

CHOIR TRAINING OF CIGANITRI 2 STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BOJONGSOANG DISTRICT, BANDUNG REGENCY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstrak

Judul penulisan ini merupakan laporan deskriptif Pelatihan Teknik Vokal Paduan Suara pada Sekolah Dasar Negeri (SDN), yang bertujuan memberikan apresiasi dan penggalian bakat sekolah tingkat dasar. Teori pelatihan vokal meliputi teknik pernafasan, pernafasan, produksi suara, frasing dan kemungkinan lain kaitannya penghayatan terhadap lagu yang dinyayikan. Bukan pelatihan yang mudah melakukan di masa pandemi Covid-19 ini kaitanya dengan vokal. Rencana Pergelaran Paduan suara lagu lagu Nasional/Daerah menjadi sebuah rekaman paduan suara secara daring. Sulitnya proses pembelajaran teknik vokal yang diberikan, maka memerlukan tatap muka untuk mewujudkan hal tersebut, meski tetap memperhatikan protokoler kesehatan (social distancing). Hal ini dilakukan dengan meminimalkan peserta didik. Dengan keterbatasan teknis kaitanya dengan pelatihan teknik vokal yang diberikan, pergelaran lagu lagu yang direncanakan 10 lagu, menjadi 5 lagu dalam bentuk rekaman. Hasil rekaman masing-masing siswa, kemudian digabung menjadi perekaman gabungan vokal menjadi paduan suara.

Kata Kunci: Pelatian teknik vokal, paduan suara anak, teknik perekaman

Abstract

The title of this writing is a descriptive report of the Vocal Choir Technique Training at State Elementary Schools (SDN), which aims to provide an appreciation as well as searching of elementary schools talents. The vocal training theory includes breathing techniques, breathing, sound production, phrasing and other possibilities in relation to the appreciation of the songs. A vocal training is not an easy training to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Choir Performance Plan of the national/regional songs becomes an online recording of the choir. The challenge of the vocal technique learning process is that it still requires a face-to-face meetings, by following the health protocols (social distancing). This is done by minimizing the participants. With the limitations of vocal technique training provided, the planned performance of 10 songs becomes 5 songs in recorded form, namely Virtual Choir.

Keywords: vocal technique training, virtual choir, recording technique

INTRODUCTION.

SD Ciganitri 2 Choir Training is a training process which provides knowledge of vocal techniques. The training, which was originally a necessity for the festival and furthermore the Choir Performance, changed due to the current situation and conditions. This training is mainly an effort to explore interests and talents, as well as an appreciation of the choir in particular. The COVID-19 Pandemic situation has changed the training process and the planned system. Two festival performances materials and 8 songs of performance material, have turned into a virtual Choir Performance that presents 5 songs. Furthermore, it changed from festivals and performances into a virtual choir.

The virtual choir which is currently popular is an activity for the students who already have a group which possesses vocals with well measured technical quality from each group. With these considerations, the training at SD Ciganitri is an experiment that is not easy to do. Online training cannot completely guarantee a smooth process. Direct access to the students to provide practical evaluation related to the shape of the jaw, tongue, teeth, stomach and so on is very necessary. Thus, face-to-face meeting is needed to provide the practical material that needs to be done by following the health protocols.

The training methods and materials are vocal technique elements which includes: body posture in singing; breathing and a good sound production. The basic materials (body posture, diaphragmatic breathing, sound production, and sound placement) are practically classified into: (1) The mastery of the material to be able to sing the songs according to the written notation on scores; (2)

The interpretation of the songs/materials as desired by the composer and the song arranger; and (3) The expression, that is, after passing through stage 1 and 2, the students are able to sing a song with appreciation and expression [1]. These three things become the focus of discussion of the training material.

The initial meeting of the training was to determine the members by selecting the elementary students from grade 3 to grade 5. A group of 24 students were selected from six classes, which totaling around 150 students. The selection was based on the voice material of each participant which is divided into two categories namely high voice (soprano) and low voice (alto). From the number of selected students, a meticulous re-selection of abilities was conducted for the students who really have the ability according to the desired criteria.

The first part of the training process is the body position. The body weight rests evenly on the feet, as much as possible to form a straight line from the midpoint of the heels to the head-calf muscles. The abdominal muscles must be relaxed and the back is straight, so that the spine is lifted. This body position is very important to be shown in a ready manner and to support a singing performance, which is upright but relaxed body [2]. The next training is breathing exercises.

Diaphragma breathing is the greatest source of an energy and a vocal technique foundation, which is done without shrugging and puffing out the chest. Everything is focused on the stomach and it ensures that once you take a deep breath, the stomach is enlarged (not the chest or shoulders that are pulled up). This exercise has to be done repeatedly, so that when inhaling, the stomach is filled to the maximum. The challenge that

is often faced by the students who just begin to learn is when they are breathing intentionally, the chest and shoulders are raised upward. Since the diaphragm is in the abdominal area, thus, you are supposed to inhale as much air as possible, then exhale slowly through the mouth, or it can be sizzling, it has to be done repeatedly according to the requirements [4].

A good sound production is a result of the correct way of forming sounds and is also a result of good resonance” [5]. The vocal resonance space is classified into three places, namely: the lower - middle - and upper resonance space. These three places of vocal resonance are generally always used simultaneously in singing. However, at a certain moment the attention to each resonance room will always be there, especially when singing one or two notes or a part of a melody [6]. Articulation is also important, as it is given in order to understand how to pronounce it word-for-word according to the diction (language) of the words used (Indonesian, English, and regional languages). Furthermore, phrasing is equally important to provide an understanding of a proper and correct sentence truncation, so that it is easy to understand and in accordance with applicable rules. It is also applicable for the sound placement.

Ririe, Aley (2010) explained that in vocal techniques, things that need to be considered are articulation, breathing, intonation, phrasing, vibrato, resonance and posture [7]. The sound placement in the resonant space (throat, mouth, nose) will make a significant contribution to the production of this type of sound (dark, light, nasal) [8]. With this understanding, a good sound can be produced by paying attention to: articulation (clarity in pronouncing syllables); diction (pronounce the

text clearly and correctly following the rules of the original sound). A good diction is influenced by how we can pronounce the correct vowels, diphthongs, consonants and sound placement (correct sound placement) [9]. The classification of three main elements of vocal technique, namely mastery of song material; material / song interpretation, and expression becomes the focus of the training process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In anticipating the challenge of providing material with a literal language in accordance with the concept of vocal technique that has been described, the author tries his own way to convey language analogies that can be captured by the students' age level. A song mastery is emphasized to the members to memorize the lyrics, while the diaphragm breathing technique is taught by direct practice. The understanding of breathing technique is taught with commands and analogies of simple sentences, such as: the inhalation and exhalation of the breath directed and exhaled from the same source, which is the palate of the mouth, which feels cold when the breath/air enters and exits as a vocal source. In addition, the writer also tries to teach about an analogy of fruit, from small to large.

The fruit analogy talks about grapes and rambutans, which are placed in the mouth. It provides an imagination to guide the students by enlarging the cavity of the mouth, which is related to the timbre quality of the voice. The purpose is to invite the students to inhale through their mouths and exhale with the vowels accompanied by the imagination of grapes and rambutans fruit in it. When producing the vowel “a” and using the pal-

ate technique as a sound source, assisted by a push from the stomach/diaphragm, a higher quality “a” vowel will come out. It is also related to the needs of the desired sound (thin sound or thick sound) from the fruit analogy.

The next analogy is when singing the vowel “i”, the writer uses the analogy of “*Ikatan Sapu Lidi*” (tied broom wooden sticks). It means when inhaling and exhaling a vowel centered on the upper palate, it is assisted by the analogy of a large and small “broomstick (*sapu lidi*) hole”. In order to get a thin impression and a loud sound, the sound is like inserting a stick in a small hole, the sound is directed and pulled upwards, producing a thin and clear sound. In terms of sound placement, the students are asked to feel when they take a breath, they must know that it is directed at the upper palate which feels cold when the air enters the mouth. Likewise, when producing a squeaky vowel from where the cold is felt. Each of the vowels “a, i, u, e, o” has its own analogy, and the most important thing is that the analogy is understood and can be practiced.

On the other hand, the interpretation of the song is that conceptually a singer must be able to sing as the composer and song arranger wish. The hard/soft interpretation is according to the dynamics of the music score. A song interpretation concentrates more on the dynamics according to the meaning of the lyrics or the character of the interpretation, and the melody elements. It is of importance that the intonation of the song bar syllable and the phrasing (wording) match the correct sentence. This can be achieved if it is carried out with good breathing techniques. In addition, warming up (vocalize) sufficiently before the exercise begins.

In song expressions, the trainer provides analogies by telling stories (legato), inviting (encouraging), praising with examples of hand and head movements or body swings. In many cases, it can even be extreme, such as conveying the crescendo, the students are given the analogy of “listening to the deaf”, which means to invite the students to be louder. In regard to a song interpretation, there is one example of a song called “*Di Timur Mata Hari*”. In certain verses like: “*Di-timur-mata-hari-mu-lai ber-cahya*”, the initial word until the word “*bercahya*” is sung in *stakato*. It follows the arrangement of the musical accompaniment. Furthermore, the end of the vowel “a” in the word “*cahya*” is expanded and clarified “by Crescendo (the longer it gets louder). The sentence of the next song is in accordance with the imagination whether you want to be more assertive as an invitation or an affirmation of the last verse “*Seluruh Pemuda Indonesia*”. This section is accompanied by an understanding of the direction, placement techniques and sound production, according to the sentence analogies that have been given previously. Understanding of breathing techniques, where the air is directed and from where the air is expelled with vocals, as practiced, directs students to concentrate on the head voice. The analogies of the sentence or language that is conveyed is very helpful for the students’ understanding in receiving material that is unfamiliar for them. It is of importance to pay attention to the arrangements, the signs of changing tempo, etc, so that the songs can be sung appropriately and they support expressions.

At the end of the training process, what is described as a virtual choir is a recording technique. The recording technique in particular is the initial recording of each student’s video individually us-

ing a heard set and guiding music with a player, then recorded with a camera. The initial part that must be considered is editing the audio of each recording, followed by the video which is adjusted between mouth speech when singing with the edited and unified audio from each of these recordings.

CONCLUSION

An understanding of a vocal technical training during the Covid-19 Pandemic gave a good experience. In theory, vocal techniques are conveyed to the students, even though the technical constraints have changed the plans related to the elements of general knowledge of vocal techniques. When the online training process is not optimal and does not even provide any practical development, hence the face-to-face training is needed. Techniques such as understanding the teeth, jaw, mouth, etc. are practically related. The authors offered the face-to-face training, with due observance of the health/social distancing protocol by minimizing the number of attendees at each meeting.

For the sake of a smooth understanding of the given materials, the writer tends to use analogies to get the impression of the appreciation of the song's expression. The expression of the analogies is adjusted to the age level of the students. It is very helpful in conveying the desired material without reducing the meaning of existing theoretical concepts. The safe, calm, a little humor, familiar atmosphere breaks the ice and it is accepted well without any feeling of involuntary, furthermore they feel excited in following the training process.

Nevertheless, this training contributes to exploring the interests and artistic talents of the stu-

dents, which so far have not been done much by State Primary School Education in particular. Not only in Bandung, but also in other cities throughout Indonesia. There is a concern and good cooperation from partners, supported by appropriate methods related to the proper process of delivering techniques. It is hoped that this activity will be a matter of pride for the partners concerned. The result of this choir training is in a VCD form which is then published to the elementary schools in Bojongsoang Sub-district and its surroundings.

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