

# WORK ON DICTION AND ARTICULATION IN A POP SINGING LESSON

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**Abstract:** *diction, along with proper singing breathing, pure intonation and sound formation, is one of the main parameters in the technique of pop singing. Without articulate diction the performer cannot convey the meaning and content of the piece of music to the audience. Pop singing is characterized by close sound pronunciation through an active and expressive rounding of vowel sounds, a significant predominance of the vertical volume of the throat. The peculiarity of pop singing is the preservation of speech phonetics. The vocal words not only create images, they are involved in forming the vocal position, activate the respiratory muscles. During singing there is a sort of separation between vocal and speech sounds, where the vocal ones are depth, volume; speech sounds are closeness (lip synchronous pronunciation), mask-like gathering.*

**Keywords:** *diction, articulation, sound, singing, speech, class, timbre, singer, musician.*

## РАБОТА НАД ДИКЦИЕЙ И АРТИКУЛЯЦИЕЙ НА УРОКЕ ЭСТРАДНОГО ПЕНИЯ

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**Аннотация:** *наряду с правильным певческим дыханием, чистой интонацией, звукообразованием дикция, является одним из основных параметров в технике эстрадного пения. Без четкой дикции исполнитель не сможет донести до зрителей смысл и содержание музыкального произведения. Для эстрадного пения характерно близкое речевое произношение звуков за счет активного и экспрессивного округления гласных звуков, существенного преобладания вертикального объема ротоглотки. Особенностью чертой эстрадного пения принято считать сохранение речевой фонетики. Вокальные слова не только создают образы, оно участвуют в формировании вокальной позиции, активизируют дыхательные мышцы. При пении идет как бы разграничение вокальных звуков и речевых, в котором вокальные - это глубина, объем; речевые — близость (зубное произношение), собранность в маске.*

**Ключевые слова:** *дикция, артикуляция, звук, пение, речь, занятие, тембр, певец, музыкант.*

UDC 078

In variety singing lessons special attention shall be paid to the work on diction. The clarity and precision of the pronunciation of words and even single syllables largely depends on the mobility of the singer's articulatory apparatus.

The sluggishness of the articulator is the main reason for bad diction. The clamped lower jaw obstructs the opening of the mouth and the hyoid bone pulls up the larynx, which can cause forced throat singing. The lower jaw should be loose, not clamped. Being passive, it should not lean down heavily, hitting the larynx. It must be well held by the muscles of the cheeks and the corners of the lips, the lips themselves, actively uttering consonants.

The lips are directly involved in the formation of vowels and are the main shapers of the lingual consonants. The position of the lips affects the timbre of the sound in singing.

Before singing a piece of music the singer has to prepare the articulatory system or more precisely tune it. To do this, the singer must: recite short phrases to make the pronunciation of words clearer, do exercises on the development of vocal breathing and sing.

It is compulsory to sing at each lesson, because the vocal cords are growing stronger. Voice as a musical instrument requires the right setting. Quick phrases loosen the vocal apparatus and vocal exercises develop the vocal apparatus.

By singing, our vocal cords warm up and tune out properly. To achieve the correct vocalization at the initial stage of learning to sing, pupils must often practice the exercise of singing the "m" sound with their mouths closed. The teeth must be unclenched, the soft palate activated with a light yawn and the sound directed towards the head resonator, which in vocal training refers to the upper part of the face and its nasopharyngeal cavity. Sending the sound to the front of the hard palate at the roots of the upper front teeth provides more resonance and gives the sound brilliance and power. When singing, keep nasal and throat resonances to a minimum; the higher and more accurate the vocal position, the clearer and more natural the brightness of the voice.

Singing breath should be taken actively enough, but noiselessly, deeply, simultaneously through the nose with a feeling of a slight yawn. Sing in one breath, smoothly, softly, long pass from one note to another. Melody in the song is inextricably linked with the lyrics. Meanwhile, in pop singing is often impossible to understand the words. Such singing cannot be considered artistic. The clear pronunciation of the words is essential for proper singing.

Good diction is based on working on the pronunciation of the vowels and consonants.

The main point in working on the vowels is to pronounce them cleanly, without distortion. Specificity of the pronunciation of vowels in singing is in their uniform manner of formation. This is necessary for the smoothness of the sound and to achieve a good pitch in pop and jazz works. Any vowel can be sung round or flat with the same lip position. Vocal vowels are formed due to the change in shape of the oropharyngeal space (resonator volume). This can be seen by the change in oropharyngeal volume from 'u' to 'o', 'a', 'e', 'i'. Vocal vowels need to be felt as an open volume of a certain shape. They are formed on the open throat and relaxed chin. For competent vowel formation it is necessary to train the activity of the internal articulation.

Psychological clamps that inhibit the creative process and interfere with diction clarity and expressiveness should be removed. A tightly clenched jaw, tense neck, sluggish tongue and other natural and acquired clamps lead to poor diction, incorrect pronunciation of individual sounds, and the body as a whole becoming stiff.

To develop the mobility of the muscles of the lower jaw, the ability to open the mouth wide enough in the process of speech, use the following special exercises:

1. Lower the lower jaw down freely until there is a gap between the teeth and the mouth. 2 teeth until there is a gap of 2 fingers between teeth,

2. utter silent, extended (one exhalation) vowel sounds:

Aaaaaah,

Yaaaahh,

Ooooooh - 2 finger distance

Yeeeeee - 1 finger distance,

Iiiiiiii - mouth slightly covered.

Unlike speech, in singing we use the whole range of our voice, not a part of it. Moreover, the singing voice differs from the spoken voice not only in range and strength, but also in timbre.

The vowels A and O can be pronounced with different mouth shapes (there is no fixed position for each vowel). The vowel U is deep and the lips are soft and relaxed - pull forward in a puffed up way, but pull the chin down, making the mouth opening larger. The vowel O is best formed from the U itself, just lower the chin even further down ("open the mouth wide down"). For A, imagine that the mouth opens wide upwards, although the upper jaw is actually stationary. In this case, A will come out bright and cheerful. Sing the vowels I and E as quietly as possible at the beginning. E is approximated to I.

The vowel 'a' gives the greatest 'mottleness' in singing, because it has the greatest number of variations in pronunciation of different people and in different words.

Thus the work on the vowels is combined with the work on the quality of the sound, and consists in achieving their clear pronunciation, combined with a full singing sound. In singing, however, the vowels are not always pronounced clearly and distinctly. The degree of brightness of the vowel depends on the construction of the musical phrase. Under stress in words, or at the climax of musical phrases, the vowels sound brightest and most definite, while in other cases they are dulled, weakened.

The formation of consonants, unlike vowels, involves some obstruction of air movement in the vocal apparatus. Consonants are divided into voiceless and voiced according to the degree of voice involvement in their formation.

Some features of the pronunciation of consonants in relation to the most common errors:

1) The voiced consonants (single and paired) at the end of a word are pronounced as their corresponding voiceless consonants. Before voiceless consonants, voiced consonants are also stunned.

2) The teeth consonants "d", "z", "s", "t" is softened before the soft consonants: д(ь)венадцать, каз(ь)нь, пес(ь)ня, etc.

3) The sound "н" before soft consonants is soft: стран(ь)ник.

4) The sounds 'zh' and 'sh' before soft consonants are pronounced hard: прежний, вешний.

5) The reflexive particles sya and s'in at the end of words are pronounced hard like sa and s.

6) In a number of words, the combinations "chn", "cht" are pronounced like "shn", "sht": (ш)то, коне(ш)но, ску(ш)но.

7) In the combinations "stn", "zdn" the consonants "t", "d" is not pronounced: гру(сн)о, по(зн)о.

8) The combinations "ssh" and "zsh" in the middle of a word and at the junction of a word with a preposition are pronounced as a hard long "sh": бе(шш)умно, and at the junction of two words - as written: pronounced in a whisper.

9) The combinations "sch" and "zch" are likened to a long "sh": (щц)астье, изво(щц)ик.

10) The sonorous sound "r" is in most cases pronounced exaggeratedly.

In addition to diction, consonantal sounds act as breathing activators.

The tongue takes an active part in the formation of most speech sounds. On its work largely depends the clarity of speech. To strengthen the muscles of the tongue, improve its mobility and switch, practice the following movements:

Vigorously pronounce: DA-DA-DA-DA; T-D, T-D, T-D.

To strengthen the muscles of the larynx vigorously pronounce: K-G, K-G, K-G;

To activate the muscles of the lips inflate the cheeks, reset the air by a sharp clap through clenched lips, vigorously pronouncing: P-B, P-B, P-B

These exercises develop, improve the articulatory apparatus and should be repeated until you are slightly tired.

PKTU-TPKU PKTO-TPKO PKTA-TPKA

RLU RLO RLA RLA RLE RLI

LRU LRO LRA LRE LRI LRI

These exercises exercise the entire speech apparatus and gradually develop the muscles of the speech organs (lips, tongue, soft palate, vocal cords) needed to pronounce the sounds.

**Tongue twisters:**

От топота копыт пыль по полю летит;[ot topota kopit pil po polyu letit]

На дворе трава, на траве дрова: раз дрова, два дрова – не руби дрова на траве двора;[Na dvore trava na trave drova: raz drova, dva drova- ne rubi drova na trave dvora]

Карл у Клары украл кораллы,

Клара у Карла украла кларнет.[Karl u Klari ukral koralli, a Klara u Karla ukrala klarnet]

**Singing for the development of articulate diction and alignment of vowels using different syllables:**

- MA-ME-MI-MO-MU - Singing on one sound,

BRA-BRE-BRI-BRO-BRU; MA-ME-MI-MO-MU; DA-DE-DI-DO-DU, etc.

Emphasize that the clarity of pronunciation does not apply to the phrase as a whole, not a word, but each letter. And pronounce them not as they are written, but as they are pronounced in the transcription. The tempo can be varied.

All these exercises are very helpful in the development of clear diction and the formation of a long breath.

In conclusion, during the methodical work, the importance of articulation and diction through artistic expression, to the character and emotional mood of the variety pieces being performed should be emphasized. Quality of the performance depends on all kinds of work: breathing and sound formation, clarity of intonation, diction and clear articulation; ability to show wide and even voice range, smooth vocalism, artistry. All this helps pop singer to perform musical pieces at a high professional level.

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