

Implementation of Vocal Training Methods from the Stanislavski System in the Kanti Becakap

Ikhsan Satria Irianto^{1)*}, Tofan Gustyawan²⁾, Lusi Handayani³⁾

^{1,2,3)} Department of History, Art and Archeology, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Jambi University, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author

Email : ikhsan.irianto@unja.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This vocal training method research is an interpretation of Stanislavski's acting method. This study aims to formulate vocal training methods for actors based on the Stanislavski system. The application of this method is carried out in the Kanti Becakap (Art Community). The material object of this research is "The System" by Stanislavski which is contained in two books, An Actor's Prepares (Translation of Asrul Sani, 1980) and the book Building A Character (Translation of Gramedia Popular Library, 2008). The research method used is a qualitative method with an analytic descriptive approach. The data collection technique used was literature study and the data analysis technique used was inductive analysis. The results of the formulation of the vocal training method from the stanislavski system consist of eight training methods, Vocal Relaxation, Articulation Clarity, Vocal Volume, Musical Dialogue, Swan Neck Intonation, Possibility of Pauses, Accentuation Rules and Instinctive Rhythms. The eight formulations of the vocal training method can be divided into two exercises, namely vocal preparation and dialogue preparation.

KEYWORDS

Stanislavski
The System
Vocal Training
Methods
Kanti Becakap

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INTRODUCTION

Actors carry an essential role in theatrical performances, because actors are media for conveying meaning and establishing communication in theatrical events. Given the vital role of actors in theatre, competent actors are needed so that actor and spectator communication as the heart of theatrical events can be carried out solemnly. Unfortunately, actors are sometimes complacent with the performance of their means of expression, so they always underestimate the training stage (basic actor training) and rush straight into the rehearsal stage (performance preparation). The logical consequence is that the actor's means of expression do not work optimally and destroy communication in theatrical events.

One of the problems in acting performance that often occurs on stage is the actor's failure to process vocals. This problem is crucial because an actor's vocals are an aspect that can be read clearly. Actors can manipulate their gestures with artificial acting motives and support their expressions with make-up. However, actors are helpless in front of the audience if the dialogue is not clearly heard. Ironically, compared to processing his vocals, the actor prefers another alternative path, namely choosing an acting approach that places more emphasis on nonverbal language. This is of course one way for actors to run away from the responsibilities of their role.

Slamet Rahardjo (in Stanislavski, 2008: xiii) explains that one of the responsibilities of an actor is to deepen his vocals. Vocal exercises for actors are carried out so that the actor's means of expression are ready to serve the possibility of various phrases with intonation, rhythm, tempo and direction that represent various human characters. In the next stage, then the actor studies the script

and translates the subtext. That is, vocals for actors are fundamental, so it is ironic if the vocal aspect is neglected in the process of actors working in bringing characters to life on stage.

Actor vocals are a crucial issue in theatrical style that makes dialogue the primary medium in the process of conveying meaning. Such theatrical style certainly expects actors to be able to realize dialogue on stage as their function is in theatrical communication. Dialogue in theatrical performances has the function of presenting information, embodying characters, leading plots, enlivening themes and shaping tone and atmosphere (Yudiaryani, 2002: 362). Vocals are part of a playing instrument that supports the "to be" process carried out by actors in an effort to present a character in the actor's mind (Rifandi, 2020: 28)

If the actor does not regularly train his vocals, gradually the quality of his vocals will decline. Therefore, it is important to perform basic actor training regularly. Exercises that aim to develop the voice must be done every day, because the development of the muscles of the human body requires systematic and good training over a long period of time (Stanislavski, 1980: 43). Then what kind of training method is effective for maintaining the actor's vocal quality? This paper attempts to offer a theatrical vocal training method based on Stanislavski's system which is summarized in the book *An Actor's Prepares* (1980) and the book *Building A Character* (2008).

Stanislavski's acting method offers various acting training techniques to create real life on stage (Pasaribu, 2022: 82). However, Stanislavski did not formulate a standard training formula, therefore it is necessary to analyze the various acting training techniques offered by Stanislavski to find training techniques that focus on actor vocal processing. Stanislavski offers various acting methods and actors must carefully choose the right method for their acting work (Irianto, 2022: 123). Asrul Sani (in Stanislavski, 1980: 6) says that Stanislavski's system needs to be developed and adjusted according to needs, because every actor always has a different way. Therefore, the formulation of this vocal training method is an effort to develop and focus on the broad horizons of the Stanislavski system.

The Stanislavski System is a series of actor technical training internally psychologically and externally mechanically. (Brockett in Stanislavski, 2006: vi). Stanislavski compiled his system since 1906 through various records of the processes he had carried out. The system focuses on the "Art of Experiencing" which involves actors being able to experience the feelings possessed by characters. An actor who is able to understand the character he is playing is a credible actor who is able to realize complete acting.

Stanislavski's *Preparation of an Actor* was written between 1906 and 1914. Stanislavski's system in this book is focused on psychic techniques (emphasis on mental processes). Meanwhile, the book *Building Characters* contains Stanislavski's works on vocal and physical techniques that were worked on between 1914 and 1920 (Pratama and Hutabarat, 2019: 16). In the first book, the author chose the method of relaxing the tendons for the need to prepare the actor's vocals. As for the second book, the author chose the method of diction and singing, accentuation, and speech tempo-rhythm. This selection is based on the vocal processing offered by Stanislavski. In the first book, Stanislavski focuses more on processing emotions, so what can be claimed as an effort to process vocals is only in one chapter, namely muscle relaxation. Whereas in the second book, Stanislavski put more emphasis on the actor's physical processing efforts. That's why Stanislavski's choice of acting method was mostly taken from his second book.

Stanislavski does not formulate a standard formula for his method, so it needs an analysis process to understand the system explicitly. Stanislavski structured his system through fictional stories about students and teachers who seek the truth about acting (Carnicke, 2000: 16). Stanislavski chose this narrative style so that his system becomes an experience that all actors can experience. In addition, this fictitious narrative style also allows the Stanislavski system to continue to be understood differently in each era. This paper tries to offer an interpretation of Stanislavski's system, especially in actor's vocal preparation.

The theory used in the preparation of this theatrical vocal training method is the theory of acting put forward by Stanislavski in "The System". Over the years, Stanislavski tried to formulate acting methods for actors in a scientific and credible way about 'the right way of acting' (Pratama and Pahala, 2019: 7). Through "The System", Stanislavski tries to separate theory, professional

techniques and methods. This separation is done so that the actor is able to prepare for a role with real awareness. Actors must also be aware that training must emphasize physical and psychological foundations (Harymawan, 1988: 178). Stanislavski explains that his system is the result of finding a path that leads from the conscious to the unconscious. This is the rationality of the brain system, when the subconscious is unable to stop its activities, consciousness must take part. This system only keeps the appeal from failing to appeal to something truly creative (Mitter, 2022: 22). The formulation of this vocal training method is applied to basic acting exercises at Kanti Becakap. Kanti Becakap is a dialectical space and a forum for creativity that was founded in 2022 and is domiciled in Mendalo, Jambi. This cross-disciplinary arts community chose theater as a starting point to reach various artistic possibilities. The reason for choosing Kanti Becakap as the implementation object is because this community chose Stanislavski's acting as the basis for making their work.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. The choice of this method is based on research findings that are in line with the function of the qualitative research method, namely in-depth research to find new perspectives on things that are already widely known or that are not widely known. While the approach chosen is an analytic descriptive approach, namely the data and results of the analysis are in the form of words (Moleong, 2010: 7).

The primary data from this study is the Stanislavski system which is contained in two books, namely *An Actor's Prepares* (1980) and the book *Building A Character* (2008). While the supporting data are scientific writings, books and reviews of the Stanislavski system. The data is then analyzed inductively to produce document summaries.

Based on the description of the methods and data above, the stages in this study are as follows:

1. Data Collection Technique

The data in this study were collected using the literature study method. The choice of data collection method was chosen because the material objects in this study are available in the form of books, journals and other written literature that have relevant objects of study. Data is not only traced through physical (print) literature, but searches are also developed in literature in the form of soft files (e-books) on the internet. Literature study is text-based research with data collection methods focused on library data. The process of studying literature is rereading texts and reinterpreting texts to produce new texts (Zed, 2004: 3).

2. Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out inductively with a descriptive approach. That is, the analysis is done by describing and analyzing the data. The results of the analysis are then compared with the source data in order to verify and validate the facts so that the data can be accounted for. Inductive analysis is an analysis that is specific, to produce propositions that can be generalized broadly. This analysis aims to explore texts that have multiple meanings and find conclusions from data that are interconnected (Umrati and Wijaya, 2020: 33).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Vocal Relaxation

Muscle spasms can interfere with acting, especially if they affect the organs that support the actor's vocals. Muscle spasms that attack the voice organs will make the actor have suboptimal vocal quality, such as hoarseness and loss of voice. If this spasm attacks the diaphragm, then the actor's breathing will be disturbed. Even though muscles are physical, their spasm can adversely affect the emotions of actors and the way the characters feel.

Even though it seems separate from the actor's emotional experience and the character's inner manifestation, muscle spasms are a minor problem that can create a domino effect which is fatal to the acting work. Therefore, the first stage for actors to prepare their vocals is to relax the muscles of the vocal organs before processing them. This process is known as vocal warm-up.

Unfortunately, even though they have warmed up, it is impossible for the actor to be completely free from muscle tension. Muscle spasms cannot be eliminated, but they can be fought with awareness. Stanislavski offers a solution to muscle spasms by means of development of control devices. This control tool is the awareness to know the part of the muscle that is spasming and try to calm it or distract it. The process of developing this control device is carried out by observing oneself to find out which parts of the body are in spasm, then consciously relaxing the tension and turning this control pattern into a mechanical habit.

Muscle relaxation is an actor's conscious effort to find out how his muscles are working, to then mark several tense muscles, after which he tries to reduce the tension. Relaxation is not a passive state, but active work to release all kinds of tension. Relaxation is a state in which the actor is in a ready position to react to even the smallest stimulus. The practice of muscle relaxation begins with moving the whole body, from movements that use large muscles to movements that use small movements. Even though this training method is focused on vocal exercises, the whole body needs to be warmed up so that there are no muscle spasms that interfere with the training process. Then the warm-up is focused on the organs that are directly involved with voice and breathing, such as the stomach, back, shoulders, neck, jaw and tongue.

The next step is to pronounce each letter at an increased volume and pronunciation. Feel every muscle working as the letters are pronounced. Remember and be aware of each letter that is pronounced with muscles that are still tense and stiff. After that, exercise conscious control to reduce muscle spasms by repeating every letter that has problems with pronunciation many times. Repeat until each letter is able to be pronounced with flexible muscles.



Picture 1. Vocal Muscle Relaxation
(Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

2. Clarity of Articulation

Actors who have poor articulation will utter dialogue in an indistinct and noisy sound, such as the sound of a thunderstorm or the sound of a fly's wings. When actors engage in dialogue with one word or one missing phrase, the performance goes awry. Because bad pronunciation will cause great misunderstanding and destroy the dramatic vision of the playwright. Therefore, actors need to train their articulations diligently and continuously.

Articulation exercises are carried out by realizing that the actor does not use the throat and nasal voice. Then the articulation will be trained is the actor's stomach voice. Then you can start practicing by pronouncing each letter of the alphabet clearly. Feel the difference that occurs in the speech organs when pronouncing vowels and consonants. Be aware of some letters that are hard to

pronounce or don't make a clear sound. Repeat the exercise on the problematic letters, until clarity of pronunciation can be achieved.

Once each letter can be clearly pronounced, continue practicing by putting two letters together and repeating the process from the beginning. Then expand the sounds up to three letters and so on, until they form a sentence. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor can pronounce his dialogue clearly and clearly. In addition, actors must also understand the correct position of the mouth, lips and tongue when pronouncing letters clearly.



Picture 2. Articulation Exercises
(Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

3. Vocal Volume

If an actor has a beautiful vocal timbre and flexible vocal expressive power, but does not have a strong volume, the beauty of the actor's voice will only be enjoyed by the audience at the forefront. This is what makes volume important. If the actor forces his voice to sound louder, the result will damage the actor's own voice. Voicing forcedly to increase the volume doesn't make the sound any louder, but only produces a guttural scream that has a smaller range. Therefore, an appropriate volume training method is needed so that the actors on stage have strong vocal volume, but are not released by screaming.

The exercise that can be done is to say the alphabet from the lowest volume to the highest volume. Increase the volume gradually in consistent increments. However, when the highest volume has reached the limit of vocal ability, don't be forced to increase the intensity by shouting. Do this exercise regularly, then the intensity of the highest volume will increase. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor has a strong vocal base without having to scream on stage, so that the sound produced remains natural but can be heard all the way to the back of the audience.



Picture 3. Recite the Alphabet With the Highest Volume
(Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

4. Musical Dialogue

Actors must let go of all kinds of accents they have, so that the pronunciation of dialogue becomes pure without any cultural burden. Next, the actor must remove the effect of pretending or overemphasizing the way the dialogue is pronounced. This exercise is done by reading dialogues as if they were speaking everyday, without the tendency to embellish intonation. This exercise can be done independently with the help of a tape recorder or with an instructor. Actors must immediately realize that the dialogue they speak is unnatural. Actors may not realize this, because this pronunciation pattern has become a habit. However, if this habit is allowed, it will interfere with the sound of his speech.

The exercises are carried out by means of the actor reading the dialogue and recording it or reading it in front of the instructor. After the actor reads, listen to the instructor's response or voice recording, whether there are still false, artificial or exaggerated pronunciations. Realize the mistake and make the change on the next try. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor is able to say the dialogue naturally.

After the actor has been able to say the dialogue naturally, then the next exercise is to make the dialogue like a melodious song. The actor must understand that the spoken text is a melody. The art of acting is the same as the art of sound, namely making a rhythmic sound. An actor who is able to master the rhythm of his voice can animate the words in the dialogue as well as enter into the character he is playing. Meanwhile, an actor who is unable to process the rhythm of his speech is like the way a person with a nervous breakdown speaks with a stutter.



Picture 4. Read the Dialogue Without an Accent
(Kanti Becakap documentation, 2023)

This exercise can be done by saying dialogues with different emotions. After that the actor must realize that every emotion can affect the rhythm of the spoken dialogue. This exercise can be done with one sentence or it can only be one word and can even be done with only one letter. Say the dialogue with at least three emotions, then realize that every feeling needs a beat, so every utterance of dialogue becomes musical. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor is able to realize that there are many possible rhythms from a simple sentence.

5. Swan Neck Intonation

Swan neck intonation is a phonetic pattern offered by Stanislavski as one of the patterns that can be used by actors in processing the sound flow of their dialogues. Swan neck intonation is an intonation groove that has a shape resembling a swan neck. The swan neck intonation pattern starts from a low tone and increases to the highest point. The tone line then leveled off and suddenly swooped down. This intonation pattern can be used in one dialogue or in one sentence.

This intonation exercise is done by reading a sentence using goose neck intonation. Determine the basic tone and peak point of the dialogue interval according to the actor's initial vocal modality. Make a gooseneck chart of each word so the actor knows when to raise and lower intonation. The next stage of practice is to use swan neck intonation in one long dialogue. Arrange each sentence to form a goose neck and read it according to the flow of intonation. Do this repeatedly until the actor masters every high and low sound of the word he makes. The final stage of this intonation exercise is to use swan neck intonation with your dialogue partner. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor knows one of the phonetic patterns that can be used and developed in processing intonation.



Picture 5. Speak Dialogue Using Swan Neck Intonation
(Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

6. Possible Pause

Every word that the actor utters must be styled and regulated. In order for words to be separated or combined properly, the position of the stop or pause must be determined. Pauses are very important in dialogue, because the wrong placement of pauses can change the meaning of the dialogue. The pause exercise can be done by reading a long dialogue in one breath. Then understand that parts of words in dialogue require pauses. Mark in the script the position of pause, then read the script again and feel the difference. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor realizes that dialogue without pause is an impossibility for the actor.

The next exercise is reading the dialogue with punctuation. Each punctuation mark requires a different rhythm. Pauses from periods and breaks from commas require different intonation, as do different punctuation marks. Then the next exercise is to read the dialogue with the correct punctuation intonation. This exercise is known as a logical pause. The next stage of the exercise is a psychological pause. A logical pause is one that focuses on the rhythm of the dialogue, while a psychological pause focuses on the emotion of the dialogue. The task of a logical pause is for the dialogue to sound beautiful, while the task of a psychological pause is to make the dialogue more lively and understandable.



Picture 6. Pause the Dialogue
(Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

Psychological pause training begins with understanding the character's character in depth. Then understanding is developed to the subtext of each dialogue. After the actor understands the character as a whole, the actor is able to feel the character's emotions. The next stage is for the actor to determine the dialogue break based on his understanding of the character's emotions.

The next pause exercise is the luft pause or pause to take a breath. The luftpause is sometimes not included in the pause, because the time it takes is very little. However, these pauses are especially important for actors who speak long dialogues with high emotional intensity. The use of luftpause should not interrupt the emotion of the dialogue. The luftpause exercise is done by reading long dialogues quickly. When the breath runs out, use the luftpause without breaking the pace of the dialogue. Take a breath in one beat and continue reading the dialogue again without dropping the tempo. Repeat this exercise until the luft pause becomes automatic and mindless. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor is able to understand the three types of pauses, and their use for dialogue.

7. Accentuation Rules

The accent is the index finger pointing to a word in the dialogue so that subtext can be realized. The use of the right accent is the highlight of the subtext, but if the accent is used incorrectly it will damage the word and immobilize the phrase, this will affect the loss of subtext from the dialogue. Accentuation is the process of giving meaning to every word uttered by an actor. Accent determination is based on character analysis and dialogue vision.

Accentuation exercises are carried out by dividing the word into two syllables, then the actor reads the word by emphasizing the first syllable. Then the actor re-reads with the emphasis on the second syllable. The next stage of the exercise is for the actor to try to read two words with the emphasis on the first word and on the second attempt the emphasis is shifted to the second word. Do this exercise gradually until the actor is speaking a complete piece of dialogue with varying emphasis on words or syllables.

There are two rules in the use of accents, the first rule is an adjective that describes nouns that are not given an accent. The second rule is lined placement, where the emphasis is on words that express the character's emotions. These two accent rules imply that the accent must be placed on the correct word. More accents can distract from the subtext of the dialogue, but the placement of the accents on key words can contain embodied subtext. The art of accenting words is as difficult as the art of removing accents, for every word falls victim to accentuation if there are too many or too few accents. Therefore, actors are required to be able to choose each keyword in a dialogue to be given an accent.

This exercise of two accent rules can be done by giving various accents in one dialogue. After that be aware of some accents that are not important. The next stage is to determine the key words in one dialogue. Highlight each keyword and accentuate the emotion of the dialogue. The result of this exercise is that the actors understand that different accent placements will produce different dialogue meanings.



Picture 7. Read the Dialogue Using the Highest Accentuation Scale
(Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

The next exercise is the accentuation scale exercise. The accentuation scale is divided into three, namely high, medium and low. These three accentuation scales are used to liven up the dialogue so that the key words can be conveyed properly. Keywords that convey the idea of dialogue are delivered on a high scale, while introductory words, keywords are delivered on a medium scale, and words that complete the whole sentence but do not have a weight of meaning are delivered on a low scale. This accent scale exercise is done by determining a high to low scale for words in one dialogue. After that the actor utters the dialogue based on the accentuation scale. The accent grooves are spoken smoothly without artificial emotional jumps. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor is able to accent the dialogue according to the accentuation scale.

The next stage of accentuation practice is masculine and feminine accentuation exercises. Masculine accentuation is the emphasis on words firmly and loudly and delivered at a fast tempo. Meanwhile, the feminine accent is conveyed loudly, but softens at the end of the sentence with a slow tempo. The terms masculine and feminine accentuations are also known as "outward emotions" and "inward emotions". This practice of masculine and feminine accentuations can be done by saying a long dialogue using masculine accents. Then proceed with using feminine accents. The result of this exercise is that actors are able to master masculine and feminine accents and know when to use them.

8. Instinctive Rhythm

Setting the tempo of the action can be done with the help of the metronome. However, the tempo tool doesn't work if dialogue is what you want to set the tempo for. The tempo of the dialogue can be set using mental counting based on subtext or analysis of the text. The tempo of the dialogue is adjusted to the characters' emotions and dramatic needs, so that actors who are tempo blind are actors who do not have a high sense of rhythm.

Each dialogue has a different rhythm and each rhythm requires a different tempo. The tempo of dialogue is not the same as the tempo of music, the tempo in music moves regularly and consistently, while the tempo in dialogue cannot be ascertained because each word has a unique pronunciation tempo. So that the tempo of the dialogue is not determined by mathematical calculations, but is determined by instinctive calculations (inner beats).

The rhythmic tempo is not only calculated from the actor's dialogue, but also from the actor's silent act. This is because sound and silence in acting are a unity in rhythm. The actor's rhythm is not static, but constantly changing and developing. So that the rhythm of the performance that is manifested is not monotonous, but more varied and expressive in lively and meaningful intervals.

Tempo and rhythm exercises can be done by reading long dialogues accompanied by musical accompaniment. The selected music is music that has a different tempo. The actor's task is to read the same text while living the tempo provided in the music. Actors are required to be able to feel the tempo of music to create rhythmic dialogue. The achievement of this exercise is that the actor is able to feel the tempo of the music and unite it with the spoken dialogue. Even though the dialogue that is conveyed remains the same, actors are required to be able to create different nuances through the tempo and rhythm that are in harmony with the accompanying music. The actor's task is not to adjust the dialogue to the tempo of the music, but to feel the music and create an instinctive rhythm of dialogue.



Picture 7. Set the Tempo of the Dialogue by Feeling the Music
 (Kanti Becakap Documentation, 2023)

Based on the eight formulations of vocal training methods that have been implemented in the vocal training of the Kanti Becakap community, the whole process can be divided into two trainings, namely voice training and speaking training. Voice training is an exercise that focuses on voice preparation as an actor's initial capital, while speaking practice is an exercise in composing dialogue rhythms. So it can be concluded that vocal training is the stage of vocal preparation and speaking practice is the stage of dialogue preparation. The division of the two trainings can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Vocal Training Methods

No	Vocal Training	Stages	Training Focus
1	Vocal Relaxation	Vocal Preparation	Warmup
2	Clarity of Articulation	Vocal Preparation	Articulation
3	Vocal Volume	Vocal Preparation	Volume
4	Musical Dialogue	Dialogue Preparation	Rhythm
5	Swan Neck Intonation	Dialogue Preparation	Intonation
6	Possible Pause	Dialogue Preparation	Pause
7	Accentuation Rules	Dialogue Preparation	Accentuation
8	Instinctive Rhythm	Dialogue Preparation	Tempo

CONCLUSIONS

Actor vocals are a crucial and essential communication medium in theatrical performances. So it takes the right method of vocal processing so that actors are able to maintain the quality of their vocals. Stanislavski in *The System* never explicitly formulates vocal training methods, but through his fictional stories there are indications of vocal processing for actors. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze Stanislavski's system to find his vocal training technique. The search for vocal training methods was carried out through reinterpretation of the chapters on relaxation, diction and singing, accentation, and tempo-rhythm of speech in two of Stanislavski's books.

The formulation of the vocal training method from the Stanislavski system consists of eight stages. The first is Vocal Relaxation, this exercise provides a vocal warm-up method so that each organ that supports sound regulation is not stiff and tense. The second is Clarity of Articulation, this exercise provides a method for creating clear and crisp sounding sounds. The three vocal volumes, this exercise provides a method of increasing the volume of the voice so that the actor's voice can be heard with a wide range. Fourth, musical dialogue, this exercise provides a dialogue method with rhythm, such as singing.

Fifth Swan Neck Intonation, this exercise provides a method of raising and lowering the voice based on swan neck intonation. Sixth Possible pause, this exercise provides a variety of pause techniques and how to use them. The seven Accentuation Rules which provide various rules for accenting dialogue. The eighth instinctive rhythm, this exercise provides a method of determining dialogue tempo based on inner beats.

The eight vocal training method formulations above can be divided into two trainings, namely vocal preparation and dialogue preparation. Vocal preparation focuses on processing the various vocal support organs, such as the esophagus, oral cavity, throat, lips and tongue. While dialogue preparation is the arrangement of rhythm from letters to sentences so that the dialogue is more lively. These two trainings are one unit and cannot stand alone. However, the sequence of exercises can be adjusted according to conditions and needs.

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