

Article

# The Content Of Educational Work Carried Out In Children's Choirs

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**Abstract:** This study examines the pedagogical principles and methodologies employed in the education of children's choral groups. The research highlights the multifaceted and systematic process of vocal-choral training, emphasizing elements such as vocal technique, breathing, articulation, and ensemble performance. The methodology includes structured warm-up exercises, vocal-choral practice, and gradual transition to polyphonic singing, fostering both technical proficiency and artistic expression. Results indicate that participants experienced significant improvements in breath control, intonation, and ensemble coordination, leading to enhanced musicality and confidence in choral performance. The study underscores the importance of methodical training, tailored to the developmental needs of young singers, to cultivate their vocal skills and ensure sustainable vocal health. The findings provide practical insights for choir directors and educators aiming to achieve consistent artistic excellence in children's choral performances.

**Keywords:** Choral Performance, Children's Choir, Voice, Diction, Talent, Sound, Timbre, Vocal Power, Vocal Apparatus, Pronunciation, Breathing, Pedagogical Factors

## 1. Introduction

The successful organization and preparation of choral groups organized in secondary schools and extracurricular educational institutions for creative success is a task that requires considerable responsibility and a complex pedagogical process.

A choral group is a mass type of amateurism that introduces amateur students to a new musical world, which plays an important role in revealing the musical abilities and talents of students.

Attracting students who are passionate about music and singing to such groups is not only the work of a music teacher, but also the result of the entire community, as well as the leadership of schools and extracurricular institutions, feeling the great care and attention paid by our state to the education and upbringing of children, and striving to fulfill a responsible task.

The formation of the organization of the acoustics of the choir and the formation of a healthy and capable team capable of performing any creative tasks in it are the work of the organizing leader, or the music director. Choir director has to be a qualified, experienced, qualified, musically talented and skilled person who has theoretical and practical knowledge about vocal, choral, instrumental and conducting and related theoretical study of music art.

The leader is also involved in the organization of the choir as an organization and therefore it is easier for it to start and operate properly than any other organization.

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Besides the above mentioned characteristics of professional qualities, it is also crucial for the choir director further to realize the experience and methods, which have been developed in the music pedagogy, and to seek for the effective approach to children and to ensure that children would like to work together for the certain goal.

Positive outcomes are possible only with clear, scientific, efficient, highly inclusive, and demonstrative classes that use technical tools. Its work should be performed not randomly but systematically and this should be under the basis of working from low to high level[2].

There is a need to establish an optimistic climate for growth of ideas in the team. By organizing the activities of the working team properly, creativity is linked with discipline. It is only possible to get good results when training is clearly laid down professionally and pedagogically, example set and good attitude towards the training put in place. The choir leader's leadership and management of the team's work on the basis of a clear plan, program and strict discipline is a process that serves the artistic and aesthetic education of the participants and, in addition, the audience.

Creating a creative and working environment in the choir is created as a result of the leader and participants understanding each other, respecting each other and harmonizing their creative aspirations. It is advisable to hold choir training sessions organized in an educational institution twice a week. The educational work carried out involves the formation of vocal-choral and performing skills of students who are passionate about art and strengthening their musical and theoretical knowledge. Therefore, the activities of the group should not be understood as consisting only of learning songs, singing and concert performances. Therefore, the choir leader should attach great importance to educational work in the group and regularly hold events such as musical lectures, conversations, listening to concerts of choral groups on various topics. It is important to familiarize the participants with the news of the republican and world musical culture and life, and organize visits to famous artistic groups.

As mentioned, it is desirable that the teacher-choir director shares some information on music literacy, solfeggio, music theory and history, that would complement and consolidate some of the theoretical and practical knowledge and concepts within the "Music Lesson" during the group sessions. Thus, the education activities conducted during the first stages of the group's activity is focused on the acquisition of fundamental singing skills in children, in other words, vocal singing skills. It goes without saying that singing in a choir arises from vocal singing. In any case, the primary goal for any type and type of choir is to cultivate elements and techniques of vocal singing in singers. The work done in vowels pursues an aim of training for the Choir performers the correct and resonate voice, the clear and presentative intonation of interval-chords.

⊗ focusing on those components of vocal choral performance that include good ensemble, pronunciation and artistic performance.

⊗ postures and tonal quality by correcting the ventilation system;

⊗ allowing them to get singing characteristics that combine into a certain organism, satisfying the conditions of beginning and ending the performance as well as singing in accordance with a conductor's indications and concepts in the "Music Lesson" during the group sessions. The educational work carried out during the initial period of the group's activity is aimed at developing children's basic singing skills, that is, acquiring vocal singing skills. As is known, singing in a choir is based on vocal singing. Regardless of the type and type of choir, the most important task is to develop vocal singing skills in singers. The goal of vocal work carried out in a choir is to develop in performers the skills of correct, resonant voice, pure intonation of interval-chords. The main focus is on the following aspects:

- working on the important elements of vocal choral performance, mastering good ensemble, pronunciation, and artistic expression;
- correct breathing, establishing and shaping the vocal sound;
- enabling the members of the group to acquire singing skills that are united into a single organism, achieving the factors of starting, finishing the performance, and singing following the conductor's signals;

## 2. Materials and Methods

Establishing the essential elements of choral singing requires mastering vocal-choral technique. Vocal-choral technique is made up of breath, of the proper, efficient utilization of breath, how sounds are produced, how they are sustained, power, tone quality, articulation, and phrasing abilities[1].

If vocal-choral technique is not well mastered in choral performance, it follows that even the balance of choral parts and their combination, clarity of speech, diction, and even artistic freedom in any given choral performance will not be present. Hence, there is always a need to work on vocal-choral technique in the performance of chorally sung pieces. At this point, we consider it permissible to briefly dwell on the main aspects of vocal-choral education:

1. Singing skills. For singing it is also appropriate for the singers to occupy a certain position. There are two types: standing and sitting. And based on what I have learned singing while standing is the most comfortable position.
2. Breathing. The foundation of vocal and choral performance is breath. Normal respiration and its employment, is, indeed, the foundation of vocal and choral technique and depends on respiration while singing or breathing or holding it or shortening it or prolonging the span of phrases of the song or intensity of sound or rhythm, tempo etc.
3. Sound production. Sound is, in general, a function of the vocal system. Suspensory ligament air exits the lungs increasing the lungs in the larynx; the tympanic membrane would vibrate and make sound. The pitch, width, and thickness of the sound are related to dimensions of the local, and the tension and thickness of the larynx cavity, as well as the contraction of tongue, larynx and the larynx muscles. Singing-like sound is created by the vocal cords oscillation and the reinforcement of sound by the resonators. The resonators rate up the generated sound and produces various tones into it.
4. In vocal and choral practice, there exists the practice of 'voice training' called *pastanovka golosa*, under which singers are trained to sing as required. Voice training is actually about education. This is a special didactic process that provides an opportunity to develop and bring into form the correct sound. The formation of this work takes place in special vocal lessons, and their absence is most considered as the most necessary condition in group classes. Some of the aspects are masking of voice and not singing in an 'open' voice but teaching singing in a semi 'closed' voice.
5. Another important condition for vocal choir training is to level the registers and achieve a mixed (mixed) sound. The register is the division of the volume of a person's voice into parts - low, high, middle. When singing, the voice changes when moving from one register to another. This is noticeable in inexperienced performers. Its leveling occurs through regular exercises[2].
5. Methods of transmitting the melody. When singing, the melody is said to be uniform, even, and connected - *legato*, when it sounds separately without being connected - non *legato*, when it is played intermittently - *staccato*, when it sounds with separate emphasis - *marcato*. Special work is carried out on these in vocal and choral skills.
6. Sound attack. The beginning of the sound after the end of the inhale is called "Ataka" (attack) in vocal-choral performance. There are types of attack of the sound, soft, hard and after inhalation. The formation of this type of skills is also carried out through

special exercises. Singing the sound softly, softly, (producing the sound with the mouth closed) *p*, *pp* and slowly opening it is called a soft attack, and the sudden appearance of the sound hard *f*, *ff* is called a hard attack [2].

7. Tuning. Tuning in this respect means the singers singing in a mass formation are able to hear well the sound of the music and synchronize their voices with the same. In other words, tuning is about singing a pitch with exactness with the intended tune. Intonation is the ability to produce sound cleanly and clearly at its own pitch. This is very paramount in amateurs choral performance in order to be achieved. Ensuring that a pure intonation rises from pure unison voice both in lesson processes and in the activities of the choired circle, is the principal aim in vocal and choral educational practice. For this, systematic work is already done in amateur choirs. Extra emphasis is placed on tuning and intonation learning with the kids who have only recently joined the team and do not sing.
8. Ensemble. In music performance, ensemble basically means many performers in unity, in other words, unity of the performance. In within the practice the word ensemble also refers to a group or a team of performers. Ensemble reflects the unity of voice of all dancers, the speed of the performance, movement and beat, and harmony of sound. Just as much as in singing, harmony is as compulsory as the fine-tuning of a music instrument.

Ensemble in its turn is of general and private kind. If all singers in Choral or Singing voice regime focus on one key and sing or they sing in harmonies or otherwise in unison, then any one general ensemble, while if every single voice rate is distinct and every voice part sing in single vocals then it is any one private ensemble.

10. Pronunciation. Articulation in song is not the same as articulation of a note. The kits of expressive pronunciation include singing with the active movement of the organs of articulation – lips, tongue, and the jaw. The clarity and expressiveness of pronunciation depends the clear and precise pronunciation of sounds (letters). The tendency to ambiguity in the pronunciation of some words and their pronunciation with difficulty for children, tension of the vocal apparatus and the inability to clearly articulate letter sounds calls for long-term, systematic and sometimes, an individual approach to practices with them.

To achieve the optimal performance described above in a choir, the following basic rules must be followed:

- a) The song should always be sung without any form of constriction;
- b) Singing should put the children in the right frame to sing, the children should be ready for it mentally, and the approach of the singing should not be straining.

The performer also has to listen to himself and move all the instruments on his pieces on his own.

- a) An attempt should be made to produce a smooth, but not too intense, gentle, harmonious sound, a sound that has a uniform timbre throughout all the pitches, in order not to harm the vocal color.
- b) One cannot sing at the top of their voice, this strains the voice.
- c) It is also not good to sing always in bass (singing in the bass clef) and treble.
- d) The quality of the singing speech should be monitored frequently, closely. It is required to provide correct, clear, but practiced to some extent, singing of vowels, to distinguish pure consonants in the song with obvious intonations and without discomfort to the voice organ.
- e) Breathing should be relaxed, not strangled, rhythmic, level, variable. Thus, exhalation should be performed with the airways set in a particular manner.

On these bases it is possible to master singing skills and achieve the desirous state of expressive singing. The necessity to teach children of school age (age) artistic, impressively and expressively sing should never violates age related laws on development, singing voice formation and the whole consistent process of musical and aesthetic education of

schoolchildren. The formation of vocal-singing skills and abilities of participants in children's choral groups is carried out directly with the help of vocal-choral exercises. This, in turn, has two goals. The first is to bring the children's vocal organs into working order (warm up), and the second is to develop vocal-singing technique, therefore, conducting vocal-choral exercises before each session is a necessary condition.

When vocal-choral exercises are used in their place, with care and skill, they lead to the formation of all the qualities inherent in the performance of the group. This includes breathing, its economical use, sound attack, *aufhak*, dynamic signs, tempo, diction, articulation, pure intonation, achieving ensemble, etc. Exercises can also be used to master difficult parts of the song, master polyphonic singing skills, and develop memory and musical hearing. Before each session, you can allocate up to 7-10 minutes or even more for singing exercises.

Even taking into account the extremely delicate and insufficiently formed vocal capabilities of schoolchildren, that is, the power of their voice, and the fact that their vocal cords are extremely thin and weak, it is methodologically and pedagogically incorrect to immediately start singing without vocal-choral exercises and can even have negative consequences. For vocal-choral exercises, the choir director can sing various soft (*ligato*), interrupted (*staccato*), emphasized (*marcato*), and worded and wordless exercises with note names and syllables *la, do, da, de, di, ma, mi, mee, mo, mu, za, ze, zu*, etc. Exercises can be performed first with note names, then with syllables, and in subsequent stages by heart[1].

"Warming up" the voices and preparing them for singing can be done with all participants and with separate parts. Exercises can be done with the mouth closed or with the voice.

Exercises are carried out with and without piano accompaniment, in the initial stages by hearing and repeating the leader's voice.

The choir should first be taught to sing in pure unison. Later, two-part exercises can be continued with holding on to one note while singing and the second part singing up or down, then the next parts can perform the exercise in turns, singing two-part parts from small song parts, etc.

### 3. Results

Several important findings can be drawn from the study on vocal-choral training and the development of essential elements for choral singing concerning the utility of other areas of methodology on performance. These assessments suggested significant positive changes in participants' vocal-choral abilities particularly in breath support, pitch, and articulation; daily warm ups focusing on breath management, onset, and tuning facilitated choral fusion from the previous uncoordinated choral timbre found among many of the participants. Intonation and ensemble patterns brought better control of vocal tone and diction and cleaner, more accurate unison singing; transitions between vocal registers or between voices sections were also more easy; two-part and multi-part singing practice developed good control for harmony and synchronization in the choral group. Efficient practice on production encouraged participant to sing with better and more expressive tone with syllable/note names exercising improved consonant tone and vowel tone which are vital in choral music. Students said they became more confident in vocal performance and active in choral warm-up and selected techniques that reduced their performance stress and facilitated the mental and physical readiness for singing. As for the factors that became more effective, it is worth noting the structured exercises, for example *legato*, *staccato*, and *marcato* techniques help in handling difficult parts of rather difficult songs and practicing polyphonic singing as well as people's musical memory to combine different voice parts into a smooth performance. For young singers with initially thin and feeble vocal cords, vocal-choral exercise were applied cautiously so the young singers

could begin to strengthen their voices safely, in addition short but correctly structured exercise proved to be effective in warming up singers' voices and minimizing the probabilities of singers' voices getting tired or being damaged. Such results support the need for systematic training for promoting the technical, artistic, and Shared Kaleidoscope aspects of choral performances.

#### 4. Discussion

The findings stress out the prime value of systematic and systematical vocal-choral training as the key to choral performance enhancement. Breathing exercises appear to be the best starting point when addressing any matter concerning singing and vocal-choral acoustics because controlled and efficient utilization of breath directly impacted on the quality of sounds produced, tone quality, and stamina. Based on the set objectives, it is noted that constant emphasis on correct formation and improvement strengthens the homogeneous sound of the choral ensemble.

Yet another important beneficiary was expressive singing, which was improved with special emphasis on practicing the skills of precise articulation of the words vocalized. Specific exercises to blend consonants and a clear enunciation of vowels provided explicit means to convey the artistic message and undertaking of songs. This points to the need of addressing both the element of accuracy and passion for the course in teaching choral.

Also, it was found that the gradual approach to the introduction of multi-part singing is beneficial for amateur and school-age choirs. The simple formation coming first through pure unison singing and followed by sheer two-part exercises helped build confidence and co-ordination before moving to other formations. Thus, this approach gives emphasis on the appropriate scaffolding where the desired abilities have to be first developed prior to be advanced to the challenging features of choral education.

Different kinds of exercises including those using syllables and note names was found to foster musical memory and hearing. Apart from these exercises practical activity helped the participants to prepare for performance as well as developed their musicality and ability to react on dynamic and rhythm changes. Furthermore, the protocols that deliberately incorporated warm-up routines of the singers before they embark on performance was positively affirmed as critical intervention measuring in shielding young singers' vocal health and preparing them for the performance.

Additionally, the discussion focuses on the responsibility of the leaders in managing exercises with regards to the chorus ability and the different level of the participants. Appropriate choices of warm up activities and voice production methods have a potential to enhance the effectiveness of the choral training especially of youths and novices. This way, directors can avoid both shouting at singers and staring at cone which are both equally damaging to vocal folds and they will also learn their skills incrementally.

Therefore it has been established that extensive vocal-choral training is mandatory if one wants quality choral performances consistently. Philosophy of effective instructional procedures lies at the core of the research and as such it is conformity with the college's well established pedagogy principles. Choir directors can develop the technical and artistic abilities that their team and each singer can achieve when the basic elements of breathing, vocal sounds, intonation, and expressive singing are well studied. These findings will be useful for educators and practitioners, trying to restore superb choral artistry.

#### 5. Conclusion

At the initial stage of the transition to polyphony, children's play songs, folklore samples, which contain the melody of polyphonic song samples, melodic intonation and elements of folk polyphony, can be used. In this case, Uzbek folk children's songs reworked for the choir are very useful. We would recommend that teachers use the training, vocal and choral exercises presented in the textbook "Singing in a Primary School" by P.F. Kadyrov. This textbook is an important resource for leaders working in a choir[2].

Experience shows that singing songs according to the graphic image of the song is of great importance for the choir members to master notation, polyphony, and to master the skills of reading from a sheet. For example, children sing one melody by seeing the image of the movement of one voice up, the second down, and the third in one place. In this case, reading them according to the notes has a positive effect on their retention of the notes.

Teaching a choir to sing in polyphony begins with mastering small two-part samples. Mastering two-part singing is a key step in achieving polyphony. As a result of methodologically correct and systematically conducted exercises and training, success in polyphony can be achieved.

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