

Book-review of

EMOTIONS IN THE HUMAN VOICE, Volume 1 and 2
Krzysztof Izdebski ed. Plural Publishing INC. 2008

As it is stated in the foreword of Volume I the human voice is a masterpiece of creation. It is only in the last one or two generations that objective measures of the emotional brain has been developed. Brain correlates of vocal emotional processing in men and women can now be used in relation to voice and the sound of emotion measured. Affect-induction and vocal emotional acoustics also to affect the listener is focused upon including the male-female relation ship. In volume II the function of the social brain is presented in relation to voice. The social brain includes the process of perception and analyzing actions and intentions of other people. It is important to use new knowledge of the central nervous system in voice research.

Two other aspects are presented in the books, man - machine interrelation ship and pathology especially in the editor's expert area of spasmodic dysphonia. The research in both books is updated: computer classification of moods is among others based on speech rate, pitch, and sound energy as we know, but how can we supplement with other phenomena, e.g. accents in speech, and what to do with language differences (27 national languages in Europe).

As for pathology the aspects of emotion and voice is in a beginning phase: to define the pathology of the voice and correlate to objective findings. That is why it till now has been too difficult (impossible) to make evidence based clinical research. The scaring aspect being the Cochrane evidence based library only focusing on evidence but in many cases without correct or updated discussions of the diagnoses used, e.g. functional dysphonia which is a mixture of emotional, social and immunological aspects. The diagnosis: Dystonia and its many pathology aspects seem to be an access to understanding not only pathology of central voice regulation but also speech. In the future one can hope that advances in the use of computerised high-speed films of online measures together with laryngography can better the understanding of on line emotional nuances also in performing arts.

The public for the books seems to be rather broad. The many valuable descriptions of emotional aspects of the voice have been responded to in quite big groups of society, of which singing teachers, computer scientist and clinicians, treating pathological voices seem to be the largest.

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