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The Use of Imagry in Teaching Voice to the Twenty-First Century Student

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COLLEGE OF MUSIC

THE USE OF IMAGERY IN TEACHING VOICE
TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY STUDENT

By

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ABSTRACT

When instructing voice, teachers have had to develop a variety of methods to explain pedagogical principles to their pupils. There are teachers whose methods use only anatomical manipulations and scientific fact, teachers who use only images and analogies, and teachers who use a combination of both. The purpose of this treatise is to illustrate ways to choose images and analogies and link them to specific pedagogical principles when teaching voice. This treatise includes the following: 1) a historical background for vocal pedagogy and imagery, 2) how to help a student establish an image vocabulary, 3) a guideline for creating the appropriate image when teaching certain pedagogical principles, and 4) suggestions for imagery use in the instruction of style and music, as well as the power of word choices.

THE USE OF IMAGERY IN TEACHING VOICE TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY STUDENT

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

When teaching the twenty-first century voice student, today's voice instructor needs to use varied techniques to enhance his/her teaching. Each student presents a different challenge for the teacher. Because every student is a unique individual, teachers have had to develop a variety of methods to explain pedagogical principles to their students. There are teachers whose methods use only anatomical manipulations and scientific fact, teachers who employ only images and analogies, and teachers who utilize a combination of both.

The methods teachers choose to use in their instruction may be influenced by the methods with which they were taught. When a teacher who favors a strict scientific method instructs a student, that student may in turn instruct his/her future students in a scientific manner. Also, a teacher who uses imagery in his/her methodology may be more likely to have a student that will also use imagery. Unfortunately, these images may be passed from teacher to student with no other explanation than, "That's what I did." Whereas instruction that uses imagery may be colorful and entertaining, instruction devoid of imagery can be dry and difficult to understand for many students, especially beginners. Therefore, a method of instruction that balances both the use of imagery and scientific principles is desirable. William Vennard states, "...the knowledge of literal fact is the only justifiable basis for the use of imagery and other indirect methods."¹ In order to have success, the author of this treatise believes the twenty-first century teacher needs to learn from the past and combine those proven pedagogical concepts with current uses of language, ideas and images.

¹William Vennard, *Singing: The Mechanism and the Technic*. (New York: Carl Fischer, 1967), iii.

Clifton Ware in *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy* describes how mental imagery is used in vocal pedagogy. He states that mental imagery is “an intuitive approach to learning using poetic, subjective figures of speech, including simile (“like” and “as if” and metaphor (implied comparison with fact) to elicit indirectly a positive response.”²

The use of imagery in teaching voice is not a new idea. Victor Fields eloquently purports its relevance:

Mental imagery provides the very plan and purpose of vocal expression. The formation of the sounds of the voice and their adequate projection are direct outpicturings of these underlying concepts, and vocal expression is therefore said to be governed by the singer’s powers of visualization and mental imagery... Basically, it is the MIND that sings, not the voice. You can say or sing only what you think, since your voice follows your thoughts... Hence, we must learn to sing in thought, for the tone is embedded in the idea that produces it.³

Fields describes the importance of imagery, but it is Vennard who emphasizes the necessity of combining scientific fact and imagery. He states, “Scientific language is inadequate in teaching an art, and we fill out the deficiency with poetic imagery. As long as we do not confuse fancy with fact, this can be a means of finding truths which are yet beyond our understanding, but which may nonetheless have practical usefulness.”⁴

James McKinney agrees with Vennard’s balanced approach to the use of imagery:

A...problem may arise from the mechanistic and psychological controls employed in the act of singing. Extreme advocates of the mechanistic approach believe that singing is largely a matter of getting the right parts in the right place at the right time, and that correcting vocal faults is accomplished by calling direct attention to the parts which are not working well. At the other extreme are those who believe that attention should never be directed to any part of the vocal mechanism – that singing is a matter of producing the right mental images of the desired tone, and correcting vocal faults is achieved by learning to think the right thoughts and by releasing the emotions through interpretation of the music. As is

²Clifton Ware, *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy: The Foundations and Process of Singing*. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1998), 84.

³Victor Fields, “How Mind Governs Voice,” *The NATS Bulletin* 22:2 (Dec. 1972): 2.

⁴Vennard, 147.

often the case, the truth lies between these two extremes and is a composite of both approaches.⁵

Donald Freed in *Journal of Singing* agrees with Vennard and McKinney's approach to fact-based imagery. He writes, "The teacher certainly should know the difference between image and physiological truth. More often, the imagery should help to reinforce a physiological principle, and the difference should be explained."⁶

By using imagery, one can tailor his/her teaching to help each student in a language and manner in which he/she will understand. As educators it is challenging to make teaching styles remain relevant in terms of the images that are chosen as well as the manner in which they are delivered. The relevance will be different for each student taught. Regnier Winsel says, "We must explain technique to the student in individual terms that he (or she) will understand according to his temperament. The fundamental of voice production does not vary, but application of these truths must be understood by each student in his own way; hence, this application must have infinite variety."⁷

Learning styles of students are constantly changing. With the increase in the popularity of indoor, sedentary activity as a result of technology, young people today may be more likely to be less physical and creative in their activities. Many students of today may be more likely to watch a DVD or play a video game than read a book or exercise. This change in behavior from past generations also changes the images to which these students are receptive. Teachers should be aware of the learning styles of students so they can adjust their way of teaching to remain effective in the twenty-first century.

⁵James C. McKinney, *Diagnosis and Correction of Vocal Faults: A Manual for Teachers of Singing and for Choir Directors*. (Nashville: Genevox Music Group, 1994), 31.

⁶Donald Freed, "Imagery in Early Twentieth-Century American Vocal Pedagogy." *Journal of Singing* 56:4 (March/April 2000), 10.

⁷Regnier Winsel, *The Anatomy of Voice: An Illustrated Manual of Vocal Training*. (New York: Exposition Press Inc., 1966), 74.

CHAPTER 2

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VOCAL PEDAGOGY AND IMAGERY



Figure 1. Galen of Pergamum⁸

Although not a teacher of singing, Galen of Pergamum (ca. 130-ca. 200) played an important role in the history of vocal pedagogy. Because dissections of human corpses were against Roman law, Galen discovered information about physiology and anatomy through his dissections of apes and other animals. Through his studies Galen was able to synthesize previous knowledge of the larynx with new information that he researched. Even though Galen learned much about the larynx, he had no ability to observe how it worked in a living person; therefore, true vocal science would not come about for many more years.⁹ In the eighteenth century an anatomy professor named Antoine Ferrein became the first scholar to conduct acoustic experiments on an isolated cadaver larynx. He discovered:

⁸Eric W. Weisstein. "Galen of Pergamum," *World of Biography*. (accessed 12 June 2007), <<http://scienceworld.wolfram.com/biography/Galen.html>>

⁹"Galen of Pergamum." (accessed 22 August 2007), <<http://campus.udayton.edu/~hume/Galen/galen.htm>>

1) That a close reproduction of the voice could be obtained in a cadaver by bringing the vocal bands together and blowing through the trachea from below; 2) that the vibration of the vocal bands was the essential factor in the generation of sound and that the sound ceased on touching the vocal folds; 3) that the intensity of the voice depended on the force of the air pressure; 4) that the pitch was related to the action of the cricothyroid muscles; 5) that, the vocal bands followed the laws of the vibrating strings in their relation between pitch and length. Hence, he regarded the edges of the glottis as strings and called them the “vocal cords”.¹⁰

The majority of what is known of the early history of voice instruction comes from treatises that outlined performance and stylistic techniques popular during the time in which they were written. Actual instruction on vocal technique was limited. One of the most influential treatises on singing was written by Giulio Caccini in 1602. In *Le Nuove Musiche (The New Music)* Caccini outlined his method of singing, described current performance practices, and included music with which one could employ these tenets. This new style of music was a departure from the polyphony that was popular during the time and a move toward solo song. Unlike the highly ornamented madrigals made popular in the courts of the late sixteenth century, Caccini’s “new music” consisted of single-voiced melodies with simple accompaniments. A famous example of a Caccini song written in this new style is “Amarilli, mia bella.”



Figure 2. “Amarilli, mia bella” (measures 1-4)¹¹

¹⁰John Ohala, “Linguistics 113, Experimental Phonetics.” Powerpoint presentation. (accessed 13 July 2007), <[http://www.google.com/search?q=cache:o5esBnzBjT0J:trill.berkeley.edu/PhonLab/classes/ling113_2004/history_of_exp_phonet.ppt+Antoine+Ferrein+\(1693-1769\)&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=us](http://www.google.com/search?q=cache:o5esBnzBjT0J:trill.berkeley.edu/PhonLab/classes/ling113_2004/history_of_exp_phonet.ppt+Antoine+Ferrein+(1693-1769)&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=us)>

¹¹“Image of Amarilli, mia bella.” (accessed 9 September 2007), <<http://store.recordare.com/caccamar.html>>

These melodies were to be ornamented using Caccini's methods for emphasizing the text and creating vocal nuance. As a teacher of voice Caccini was very successful. Many of his students became popular performers and spread Caccini's expressive Florentine style to the whole of Italy.¹²

Expressiveness and virtuosity became the hallmarks of singing in the baroque period. Singers were influenced by opera and the rise of professional opera singers, especially the castrati. For the bulk of the baroque period the castrati were thought to epitomize that which made singing great. Well trained castrati could sing as high or higher than most female singers, could sing louder than most males or females, and had the advantage of superior musical training to allow them to sing with grace and extreme agility.¹³ Not just the castrati, but all singers were expected to ornament easily and efficiently while they were singing. In order to achieve this virtuosity, singers needed solid vocal technique. When discussing techniques of singing in the baroque era it is the Italian method that was the ideal against which all other singing was measured.¹⁴ In fact, in *Harmonie universelle* (1636), Marin Mersenne urged French voice teachers to travel to Italy "where they pride themselves on their fine singing and knowing music better than the French...those who are unable to travel should at least read Giulio Caccini..."¹⁵ The main teaching points of the Italian method included: good intonation, dependable breathing technique, clear diction and proper expression.

Although the term *bel canto* (beautiful singing) was first used to refer to the sixteenth and early seventeenth century practice of florid vocal ornamentation, it is more commonly used to describe a later vocal era. This *bel canto* ideal dominated vocal pedagogy during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This era, sometimes referred to as "The Golden Age of Singing,"¹⁶ was marked with two distinct styles of

¹²James Stark, *Bel Canto: A History of Vocal Pedagogy*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 196.

¹³Ibid., 199-200.

¹⁴Ibid., 206.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Cornelius Reid, *The Free Voice: A Guide to Natural Singing*. (New York: Coleman-Ross Company, Inc., 1965), 5.

teaching, the “scientific” and “natural” methods.

Manuel Garcia II (1805-1906) is the historical figure that is probably most often



Figure 3. Manuel Garcia II¹⁷

credited with the creation of the scientific method of teaching voice.

Garcia was one of those seminal historical figures whose career marked a watershed between the past and the future. An heir of the old Italian school of singing, at the same time he belonged to a generation of scientific minds who wished to look beyond the mere appearance of things to their underlying causes. In the process he developed theoretical ideas that were based on close empirical observation and leavened with uncanny intuition. His work was touched by genius, but it was opposed by those who were less gifted and less prescient. He was a man ahead of his time – so far ahead that although more than 150 years have passed since his first treatise appeared, he remains a presence that must be reckoned with in any serious study of the history and technique of singing.¹⁸

In 1835 Garcia was appointed Professor of Singing at the Paris Conservatoire. In 1841 Garcia completed his *École de Garcia: Traité complet de l'art du chant* (*School of Garcia: Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing*.) This treatise was the first to outline his theories on vocal technique. As Stark tells us in his book, Garcia was acquainted with the treatises that were written before *École de Garcia: Traité complet de l'art du chant*, but he felt they were incomplete in their scope, “Unfortunately, that epoch has left to us only some vague and incomplete documents of its traditions. The works of Tosi, Mancini, Herbst, Agricola, some scattered passages in the histories of Bontempi, Burney, Hawkins,

¹⁷Andrea Suhm-Binder. “Picture of Manuel Garcia II”, (accessed 12 June 2007), <http://www.cantabile-subito.de/Teachers/hauptteil_teachers.html>

¹⁸Stark, 3.

and Baini, give us only an approximate and confused idea of the methods then followed.”¹⁹

By using mirrors and the sun to view his larynx, in 1835 Manuel Garcia II created the laryngoscope. This invention provided Garcia greater detail on the physiology and workings of the larynx. Garcia’s 1855 article titled “Observations on the Human Voice” led to the general use of the laryngoscope as the chief diagnostic tool in the medical practice of laryngology.²⁰ This invention also helped give vocal scientists the physical proof and information necessary to give credence to their method of teaching. The detailed information gathered from new technology did not necessarily guarantee better teaching. In *The Free Voice*, Cornelius Reid highlights this dilemma:

Early teaching tradition had a unique practicality and was obviously based upon secure functional principles that worked. There is probably little to quarrel with on these grounds. But with the advance of technology and the advent of the scientific era the proponents of Bel Canto training were left defenseless. They knew they were right without, unfortunately, being able to prove it. In the meantime, a new generation of teachers came along to confront a world in a process of change; a world which created in every area of life uncertainty and confusion. Some found it expedient to adopt a pseudo-scientific jargon, but the majority tried to remain faithful to tradition, which was in the process of slipping away from them without their being aware of it. Vocal pedagogy, and the functional principles upon which it rested, thus struggled against the contrary currents of two worlds, neither of which was clearly defined nor concrete. It was during this transitional period that a great deal of quackery came into being.²¹

In a reaction against Garcia and other vocal scientists, some voice teachers began teaching “natural” methods of singing. These teachers believed that vocalists and not scientists should develop the teaching methods of the nineteenth century. Even after the turn of the century teachers were still reacting against the scientific method of voice instruction used by Garcia and his followers. In 1916, David C. Taylor wrote, “Scientific methods of voice culture are a complete failure. This fact is so well known to all who are

¹⁹Stark, 5.

²⁰Ibid., 6.

²¹Reid, 3-4.

interested in the subject that it need be supported by no proof.”²² Instead he promoted a natural method of singing that required only a good physical and mental ear:

For the production of vocal tones of any kind, the mental ear is the guide to the voice. The desired tone is first conceived in the mind; the vocal organs then adjust themselves for the formation of the tone. A message is carried by the nerves, from the brain to the muscles of the vocal organs, bidding them to perform whatever movements are necessary for the tone demanded by the mental ear. The vocal organs instantly obey this command. Nature has endowed them with an instinct by which they know what adjustments to make in order to carry out the command of the mental ear.²³

Teachers of “natural” or “no-effort” methods knew little of the physics of the voice. The techniques they employed were not mechanistic and there was a total absence of “do this” instruction. Vocal development was accomplished by stimulating involuntary muscular activities within the laryngeal pharynx by means of carefully selected exercises.²⁴

The twentieth century had much technological advancement that aided teachers in the instruction of voice. In *The Structure of Singing*, Richard Miller explains how this affected vocal pedagogy:

Before the second quarter of the century, many books on singing were written either from the subjective experience of the singing artist or from the viewpoint of the scientifically minded person, who explained the basic functions of the vocal mechanism. Beginning in the 1920s, authors applied the new findings of medical science, phonetics, speech research, and speech therapy to singing, in the hope of revolutionizing vocal technique. Since the 1940s, much of what has been written for singers and teachers offers explanations of the physical aspects of singing, designed to support precepts that have evolved from performance experience.²⁵

²²Stark, 19.

²³Ibid., 19.

²⁴Jerrold Pope, *Vocal Pedagogy Lecture on Imagery*. Florida State University, Fall Semester, 2001.

²⁵Richard Miller, *The Structure of Singing: System and Art in Vocal Technique*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), xx.

Even with all the advancements in technology, voice teachers of the twentieth century did not all agree on how voice was to be taught. In the twentieth century pedagogues such as Cornelius Reid, William Vennard and Richard Miller, among many others, made major contributions to the field of voice instruction. The texts written by these pedagogues cover a variety of information regarding voice instruction. Within their texts each author offers their opinion on how to sing, and lays out the tenets valuable to their techniques. The techniques offered by these teachers have traits that could be traced to historically prominent teachers who taught in the *bel canto* tradition, yet these teachers have produced their own unique methodology. Richard Miller explains this development:

Why not just put ourselves in the hands of someone who teaches “the old *bel canto* method” and be done with it? We cannot because there is no specific codified system of *bel canto* waiting for the vocal neophyte to pick up and assimilate. Despite some claims that certain teachers have a direct link to “the old Italians,” no modern teacher can honestly profess to teach some clearly delineated method that is universally recognized as being “the *bel canto* method.”²⁶

Teaching methods in the twenty-first century are still varied. There are those who use electronics, spectrographs and other machines to help in their voice teaching, while others eschew science and rely solely on their own ears to help students discover a correct technique. What is different in the twenty-first century is the vast amount of information and resources available to all teachers that allow them to develop the teaching method with which they are the most comfortable.

As the progression of *how* voice was taught has changed through history, so has the location of *where* voice has been and is taught. Today’s voice instruction occurs within two main locations. It is taught in the academic setting or in the private studio. In private studios instruction can occur devoid of the educational rigidity and restraints of the academic system. The teacher and student set the subject matter and timeframe with which it needs to be learned. In the university or college setting, for example, voice instruction occurs at a different pace. As vocal music majors, most students are required to study for at least seven semesters of their college career. These students are often expected to learn from three to ten songs a semester depending on their ability and age.

²⁶Miller, *The Structure of Singing*, xx-xxi.

Many are expected to perform jury examinations at the end of every semester, or at least every year. Even in private lessons, high school students that study voice are usually preparing for contests, competitions or tryouts. The lessons they take generally occur over a short time frame culminating with the event for which they were preparing. This compressed manner of learning voice is a far cry from the method taught in the past. During the *bel canto* era students would spend years learning a method of singing like those espoused by Marchesi, Bordongi, Vaccai and others. These students did not progress to the next exercise in these method books until their teacher felt they were ready. Students were not learning to earn a grade, or working toward a vocal performance degree. Instead they were learning to be performers with no outside time constraints to impede their natural timeframe of learning.

As reasons for singing have changed, the way in which singing is taught has changed. The rise of vocal science has given today's pedagogue a more accurate description of how the vocal mechanism works. This clarification has led many teachers away from imagery and toward pure vocal science. For some students the scientific approach is not successful. Therefore, the ability to link imagery and science will bridge the gap between pedagogical generations. It will also help to create pedagogues able to move forward into the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER 3

ESTABLISHING AN IMAGE VOCABULARY

Students attending colleges and universities today learn in different ways than did their instructors or professors. These students are labeled as “The Internet Generation” by Don Tapscott in his book *Growing up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation* because they are the first to grow up in a digital, and Internet-driven world.²⁷ This immersion in technology has shaped the way the “Net Generation” learns. In their article “Teaching and Learning with the Net Generation,” Kassandra Baines, Raymond Marateo, and S. Pixy Ferris exemplify this saturation with the following statistics. By age twenty-one, the average *Net Gener* will have spent 10,000 hours playing video games, 20,000 hours watching TV, 10,000 hours on cell phones, sent and received 200,000 e-mails, and spent under 5,000 hours reading.²⁸ These statistics show the multi-media influences that shape *Net Geners*²⁹ learning styles. In “Teaching and Learning²⁹ with the Net Generation,” the authors state that *Net Geners* are independent learners that have “a greater desire for active engaged learning experiences.” And also “express a need for more varied forms of communication and report being bored with traditional learning methods.”³⁰ The authors cite Tapscott’s *Growing Up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation* to explain this shift in learning styles. “Tapscott argues that this more independent learning style has grown out of the ingrained habits of seeking and retrieving information from the Internet, which

²⁷“Generation Y,” *Wikipedia*, (accessed 18 January 2007),
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_Y>

²⁸Kassandra Barnes, Raymond Marateo, and S. Pixy Ferris, “Teaching and Learning with the Net Generation,” *Innovate*, (accessed 17 June 2007),
<<http://innovateonline.info/index.php?view=article&id=382>>

²⁹The term *Net Gener* is a term coined by Don Tapscott in his book *Growing up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation* to refer to members of the Internet Generation.

³⁰Barnes, et al., “Teaching and Learning...”

marks a striking contrast to previous generations of students, who tended to acquire information more passively from authority figures.”³¹

Another effect of the Internet on the *Net Generations* is the need for immediacy. This is exacerbated by websites such as Google.com, Yahoo.com, Ask.com and others that can return answers from search queries in less than a second. According to the authors of “Teaching and Learning with the Net Generation,” “*Net Generations* use of the Internet for immediate access to information has taught them to expect immediate answers. This conditioning has made them on the whole less likely to accept delayed gratification in learning, both in the classroom and outside it.”³²

Because of the different learning styles between today’s student and his/her instructor, it is imperative that student and teacher develop a way to communicate that is understood by both parties. A step towards facilitating this communication is the establishment of a student’s image vocabulary.

All students carry with them the accumulated experiences they have gained throughout their lives. These experiences create their image vocabulary. Unfortunately, some students are not aware that this vocabulary even exists. For them it must be discovered. In order to work on establishing an image vocabulary, a teacher must become acquainted with the student. This can be done in a variety of ways: direct questioning, light conversation, written questionnaire, or a combination of all three. Direct questioning can sometimes be off-putting to a new student, as he/she may feel as if he/she is being interrogated. Light conversation is nice, but often is off topic and trivial. A written questionnaire may be the most efficient, but is also the most impersonal. Therefore a combination of tactics is the suggested method.

To establish a student’s image vocabulary, teachers must learn what types of life experiences their students have had. Have they traveled? Do they play sports? Do they enjoy art? Each teacher can find their own method for developing a common set of topics from which they can draw appropriate images for teaching. The following questions provide examples:

“What sports or physical activities do you like?”

³¹Barnes, et al., “Teaching and Learning...”

³²Ibid.

“To what music do you listen?”
“What hobbies do you enjoy?”
“What TV/Movies/Books do you like?”
“Have you ever traveled anywhere away from home?”
“Do you play any musical instruments?”

Asking these questions can lead to a dialogue that will help facilitate possible image choices for the teacher. The first question, “What sports or activities do you like?” is important because sports and other physical activities are rich fodder for vocal images. In *Complete Handbook of Voice Training* Richard Alderson states,

It was working with this student that gave me the insight that singing is analogous to sports. As in athletics, good physical health is necessary to singing, and rhythmic and muscular coordination are vital. The singer who waits poised, ready to sing the proper word at the proper pitch has the same kind of mental and physical preparation as a batter waiting for a ball to enter the strike zone. The body is balanced, the breath controlled, and the mind alertly and silently measure the time and amount of force to do the job.³³

The question, “To what music do you like to listen?” may help a teacher determine to what vocal models the student has been listening. A student steeped in classical music may present different vocal problems than one engrossed by country, or rap, or pop. Clifton Ware explains this dilemma:

...it is during the impressionable years of adolescence that we are likely to develop a taste for a particular vocal style, usually of a popular genre. Pop singers, although exemplary in some ways, may be less than ideal models of healthy, efficient voice use. Generally speaking, professional pop singers and particularly “hard rockers” lack adequate vocal resources and training, yet remain very influential as vocal role models. Young singers enamored of certain classical singers can also run into problems, as when trying to emulate the developed voice production of mature artists, particularly lower-voiced types with large voices. Without having a complete understanding of how model classical singers produce such powerful sounding tones, young singers can get into vocal trouble by trying to mimic mature singers’ tone quality. Thus, some singers must take deliberate steps to unlearn strong influences that model singers have impressed on their vocal personality.³⁴

³³Richard Alderson, *Complete Handbook of Voice Training*. (West Nyack, NY: Parker Publishing Company, 1979), 20-21.

³⁴Clifton Ware, *Adventures in Singing: A Process for Exploring, Discovering and Developing A Vocal Potential*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 21.

Listening to instrumental music may also affect a student's image vocabulary. A student interested in voice, but listening solely to instrumental music may not be as familiar with the importance and subtlety of the role of texts within songs. With this idea in mind it behooves the twenty-first century teacher to remain aware of the variety of music genres to which his/her students listen. One does not need to like all musical styles, but one should be cognizant of the vocal techniques and vocal colors involved in performing these genres.

Asking, "What TV/Movies/Books do you like?" allows a teacher to learn what a student does with his/her free time as well as gives a teacher a ready resource of images to use when discussing the characterization of a piece or song. It may also help in establishing student/teacher rapport when bonding over a common interest. For example, a teacher teaching "An die Musik" could very easily use the movie "Mr. Holland's Opus" to discuss interpretation. The passion and love that Mr. Holland had for music in that movie would easily translate into the love of music described in the Schubert lied.

The question, "Have you ever traveled anywhere away from home?" may help highlight a student's ability to imagine other cultures, other scenery, other people, different ways of travel and many of the gratifying experiences that travel can give. It may also shed insight to a student's ability to learn or at least sing in other languages. A student who has been to another country, or even just another state will look at the world differently than someone who has never left home. For those students who have never traveled, the discussion of other cultures and countries may lead to a better awareness of diversity and stimulate interest in world awareness.

The last question, "Do you play any musical instruments?" could be one of the most important. The dedication and desire required in learning to play an instrument mirrors the dedication and desire necessary to become a successful singer. There are also many similarities and musical images that can be made between singing and playing instruments. Possible images could include: the relationship between the bowing of a stringed instrument and the management of breath flow in a phrase, the articulation of instrumental attacks versus the onset of a vocal tone, or the timbre of instruments compared to the timbre of vocal tone (i.e. brassy, reedy, flutelike).

Regional location may play a role in whether or not a student has experience in playing musical instruments. For example, this author has found while teaching in Arkansas, that many students play some sort of traditional folk instrument. Whether it is a guitar, fiddle, mandolin or other instrument, most of these students learned to play “by ear” in an informal setting. This tradition of folk music produces many images that are beneficial in teaching voice.

A student’s lack of ability to play another instrument may also be a telling fact. This student may need more training in basic musical fundamentals and may not be as ready to excel as one who is already musically adept at another instrument. A student lacking sound musical fundamentals may benefit from the use of imagery instead of intricate musical terminology.

In using the question/answer method to discover a student’s image vocabulary both the answer a student gives and the way in which it is given are equally important. For instance, asking students to describe in their own words or images how they think their voices sound may generate interesting results. Some students may be able to give accurate descriptions of their own voices. While other students’ perceptions of their tone may differ from that which the instructor hears. Yet still other students may not have the ability to describe their tone at all. Even if the description yields little concrete information, the manner in which the student answered could give insight as to how his/her imagination works. When establishing an image vocabulary, knowing how a singer’s imagination works is as important as what images it may contain. Some students have vivid imaginations while others may need guidance to allow them to explore mentally. Both types of students may have success using imagery, but the time required to cultivate these images may be different.

In a 1989 *NATS Journal* article, Thomas Cleveland states, “Because voice students respond so differently to the use of imagery, we as voice teachers should employ a large arsenal of tools, imaging and otherwise, to better meet the needs of the various cognitive processes of our students.”³⁵ By cultivating a student’s image vocabulary and

³⁵Thomas Cleveland, “Mental Imaging and the Teaching of Voice,” *The NATS Journal* 45:3 (Jan./Feb. 1989): 41.

using those images to teach specific pedagogical ideas, a teacher will be better able to meet the various cognitive needs of the student to which Cleveland refers.

CHAPTER 4

CREATING THE APPROPRIATE IMAGE

There are many images used in the teaching of voice. These images are sometimes passed down from teacher to student. If that student becomes a teacher, those images may be disseminated to all of his/her students. It is in this “oral” tradition that the process of imagery in teaching voice is steeped. Unfortunately, this tradition may pass on images without explanations. It is because of this random usage of imagery that the act of creating new, specific, appropriate images is important.

When creating an image one first needs to determine what pedagogical tenet the image needs to describe. Without knowledge of the proper workings of the voice, imagery can be a guessing game. Five main pedagogical areas around which images may be created include: posture, respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation. The following are definitions of these five singing components:

Posture or Alignment: The act of placing your body into a position that best facilitates the singing technique. In *Foundations in Singing* John Glenn Paton describes these correct body positions.

- Feet: Let your feet be a few inches apart, toes turned out slightly, and one foot a little forward. Keep both feet on the floor.
- Legs: Straight, but not rigid or locked at the knees.
- Torso: Keep your hips and shoulders level. Your back muscles hold the torso erect so that the abdominal muscles can play their proper role in giving you flexible breath control.
- Shoulders: Let them relax downward and back. If your shoulders hunch up out of fear or insecurity, the tension may carry over into your singing. If they slouch forward, your lungs cannot expand properly. Relaxing your shoulders helps you look and feel confident.

- Neck and Head: Imagine them rising weightlessly toward the ceiling. Let your head remain level so that your eyes look straight ahead, neither up nor down.³⁶

Respiration or Breathing: Breathing is the process of moving air in and out of the body - inhalation and exhalation. Breathing for singing and speaking is a more controlled process than is the ordinary breathing used for sustaining life.³⁷

The cycle of breathing can be divided into four phases: inspiration, suspension, expiration, and recovery. In *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy: The Foundations and Process of Singing*, Clifton Ware outlines the action of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles during these four phases:

1. Inspiration. When the need for oxygen is sensed by the body, the diaphragm contracts, increasing rib-cage volume. External intercostals will probably be recruited to further increase the volume of the rib cage, which decreases air pressure within the lungs and causes the air outside to be drawn into the lungs to fill the partial vacuum. The air enters through the mouth and/or nose and passes through the pharynx, larynx, trachea, and bronchi into the lungs. At rest, inhalation takes approximately one second and consists of the following action (both literally and figuratively) based on simple observable responses:

<i>In</i>	air enters through the mouth and/or nose into the pharynx
<i>Down</i>	air moves downward through the larynx into the trachea, bronchi, and lungs; diaphragm descent expands rib cage and abdominal wall
<i>Out</i>	abdominal organs and lower abdomen distend and the lungs expand within the rib cage

2. Suspension. There is a brief suspension period when recoil forces overcome the muscular forces of rib cage expansion, and the process reverses direction. This usually lasts less than a second but could last considerably longer if the muscles of inspiration (mainly external intercostals) are held in a contracted state to check the recoil forces.
3. Expiration. This action is the reverse of inspiration and at rest lasts approximately three seconds.

³⁶John Glenn Paton, *Foundations in Singing, A Guidebook to Vocal Technique and Song Interpretation*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 7.

³⁷James C. McKinney, *The Diagnosis and Correction of Vocal Faults: A Manual for Teachers of Singing and for Choir Directors*. (Nashville: Genevox Music Group, 1994), 27.

<i>In</i>	the lungs recoil inward, drawing the rib cage with them; abdominal muscles return to their resting state, or are contracted, and the abdominal viscera moves in and up
<i>Up</i>	the diaphragm recoils upward, reducing the volume of the rib cage and increasing pressure in the thorax
<i>Out</i>	air is expelled from the lungs, first through the trachea and then through the larynx and vocal tract, either silently or with vocalized tone; the length of this phase lasts approximately fifteen to twenty seconds for singing and one to five seconds for normal speech

4. Recovery. Finally, there is a moment of relaxation for all muscles involved in the breathing process, before the breath cycle begins anew.³⁸

Phonation: Phonation is the process of producing vocal sound by the vibration of the vocal cords. It takes place in the larynx [voice box] when the cords are brought together [approximated] and breath pressure is applied to them in such a way that vibration ensues.³⁹

Resonation: Resonation means the *intensification of a tone by sympathetic vibration*. Sympathetic vibration is the *tendency of air in an enclosed or partially enclosed place to vibrate in response to a musical tone*. In singing, the voice gains strength and quality from bouncing back and forth in our resonators: the throat, mouth, and other spaces of the head and neck. They are “partially enclosed spaces” in which desirable sound waves are reinforced and others die away.

Resonance makes your voice louder by concentrating vibratory energy onto specific frequencies (pitches). In that process, resonance strengthens the overtones that give your voice its basic quality. They also produce vowel colors that change as the shape and size of your throat and mouth openings change.⁴⁰

Articulation: This is the process by which the joint product of the vibrator and resonators is shaped into recognizable speech sounds through the muscular adjustments and movements of the speech organs. These adjustments and movements of the articulators result in verbal communication and thus form the essential difference between the human voice and other musical instruments. Singing without understandable words limits the voice to nonverbal communication.⁴¹

³⁸Ware, *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy*, 84.

³⁹McKinney, 27.

⁴⁰Paton, 19-20.

⁴¹McKinney, 27.

Specificity is a key to the creation of an appropriate image. The more precise the image, the more effective it will be. In order to create a detailed image, it should include something with which the teacher is either familiar, or can have empathy towards. For instance, many teachers have never been skydiving, yet are familiar enough with this act to possibly use it as an image in their teaching. Although images should be precise, they should not be complex. Each idea should highlight one pedagogical principle and should be used to explain or fix a single problem at a time.

Using the five pedagogical tenets as guidelines, the following are examples of several possible images with explanations as to how they may be used in the teaching of singing.

Posture

When using posture imagery, it is important that the images help the student to be alert and energized without being rigid. Images involving athletic activities are excellent examples. A football player at the beginning of each play must be alert, energized, and ready for action without being stiff or rigid. A baseball player waiting for a pitch must have a posture that will allow him to swing with force without being so tense that his swing will be late. Dancers are acutely aware of posture and line in their dancing. In dance lessons, they are often told to have their belly buttons touch their backbones, so dancers must be careful not to carry this excess tension into their abdomen as they sing. An image for posture that is not sports related is that a singer should be like a bobblehead doll. The singer should have a long neck, but one that is flexible, not fixed.

Thomas Hemsley details several useful images that deal with posture and preparedness to sing in *Singing and Imagination*. Hemsley writes:

There are innumerable detailed descriptions of this good posture, which I would prefer to describe in the simplest non-technical terms as the state of surprised, poised, alertness.

Imagine that you are taking a walk in the woods on a beautiful spring day. Suddenly you hear a strange noise, which surprises you. (You are surprised – *not* shocked.) You become very still, poised, alert. All your senses are awake. You listen intently; you test the air. You open the jaw as if preparing to drink. You raise your chest, and you gather strength into your lower belly. You prepare for action, and are ready to react in whatever way is appropriate when the source of

the noise is revealed. Your whole body is balanced, still, controlled; ready to attack, to run away, or simply to rejoice at the unexpected appearance of a friend; you are ready to sing.⁴²

Hemsley also relays a quotation that William Earl Brown received from his teacher Giovanni Battista Lamperti. Lamperti states that the sensation of readiness to sing is:

Like that of a tight-rope-walker as he steps on the wire;
Like that of a swimmer as he trusts the support of the water;
Like that of the listener who hears a mysterious sound in the quiet of the night;
Like that of the archer the instant before he releases the arrow;
Like that of the orchestral conductor, with his baton poised;...⁴³

Finally, Hemsley includes a quotation that Joseph Schmidinger wrote in his book *Biodynamische Stimmbildung. (Biodynamics of Voice Production)* This image compares a man riding a bicycle, hands free with correct singing posture:

With head and chest held high, and with upright body, he sits on the saddle of his bicycle.

With legs somewhat spread, he presses evenly on the pedals.

By means of a gentle rotation of his hips he, as it were, frees his upper body from all constriction, so that from this position he is able to steer his bike.

Smiling and yawning, he feels a deep breath below his diaphragm, which produces a feeling of physical well-being.

In this position he can enjoy his ride, and is also ready to sing.⁴⁴

In *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy*, Clifton Ware includes a simple image for good posture in singing, "...correct body alignment may be described as the sensation of being gently stretched in all directions simultaneously, somewhat like an Olympic swimmer poised to take a high dive."⁴⁵

⁴²Thomas Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination: A Human Approach to a Great Musical Tradition*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 30.

⁴³Ibid., 24.

⁴⁴Ibid., 38.

⁴⁵Ware, *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy*, 262.

Respiration

Images for respiration can focus on any of the phases of breathing (inspiration, suspension, exhalation, recovery) or on the coordination of the phases with one another.

An image that covers all the phases of breathing in singing is that of swinging a golf club. The backswing is like inspiration whereas the transition at the top of the swing from back swing to downswing is like the suspension phase. The downswing is like exhalation and the follow through is like the recovery phase of singing. Just like in singing, if any of the parts of the golf swing are out of balance, the whole swing suffers. The key to both respiration in singing and swinging a golf club is balance and rhythm.

In *Complete Handbook of Voice Training*, Richard Alderson compares the pulling of taffy to breath support in singing. Although some students may have never seen taffy being pulled, many have probably consumed the finished product and can therefore understand the analogy.

I like to compare respiration to pulling taffy. There is resistance involved, but the action is smoothly and evenly expansive. There is no rebound in pulling taffy, just a slow relaxation of the materials when the pressure is released. In the same manner the respiratory muscles expand smoothly and evenly with a feeling of support, but the lungs do not snap like an inner tube, nor the epigastrium bounce like a rubber ball. Rather they relax slowly when the pressure of breath support is relieved.

There is no contradiction between the concept of singing on the rebound of the breath and the analogy of pulling taffy. In the former the idea is that the breath rebounds slowly, that is, at the same speed it went into the lungs. In the latter analogy the idea is that breath support is smooth, moving tension, which does not snap back when released. The taffy pulling analogy illustrates breath support for long notes, slurs, crescendos and decrescendos.⁴⁶

Alderson also compares the use of breath in singing to the action of a violin bow:

The breath may be compared to the action of the violin bow. Sometimes the breath must flow rapidly, sometimes slowly. At times there are only a few notes, perhaps even one, in a breath span. Other times there are many notes. The fluidity with which the violinist draws the bow across the strings illustrates the smoothness with which a singer releases his breath. Whether the phrase is long or short, fast or slow, the pressure of the breath is smooth and the flow is steady.

⁴⁶Alderson, 59.

Also, not every inch of the bow is used in each phrase. Sometimes only a small part of the bow is needed for a short motive or the upbeat into a longer phrase. Similarly, not every ounce of air or vital capacity is used on every phrase. At times only a small breath is needed, so the singer inhales just the requisite amount of air.⁴⁷

Alderson includes images to help describe the coordination needed for correct breath management within each phrase:

As in most aerobic sports and gymnastics, singing requires coordinated breathing. The breath must be in the rhythm and tempo of the activity. It should not be locked in. Singing with the breath uncoordinated or locked in would be like playing tennis or swimming without breathing at all.⁴⁸

The old masters often spoke of the proper attack as “singing on the breath.” This meant starting to sing with the glottis open and letting the breath cause the sound to begin. My idea of singing on the rebound of the breath evolved as a way of feeling just that sort of attack. I ask the student to think of the breath as a ball, which bounces up *in slow motion* after it is dropped, so the breath is not locked in or held immobile between inhalation and exhalation. The breath is constantly moving in or out during singing. Thus, the glottis stays open.⁴⁹

Inhaling and saying “Ah...” as if surprised and delighted is a good example of the breath and larynx coordinated through psychological means. The student imagines a time when he was happily surprised, and the response of the muscles is automatic. As with other instinctive features of singing, the teacher’s task becomes one of helping the student sustain the response for a time so it becomes useful in singing. This exercise is related to singing on the rebound of the breath...⁵⁰

In *The Diagnosis and Correction of Vocal Faults*, James McKinney highlights images he feels useful for teaching respiration. “Some breathing concepts, which may prove to be helpful in establishing good habits, include: ...Breathe in as if smelling a rose...Breathe in as if beginning a yawn...Breathe in as if drinking a glass of water.”⁵¹

⁴⁷Alderson, 60.

⁴⁸Ibid., 58.

⁴⁹Ibid., 48.

⁵⁰Ibid., 45.

⁵¹McKinney, 55-56.

McKinney also compares the efficiency of breath management with a bicycle tire.

The ability to sing long phrases comes primarily from the efficiency of the vocal cord action; it is the result of good laryngeal adjustment, not of lung capacity. If a bicycle tire has a bad valve, the tire will keep going flat, no matter how much air is put in it; if the vocal cords allow too much air to escape, the singer will soon run out of breath no matter how much air has been inhaled.⁵²

For students having difficulty sustaining support throughout the entire phrase,

Richard Alderson offers this image:

For the student who fails to support throughout the phrase, I offer the analogy with the baseball player at shortstop who takes his eye off the ball before it gets to him. That player will probably miss the ball and muff the throw to first base. The end of a phrase is just as important as the beginning, and we reach the end successfully by continuously supporting the phrase.⁵³

Alderson also relates other sports analogies to the act of breathing.

I try to relate breathing to the particular sport in which the student plays. If he plays baseball, he should imagine he is at bat. The muscular movement before he swings is quite like the feeling of lift in breathing to sing. He could not imagine his chest collapsing as he swings a bat, any more than he should feel it collapse while he holds a note.

The same analogies apply to serving a tennis ball, swimming, driving a golf ball, and most other sports. Gymnastics also requires this feeling of lift. The muscles are ready but not rigid, synchronizing with the breath to prepare the body for the task at hand.⁵⁴

Alderson presents another image that can be used to explain the act of sustaining tones.

Sustaining a tone is analogous to a pingpong ball suspended on a vertical stream from a bubbling fountain. The lively ball dances around effortlessly. The point of the analogy, of course, is that the stream of water is not trying to push the pingpong ball in a particular direction or “to the back wall.”

A sustained tone is like a small wave or the ripples on a pond. There is free and effortless motion, which has life and energy in such a tone. A straight

⁵²McKinney, 61.

⁵³Alderson, 97.

⁵⁴Ibid., 42.

tone may be sustained, but it sounds driven and lifeless. The ripples are analogous to the vibrato in an energized sound.⁵⁵

For singers who are trying to over-support the tone by using too much breath McKinney offers this simple thought, “Another idea which might encourage less support is to ask the student to sing as if he is singing to a baby.”⁵⁶

Although not about a specific breathing principle, Thomas Hemsley’s quotation from Charles Lunn’s book *The Voice* describes what breath actually is, and why singers do it.

Voice is not a matter of letting out air (breath), but air waves (vibrations), which do not require a current of air to carry them along any more than rings in a pond from a fallen stone require a current of water to enable them to reach the edge of the pond.

Later, Lunn writes:

We are material, animal and spiritual. If the higher or spiritual side rules the lower or animal side, then we are artists; if the lower or animal side rules the higher or spiritual side of our natures, then we are mere performers. As animals we must breathe. If we breathe when we sing because we must, then our lower or animal side rules, but if we breathe because we choose, then our higher or spiritual nature rules. From the beginning of study enlist the mind.⁵⁷

Phonation

As you cannot have phonation without airflow, images used for respiration may also apply to phonation. An image that may be used to help highlight balanced phonation is that of driving a car with a manual transmission. The act of balancing the release of the clutch with the addition of gas is similar to the balance between the closing of the vocal cords with the addition of airflow. In both cases when done correctly a smooth take off and attack is achieved. For those students not familiar with a manual transmission, the

⁵⁵Alderson, 76.

⁵⁶McKinney, 64.

⁵⁷Hemsley, 107.

same image can be used by describing the starting of a car with an automatic transmission from a dead stop going up a steep hill. The balance needed between the brake and gas on an automatic automobile, is the same as the balance needed between the clutch and gas on a manual car.

A problem many students have with phonation is a desire to control and an unwillingness to release the tone. An image that may be used to help foster a released sound is to “vomit the tone.” Although crude in nature, the act of regurgitation is one of total release and is not controlled in any way. It is also an image that is vivid and easily remembered by the student. As regurgitation actually takes place through the esophagus and not the larynx, there is not a precise physical correlation that connects vomiting and singing. Instead, it is the feeling and release of an uncontrolled, spontaneous action that links the two ideas.

Richard Alderson in *Complete Handbook of Voice Training* describes another idea that can be used to describe the coordinated release of tone and balanced phonation:

For the student who finds it difficult to conceive of a coordinated release of breath through the glottis, I suggest this analogy. Hitting a door which is ajar will not close it. The door merely stands and trembles. Pushing the door closes it effectively with a minimum of effort. The force is applied evenly, smoothly, and directly, and the door closes. Likewise, the singer should move evenly, smoothly, and directly toward the end of the phrase. His body functions easily, the muscles respond evenly, and he sings smoothly.⁵⁸

To emphasize the muscular energy needed for the proper attack of a tone, Alderson compares a singer to a sprinter and a spring.

Some muscles are meant to stay set. Others are tense but moving, like the mainspring of a watch, applying pressure as they relax or uncoil. Just before dashing away from the starting blocks, the track star’s muscles are tense and ready. At the sound of the starter’s gun, his muscles spring into action. So it is with the singer. He waits for the appointed time in the music, muscles ready to move. When the moment arrives, his muscles move into action, and he begins to sing.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Alderson, 97.

⁵⁹Ibid., 58.

In order to highlight the function of the vocal cords during phonation, Alderson compares the vocal bands to rubber bands.

The vocal bands can be compared to common rubber bands found in every office and home. The farther they are stretched, the thinner the bands become, and the higher the pitch they emit when plucked. When the tension is released, the bands return to their primary shape and size. Also, the larger rubber bands produce lower ranges of pitches, while the smaller bands produce higher pitches. Further, the texture of the rubber bands influences the quality of sound produced.⁶⁰

In this analogy Alderson matches a singer's desire to control and unwillingness to release the tone, with that of a golfer unable to hit a golf shot correctly.

A common problem for a golfer is not keeping his head down. He wants to look up to control the flight of the ball, and his body moves out of position as the clubhead meets the ball. If he keeps his head down until after the clubhead has struck the ball, he may not see the flight of the ball as well, but the chances are better that he will like the shot.⁶¹

When learning how to phonate in a released manner a student may be faced with the dilemma that the new sound of his/her voice is not similar to the sound with which he/she is familiar. Alderson addresses this problem by once again relating it to golf.

In learning a new method of singing, the student sometimes tries to apply the new technique cosmetically to his old sound. If he can accept a new way of singing without worrying about the quality of sound for a while, he will soon see development in his voice. Preoccupation with the sound of his voice can be a deterrent to his progress, so he may have to be reminded of "hit the ball and look for it later."⁶²

⁶⁰Alderson, 63.

⁶¹Ibid., 96.

⁶²Ibid., 109.

Resonation

When choosing images for resonation it is important to remember that air is the medium that resonates when singing. Therefore, most respiration images are also applicable to resonation. One key to good resonation is the coupling of airflow with proper space in the vocal chamber. Two images that can be used to help create a well-positioned vocal chamber are the creation of a wide pharynx by thinking of it being like a cobra hood widened while singing, and the creation of a slightly raised soft palate by plugging the nose and singing as if you had congestion and a stuffy nose.

A method of maintaining the balance between breath management and the vocal space needed for good resonance is illustrated by the technique of *appoggio*. *Appoggio*, which comes from the Italian verb meaning, “to lean upon,” is a method of singing that stresses the importance of balance to maintain proper posture and efficient breath support. In *The Structure of Singing* Miller defines his idea of *appoggio*.

Appoggio cannot narrowly be defined as “breath support” as is sometimes thought, because *appoggio* includes resonance factors as well as breath management. *Appoggio* may be translated as “support” (*appoggiarsi a*, “to lean upon”). The historic Italian School did not separate the motor and resonance facets of phonation as have some other pedagogies. *Appoggio* is a system for combining and balancing muscles and organs of the trunk and neck, controlling their relationships to the supraglottal resonators, so that no exaggerated function of any one of them upsets the whole.⁶³

A simple and useful image that Miller uses to highlight the idea of *appoggio* is to “Sing in the position of breathing – breathe in the position of singing.”⁶⁴

No matter what a teacher’s concept of resonance or placement is, the idea of *appoggio* should be applicable. *Appoggio* does not only refer to the balance of breath management and posture, but also to the balance of breath management and resonator space. Miller describes this usage of *appoggio*:

“...resonator coupling permits sensation in all parts of the vocal tract. The resonance balance (placement) relies neither on the pharynx nor on the mouth as a

⁶³Miller, *Structure of Singing*, 23.

⁶⁴Ibid., 24.

chief resonator, but on a combination of both. Sensation centers neither in the throat nor in the face. Resonator coupling becomes resonance balancing without functional or acoustic violation of any single part of the vocal tract.”⁶⁵

The image of a bow and arrow highlights the balance of the *appoggio* ideal. The bow illustrates the forward “ring” (*chiaro*) in the tone, while the drawn back string illustrates the space necessary for a well-balanced sound (*scuro*). The energy required to maintain the bow drawn back may also be equated to the energy needed to maintain breath support throughout the phrase.

Richard Alderson describes several images that may help students find the proper positioning of the vocal chamber.

Sometimes merely asking the student to “put more air in the tone” helps rid the voice of excess nasality. “More air” implies more breath flow and a lessening of tension in the larynx. A concurrent lessening of tension in the pharynx which might be holding the velum in a low position would lead to a less nasal sound.

An old analogy for opening the throat, and therefore for lifting the velum is that of the “hot potatoes.” The singer is asked to imagine he has a mouthful of hot potatoes. The consequent broadening of the pharynx helps lift the velum. The analogy has to include a deep breath through the mouth in order to be effective.

What is perhaps the most famous analogy to good singing seems appropriate here, the “pear-shaped tone.” A teacher of mine once said the stem should be sticking out of the singer’s mouth. Such an idea is not too bizarre if it helps a student sing better.⁶⁶

Thomas Cleveland goes into further detail about the image of the pear-shaped tone.

A mental imaging device often used to teach vocal resonance is to have the student imagine a pear in the back of his throat behind the soft palate with its stem and upper portion pointing up and back toward the top of the skull. As the student sings up the scale, he is asked to imagine himself pulling up and back on the stem portion of the pear. Using this mental image seems to create more space and greater relaxation in the larynx, as well as to keep the larynx down in its optimum singing position.⁶⁷

⁶⁵Miller, *Structure of Singing*, 61.

⁶⁶Alderson, 122.

⁶⁷Cleveland, “Mental Imaging,” 41.

Aside from a slightly raised soft palate and a wide pharynx, a singer needs a relaxed, low larynx to create the optimal position for the vocal chamber. Alderson offers this simile to help illuminate proper laryngeal positioning:

A useful simile in learning to sing with a lowered larynx is to make the tone as if drinking in the air. As the German masters said, “Trinken die Luft.” This is admittedly an impossibility, but the feeling is quite valid. By trying to drink in the air the student avoids pushing in with the abdomen, which in turn avoids pushing up the larynx. The effect can be dramatic in the change of timbre. Properly practiced, this concept helps keep the vocal mechanism in its optimum position.⁶⁸

In *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy*, Clifton Ware offers a series of images all designed to establish correct vocal tract alignment.

Some of the more popular suggestions for establishing vocal tract alignment are to imagine and imitate (1) taking a drink of water, (2) smelling a rose or something odorous, (3) smiling inwardly (suppressed smile), (4) beginning to sneeze, (5) beginning a pleasant yawn-sigh, and (6) holding the breath while swimming underwater. All of these suggested images depict reflexive actions, and all help to align the musculature and organs of the vocal tract by subconsciously causing the soft palate to lift, the anterior-posterior faucial pillars to stretch, and the larynx to move lower.⁶⁹

Articulation

As articulation can be affected by poor posture, respiration, phonation, or resonance, images used for any of these pedagogical tenets may also be applicable for articulation. Jean Westerman Gregg states that in order for articulation to be at its best, all of the other tenets of good vocal pedagogy must be working efficiently.

Teachers and professional singers are fully aware of the hierarchical sequence in voice development of posture, respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation. Note that articulation is the end product that can be optimum only if the lower levels of the hierarchy are optimum. Good posture aids abdominal-diaphragmatic breathing, which helps to obtain a clear tone during phonation,

⁶⁸Alderson, 108-109.

⁶⁹Ware, *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy*, 152.

which allows the tone to resonate in the supraglottic areas, which frees the patterns of articulation.⁷⁰

A useful image to help enhance articulation is to tell the student not to let the words fall out of your mouth and gather at your feet. Instead, send those words out into the room so the audience can hear them. Another analogy can be made between the articulation of words and the articulation of instruments. In order for a person to play the repeated triplet pattern of the accompaniment in a song such as Schubert's "Erlkönig," he/she must remain relaxed and not have excess tension. This same idea of relaxed energy can be applied to vocal articulation.

James McKinney offers an image for articulation in *The Diagnosis and Correction of Vocal Faults*. He states, "Another helpful thought pattern is to imagine you are singing to someone who has to read your lips or to someone who does not know your language very well."⁷¹

When creating images for articulation it is important to also be aware of the type of venue in which the student will perform. Articulation that is sufficient for the studio will most likely not be sufficient for the recital hall or operatic stage. Clear articulation and diction is important for any size of voice. Whether a student's voice is big or small, the ability to be understood is of utmost importance. In an article written for *The NATS Bulletin*, Berton Coffin relays a quote from Richard Strauss on this matter. Strauss states,

I, myself, have witnessed especially in Wagnerian music-dramas...singers with big voices but poor enunciation have been swallowed up in the orchestral waves, while artists with smaller voices but with sharp enunciation and with distinct phrasing were able without difficulty to uphold the author's words against the tonal floods of the symphony orchestra.⁷²

⁷⁰Jean Westerman Gregg, "Vocal Development and Articulation in Speech and Song," *Journal of Singing* 58:5 (May/June 2002): 432.

⁷¹McKinney, 151.

⁷²Berton Coffin, "Articulation for Opera, Oratorio, and Recital," *The NATS Bulletin* 32:3 (Feb./Mar. 1976): 27.

With that in mind, a useful image for articulation could be as simple as, “Pretend you are singing at the Metropolitan Opera and not in a small studio. Make sure that even the people in the back can understand what you are saying.”

In a doctoral pedagogy lecture at Florida State University, Professor Jerrold Pope handed out two extensive lists of images (Appendix A and Appendix B) he had collected over his years of teaching. Appendix A contains a list of images in no particular order. Appendix B contains a list of images grouped by pedagogical tenet. Although neither of these lists contains instructions as to how or when to use the images they contain, this author believes that these lists still provide valuable resources from which ideas can be drawn.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, a teacher must be aware of his/her student’s image vocabulary when creating images. Ideas valuable for one student may be lost on another. This need for varied metaphors challenges the teacher to be creative and constantly expand his/her own image vocabulary. A teacher’s image vocabulary can be developed through a variety of means including:

- Reading more literature

Whether it is a best seller or a classic, books are a great source for imagery.

- Watching more television

By watching varied television programs, a teacher will be better informed on pop culture, and more in tune with the students that they teach.

- Watching more movies

Like watching television, movies help teachers become acquainted with pop culture and can give them insight into current trends that may be influencing their students.

- Listening to new and different types of music

Musical styles and genres are constantly expanding so it makes sense that the types of music listened to by teachers should grow as well.

- Establishing a “Facebook” or “Myspace” page

If maintained in a professional manner, these pages are a great way to

learn about your students and communicate with them in a fast and informal way.

Acquiring new information is not the only way a teacher can develop his/her image vocabulary. Learning the ability to *transfer* knowledge one already has is the best method for expansion. Clifford and Charles Madsen define *transfer* as:

The effect that learning a task has on the learning of another task. If having learned the first task facilitates learning the second task, it is called positive transfer; if learning the first task interferes with learning the second task, then it is called negative transfer.⁷³

By mastering the ability to transfer knowledge, a teacher's only limit for imagery is his/her own imagination.

When creating appropriate images for a student, his/her image vocabulary is not the only thing with which one should be concerned. The personality of the student will play a role in the type of image necessary. This personality may be hard to determine at first, but can possibly be learned through his/her body language and how the student relates to his/her peers. Is the student shy or outgoing, confident or weak, excited or bored, tired or awake, comfortable or edgy? Does he/she seem to be a leader, a class clown, an outcast, hungry for attention, overly critical, or overly confident? All of these questions will affect how and why an image is created.

In order to show an example of how images can be created, this author will create and compare two fictitious singers, each the same sex, age and with similar vocal problems. The difference between the students lies in their personalities, musical experience and image vocabularies. Both students are females, eighteen years of age. They are both tall, thin, intelligent students that are polite and have good work ethics. The vocal problem they share is a thin, breathy tone.

The factors that make the students different are as follows:

Student A

Personality – She is a shy, not-confident student.

⁷³Clifford K. Madsen and Charles H. Madsen, Jr., *Teaching/Discipline: A Positive Approach for Educational Development*. (Raleigh: Contemporary Publishing Company of Raleigh, 1998), 324.

Musical Experience – She is a student of average musical talent that participated in high school choir and has had no prior voice lessons.

Image Vocabulary – She likes to read and is a fan of the *Harry Potter* books, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Jane Eyre*. She likes to watch the *Harry Potter* and *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies. She enjoys riding horses and likes to listen to music. Her favorite musical artist is Christina Aguilera.

Student B

Personality – She is outgoing, funny, confident and athletic.

Musical Experience – She sang in high school choir, participated in high school musicals and took voice lessons from her high school choir director.

Image Vocabulary – She plays basketball, tennis and runs track. She can play the piano as well as the violin. She is involved in her church youth group and has a pet dog.

Because both students are beginners and have breathy tones, this author would attempt to choose images that address the pedagogical tenets of posture, respiration and phonation.

Posture

As Student A is a shy, non-confident student, getting her to achieve a good singer's posture may help solve part of her breathy tone. Because of her fondness for the *Harry Potter* movies, this author would draw comparisons between good singing posture and the erect posture of Professor Snape, or the noble, confident posture of Professor Dumbledore. Due to her skills as an equestrienne, a comparison may also be drawn between the energy and balance needed to ride a horse and the energy and balance necessary for good singing posture.

Because Student B is an athlete, many posture images can be drawn from the physical activities in which she likes to participate. Posture images can be drawn from the

images of a basketball player shooting a free throw, a tennis player returning a serve, or the effortless energy needed by a sprinter to run the 100-meter dash.

Respiration

Silent inhalation is an important factor in proper respiration. An easy way to get students to achieve silent inspiration may just be by simply asking them to inhale quietly. If this does not work, then imagery may be necessary. An image for Student A can again be drawn from *Harry Potter*. Instead of casting a spell (breathing) out loud, ask her to cast it (breathe in) in a non-verbal or silent manner. The ability to perform spells in a silent manner was necessary for all the students of Hogwarts School of magic to learn in their sixth year.

Being a violinist, student B might be open to imagery involving bowing technique and the attack of notes. Taking a silent breath and starting a tone on the violin are both affected by excess tension. This tension is unnecessary and detrimental to the resulting tone in both singing and playing.

Another important component of respiration is the proper transition from inhalation through suspension to the exhalation phase of singing. Many students inhale correctly, only to hold the breath and wait too long before beginning to phonate the tone during exhalation. Many images from athletics can be compared to this phase of singing. Since student A has not participated in any sports, an image taken from everyday movement may be more relevant for her. The idea of standing in one place with arms extended, while rotating from side to side without pausing when changing directions, is a great way to describe the smooth transition needed in the singing process.

As a tennis player, student B may be open to sports analogies to explain the correct action necessary in respiration when singing. The fluid motions one needs when hitting a serve, or the balanced motion of the back swing, swing, and follow-through needed when hitting a groundstroke are both possible images.

Phonation

Although there are many aspects of phonation that could be addressed in order to correct a breathy tone, this author will describe images that will help coordinate a balanced onset.

Since both Student A and B are of legal driving age, the image stated earlier of starting a car from a dead stop should be applicable to each. Student A may be receptive to the comparison of opening a screen door with that of balanced onset. If one attempts to open a screen door when it is very windy outside (starting an attack with high sub-glottic pressure) the screen door will flip open. If one were to open a screen door with no wind outside (starting an attack with low sub-glottic pressure) extra force may be required to open the door. If one were to open a screen door when there is wind equal to the weight of the door (starting an attack with correct sub-glottic pressure) the door would swing open freely without either flipping open or slamming shut.

Student B may understand the screen door analogy as well, but also by being an instrumentalist may be open to comparisons between the attack of a note on the piano or violin with the onset of a tone as a vocalist.

Not all images will work for every student. That is why it is important to be able to describe images in a variety of ways. If one is aware of the physical processes that occur when singing, then one can use images that illuminate those processes to describe proper vocal technique.

In an article written for *The NATS Journal*, Richard Miller explains the importance of creating and using specific images when teaching voice. He writes:

Singing with its complex elements of vocal timbres, text, and the whole ambiance of performance, must be highly personal. The singer will very quickly develop his or her own useful functional imagery. Attempting to superimpose one's own physical imaging upon another person is often less than successful. When teacher and singer agree as to what the language of imagery may mean as it pertains to good function, there is a role for limited technical imagery in the teaching of singing. Unfortunately, much studio imagery remains a mystical language which the student is unable to penetrate.⁷⁴

⁷⁴Richard Miller, "Imagery and the Teaching of Singing," *The NATS Journal* 46:1 (Sept./Oct. 1989): 16.

CHAPTER 5

THE POWER OF WORDS

The main focus of this treatise is to pair the use of imagery with specific technical instruction in the teaching of voice. However, this author would be remiss if other uses of imagery in the instruction of voice were not mentioned. One area in which imagery may be useful is in the teaching of style. Whereas technical imagery can be linked to specific pedagogical facts, stylistic imagery can be more subjective. Due to this subjectivity, stylistic imagery may not be successful without a sound, technical knowledge of vocal pedagogy. A sampling of musical ideas that could be taught using stylistic imagery may include: dynamics, legato phrasing, and vocal coloration.

The musical concept of dynamics can be described using stylistic imagery. The ability to crescendo and decrescendo evenly within a musical phrase is a basic musical principle that requires an advanced vocal technique. One needs to be able to balance sub-glottic air pressure, airflow, registers, and vowel shapes in order to create smooth dynamic contrasts within a musical phrase. The comparison of the turning up or down of the volume knob on a radio to the crescendo and decrescendo of a musical phrase is an example of stylistic imagery concerning dynamics. An important aspect of this image is that the knob should move smoothly and consistently. Any type of idea that promotes a consistent, even growth and decline can be used as a valid image for dynamics. This fluid movement not only exemplifies good musicianship, but it should also promote consistent airflow and proper breath support.

The ability to sing a legato line is an important skill for all singers to master. Singing in a legato manner requires one to coordinate a variety of technical issues. For some students, the use of stylistic imagery may allow them to address these technical issues in new ways. Instead of thinking about balancing airflow with sub-glottic pressure, an open throat, relaxed jaw and other technical concepts necessary to achieve a legato phrase, a student may instead try to make the phrase “smooth and connected.” In doing

this he/she may be able to coordinate all the physical aspects needed to make the phrase legato without needing to consider each aspect individually.

A humorous image that may help a student sing a legato line is to tell him/her not to “sing sausages.” In this image vowel sounds are compared to sausage links. In non-legato singing, vowels are often clipped short, creating a vocal line without consistent connection. Sausage links are not continuous tubes of sausage, but instead a series of small tubes linked together to form a long line. This idea may help students



Figure 4. Sausage links⁷⁵

visualize the musical line and eliminate the gaps of sound that can cause non-legato singing.

The ability to use vocal colorization or change in timbre is a great way to highlight text or emphasize emotion. Imagery may be a helpful tool with which to teach this skill. An example of such imagery could include asking the student to sing the phrase either darker or brighter. Other terms that may be used could include warmer, richer, thinner, fuller, or more speech-like. One might also ask the student to “imitate an opera singer,” or “sing that note as simply as you can.” Activating the student’s imagination in this way may lead to a breakthrough in the student’s perception of his/her own sound, and his/her knowledge of how to produce consistently such sounds. Although using stylistic imagery in this way may allow the student to achieve the desired musical ideas, it will in no way ensure that he/she will understand why or how he/she produced said concepts. Therefore, a combination of specific technical instruction and stylistic imagery may allow the student to know how and why he/she was able to perform certain musical ideas.

During the instruction of voice, teachers need to choose their words wisely. Many pedagogues may agree on what good singing is, but often disagree on the terms used to

⁷⁵ “Image of sausage links,” (accessed 11 November 2007), <<http://fugato.net/wp-content/Sausage-Links.jpg>>

describe such singing. They may also agree on a method of vocal instruction but not agree on the words used to facilitate this method. Just as the correct image may elicit the desired vocal response, the incorrect image or word choice may cause problems. An example of this can be found in an article written by Donald Freed. In his article entitled, “Breath Management Terminology: How Far Have We Come?” Freed compares terminology used to describe the act of breathing for singing in two generations, 1900-1910, and 1970-1990. Although originally prepared to highlight change in terminology usage, comparing the two tables prepared by Freed will show the variety of words used to describe the same physical action of breathing.

In the first table, featuring terms taken from pedagogical texts written between 1900-1910, the majority of teachers favored the term “breath control.” Other teachers preferred terms such as: breath support, breath management, appoggio and vocalized breath among others. The teachers’ choices of terminology matched their pedagogical beliefs and style of teaching.

Table 1. Frequencies of Major Terms and General Areas of Agreement in American Voice Pedagogy Textbooks, 1900-1910. ⁷⁶

(N=35)	
	Frequencies
Breath Control.....	21
Breath Support.....	1
Breath Management.....	2
Appoggio.....	1
Vocalized Breath.....	1
Inspiration-Expiration.....	1
Respiration.....	3
No Central Term.....	3
Anti-Control.....	1
General Areas of Agreement	
Deep Breath	
Silent and Effortless Breath	
Physical Exercise to Increase Breathing Efficiency	
Central Importance of Breath and Breathing Pedagogy for Control	
Steady Pressure/Flow of Breath	
Breathe Through the Nose (More Efficient; Expansion)	
Clavicular Breathing to be Avoided	
Exercises for Training the Breath (with and without vocalization)	
Expanded or Lifted Chest	

Table 2 highlights terminology taken from books used for teaching voice that were written between 1970 and 1990. There is much less consensus during this period. Instead of referring to breathing as “breath control,” the term used most often during this period is “breath support and control.” The combining of terms shows the teachers’ attention to semantics and the importance of word choices used when describing the action of breathing. The change in terminology may also be linked to the new and more specific technical information about vocal pedagogy available to teachers in recent years.

⁷⁶Donald Callen Freed, “Breath Management Terminology: How Far Have We Come?,” *The NATS Journal* 50:5 (May/June 1994): 17.

Table 2. Frequencies of Major Terms and General Areas of Agreement in American Voice Pedagogy Textbooks, 1970-1990.⁷⁷

(N=23)	
	Frequencies
Breath Support and Control.....	7
Breath Control.....	3
Appoggio.....	3
Breath Support.....	2
Support/Control/Management.....	2
Breath Pressure.....	2
Breath Management.....	1
Breath Energy.....	1
No Central Term.....	1
Anti-Control/Terminology.....	1
 General Areas of Agreement	
Deep Breath	
Silent and Effortless Breath	
Physical Exercise to Increase Breathing Efficiency	
Central Importance of Breath and Breathing Pedagogy	
Steady Pressure/Flow of Breath	
Clavicular Breathing to be Avoided	
Exercises for Training the Breath (with and without Vocalization)	
Expanded or Lifted Chest	
Importance of Posture/Body Alignment to Breathing	
Greater Integration of Laryngeal/Pharyngeal (Production/Resonance) Factors with Breathing	
Basic Anatomical/Physiological Understanding is Important	

When reading vocal pedagogy texts, it can be apparent that the authors have carefully chosen the words used to describe their concept of vocal technique. In a lesson setting, teachers should be just as careful in their selection of words. Not only are actual word choices important, but also so is the manner in which these words are delivered. For example, if a teacher were loud spoken, funny, crude, smart-alecky, or soft-spoken his/her instructions would be received in completely different ways. Therefore, a teacher

⁷⁷Freed, "Breath Management Terminology," 20.

needs to read each situation carefully. He/she needs to be aware of his/her own body language, physical presence and the power of his/her persona, as it will affect the way his/her words are perceived. In essence, a teacher needs to craft the manner and words that he/she uses when teaching, the same way he/she crafts the interpretation and diction he/she uses when performing. In both instances, full body awareness brings the words to life. One must always remember that the *perception* of the student is more important than *intent* of the teacher.

In conclusion, imagery is an important tool for today's teacher of voice. Its usage is important because of the visual manner in which today's students learn. This manner requires teachers to develop new and creative approaches to vocal instruction.

Imagery is also important because of its flexibility. It can be used in a variety of ways and situations when teaching vocal technique. Whether teaching posture, respiration, phonation, resonance or articulation, if a teacher learns his/her students' image vocabulary, a credible image can be selected that will exemplify the correct technical aspect desired.

Finally, in any use of imagery, a teacher must be aware of the word choices and manner of delivery he/she uses to explain his/her instruction. Proper images improperly described may yield undesired results. Whereas vivid images correctly described will more than likely yield promising results. Imagery, no matter how creative, cannot take the place of accurate, technical instruction. However, imagery when used correctly can take dry, scientific instruction and bring it to life by emphasizing specific pedagogical ideals and making them current, creative and entertaining for the student.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF POSSIBLE IMAGES

The following is a list of images collected by Dr. Jerrold Pope. These images are in no particular order and were included as a handout for a vocal pedagogy lecture discussing imagery.

Breath support/breath control
Sensations
Placement
Place the voice
Resonance, mouth
Resonance, head
Resonance, chest
Focused tone (needle point, whistle, steam pipe)
Floating tone (buoyant)
Spinning the tone/*fila la voce/nota flare*
Resonance, nasal
Air stream (current)
Too far back (veiled, sepulchral, gargling)
Relaxation (collapse on sofa, sigh)
Vortex theory/whirling eddies or currents (air molecules)
Resonance, sounding board
On the breath (vocalized breath)
Forward tone
Drink in the tone/*inhalare la voce*
Above the breath
Voice as mind
Sitting on the breath
Reedy tone
Mask (in the mask, *dans la masque*)
Lift of the breath
Bocca ridente/toothy singing
Up and over
Relax the throat
Project
Ping (ring)
Learn to sing by singing (natural methods)
Intercostal lift (pull at ribs)

Imagination
 Illusion
 Hum on the tongue
 Get it out of the throat
Cupo (cupped tone)
 Building on the soft
 Vomit the tone
 Hooty tones
 Bite into the tone
 Breathe with the throat
 Bad diction throws breath out of gear
 Bellows - lungs, body function like bellows
 Wind chest
 Air blast
 Gain control of bronchials, gain control of breath
 Artistic breathing
 Motive power
 Motor man and brake - breath control
 Diaphragm is guardian angel of lungs
 Breath should flow like gossamer filament
 Breath like water in locks of canal - balance, release
 Breath like water flowing out of bottle
 Abdominal breathing for singing like that of baby or sleeping lion
 Controlled energy begins at the bottom of the vocal apparatus and is completed at the top
 Bronchial tubes are like trees branches of windpipe; extend to lungs, which inflate like
 balloon
 Abdominal breathing better called "abominable."
 Pack the lungs with extra breath when possible
 Keep the lungs well opened
 Keep base of the lungs wide and solid on diaphragm
 Equipoise, or the balance of muscular forces
 Artistic tension
 Stream of air as a glassblower maintains the stream of breath
 A shaky, uncontrolled breath is like a rickety foundation
 Lungs are empty sacks into which the air drops like a weight; fill bottom first
 Take air in and send it out in little puffs
 Breathe as if you smell a rose
 Voice is like a:
 -Flute
 -Piccolo
 -Oboe
 -Organ, cathedral organ
 -Organ pipe
 -Trumpet
 -Harp string
 -Violin

- Amati violin
- Pipe with double reed
- Cello
- Bell

Lips of horn player

Enunciate within the lungs

Crescendos and vowels come from the abdomen

Voice has one register, the facial register

Flexibility in singing is birdlike

Make a picture of beautiful tone, and then produce it now

Tone is like the finest chemical compound

The “smiling looseness” of the face - alert, but never with fixed grin

Smile on the inside

Smile into the tone

Flexibility is like subtle laughter

Flexibility is like Santa Claus ... very jolly

Cry into the tone

Let the tone cry out

Call across with the voice

Let the tone shoot through a hole at the top of your head

Let the tone shoot through a hole in your chest

Out the back of the head

Crush the tone like a kernel of sound/or the crush of the tone

APPENDIX B

LIST OF POSSIBLE IMAGES GROUPED BY PEDAGOGICAL TENET

The following is a list of images collected by Dr. Jerrold Pope. The images are grouped by pedagogical tenet.

ALIGNMENT

Feel a noble length in the body

Come into balance

The place of balance is that place from which movement in any direction is easiest.,
being on balance is like being on pitch (Barbara Conable, Alexander technician)

Be aware of your legs

“Alert” the body

BREATHING

Sing in the position of breathing ... breathe in the position of singing (Richard Miller)

Sing on the gesture of inhalation (Richard Miller)

Open the ribs/release the ribs

Imagine a line between the small of the back and the sternum (Bill McIver)

Smell a rose (Richard Miller)

Lift the ribs

Inhale a global breath

The release of the tone is the new breath

Feel “rhythmic necessity” (Carole Webber)

Satisfy the lungs, avoid crowding them

Breathe because you choose to, not because you must

Steer the air

Be a steward of the air
Use economy of breath pressure in middle voice
Support does not equal tension (Cynthia McGladrey)
Support comes from below the belt

PHONATION

Track the vowels (Richard Miller)
Keep vowelizing (Jerrold Pope)
Be at one with the point of sound
Let the voice give resistance to the breath
Lamperti in Vocal Wisdom:
 Do not “hold” your tone, spin it!
Allow the tone to be self-starting, self-prolonging, and self-stopping. Have the desire to
 make a beautiful tone and sustain it.
Take the breath/hear the pitch/form the vowel

RESONANCE

“Bring” the voice
Round the vowels
One note ignites the next (Richard Miller)
Feel the breath in the mouth (Ellen Faulk)
Give head-dominance to passaggio notes (Dale Moore)
Open the molars
Bunch the back of the tongue forward
Allow the tongue to roll or curve forward
Get out of the way of the tone
Place finger on upper teeth (Bill McIver)
Sing with a soft throat
Sing with a wide throat
One extended hand holds a nasal sound (student demonstrates) ... other extended hand
 holds a swallowed sound (student demonstrates) ... now place the hands on top of
 each other for a chiaroscuro sound (student demonstrates) (April Duvic)

ARTICULATION

Free the tip of the tongue

“Egg in the mouth” for too much jawing. Give room to the vowels

Give vowel “space”

The lips, the teeth, the tip of the tongue (Joan Caplan) Sing with “tall” vowels

“I thought I saw the saw” for too high tongue (Richard Miller)

Go “behind” the tongue for the [i] (Dale Moore)

COORDINATION OF BREATH AND TONE

Sing on the interest not the principle

Analogy of gas/clutch

Less is more

Use your impulse, intention, and imagination

But APPOGGIO says it all!

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jon F. Clements, originally from Viroqua, WI, earned a Doctor of Music in Vocal Performance with an emphasis in vocal pedagogy from the Florida State University College of Music in 2008. He holds a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in choral music education from Luther College in Decorah, IA.

Jon has performed in a variety of musical genres including opera, oratorio, art song, and musical theatre including the roles of Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, The Pirate King in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Billy Bigelow in *Carousel*. He has taught music at Luther College, Truman State University, Jacksonville University and is currently on the faculty of Arkansas Tech University as an Assistant Professor of Voice.

Jon has been married to Dr. Barbara Clements since 1995. They have two beautiful daughters, Isabelle Mae and Madeline Louise.