



URBAN BANGKOK SINGING STYLE: THAI LUKKRUNG SINGING OF DAOJAI PAIJIT'S MUSICAL IDENTITY

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to focus on a musical identity of Thai lukkrung singing by way of examining Daojai Paijit's singing style. One of the most popular singers in urban Bangkok between 1970s-1990s, Daojai rised as a professional singer independent from Sunthraporn Band, one of the first Thai westernized music bands in Thailand. A qualitative research was employed to gather data through document research, field work with composers, and conducting a series of interviews with twelve Thai lukkrung music experts and an analysis of five prototype songs which were selected by the criteria of popularity, awards received, and usages of vocal techniques. Arrangers, composers, singers, and musicians of the Lukkrung singing style were interviewed. Daojai Paijit's musical identity includes five important components: (1) voicing method; (2) phonemic orthography method; (3) breathing method; (4) communication with body gesture method; and (5) rhythmic manipulation method. Apart from vocal identity, the research has shown an important attribute of Daojai Paijit's personality which includes sixteen characteristics.

Keywords: Daojai Paijit / Urban Singing Style / Musical Identity

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Introduction

Daojai Paijit (1954-present) was born in Bangkok to a non-musical family. She received a primary education from a local school and paid her way to high school in Bangkok to support her family by selling candies and flowers on the street. Despite hardships through her teenage, she paved her way to sing in a very famous Big Band in Bangkok, Sunthraporn Band. Being trained in this particular band for two years by Master Yanyong Selanandha and Master Eau Sunthornsanan, a United Nation Educational Sciences and Cultural Organization awarded winner in 2009 as the Significant Figure of the World in Western Music, Paijit began to sing in the night clubs where new stars were spot and discovered. Night clubs in Bangkok provided a venue for young singers to meet music producers, song writers, and television producers. Paijit was singing in many night clubs where she worked and sang professionally. Those night clubs included Lolita on Rachadamneon Road, C'est ce bon on Silom Road, Nancy on Petchburi, and Galaxy on Rama IV Road. The Shadow Band accompanied Lukkrung singing style and in this band brought a new type of listening aesthetic to Bangkok urban consumers. Afterwards, Paijit's singing was discovered from one of the night clubs where she was regularly singing on Petchaburi Road in Bangkok.

Paijit had worked with many singing trainer and finally developed her singing style. She attained her professional career from being independent from Sunthraporn Big Band and

thus she had developed her own singing style which was modeled after her singing idol, Ruangthong Thonglunthom. In her singing career, she released more than 200 albums and covered more than received many awards. One of the most important awards included the Golden Athena Award conferred by HM King Bhumipol Adulayadej.

Methodology

The objective of this research is to determine musical identity of Daojai Paijit's singing in order to create a singing prototype as a guideline in transferring the prototype to the sample of 3 singers efficiently. In order to determine the identity and to create the singing prototype of Daojai Paijit, the researcher employs a qualitative method and uses in-depth interview as a tool for collecting data, others tool are document research, and analyzing 5 songs. The target population are 3 groups of Thai lukkrung composers, experts and artists. Twelve persons were interviewed.

A musical analysis of five selected songs reveals the five core components of Paijit's lukkrung singing style including 1) voicing method 2) phonemic orthography method 3) breathing method 4) body control method and 5) technique and rhythm usage method.

The five pieces represent Daojai Paijit's repertoire including 1) Tammai Tung Tam Kab Chan Dai (How Could You Do That To Me?) 2) Suan Kern (The Excess) 3) Suan Bang Tee Mai Pen Tham (The Unfair Part) 4) Yar Mar Rak Chan Loey (Do Not Love Me) and 5) Nam Ta Dara (Star's Tears). Then, such singing prototype was tested with the sample of 3 singers.

Identity and Guideline in Transferring of Daojai Paijit's singing

As a result of interview and musical analysis, 16 characteristics of Daojai Paijit's qualities as a professional singer and 10 singing techniques were discovered. The 16 characteristics are the following: 1) Interpretation 2) Timbre 3) Phonation 4) Power 5) Resonance 6) Breathing for Singing 7) Resonance control 8) Low-pitch singing 9) Performance 10) Songwriter's Mood communication 11) Physical and Posture 12) High and Low-pitch Listening 13) Vibration 14) Voice control 15) Range and 16) Pronunciation and diction.

The 10 singing techniques include 1) Concentration 2) Breathing control 3) Resonance 4) Precise voice 5) Power 6) Phonemic Orthography 7) Technique and Rhythm 8) Pitch control 9) Mood and Feeling and 10) Physical and Posture.

A singing prototype of Daojai Paijit was also revealed. It is consisted of five main components including 1) voicing method 2) phonemic orthography method 3) breathing method 4) body control method and 5) technique and rhythm usage method (Fig.1). Functionally, these 5 components are closely related to each other.

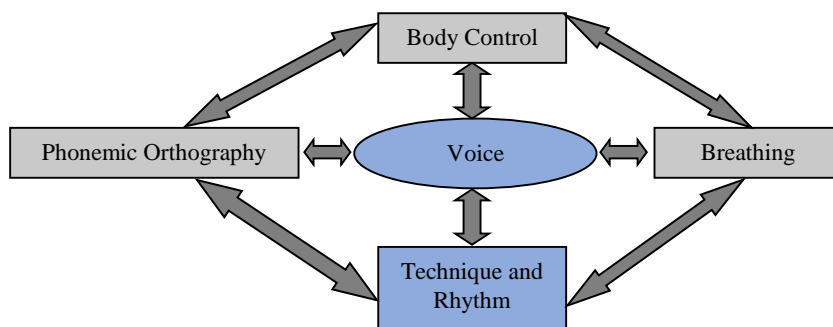


Figure 1: The relationship between 5 components of Thai Lukkrung Singing of Daojai Paijit

In transferring a singing prototype to the sample of 3 selected singers, 5 steps are constructed: (1) the selection process of sample singers; (2) the selection of repertoire; (3) Pre-test; (4) Training and Coaching; and (5) Evaluation. The evaluation showed that all 3 sample singers could inherit the singing prototype of Daojai Paijit efficiently. Therefore, it could be concluded that the prototype created in this research could substantially be used as a singing guideline for Daojai Paijit's songs.



Figure 2-3: Training and coaching process for 1 of 3 sample singers by Daojai Paijit.

Conclusion

The Creation of Cloning Process in Thai Lukkrung Singing of Daojai Pajit's Musical Identity can be cloned by analysis 5 main components which consist of 1) voicing method 2) phonemic orthography method 3) breathing method 4) body control method and 5) technique and rhythm usage method. However, although the cloning process can be used to others famous singers but the experience of singing skill of next generation singers are necessary for reaching the real mood or manner of those songs.

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