

FEATURES OF CHILDREN'S VOICE DEVELOPMENT IN VOCAL LESSONS

Alimbekova Oydin

UzSIAC Associate Professor of the "Vocal" Department

Abstract

This article analyzes the characteristic aspects of working with a vocal ensemble, including methods and approaches to interaction with performers of different age categories. Special attention is paid to the vocal characteristics of children's and adolescent voices, as well as methods of preparing a musical piece, taking into account the age-related features and individual capabilities of the performer. Key stages of repertoire mastery are also examined in detail.

Keywords: Vocal, vocal ensemble, vocal hearing, children's vocal, vocal technique.

Introduction

Vocal performance remains the most accessible form of musical self-expression. However, achieving professional mastery in vocal performance requires a gradual and thorough preparation: the development of vocalists begins in early childhood, shaping their skills in solo and ensemble singing. Children's vocal training holds a special place in the system of vocal pedagogy. The unique feature of children's singing lies in the fact that a child's vocal apparatus is still in the developmental phase, so the approach to training must be thoughtful and delicate. Learning vocal performance in an ensemble helps children develop teamwork skills, enhance musical abilities, and refine auditory perception. Vocal education is carried out using various methodologies in children's art schools, creative studios, leisure centers, and specialized vocal schools, contributing to the harmonious development of young performers.

Pop vocals play a key role in musical education and concert activities. It not only introduces students to contemporary musical styles but also helps them develop collective performance skills, which are essential for creative growth. Modern pop music enables children to feel closer to the arts, cultivate their vocal abilities, and gain confidence on stage. Vocal ensembles provide each participant with an opportunity to showcase their talents, learn harmony, and interact with other performers.

Children's vocal training requires a special approach, as children's voices differ significantly from adult voices in structure and sound. Their timbre is lighter, silvery, and "transparent," and their range is often narrower than that of adult singers. The initial training period plays a key role, as this is when basic vocal skills are established, and proper breathing and sound production techniques are formed. It is important to consider the anatomical and physiological characteristics of children's vocal apparatus to ensure that training is both safe and developmental. Working with children's voices is not just about teaching vocal techniques but also about creating a comfortable and motivating environment that helps children unlock their creative potential and perform confidently in front of an audience. Training in pop vocals and

voice development requires clear diction, as the lyrics of a song play a crucial role in its perception. Unlike academic and folk singing, where words are often adapted to the music, pop vocals frequently contain complex phrases that require quick breath control.

There are several aspects of working with children's voices:

- Physiological aspects – In childhood, the vocal cords, larynx, and other anatomical structures have not yet fully matured. This means that the standards for vocal load, breathing techniques, and sound production differ significantly from those used with adults. A vocal coach must have a deep understanding of these processes to motivate the child while avoiding excessive strain on their voice.
- Vocal characteristics – Children's voices resemble those of a female choir—they are light, bright, and silvery. However, the main difference lies in the range, which imposes limitations on repertoire interpretation and requires special techniques to develop vocal flexibility and expressiveness.
- Pedagogical aspect – The initial training period lays the foundation for future success. Developing correct vocal habits from an early age helps prevent harmful vocal techniques that could lead to problems later on. This approach not only enhances technical skills but also fosters a love for music, group singing, and teamwork in an ensemble.
- Practical aspects – When working with children's vocal ensembles, it is essential to create a friendly and motivating atmosphere where every child feels valued. Methods used in children's vocal training often incorporate playful elements, making the learning process engaging and enjoyable. This contributes not only to vocal skill development but also to overall musical education, broadening horizons, and building confidence for future performances.

Children's vocal training is a special direction in vocal pedagogy. Leaders of children's ensembles pay particular attention to the initial stage of training, considering it crucial for the formation of vocal skills. This process requires a deep understanding of various aspects, including voice physiology, laryngeal structure, and the individual age-related characteristics of children. Children's voices resemble female choral parts but have a narrower range and a bright, silvery timbre. These features impose specific requirements on teaching methodology, allowing for the proper development of children's vocal abilities and ensuring their comfortable musical growth.

At the beginning of a lesson, one of the most important elements is vocal warm-up, which includes:

- Mastering vocal techniques – regular work on forming the correct sound production setup;
- Tuning the ensemble's hearing – bringing all participants to a unified perception of sound;
- Preparing and warming up the voice– activating the vocal cords for quality singing;
- Practicing complex elements of a piece – performing special exercises to master them.

When working with a vocal ensemble during warm-ups, it is essential to focus on two key aspects: first, achieving a unified timbre in collective performance (unison), and second, working on intervals, which form the basis for developing two-part singing and, depending on vocal skill level, allow progression to polyphonic singing (chords). Intonation is adjusted by regulating the sound production position. If the voice sounds too high, it can be softened by

making the performance more rounded and covered. If the sound is slightly low, the sound production position should be shifted slightly forward.

Articulation work is one of the key elements of vocal performance. The clarity and richness of consonants directly determine the quality of diction, and their swift and precise formation ensures smooth and soft vocal sound. During ensemble work, participants develop several important skills. The first is the ability to perceive the overall sound of the group. At the initial stage, each singer tends to focus on their own voice, trying to stand out. However, a true ensemble performer understands that their voice is shaped not only by their individual singing style but also by the collective sound of the group. Therefore, it is crucial to listen to others and blend with the ensemble.

The second essential skill is the ability to feel and maintain the overall rhythmic pulse. Synchronized performance requires precise alignment of even the smallest rhythmic nuances among all participants, which is only possible through a shared sense of tempo and rhythm. Thus, the ability to integrate into the ensemble's overall sound and maintain rhythmic synchronization are fundamental skills for successful vocal group performance.

Vocal hearing and its development are directly linked to the ability to perceive and accurately reproduce the sound of the singing voice. Essentially, the entire methodology of vocal training focuses on refining this auditory perception.

Methodological literature offers more than 30 techniques for forming and developing vocal-auditory images. Among the most significant methods for a pop vocal ensemble, the following can be highlighted:

- Careful listening to the teacher's performance followed by analysis;
- Comparing different performance variations to select the most accurate sound;
- Chain singing, meaning sequential repetition of parts;
- Using hand movements to model pitch;
- Pre-setting the correct key before singing begins;
- Holding individual notes under the conductor's guidance to create a unified unison;
- Highlighting and practicing complex intonational turns in exercises;
- Transposing a piece to find the most comfortable key;
- Practicing the technique of chain breathing;
- Articulating text using active whispering, which aids in better breath control and vocal support;
- Applying various tasks when repeating exercises and memorizing song material through different methods of sound production, vocalization, dynamics, timbre, tonality, and emotional expressiveness;
- Comparing repertoire with different characteristics to help structure lesson stages and select concert programs;

The whole point of the work is for students to learn to sing easily and freely, creating a light, effortless sound.

The initial stage of working on a musical piece involves familiarization and detailed analysis. The teacher must introduce the ensemble to the composition, study its content, structure,

musical language features, main ideas, and expressive means. Next comes the learning of individual parts. At the beginning of training, performers learn their parts orally, accompanied by the piano and parallel text study. The teacher organizes lessons so that students practice their parts in small groups. In advanced groups, students may first work on solfeggio and then add the textual component. If ensemble members are unfamiliar with musical notation, the first step is to study sound syllables along with the lyrics. When performing two-part compositions, an important stage is merging the parts into a cohesive whole. Children's voices should be developed gradually and with great care. The methods and techniques used by the teacher to impart necessary skills and knowledge in vocal choral art are the result of years of practice. In children's vocal ensembles, from the very first lessons, emphasis is placed on dividing students into groups (parts) for performance. It is crucial to properly manage the process of learning a piece in a vocal ensemble. The ultimate goal of singing lessons is for students to sing freely, effortlessly, and with an airy sound, without excessive tension. Proper execution of breathing exercises during warm-ups helps the muscles immediately adopt the correct state, significantly easing the learning of musical pieces. The vocal teacher is also responsible for correcting sound production deficiencies, such as throat or nasal sounds, which affect the overall vocal quality. The ensemble leader is responsible for continuously improving teaching methods to meet both musical and educational objectives.

One of the key challenges in ensemble singing is achieving uniformity in vocal sound. If participants use different articulation methods, the collective sound will be disrupted, so special attention is given to forming unified diction and phonetics. Vocal performance in an ensemble is a form of mass art, based on the joint execution of musical works. Students come to understand that participating in group singing allows for the creation of truly beautiful sound, something unattainable in solo performance. Collective singing better reveals the ideological and artistic content of a piece, making its performance more vivid and expressive. This realization highlights that ensemble singing plays a key role in further creative self-expression and development.

Exercises for developing the respiratory and vocal apparatus are closely interconnected and help master the technique of free and correct voice control. Thus, proper voice training helps relieve excessive tension in the throat during performance. The primary goal of a vocal teacher is to help children master light and natural singing, allowing them to express themselves freely through music.

In conclusion, the best development and strengthening of a child's voice occur through singing activities. Interaction with music not only fills a child with emotions and spiritual richness but also serves as a powerful stimulus in the process of improving their vocal abilities. Additionally, singing lessons contribute to intellectual development, activation of cognitive processes, improvement of speech skills, correction of speech disorders, and overall positive effects on children's health.

References:

1. Barkhatova I.B. Voice Training for Pop Vocalists. A Method for Diagnosing Problems: A Textbook / I.B. Barkhatova. - St. Petersburg: Lan. Planet of Music, 2015. - 61 pages: sheet music.
2. Boyko E.A. Encyclopedia of Breathing Exercises [link](http://www.libma.ru/zdorove/yenciklopedija_dyhatelnoi_gimnastiki/index.php).
3. Dmitriev L.B. Fundamentals of Vocal Methodology. - Direct-Media, 2014. - 675 pages.
4. Stulova U.P. Didactic Foundations of Singing Education – Moscow, 1998.
5. Stulova U.P. Development of Children's Voices in the Process of Singing Education – Moscow, 1992.

