To the editors of   
Journal of Experimental Psychology: General

Manuscript submission

Dear Prof Sarah Brown-Schmidt,

attached please find a new manuscript entitled “Vocal Emotion Perception: A Comparison of Singers and Instrumentalists, Amateurs and Professionals” for possible publication as a research article in *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.This work has not been published previously, is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, and is approved by all authors. The preregistration, preprocessed data, analysis scripts, and supplemental materials are available at OSF (https://osf.io/ascqx/).

Musicians outperform non-musicians in vocal emotion recognition. However, the current literature is inconclusive regarding differential effects of specific types of musical activity. To address this gap, we compared emotion recognition performance of singers (N= 45) vs. instrumentalists (N=43) and professional musicians (N = 40) vs. amateurs (N = 88) vs. non-musicians (N = 38). Importantly, we predicted that vocal emotion recognition would be unaffected by the type or amount of musical activity. Using both frequentist and Bayesian inference, we found the predicted null effects for singers vs. instrumentalists, and for professionals vs. amateurs. Across groups, we replicated the link between vocal emotion perception and auditory sensitivity, suggesting that musicians’ advantage in recognizing vocal emotions is rooted in auditory sensitivity, rather than in the specific type or amount of musical activities.

We want to highlight two important aspects of this work: First, we specifically predicted and preregistered a null-effect of musical activity. Therefore, we used Bayesian inference alongside established frequentist approaches in our statistical analyses. Second, we recruited an original sample of 45 singers and 43 instrumentalists, which were all amateur musicians. To compare them to professionals and non-musicians, we used a previously recruited sample (Nussbaum et al. 2024, 10.1111/bjop.12684). This is made transparent throughout in the manuscript.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first well-powered and preregistered study on vocal emotion capacities of different musical subgroups. Our findings extend current insights into the role of musicality for vocal emotion processing and will, therefore, be of relevance for emotion researchers as well as psychologists and musicians in applied fields. We expect this manuscript to be of great interest to the wide readership of *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General.*

Yours sincerely,

Christine Nussbaum, Jessica Dethloff, Annett Schirmer and Stefan R. Schweinberger

Appropriate reviewers:

César F. Lima  
*Department of Psychology at Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon*

[cesar.lima@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:cesar.lima@iscte-iul.pt)

*César F. Lima is the leading researcher on the link between musicality and vocal emotion perception. Within the last decade, his group has published the key work on vocal emotion perception in musicians and non-musicians.*

Patricia E. G. Bestelmeyer  
*Bangor University*[*p.bestelmeyer@bangor.ac.uk*](mailto:p.bestelmeyer@bangor.ac.uk)

*Patricia E.G. Bestelmeyer is a leading researcher in the psychological and neuronal processes related to voice perception. She has also worked with voice manipulation techniques, such as emotional caricaturing.*

Phil McAleer  
*University of Glasgow*[*Philip.McAleer@glasgow.ac.uk*](mailto:Philip.McAleer@glasgow.ac.uk)

*Phil McAleer has his main interest on the expression of personality in voices. His profound experiences in linking acoustic parameters to perception make him a valuable reviewer for our manuscript.*

Petri Laukka  
*Stockholm University*[*petri.laukka@psychology.su.se*](mailto:petri.laukka@psychology.su.se)

*Petri Laukka is an expert on the vocal expression of emotion. He has published extensive works linking vocal and musical emotions to their underlying acoustic codes.*

Marianne Latinus  
*Université de Tours: Universite de Tours*[*marianne.latinus@univ-tours.fr*](mailto:marianne.latinus@univ-tours.fr)

*Marianne Latinus is a leading researcher in the field of voice perception. Her primary fields of research include cognitive processes and perception of sensory social information - voices in particular - in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).*

Non-preferred reviewers:

We do not have specific non-preferred reviewers, but note that the following individuals should be excluded for reasons of conflict of interest/collaboration:

Didier Grandjean  
*Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences and Swiss Center for Affective Sciences, University of Geneva, Switzerland*

Sascha Frühholz  
*Department of Psychology, University of Oslo, Oslo, 0373 Norway*

Patrik Vuilleumier  
*Swiss Center for Affective Sciences, Department of Neuroscience, University of Geneva Medical School, Geneva, Switzerland.*

Pascal Belin *Aix-Marseille University, Institut des Neurosciences de La Timone, Marseille, France*

Appropriate associate editors

Stefan Uddenberg, PhD

*University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, United States*

Rachael Jack, PhD

*University of Glasgow, United Kingdom*