

SIGHT-SINGING IN PROFESSIONAL CHILDREN'S CHOIRS:
THREE CONDUCTOR'S PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AUDIATION

AS
36
2019
MUSIC
.B74

A Thesis submitted to the faculty of
San Francisco State University
In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree

Master of Arts

In

Music Education

by

Nathaniel Douglas Brewer

San Francisco, California

May 2019

Copyright by
Nathaniel Douglas Brewer
2019

SIGHT-SINGING IN PROFESSIONAL CHILDREN'S CHOIRS: THREE
CONDUCTOR'S PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AUDIATION

Nathaniel Douglas Brewer
San Francisco, California
2019

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of three conductors regarding sight-singing in their professional children's choirs as it relates to audiation. Research questions addressed were: (a) "How do experienced educators teach choral students to sight-sing with an audiation-centric approach?", and (b) "How do different choral directors' perspectives on sight-singing influence student's sight-singing ability?" The primary means of data collection were interviews, rehearsal observations and performance analysis. Observations were systematically recorded with a self-made observational checklist and the performances were scored using CMEA's Bay Section Choral Performance Rubric. The results indicated that students grow in audiating and sight-singing when directors avoid some specific common misunderstandings, promote self-efficacy and confidence, and employ effective sight-singing strategies.

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this thesis.

Wendell Hanna
Chair, Thesis Committee

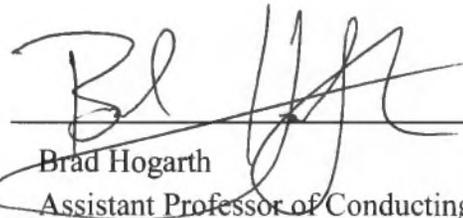
5/21/19
Date

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I certify that I have read *Sight-Singing In Professional Children's Choirs: Three Conductor's Perspectives on Teaching Audiation* by Nathaniel Douglas Brewer, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree Master of Arts in Music Education at San Francisco State University.



Dr. Wendell Hanna, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Music Education



Brad Hogarth
Assistant Professor of Conducting

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Mr. Bradley Hogarth and Dr. Wendell Hanna for consenting to be on my thesis committee and especially to Dr. Hanna for her valuable insights in this research and beneficial suggestions. Also, I would like to thank the three conductors who shared their stories and welcomed me into their rehearsals.

I thank Dr. Rick Townsend for introducing me to the concept of audiation and for sharing with me the mantra, “sound before sight before theory.”

I would also like to thank my parents, Mr. Norman Brewer and Mrs. Mary Brewer, for encouraging me to pursue my passion in music and supporting me in my education.

Finally, I give thanks to God for sustaining me and revealing the beauty of his creation through music.

Soli Deo Gloria.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	ix
List of Appendices.....	x
Introduction	1
Sight-Singing Introduction	1
The Importance of Sight-singing in Choral Education	2
Research Questions	4
Operational Definitions	4
Justification for the Research	7
A Review of Literature.....	9
Introduction	9
History of Teaching Sight-singing	9
Sight-Singing Research	13
Audiation.....	16
Metacognition	17
Sight-Singing Methodologies	19
Method and Procedure.....	22
Research Design	22
Statement of Ethical Considerations	22
Overview of the Study's Procedures	23
Population and Sample	24
Instrumentation	24
Validity	25

Threats to Validity	25
Data Analysis	26
Results	27
Introduction	27
Conductor One Description	27
Conductor Two Description.....	28
Conductor Three Description.....	29
Interview Results	29
Main Theme #1 Common Misunderstandings	45
Main Theme #2 Self-Efficacy and Confidence	47
Main Theme #3 Sight-Singing Strategies	49
Outlying Themes	50
Rehearsal Observation	51
Conductor One’s Rehearsal Description	51
Conductor Two’s Rehearsal Description	54
Conductor Three’s Rehearsal Description	57
Final Rehearsal Observations	59
Video Performance Analyses	61
Analysis of Conductor One’s Performance	61
Analysis of Conductor Two’s Performance	62
Analysis of Conductor Three’s Performance	63
Final Analysis of Performances	65
Discussion	66
Discussion	66
Conclusions.....	69
Recommendations	72

References	74
Appendices	81

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Conductor One's Themes.....	42
2. Conductor Two's Themes.....	43
3. Conductor Three's Themes.....	44
4. Conductor One's Superior Scoring From CMEA Rubric.....	61
5. Conductor Two's Superior Scoring From CMEA Rubric.....	62
6. Conductor Three's Superior Scoring From CMEA Rubric.....	63
7. Venn Diagram of Shared Conductor Themes.....	66

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix	Page
1. Interview Questions for Choir Directors	81
2. Observational Checklist from Conductor One's Rehearsal.....	82
3. Observational Checklist from Conductor Two's Rehearsal.....	83
4. Observational Checklist from Conductor Three's Rehearsal.....	84
5. CMEA Bay Section Choral Performance Rubric.....	85

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sight-Singing Introduction

What is the sixteenth letter of the alphabet? Most children or adults when asked this question may pause reflectively, glance upward and to the left while silently forming the letters in their mouth and singing in their mind the alphabet song they learned in kindergarten. Perhaps as the reader, this was your initial reaction to the question also. Similarly, a general elementary teacher may ask the class to sing the “The Star-Spangled Banner” in their mind to discover which word they believe has the highest note in the entire song. Or to perhaps imagine what Louis Armstrong singing “What a Wonderful World” would sound like after inhaling a balloon filled with helium? Whether you answered “P” to the first question, “free” to the second, or smiled at the thought of an uncharacteristically high sound coming out of Armstrong’s ordinarily gravelly voice, you experienced the metacognitive ability of hearing music in your mind; this inner hearing is called audiation.

Audiation can be viewed as a mental conception for aurally understanding music. Audiation can be likened to a schema, a concept promoted by the Swiss psychologist, Piaget to be important for cognitive understanding. Piaget’s theories provide a context for understanding how children develop their cognitive understanding or map of interacting with the world through four stages. Professor of Mathematics at Dartmouth College,

Dorothy Wallace (2001) states, “A schema includes processes, such as ‘I can draw a circle,’ or ‘I can prove theorems about all circles.’ The complexity of the processes available to the individual is part of the growth of cognition also” (p.2). Expanding on the platform of schemas and stages of learning, Gordon, the creator of Music Learning Theory, theorized that children develop their understanding of music through a series of terraced stages in audiation. Gordon’s stages of audiation differentiate between the complex processes as a student’s mental schemas broaden and become enriched.

Professor of Educational Psychology, Rosenshine, (1995) states, “Well-connected and elaborate knowledge structures are important because (a) they allow for easier retrieval of old material, (b) they permit more information to be carried in a single chunk, and (c) they facilitate the understanding and integration of new information” (p. 262). In other words, the human brain can be likened to a spiderweb of neuron connectivity: the more pathways created and the more frequented the information, the better the effectiveness of the network fabric. A child’s ability to think about music in different ways with functional schemas largely contribute to the success they achieve in that area. Thus, a student with multiple interlacing bits of information regarding singing music in their schema may have an easier time absorbing further information related to the schema of sight-singing.

The Importance of Sight-Singing in Choral Education

One musical schema taught in most choirs across America is the skill of sight-singing. It would be helpful for many teachers to gain more insight into effective practices that notable choir educators employ in their classroom in order to promote schema building in audition and sight-singing in their choirs and classrooms. Teachers who are actively mindful of helping to develop their student's schema may be preparing their students for later success instead of equipping them for immediate and temporary success by focusing on teaching to the next performance. Professor of Music Education, Rose Daniels (1988) observes, "The development of competency in sight-reading is a subject that is frequently neglected in the field of choral music" (p.22). Therefore, further qualitative insight to programs which successfully teach sight-singing may benefit those who struggle incorporating and teaching this skill even though they consider it valuable.

Professor of Music Education, Alan McClung (2001) states, "The ability to sing music on sight is considered a fundamental goal of music education and a key to the development of an independent music learner" (p. 3). Due to the necessity of quickly learning advanced music, sight-singing is considered a fundamental concept for students to begin mastering early on. Professor of Music Education, Steven Demorest (2001) adds, "Few conductors would argue against including sight-singing as a part of choral music education, but surveys of choral directors have found that while many favor sight-singing instruction, few devote significant rehearsal time to teaching it" (p. 1). This may be in part due to insecurities on how best to effectively teach mastery of this skill even though it is regarded as valuable. Whatever the hesitation regarding consistently teaching sight-

singing, research reveals that teachers want, and should, do a better job of guiding students toward developing audiation and sight-singing skills.

Research Questions

One qualitative research question that began to develop after reflecting upon these insights was, “How do experienced educators teach choral students to sight-sing with an audiation-centric approach?” Since each choral director may have a different approach to teaching sight-singing, this led to the question: “How do different choral director’s perspectives on sight-singing influence student’s sight-singing ability?”

Operational Definitions

Audiation is defined by The Gordon Institute of Music Learning (GIML, 2012) as,

The foundation of musicianship. It takes place when we hear and comprehend music for which the sound is no longer or may never have been present. One may audiate when listening to music, performing from notation, playing ‘by ear,’ improvising, composing, or notating music.

In this research, audiation will primarily encompass the tonal and rhythmic “mind-hearing” before a singer produces the pitches and rhythms out loud. Audiation can also then be understood as a cognitive process or schema for understanding music. GIML continues, “Through development of audiation students learn to understand music.

Understanding is the foundation of music appreciation, the ultimate goal of music teaching” (2012).

An *experienced choral educator* in this research will refer to a teacher that has taught a professional children’s chorus over five years and has been recognized for their musicality through awards given.

Intonation refers to the accuracy of singing a pitch in music which may be either flat or sharp.

Kodály method will refer to the methodology established by the Hungarian music educator, composer and ethnomusicologist, Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967). This method trains young students in music education through a structured pattern of learning to read music and recognize intervallic patterns through solfege. This method has become quite popular in America since it began in the 1940’s as a comprehensive music methodology covering singing, movement and

Sight-singing is the learned skill to read and sing a musical line of unfamiliar sheet music. Music professors, Darrow and Marsh (2006) define sight-singing as, “a skill that requires the singer to make timely judgments about such musical elements as rhythm, intervallic relationships, key signatures, and phrasing” (p. 21). Sight-singing is sometimes known as sight-reading; however, because the term “sight-reading” seems to imply that one is only going to read and not also sing, this paper will refer to this action as sight-singing instead. Also, this term does not easily differentiate between what an

instrumentalist does by sight reading a piece of music by playing the notes on their instrument and what a chorister does by singing the notes without any frame of reference or external instrumental support. Thus, sight singing will be the preferred term to refer to the inclusive act of combining both sight-reading and singing skills.

Metacognition is the self-awareness of one's own thinking or understanding. This reflective process is demonstrated through assessing or evaluating one's own abilities or progress in achieving a task. While the concept is not tangible, it can mean the difference between someone who repeats the same task repeatedly in the same erroneous manner and another who applies some metacognitive thinking such as "How can I think about this problem differently?" and discovers a working solution. In context of this thesis, it will pertain to the general concept of thinking about thinking and more specifically to the concept of thinking about music in the mind.

Solfège is the ancient system of arranging pitches with syllables. Sometimes solfège is spelled solfège, solfeggio, or sol-fa. In the movable-do system with la-based minor, the tonal center can be moved to fit any key signature. In the fixed-do system, each solfège syllable corresponds to a specific note head. Unless specified otherwise, solfège in this paper will refer to the movable-do, la-based minor seven syllable system of do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do.

Schema is an organizational structure of the mind. This concept borrowed from psychology, which refers to how individuals classify and order information in order to

understand the world, is used in this paper to refer to the ordering of music and musical patterns in the mind. Schemas can be formed from childhood and developed in later years through instruction and experiences. In music education, singing solfege may be an example of a mental and aural way of codifying what is both heard and processed in the mind into the schema of solfege to interpret and better understand the information.

Justification for the Research

One commonality among choirs is the regularity of preparing for performances of the repertoire being studied. This generally means students are handed new sheet music for every newly scheduled performance. If a student is receiving new sheet music at the start of every new performance period and has difficulty deciphering it, then there will likely be confused students, a frustrated teacher and perhaps even a poor performance. As stated previously, the skill of sight-singing is ubiquitously embraced by music educators as a needful skill in developing musicians. However, as the research confirms, directors are not focusing the majority of their time or lesson planning on teaching and reinforcing this skill (Demorest, 2001). Modern music teachers need the resource of more qualitative research to draw upon when looking for ways to teach sight singing. A choir director's reasons for not allocating adequate rehearsal time to practicing sight singing may be a multi-faceted issue. Perhaps some of the reasons could include limited rehearsal time, challenging and time-consuming repertoire, or even weak sight singing skills on their own part. Any of these possibilities may be addressed by a thorough examination of the existing research literature on vocal production and the many sight-singing instruction

books. Unfortunately, there are only a handful of qualitative research studies regarding experienced choral director's methods of teaching sight-singing. As will be discussed in the Literature Review Chapter, there exists no study on the sight-singing techniques of experienced choral directors of professional children's choirs. On the need for research in the area of sight singing, choral director Lara Brittain (1998) states, "Current research is limited to a few issues and often provides conflicting or inconclusive results, indicating the need for more research" (p.12). This research aims to consider some of the concerns choral directors may have regarding sight-singing while illuminating strategies that promote success in teaching sight-singing.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will address four pedagogical aspects of sight-singing: (1) history of sight-singing, (2) research regarding sight-singing, (3) current understanding of audiation and metacognition, and (4) sight-singing methodologies. Discovering what the literature reveals about these components of sight-singing will help contextualize the research questions and findings.

History of Teaching Sight-Singing

Before music notation was in place, people groups and nations passed down their songs by rote and communal singing. This was the case with the Levite musicians of historical Hebrew tribes or the ancient Greek musicians (Avenary & Eppstein, 2001). In modern times, Brown (2003) asks educators how improbable it is to, “imagine an English classroom in which students are taught to speak and listen to the language but are not taught to read or write” (p.46). The reverse question could be posed to imagine an English classroom in which students are only taught to read and write but never read aloud. When these questions are compared with the field of music, one can see that both the written and the aural skills are necessary to achieve mastery of the subject area. Since the beginnings of a written form of music, the skill of sight-singing became necessary to learn how to read but also sing the written music (Scherer, 2004).

One notable historic example of early sight-singing methods is of Guido of Arezzo's Guidonian hand in Medieval Italy to teach liturgical music to choir boys (Brown, 2003; Eshelman, 1992). The Guidonian hand can be likened to an ancient version of Curwen hand signs in that it used the hand to depict solfege pitches. Guido of Arezzo found that his technique helped the students learn their part dramatically faster than by only reading the music (Headington, 1976). This pedagogical tool functioned as an important catalyst to the advancement of the resolute tradition of written and sung church music through the Middle Ages into the 17th century (Eshelman, 1992).

Church music has historically fed the tradition of music and through new compositions and the training of musicians to create and perform such music. The church has been the father of countless musical contributors such as Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Felix Mendelssohn. Music pedagogues of the past such as Guido of Arezzo and Joseph Haydn had also spent much of their lifetime working for the church by training younger musicians to sing and play instruments. Scherer (2004) explains that the church underwent major changes as the leaders of the protestant reformation advocated for both the private reading of the Bible in the vernacular and congregational singing, such as Martin Luther's hymns, that affirmed the tenants of the reformed church denominations. As conditions ripened for the Protestant Reformation in Europe, Johann Gutenberg's new printing press was quickly gaining popularity for its use in quickly printing sheet music that before was too laborious, time-consuming, and cost-prohibitive to be functional for mass reproduction of choral music scores (Scherer, 2004).

Thus, the combination of Johannes Gutenberg's printing press in 1444, and the results of the Protestant Reformation of 1518, created an environment that was ripe for an abundance of musical scores from which to sight-sing.

In America, sight-singing has its historical roots from the shaped note singing of the early 18th century Southern churchgoers to the Northern sight-singing schools in Maine (Robertson, 2001; Davenport, 1992). Many sight-singing schools in New England were established because those, such as Thomas Symmes proposed, believed that children should be taught to sing by reading rather than the existing style of lining-out (Robertson, 2001). A common practice in the late 17th century, lining-out came to America from its English and Scottish origins and was popular for illiterate congregations because a minister could intone a melody line and the congregation would reply in kind (Temperley, 1981). This call-and-response singing was less necessary in the growing and literate American climate of the early 18th century. Robertson (2001) explains that the settlement of singing schools was the harbinger for singing societies, clubs, and organizations. Evidence of this singing tradition survives in tunebooks such as William Walker's *Southern Harmony* of 1835 or Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha King's *The Sacred Harp* of 1844. According to Miller (2010), these first tunebooks often used only four note solfege fa, sol, la, and mi (p. 255). This four-note system eventually developed into the seven-note movable-do system that modern music educators generally use consisting of: do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do. These tune books are markers of how

Americans have proven the importance of not only singing but also doing so using an organized and systematic approach (Grove Music Online, 2001; Miller, 2010).

One significant American music educator that is well-remembered for working with church music, advocating for music in the public-school system and Sunday schools, and even setting the nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb” to music, is Lowell Mason. Hailed as the father of American music education, Mason’s efforts did much to further the tradition of sight-singing in churches and public schools not only through his teaching but also his tunebooks including his earliest tunebook collection, *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music* of 1822 (Grove Online Music, 2001; Robertson, 2001). In 1826, he is remembered for declaring that “children should be taught music, as they are taught to read” (Sanders, 2018, p. 120). Sanders (2018) also notes that Mason averred for time to be specifically set aside for instruction of singing during the school day. Thoroughly committed to promoting music education, he volunteered without salary to teach music at the Hawes School in Boston in an experiment to sway the Boston Public Schools leaders to adopt music as a part of their public-school curriculum (Robertson, 2001). Upon seeing the success Mason had teaching music to untrained schoolchildren, music was officially introduced to the curriculum in 1838 which established a precedence for music in American schools that continues to this day (Sanders, 2018). Robertson (2001) adds that Lowell was able to see his vision further realized when he opened his school, The New York Normal Musical Institute. The institute’s stated goals were “to elevate the art of teaching and educate

teachers in the elements of music for the masses, so future generations of Americans would come to possess musical skills and literacy” (Robertson, 2001, p.21).

Mason recognized that the seminal research of Swiss educator Pestalozzi heavily influenced and morphed his theories on teaching singing to the American schoolchildren (Sanders, 2018). Pestalozzi, had other disciples, such as Michael Traugott Pfeigher and Hans Georg Nägeli, that believed in the sound before sight before theory concept of teaching music. (Sanders, 2018, p. 126). Bluestine (2000) summarizes Pestalozzi’s ideas on music teaching in five steps,

- 1) Teach sound before sign. 2) Lead the student to observe by hearing and imitating instead of explaining. 3) Teach but one thing at a time – rhythm, melody and expression – before the child is called to attend to all of them at once. 4) Require mastery of one step before progressing to the next. 5) Give principles and theory after practice (p. 35).

Pestalozzi’s fundamental concepts on music education helped shape Mason’s ideology and many future music educators to come throughout history.

Sight-Singing Research

Many American choral directors would agree to the importance of sight-singing. Darrow and Marsh (2006) even go as far to state that it is “the skill most important to good choral musicianship” (p. 21). Demorest and May (1995) state that many high school programs, “Emphasize performance and rote teaching at the expense of developing music reading skills” (p.156). This perspective on the condition of teaching sight-singing in

choirs today is mirrored again in how advanced choirs spend significantly less time rehearsing sight-singing training than do less-experienced choirs. (Demorest & May, 1995). In this way, sight-singing could be viewed as a means to an end or perhaps advanced choirs are so competent in sight-singing that they require less rehearsal time to train in it. Johnson (1987) indicated that selected directors in the North Central region of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) agreed on the importance of sight-reading, but devoted little rehearsal time to developing those skills. Johnson (1987) did suggest that adding a sight-singing portion to contests would help alleviate this issue which is what Floyd and Bradley researched in their 2006 study.

Floyd and Bradley (2006) explain that the Kentucky Music Educators Association's decision to incorporate a sight-singing component in their festival to improve sight-singing skills over learning by rote led all choir directors involved to agree that their choir's music reading skills improved and almost 80% stated that their choir's intonation also noticeably improved.

Demorest and May (1995) discovered that the most significant factor for accurate sight-singing was previous choral experience topping even private vocal lessons or piano lessons. This research suggests that students who remain under choral instruction for more years will be more developed sight-singers which contrasts with the Daniels (1986) and Tucker (1969) studies. Daniels (1986) supports that having a choir director that strongly believes in teaching sight-singing positively impacts student's sight-singing ability and also that the ethnic makeup of the school, not previous choral experience, is

the most significant variable in determining sight-singing success. Tucker (1969) found no relationship between choral experience and sight-singing ability but instead found that instrumental experience was more significant in predicting sight-singing success. Lovorn's (2016) findings corroborate choral experience being a weighty factor in predicting sight-singing ability and suggests that daily practice of sight-singing exercises, whether with or without written in solfege, contributes to better sight-singing accuracy scores.

While individual sight-singing success may be linked to years of choral experience, Brittain (1998) suggests that it may be necessary to have only one or two competent sight-singers to be in a group to make a group sound as if the entire group can competently sight-sing. Three other factors that Brittain (1998) adds that impact sight-singing are the harmonic context, error detection, and individual instruction. Because the harmonies supporting a melody are instructive to a singer's intuitive singing approach, giving the harmonic support without the melody may help older, more advanced singers. Advanced students may derive more meaning from the harmonic context than younger, less-trained students who are operating with less developed aural schemas (Boyle & Lucas, 1990; Brittain, 1998; Lucas, 1994).

One other way of providing the harmonic support is for students to tonicize the resting tone before singing an excerpt which Killian and Henry (2005) identify as an indicator of successful sight-reading in Texan high schoolers. Killian and Henry (2005)

also noted that just half a minute of practice and audiation of a sight-singing excerpt could significantly increase student's sight-singing success.

Davenport (1992) states that modern music educators do not all unanimously support the movable-do system (p.106). Earlier, Siler (1956) asserted that only fixed-do should be used because movable-do was "one of the worst" systems for teaching sight-singing" (Siler, 1956, p. 40). However, May's (1993) research of nine-hundred and twenty-seven Texan high school choirs found that 82.30% preferred using the movable-do system.

Audiation

The mantra "sound before sight before theory" is an old musical concept that has regained popularity with music educator and theorist, Edwin Gordon (Bluestine, 2000, p. 35; Gordon, 2007). The idea of first teaching children to organize aural information into schemas before teaching how to read and write is not novel and has been advocated by musicians and educational psychologists such as Pestalozzi's theory, Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT), and Suzuki's Mother Tongue Method (Colwell & Heller, 2003; Gordon, 2007; Zinar, 1984). Since both language and music are conceived aurally, psychologists such as Robert Gagné have theorized the developmental stages in which the aural and cognitive development of language progress. Gordon is credited with adapting Gagné's five sequential stages of language to his Music Learning Theory and coining the term "audiation" (Jordan-DeCarbo, 1986, p.39). This audiation process

begins with the five levels of discrimination learning: (1) Aural/oral (2) Verbal association (3) Partial synthesis (4) Symbolic association and (5) Composite Synthesis. Afterwards, inference learning includes three levels: (1) Generalization (2) Creativity/improvisation (3) Theoretical understanding (Gordon, 2007). These documented processes in Gordon's MLT stems with stepwise aural processing and gradually develop into a written representation of the learned sounds (Jordan-DeCarbo, 1986, p.39). Audiation then is the root of the mantra sound before sight before theory (Bluestine, 2000). This audiation process may sometimes be masked in a group singing situation by what Bennet (1984) describes as students imitating the successful sight-singing by close-by accurate peers. Bennet (1984) suggests this may happen more often to instrumental players because they are not always encouraged to sing their parts. Teachers may also notice this lack of inner hearing during a sight-singing example by a student's inability to recognize a tune they just "successfully audiated" (Bennet, 1984). One last danger may be that students do heed the "sound before sight before theory" methodology but do not progress past the first step of sound into how to read and comprehend theory because they stuck imitating sounds instead of audiating for themselves (Bennet, 1984).

Metacognition

Metacognition in relation to the field of music, as Elliott (1993) suggests, can be viewed in the complex form of thinking that music listening often requires. Students with more advanced means of intentional music listening demonstrate a deeper level of

metacognition in their understanding of music. This metacognitive understanding through careful listening is demonstrated in students being able to identify tonality, “keyality,” modality, meters, tempo, emotional, expressive and lyrical content and other features of a song in only one or two hearings. Elliott and Silverman (2015) suggest that “the educational reflecting on one’s musical actions can be boosted by ‘replaying’ examples of musical thinking in various ways” (p. 435). This replaying in the mind may apply not only to the inner hearing of basic elements such as pitch and rhythm during sight singing but also more complex factors such as musical phrasing or dynamic expressivity either heard from a past performance or derived from one’s own general musical background. In Darrow and Marsh’s (2006) quest to discover the validity of students’ metacognitive ability to predict and assess their own sight-singing skills they found that while students predicted mostly reliable results, they were more accurate in their assessment of their sight-singing skills after their sight-singing test. Academia requires more of this metacognitive research of student’s self assessing their sight-singing skills for conclusive results (Brittain, 1998; Darrow & Marsh, 2006; McClung, 2001).

As students become self-aware of their successful thinking strategies, so their metacognition is enhanced. Scott (2004) explains that recent brain research affirms that brain development during the first four years of life are crucial to intelligence. During childhood, students are constantly hearing new language terms and replaying them in the mind as they learn their native tongue. There is a parallel here with music in that students who are exposed to a wide range of music palettes have an increased opportunity for their

brains to absorb more information (Gordon, 2007). On explaining how the brain retains or dumps information, DiPietro (2000) states that, “Learning and development during childhood and beyond can be regarded primarily as a function of the elimination of unnecessary associations and maintenance of those that are used” (p. 457). This demonstrates that neglecting teaching metacognitive strategies may allow the brain to eliminate the resources to fuel metacognitive thinking. Conversely, supporting metacognitive thinking through pre-meditative activities and strategies may allow for heightened brain function regarding successful metacognitive thinking.

Sight-Singing Methodologies

As the importance of sight-singing has been established, it is fitting to survey what some of the most influential music educators have written and taught regarding this vital component of music education. What follows is a concise summary of the main tenants that Suzuki, Kodály, and Gordon believed apropos of music education.

Shinichi Suzuki’s revolutionary approach to violin teaching, which he called “The Mother-Tongue Method,” is at its core an outgrowth of sound before sight teaching (Zinar, 1984; Suzuki, 1969). Just as Mason believed every child could learn to sing as stated in his *Manual of the Boston Academy of Music*, so Suzuki believed that children are learners from their birth and can learn to absorb and play music just as one learns to read and write (Sanders, 2018; Suzuki, 1969). Suzuki maintained that the most ideal way of learning music, just like language, was through repeated listening which Suzuki (1964) described as “the most important element in musical education” (p.3). The Suzuki

method of books and materials he left behind consist of gradually more difficult pieces to challenge the ears and musicianship of the advancing students (Kendall, 1996; Zinar, 1984). While Suzuki had less to say specifically about sight-singing, his heavily aural-centric approach to music education and sight-reading on violin has helped establish credibility for sight before symbol teaching.

Zoltán Kodály is fondly remembered as one of the earliest ethnomusicologists and advocates for music education (Jacobi, 2012). He was deeply troubled at the state of musical illiteracy he noticed and tirelessly traveled and worked to notate over 10,000 folk songs and write method books to spread his vision of music education. One of the largest parts of that vision was educating young students to sing folk songs using solfege (Jacobi, 2012). This legacy is reflected in the many schools which still teach from a Kodály-based curriculum and notable music educators such as Gordon who adapted much of Kodály's work. Choksy (1981) notes Kodály's aural approach for students to learn to sight-sing "in the same way that an educated adult . . . reads a book: in silence, but imagining the sound" (p. 8). Kodály's expressed beliefs in the sound before symbol teaching have left a lasting impact on music education today.

Edwin Gordon built his taxonomy of audiation, as outlined in his Music Learning Theory, based off his research of past music educators such as Kodály coupled with his extensive observation of children. His writings encourage teachers to guide students' listening and singing through a sequence of methods that introduce a variety of tonalities, keyalities, modalities, rhythms, and meters before introducing the notation (Gordon,

2007; Gordon, 1997, Woodford, 1996). Gordon's belief of complete mastery and audiation of a song encompasses more than just accurately singing the song. Instead, a student should be able to modify, improvise and "play" with different aspects of the music such as tonality and meter. This experimentation with the music allows students to discover the music through their mental manipulation and body connectivity.

Gordon proponents suggest an agglomeration of successful music education strategies from various methodologies. Provided instruction is taught in connection with the central musical goal of developing audiation, several other established techniques from Kodály to Orff can be inculcated in an MLT-based classroom (Gordon, 2007). Demorest (1998) found that most directors prefer to use their own materials, or current repertoire, to instruct in sight-singing in lieu of existing published materials. This proclivity to using one's own material may work well with educators trained in Gordon due to the nature of borrowing in the teaching profession.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Research Design

The main purpose of this qualitative research was to explore three conductor's perspectives on teaching sight-singing through audiation. The design of this research consisted of eight questions recorded in a semi-structured interview with additional follow-up questions to generate rich data of each of the director's experiences. A purposive sample of three experienced choral directors in the Bay Area that have been teaching a professional children's chorus for at least five years or more were interviewed. The researcher observed an entire rehearsal of each choir and completed an observational checklist while taking hand-written notes. After attending live performances of all the groups, the researcher watched video performances and used the California Music Educators Association (CMEA) Bay Section Performance Rubric to score each performance. The interviews were coded using data-mining to extract themes which were supported by the rehearsal observations and performance analysis.

Statement of Ethical Considerations

The three interviewees were assured their names would not be identified in this paper by name though each director has a general description provided. Each conductor is identified as either Conductor One, Conductor Two, or Conductor Three in place of their actual names. No identifying information or specific locations have been given so that the

directors cannot be identified. All recorded interviews and artifacts have been locked and deadbolted in the researcher's music office. Digital copies of the interviews have been locked in an encrypted file on a password protected computer that only the researcher has access to in order to ensure the interviewees' information is guarded. All participants verbally consented to be interviewed with a clear understanding of the academic purpose of this research.

Overview of the Study's Procedures

After all the research instrumentation was exempted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), each director was emailed the list of interview questions with an explanation of the research and request for their time for an interview and rehearsal observation. Each participant was asked to be interviewed at their respective rehearsal locations

The interviews were recorded with a Samsung Galaxy S9 phone on the interview setting of the voice recorder while the researcher took brief notes on pen and paper. Follow up questions were asked as needed for clarification based on data gathered in the observational checklist. The interviews were then encoded in password protected files on the researcher's computer. All the research was recorded and collected by the sole researcher. All the interviews were completed during the Spring semester of 2019.

Population and Sample

These semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of three Bay Area conductors of professional children's choirs. Each director was chosen based on the criteria of having at least five years of experience in teaching the choir. Further criteria involved each choir having a regular performance and touring schedule. The sample size was purposefully kept small in order to focus on the detailed workings of the choir's practices and the director's methodologies and beliefs which could become unclear in a larger sample size. The drawbacks to a smaller and non-random sample are that the group could potentially not be representative, and the results may not be as generalizable.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation used for this study was an interview question list for the three choral director interviews, an observational checklist to be used during the observations of the choir rehearsals, and a performance analysis of live video-recorded performances. The question list and observational checklist were self-made by the researcher, informed by the current research literature and approved by the researcher's graduate advisor. The rubric was designed by the California Music Educator Association (CMEA) for their Bay Section Choral Performance.

Validity

Statements about director's beliefs concerning student learning being linked to the conductor's strategies are not based solely on the researcher but derived from the accounts of the interviewees. To safeguard against researcher bias, the directors believed that the learning their students achieved in rehearsals was linked to the strategies they employ in their teaching. Validity is further confirmed through triangulation data through interviewing, direct observation and performance analysis. The results have been compared and contrasted to the literature review with any large irregularities mentioned in the discussion. The results have been confirmed with an expert, the graduate advisor, to further address the concerns of validity and reliability.

Threats to Validity

Due to the nature of interviewing busy conductors, subject attitudes of the interviewees were considered. The interviews were conducted in a respectful manner, and each director commented on their eagerness to be interviewed and observed for the research. Each director selected a time and location that best accommodated their rehearsal schedule. Their sacrifice of time was acknowledged verbally and with a written thank-you card along with a gift basket to express genuine appreciation.

While researcher bias is to be expected to some degree for every researcher's comments about an interview, possible biased concerns were resolved with the researcher's graduate advisor. Also, since there was only one observation, some could

argue that more observations would lend more credibility to the results. While this may be true, the limitation of time makes further observations times very difficult. To counter this, each observation lasted approximately three hours which is sufficient time to gather significant data and the researcher was prepared with an observational checklist and notebook to efficiently use the time.

Some readers may comment on the need for a larger and randomized sample. The recommendation of Chapter V, there is a call for future research that furthers the scope of this research's purposive sample of three choir directors. This research is unable to be generalized due to the nature of purposive sampling. However, due to time and budget limitations, a large, randomized sample was not feasible, but should be the base of future studies that find the subject area of interest. The scope of this research is contented to transfer the results to similar target populations.

Data Analysis

Each interview was first transcribed into a Word document file and then coded using data-mining techniques to extract topics from the interviews. These topics were then organized into tables under main themes that appeared during the coding process. Topics that did not fit into the main themes were addressed in Chapter IV as supplemental topics of interest. Topics that all three interviewees mentioned or were given more weight as well as topics that were supported through observation and performance analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore how experienced choral conductors taught audiation in the context of sight-singing in professional children's choirs. To that end, three choral conductors were observed, interviewed, and one of their recorded performances was analyzed. The results of the study describe the conductors' observed teaching style, their answers to the research questions, and my reflections and evaluations on the performance of their students in concert.

Conductor One Description

With forty years of teaching experience, Conductor One was the most seasoned educator interviewed. His knowledge of teaching children's choirs has been fundamental in the establishment of his unique choral program and has set a high standard for other Bay Area children's choirs in the past few decades. He is well-known for programming challenging and modern repertoire and thus performs newly commissioned choral pieces for his top performing choirs. He stays actively involved in weekly rehearsals, summer camps, international choir tours, and maintains a regular concert schedule in the Bay Area. Conductor One attends rehearsals with a focused mental to-do list, and expects the children to consistently perform at a high artistic and musical level. Consequently, he will often rehearse a small portion of music repeatedly until the physical sound matches with

the aural concept in his mind. The students seem to respect his leadership and artistic direction and attentively work to meet his expectations in rehearsals. He is friendly and engaging before and during rehearsals, complimenting students for their success, and giving helpful words of correction when necessary. His vocal warm-ups engage the students' entire body and vocal range by incorporating full-body motions, breathing and mindfulness strategies, phonation exercises, solfege and Curwen hand signs drills, and some audiation practices.

Conductor Two Description

Conductor Two conducts two children's choirs and first began as an instrumentalist before finding his passion in choral music. One of his colleagues described him as a frighteningly gifted conductor with magical hands. While conducting, one can see his level of intensity written on his face. In his rehearsals, He distills his passionate energy for music into a focused rehearsal in which students are expected to quietly listen to instruction and energetically sing at the appropriate times. His vocal warm-ups heavily rehearse solfege and intervallic pitch relationships. He demonstrates his high expectations for his students by having them largely produce the pitches independent of the piano and use Curwen hands signs in every rehearsal. Conductor Two's choral training and zeal for teaching is evident in both how he instructs his choir and how he converses about choral pedagogy.

Conductor Three Description

Conductor Three began teaching children's choirs early on in her career and now has been conducting children for over twenty-five years. At her current position, she is in her sixth year with her exclusive, high-school, all-girls choir. She recently became the artistic director for the entire singing school and collaborates with prominent musicians around the world accepting challenging new commissions for her choir and performing in some of the most respected performance halls in the Bay Area and internationally on tour. In rehearsal, she expects excellence, accepts mistakes, and emboldens the young women to find their voice and express it confidently. With her perfect pitch and trained voice, she sometimes sings along with the choir while bolstering voice parts and other times calls out musical directions. After choir, she can be seen fellowshipping with the students and answering questions.

Interview Results

Question 1: What value do you place on sight-singing?

All three choir directors stated that they place a high value on sight-singing. Conductor Two further defined sight-singing as a student "deriving everything from the score." Because of the importance of a student reading a musical score and obtaining the aural information visually, all directors mentioned that it is important that their students are producing the pitches within their own mind rather than copying another singer or instrument. Conductor Two states the end result of audiation rather than imitation is

student independence. “What can the students do without me? What are they able to accomplish without me there helping them?”, he asks. This sentiment is echoed in the activity in which Conductor Three suggested a teacher bring in musical scores from various genres for the students to form groups and sight-read for fun. In this activity, Conductor Three is interested in showing students that they can select any score and have an idea of how to sing it without any outside aid. Conductor Two summarizes by saying “Sight-singing, to me, is the ultimate benchmark of my teaching process and what I’m passing on to my students long-term.”

Because of their different backgrounds, each director displayed unique ways of addressing sight-singing. Both Conductor One and Two have students write solfege in their scores while Conductor Three emphasizes intervallic pitch relationships to find notes. While all three conductors may at times use a similar method, they tend to prefer some methods predominantly which was evident as they taught.

Conductor Three noted that, “It’s a long process.” She admitted that the students were not good sight-singers when she first began working with them but has noticed a significant improvement in their confidence and abilities since they have been immersed in her program of half an hour of theory and sight reading apart from repertoire rehearsal. Now after two years of this learning strategy she is seeing results. Like Conductor Two, she differentiates between quick imitation and audiation, she explains, since the girl’s have a good ear, it’s easy for them to immediately sing along with the new song, but, “that’s not sight reading,” she maintains.

To Conductor Three, sight-singing is about confidence. She states, “You have the note right before you, and you just need to jump. It’s like skydiving.” When the choir arrives at the end of the song, Conductor Three wants them to accept any mistakes or areas that were not perfect with a mature understanding that sight-singing involves, creating learning experiences from past errors. She also finds that younger girls are less self-conscious about making sight-singing mistakes. The students in their teenage years, she notes, begin to shy away from a confident approach to sight-singing skills. This may be because of an increased sense of self awareness in adolescence she purposes.

Conductor Three concludes, “It’s almost a life skill, I think. You know, sight-reading. You don’t really know everything, but you just go. It’s the mindset of an adventurer.”

Question 2: From your experience, what could you tell me that has been valuable to you regarding either learning or teaching sight-singing?

Each director’s first response to this question seemed to include their own personal approach to learning music as a way to help teach their own students. Conductor One’s quick response was, “Definitely use the Kodály method.” Conductor Two responded with an explanation of how the practice strategies he learned in his graduate studies helped him so much as a musician that he adapted them to teach his choral students. Conductor Three answered, “One of the most important things is for them to see the entire structure.” She elaborated that this means exploring the many facets of music “Before reading it, look at the simple things... Most of the time when they have

something to sight-read, they just look at the first two bars, and you need to oblige them to just turn the page.”

In Conductor One’s program, using the Kodály method simply means using solfege at times. Conductor One shared that some of his choir children understand rhythm intimately while others are rhythmically weak. He states that, “Our kids are melodically strong; they can read solfegeable melodies and even chromatic melodies.” To reinforce stronger rhythmic skills, he desires to teach more stick notation and rhythmic notation. While he admits to not having enough experience with the Kodály method, he sees the benefits of this method and values its impact on his choristers. As for learning melodies well and in tune using the Kodály method, Conductor One asserts that “The solfege is the most important tool because most of the music they sing is solfegeable.”

Conductor Two draws from his personal experience as a clarinetist to employ practice strategies he would use in his private instrumental playing to group choral rehearsals. Methods such as practicing a limited number of measures or playing one challenging portion of sixteenth notes backwards and forwards until properly learned work well for both his personal practice and his choristers. He gleaned much of his rehearsal techniques from graduate school by observing while participating in a rehearsal. Also, before having students sight-sing a piece, Conductor Two analyzes the piece through a score study looking for challenging areas for his students and thinking of ways to help them meet those challenges successfully.

Regarding sight-singing difficult songs, Conductor Three conveys she has “learned that when they are uncomfortable, they start laughing a lot. You might think it’s because they don’t take it seriously, but it’s not that. They just don’t know what to do. It’s a way of protecting themselves.” This insight to an adolescent’s means of coping with their perceived inadequacies may help the frustrated teacher realize that their perceived lack of interest is a method of self-protection rather than a disruptive excuse not to sing. Conductor Three’s answer to this is that the director simply needs to forge on while the students “need to get comfortable.” Conductor Three encourages directors to teach that sight-singing successfully includes facing one’s ineptitudes with a sense of resilience and perseverance. Her “keep going” attitude is expressed this way, “It’s about accepting that you are lost and finding where you can join back in. You can be lost. It’s fine. But don’t just stop there and wait for someone to do something for you. Just find it!” “If you make a mistake- who cares.”

Question 3: What role does sight-singing play in your teaching/rehearsal?

Due to the nature of each group’s composition, age and ability, and performance schedule, the role of sight-singing was more prominent. Conductor Three’s group easily sight-sang more pieces among the three groups because of the high number of performances while some of the younger middle school students in Conductor Two’s group had more time to perfect fewer pieces. None of the groups had a structured time for sight-reading built into the rehearsal, though components of sight-singing were dispersed throughout in the forms of ear training, warm-ups, and most importantly through the

repertoire. All three directors used the repertoire as a way to either write in solfege, silently audiate, understand whole and half step intervals, use Curwen hand signs, perform rhythmic drills, observe tempo, dynamic, and key areas, or just sight-sing through the piece. Conductor One said that these learning skills were taught “90% in the context of learning the repertoire.” Conductor Two approaches sing-singing through teaching as much as the score entails before having the students sing the song. Conductor Two explained, “I’m teaching the music to the students and putting it into their brains.” The music concepts he is putting into their brains includes tonality, meter, and lyrical meaning. By flooding them with the details of the song, he teaches them to arrange an idea of the music’s overall meaning and shape in their minds.

Conductor Three also desires her students to form a mental image of the overall arc of the music by the end of the first rehearsal of sight-singing the new repertoire. She gave the analogy of a potter who begins with a blob of unidentifiable clay which after the initial molding only takes a very rough shape into what it will eventually be. This first stage is not the time to be concerned with precise details that will be included in the end product. In the same way, musicians should not expect to work out the fine details of the song during the first run-through but should instead get a sense for the flow and arc of the piece. The many manifold niceties such as proper diction, pronunciation, and precise cutoffs are a lofty goal for a first sight-reading session but should not distract from obtaining a full mental picture of the music initially. The flow and arc of the song are of chief importance to grasp before the finishing touches can be applied.

Question 4: What kind of cognitive or mindfulness strategies, such as audiation, do you teach to improve sight-singing skills?

Conductor Two uses strategies that teach mindfulness to his students. The two ways he approaches reading music is through a conscious and subconscious method of teaching music. He states, “I cross back and forth between pushing them to do what’s subconscious and just accept mistakes, and then we go back to take our time to really take our time to really thoughtfully think about the next sound we to hear.” This subconscious approach is another way of considering Conductor Three’s approach to singing with confidence despite the outcome of the initial sight-reading. Conductor Two differentiates between switching back and forth for different purposes. He continues, “As sight-readers, we don’t want to be slow. We don’t want to always have to stop and think about the next note. Sometimes we want to be pushing our students to just make the mistake but keep moving forward.” This approach helps to combat being always conscious of the minute errors that could distract the group from getting complete idea of the music.

Conductor Two does agree that occasionally it is needful to be more mindful of the accuracy of while sometimes that is not the focus of the practice. While being conscious, Conductor Two asks the students to “hear the sound first and then sing it.” After having the students audiate the note, he will then check it on the piano for accuracy. “At some point,” he continued, “We stop checking.” Conductor Two no longer checks the student’s pitch after a while because some student’s perfect and relative pitch starts to

emerge. He has found that this slower, methodical approach to consciously sight-sing with tremendous mindfulness allows for certain students to begin developing perfect or relative pitch. These students help correct inaccurate pitches among their fellow students and sometimes even their director. He admits that, "It's very difficult to train students this way at first because it is time consuming and doesn't allow for just singing through the songs. The students learn to engage in this learning process which takes time to get accustomed to."

Question 5: How do you assess the student's sight-singing?

All three directors require the singers to pass some form of singing and sight-singing test as a requirement to be a part of the group whether it is a formal, one-on-one test, or as a natural progression from an earlier tier in the choral program. Conductor One acknowledges he has not done enough assessment as he would like and plans to implement their once-a-year report card in the future more prominently. He tests aural and listening skills at the beginning of the year while organizing all the groups during choir camp. Students who want to advance and become section leaders can volunteer for an extra audition for a closer examination of their skills. Those students who score perfectly are recognized in front of the group.

Conductor Two listens for three things during sight-singing assessment. "(1) Can they read what's on the written score. (2) Can they echo back what I'm playing or singing just on sound. (3) Can they transfer sound into solfege." In addition to sight-singing with

neutral syllables and transferring sound into solfege, he wants his choristers to accompany their singing with Curwen hand signs and be familiar with stick notation. Much of this assessment is done during the Summer camp and these sight-singing concepts are taught and reinforced during that time.

Conductor Three was more concerned with the students understanding the overall musical phrase or arc of the music during times in which they sight-sing. She does less with teaching sight-singing at this advanced level because her main focus is teaching the repertoire. Instead, she credits much of the girl's singing success to the great team she works with that includes a dedicated harmony/aural skills instructor and vocal coach teacher. She adds to the difficulty of sight-singing by separating every singer from their own part by putting them in mixed formation to find if they can sing and understand their parts not only horizontally but also vertically.

Question 6: Do stronger sight-singing skills help students advance to more advanced tiers in your choir?

All three directors quickly answered "Yes" that students who were stronger sight-singers advanced more readily and were required to have a certain level of skill to be considered for the more advanced groups. Conductor Two requires his group to be able to sing and read in all modalities, tonalities and keyalities. Conductor One spoke about the skill-building involved with auditioning and growing in a choral group. He found that students who rise to leadership and audition for higher ranks are noticing themselves

developing in their musical skills such as theory and vocal technique. This self-awareness of their skills building on each other gives them the confidence to try out for section leaders or a more advanced group and echoes what Conductor Three believes about instilling confidence in the student's sight-singing abilities.

Question 7: Can you explain the system you emphasize while teaching sight-singing such as movable-do, using solfege, Curwen hand signs?

All three directors stated that they used the movable-do, la based minor system. Conductor One and Two used Curwen hand signs extensively, but Conductor Three used no hand signs in her rehearsal and did not mention using them in the interview. Conductor Three also trained under fixed-do and has perfect pitch which makes converting to movable-do awkward for her though she has acclimated to using it. She purposes that in later years and during more advanced, atonal music that students learn their songs through an understanding of fixed-do and interval relationships because of the shifting or absent tonal centers in some music. None of the directors mentioned using numbers as a way to sing scales.

Conductor One explains his use of the Kodály system by saying, "When we say we use Kodály, we're sort of just borrowing elements from it. We have a goal. If you don't play an instrument you can sight-sing. You have the tools to sight-sing. That's kind of our goal." This goal shows the elevated function of solfege to not only inform students

about note names and pitch relationships but instill a system that empowers choristers to sight-sing unaided by instruments.

Conductor Two does heavily employ solfege naming and singing during rehearsal and strongly stated that his choir uses Curwen hand signs at each rehearsal. At times, he uses letter names for notes. He mentioned that he equates fixed-do as a letter naming system. However, he views movable-do as a way to teach harmony rather than solely sight-singing. In this way, he can build chords, change tonal qualities and keyalities all by relating the harmony to the solfege for the students.

Conductor Three does have the students train in Kodály especially in the younger years of their training with the earlier tiers in the choir. However, her vision is to incorporate more body-awareness and movement in the choir through a full-time Dalcroze teacher. After sharing some of her concerns about movable-do's effectiveness for music without a strong tonal center, she expressed her desire for students to have a firm grasp of movable-do during their development so that in their final years of choir, they can appreciate how choirs in many parts of the world use fixed-do to understand interval relationships in a different way.

Question 8: What advice would you give me as a choral teacher to help teach sight-singing?

Conductor One's first response to this question was, "I like that you're studying it. I didn't. I never had a goal to work with children and I've worked with children pretty

close to 40 years.” While he learned much from his many years of experience, he agrees that choral directors in training can gain valuable insights through studying various methodologies. In addition to advocating learning several music education systems, he said that one must realize the strengths and weaknesses of any system. Then, educators should be consistent in capitalizing on their strengths while developing their weaknesses.

Though Conductor Two said that he learned much from his graduate school that he could apply in teaching, Conductor One expressed that he did not feel prepared to run a rehearsal after graduate school. He put it this way, “You learn what you have to learn on the job.” Perhaps there is no preparation as fitting as experience. However, all three conductors agreed that advanced preparation, score study, and mindfulness about difficult passages, are all important aspects for choral directors to consider.

Conductor Three’s top three ideas for advice for conductors began with a call to be consistent in teaching sight-singing. “Consistency is key. Even if it is only ten minutes per rehearsal. It does not need to be advanced, and it can even be what you are working on in repertoire.” She believes that this repetition will bolster student skills while demonstrating the importance of cultivating the art of sight-singing. Secondly, the director’s attitude is also pivotal in their success. Just as some animals can sense fear, children can tell if their director is uncomfortable with a piece of music or the concept of sight-singing. Children can absorb either the hesitancy a choir director has regarding sight-singing or the confidence of sight-singing while allowing for errors to be made. “It’s all about the attitude.” She states. Finally, sight-singing is not just about learning

repertoire but is also about developing curiosity in a student. If possible, she encourages a time be set aside for students to read through Pop, Jazz, or Classical scores of the student's own choosing. The style does not matter, but the important thing is that the students are reading. This educates the spirit of choristers who are not afraid to perform things they don't know.

Table 1.1 Conductor One's Themes

Teaching Sight-Singing Strategies	Self-Efficacy	Common Misunderstandings
Auditioning with sight-singing	Differentiation of skillset	View piano as enemy
Individual student preparation of sheet music	Equipping students for success	Lack of consistency
Writing in solfege	Gain experience in teaching sight-singing	Learning only on method of music education
Using the board for visual demonstration of beats	Skill-building	Copying and imitation
Body percussion	Unaccompanied sight-singing	Lack of assessment
Combined rhythms 2+3	Sight-singing without piano aid	Lack of experience
Group singing	Theory skills	Lack of preparation
Body involvement	Vocal skills	
Overarching teacher responsibilities	Solo singing opportunity	
Report card system	Sight-singing without instrumental experience	
Showing musical phrasing through body movements	Learning pitch from memory	
Sing scales before sight-singing	Section leader auditioning	
Study sight-singing	Praising students who receive perfect scores	
Growing culture of children's choirs		
Learning several music education systems		
Awareness of weakness to any system		
Advanced preparation of scores		
Kodály method		
Solfege		
Stick notation		
Rhythmic notation		
Providing rhythm with piano		
Audiation through conducting observation		
Engaging aural imagination		
Choir camp		
Sight-singing repertoire		
Solfege more important than rhythm		
Sight-singing assessment		
Movable-do, la based minor		
Repertoire over pedagogy		
Diatonic vs chromatic melodies		
Unstructured sight-singing		

Table 1.2 Conductor Two's Themes

Teaching Sight-Singing Strategies	Self-Efficacy	Common Misunderstandings
Kodály method	Self-correction	Copying and imitation
Audiation	High musical expectations	Excessive piano usage
Score study	Student skillset	Overemphasis on mistakes
Solfege	Student independence	Lack of engagement
Neutral syllables	Empowering students	
Stick notation	Student mentoring	
Remain in concert pitch	Student engagement	
Clear audiation goals for students	Engage with the music	
Sight-singing as a test of audiation	High level intellectual activity	
Rote-singing	Accepting mistakes	
Bi-tonality	Duets and trios	
Context in solfege	Solo singing	
Repertoire		
Intervallic pitch relationships		
Curwen hand signs		
Graduate school training		
Practice strategies		
Instrumental experience to choral experience		
Foreseeing sight-singing difficulties		
Perfect and relative pitch		
Methodical learning process		
Relate all notes to Do		
Memorize starting pitches of songs		
Curwen hand sings and sing simultaneously		
Clap other student parts		
Sing in thirds or fifths		
Sing backwards		
Passing on skills to the next generation		
Mindfulness		
Subconscious and Conscious		
All students learn all parts		
Drone on do		
Rhythmic dictation		
Choir camp		
Modalities, keyalities, and tonalities		
Fixed-do and movable-do		
Harmony		
Long-term teaching		
Body percussion		
Octatonic scale		
Musical structures		

On the job training
Cognitive strategy
Count-sing
Note letter names

Table 1.3 Conductor Three's Themes

Teaching Sight-Singing Strategies	Self-Efficacy	Common Misunderstandings
Diatonic vs atonal preferences Observe the simple things Fixed-do and movable-do	Taking musical risks Mindset of self-acceptance Comfortable and safe learning space	Hesitancy verses confidence Adolescent self-awareness Laughing to hide insecurity
Intervallic pitch relationships New sight-singing challenges Long process	Self-empowerment Self-correcting mistakes Admitting errors	Fear of taking risks Copying and imitation Narrow focus on details instead of big picture
Slow improvement Sight-reading	Teamwork Voice lessons	Preparing late Limited access to new music to sight-sing
Rigorous program Musical structure Fresh and new repertoire	Audition Singing individually Curiosity	Perfectionist students Director attitude Lack of consistency Overuse of piano
Preparing repertoire early Teaching macro before micro Tracking and preparation Musical phrasing Musical arc Harmony Dalcroze method Kodály method Consistency Director's attitude and approach Challenge conformity	Unstopped flow of music Learning strategy Adventurer mindset Detail oriented Life-skill Audiating for one's self	

Main Theme #1 Common Misunderstandings

Throughout all three interviews, one theme that kept appearing was director's sharing common misunderstandings in sight-singing in their group. When teaching sight-

singing, all three conductors believed it was important to know not just what does work but also what does not work. The hope in becoming aware of these sight-singing impediments is an increased alertness to when they emerge during a rehearsal. The first step in fixing a problem is acknowledging its existence.

Excessive piano use during rehearsals was unanimously viewed as a hindrance to sight-singing. Without any prompting, each conductor mentioned the dangers of having students learn to rely too heavily on the piano to generate pitch. Conductor One said that, “I view the piano as my enemy a lot of the time which is tough because my wife is a pianist.” He clarified further that, “I always want to hear the voices and I want the voices to hear the voices. I don’t want the voices to hear the piano.” Especially since he works with so much a capella music, it is unhelpful for his group to grow too accustomed to have the piano continually play along. He concluded saying, “The piano is a crutch. It’s a good basic tool for beginning but it’s not musical like a voice is.” For this reason, Conductor One denied one student’s request in rehearsal to have the piano play the pitch for their part and does not allow students to play their parts on the piano when preparing for sight-singing tests. Conductor Two would agree with this practice as he clearly stated that as often as possible, he forbids the piano from supplying students with their starting pitches. Conductor Three’s pianist did softly supply notes during their first read-through of a piece, but mainly emphasized melodic lines that were unsteady. Conductor One states his end goal confidently saying, “Those kids could easily sight-sing quite a few

pieces we've done in our repertoire without even a piano in the room just a starting pitch and solfege."

An ersatz version of audiation, imitation is another top hindrance to sight-singing that each director referenced in some way. Because students with developed ears can imitate a pitch being played or sung next to them almost instantaneously, a director can be deceived into thinking the group can audiate and sight-sing more successfully than they realistically can. Conductor Three praised her students for having very good ears and being able to copy anything that's played to them, "But that's not sight reading," she admits. While this form of copying can be useful in teaching songs by rote, it functions as a precursor to true audiation and is not the goal of a self-reliant sight-singing chorus. Conductor Two cautions against teaching only by rote because the students are less engaged in the musical process and are just copying instead of delving into the deeper musical structures. They may just be patiently waiting, or not, to their turn to make music.

In order not to hinder the student's sight-singing, a conductor needs to know when to teach fine musical details and when to instruct about the overall musical goal of the song. During the interviews, the directors each had a similar approach to teaching the song in its entirety before stopping to discuss what went right or wrong. The main hindrance in introducing a song is that the choir to be so buried in the details that they miss the overarching music point of the song. Conductor Three admitted that in her younger days, she would stop and rehearse the fine points during her initial read-through.

With experience, she realizes how that approach sacrifices the musical line of the music for the sake of accurate pitches or rhythms. With time, the musical students will learn to perfect the minutiae and insert that into their understanding of the work as a whole. This process works less effectively the other way around.

Main Theme #2 Self-Efficacy and Confidence

One shared goal among the interviewed directors is to empower their students with the skills and self-confidence to create music on their own. Conductor Two related a story on the topic enabling his students in which he asked the students to sing a middle C and the choir was unable to do so. Unperturbed, he asked them to audiate the start of one of their repertoire songs that began on that note. After he reminded them that the note they were now audiating was middle C, they successfully sang the note and then laughed—happy at their accomplishment. This is an example of teaching students not just skills but the ability to recognize their abilities and take confidence in them.

Self-efficacy begets self-efficacy. Thus, when all three directors design opportunities for their students to sing solos, duets, and in small groups, they create chances for students to feel successful in methodical steps. In the same way that negative self-talk can spiral downwards in a depressing cycle, so positive, successful actions can build efficacious beliefs about a student's abilities. Conductor Three fondly recalled an uplifting story when one of her teachers at the conservatory she attended would bring unfamiliar Baroque songs to sing through every class. The teacher would play the piano

while the students would sing together and then individually. No matter the mistakes, she would continue playing as the students learned to track where their part was as the music progressed even if they missed a bar or two. Conductor Three's point was to be willing to expose the choristers to sing individually to gain that much needed confidence. When it comes time for a performance, a student can subconsciously be powered through countless successful singing experiences in the classroom for a fearless performance.

All three conductors wanted to praise their student's successful efforts and correct any mistakes during each rehearsal. However, one topic that builds confidence is when a student can self-correct. Teaching students to both identify their errors and then solve them on their own is an empowering way to equip the choir. Conductor Two affirms about sight-singing that, "The point is independence." Thus, his goal is to enable his students to both hear errors and audiate solutions. Conductor Three urges conductors to push past sight-singing errors and continue singing. Just as she compares sight-singing to the courage it takes to just jump when sky-diving, Conductor One, will sometimes pause at the end of a hard portion of music to compliment the student's musicality and determination to sing correctly. Taking moments like these to either urge your students to jump or congratulate them on taking musical risks help build that self-efficacy and confidence in the student's musicality and life.

Main Theme #3 Sight-Singing Strategies

Of all the information the directors contributed in the interviews, perhaps the most data came from the many strategies they shared with about strategies that effectively help

teach sight-singing for them. While there cannot be an exhaustive list, there are several general means of teaching sight-singing that can be varied to fit a choir. Conductor Two spoke about the slow learning process it takes for students to grasp sight-singing and Conductor Three agreed by stating how long it took before she began seeing positive sight-singing results after she implemented a new system for her choir.

All the conductors, for at least part of a rehearsal, worked on sight-singing a song without words on neutral syllables of some kind. Conductor One and Two would often have the students sing the solfege before trying the neutral syllables. Conductor Two had his students take time to write in the solfege if they were not familiar enough to sing without it being provided. Conductor One only had them write in solfege for unusual chromatic alterations such as Fi or Ta because his students were older and could save time this way. Conductor Two gave several strategies to train students to use solfege such as singing a third or fifth above the melody, sing the song on solfege backwards, or have some students drone on Do while the other group holds the note in question.

One other topic that appeared in teaching strategies for sight-singing was involving the body somehow. In each group, students could be found tapping, patting, or swaying to the beat. Conductor One began his rehearsal bringing attention to the body and becoming aware of the breath. This sense of body awareness may help with beat and rhythm security. Conductor Two gave options to involve the body such as utilizing Curwen hand signs, clapping a rhythm and then singing the solfege on top of it, or singing a melody forward on solfege and then clap the rhythm backward. Conductor

Three wants to incorporate Dalcroze methodology to help students better connect their minds and bodies to the music. Conductor One stated, "I think body involvement is key." he then explained that it is part of the director's job to bridge the connection between music and body. He shared that in his rehearsal he sometimes has them do body percussion or stand in place and tap rhythms with a steady beat, while at other times he will create groups in the room that are assigned to clap the different rhythmic patterns written on the board.

Outlying Themes

While not main themes, two additional themes worthy of mention emerged throughout the interviews including the role of Summer choir camp and director preparedness. Each director viewed their Summer choir camp as a vital component of preparing and instructing for the upcoming year. Conductor One mentioned that during camp he would organize small ensemble, choose section leaders, and develop sight-singing skills. Conductor Two stated that his choir camp is a prime opportunity to teach singing technique skills and solfege.

Director preparedness unveils itself in many ways, but one that was often mentioned by each director was selecting music in advance for their choirs. Choosing music with much time to prepare allows for both time to score study for the director and time to learn the song for the students. All directors believed advanced score selection, if possible, was an effective practice

Rehearsal Observation

For each of the rehearsal observations below, the researcher observed for the entire rehearsal period and stayed afterward to speak with the director. An observational checklist was completed as well as hand-written notes for every rehearsal which was reviewed afterwards.

Conductor One's Rehearsal Description

Conductor One's rehearsal started with a mindful approach to preparing the body to sing by having the students start with a yoga tree pose while focusing on their breathing. Then he focused the warm-ups on the mouth and jaw by having students repeat several consonant sounds after him. The students wiggled their arms and shoulders as they sang through the vocal exercises on neutral syllables and lip trills. They seemed to enjoy all the movement during the opening fifteen minutes and especially had fun mimicking a Julia Childs voice to enlarge their vocal resonance.

There was time in the beginning exercises to include a drill to sharpen audiation skills by having students first sing an A and call it "So" After this put them in the key of D Major, Conductor One would silently form several Curwen hand signs while the students watched and heard the pitches in their mind. Then on cue, they would sing from memory what they had just audiated while copying the hand signs. Conductor One reinforced the theme of audiation by denying a soprano one's request to have her starting pitch given to her by the piano. He responded to her saying, "No, you'll definitely have

it.” This answer acknowledges his confidence in the singer’s abilities to audiate and also demonstrates his expectations for his choristers.

Before rehearsal, all the students walked in and went to their spots on the choir risers and began preparing for the rehearsal. While there was a lot of noise at times, it seemed to be the noise of energetic students excited to sing in the group. Students who were not being addressed by Conductor One would often be looking ahead a few measures or practicing past bars silently to themselves until it was their turn to be called on. Since this was a final rehearsal before a performance, the music was entirely memorized, and students entertained themselves by chanting the foreign text in rhythm during the break. Students were also ready with a correct answer to Conductor One’s questions about the music such as, “What’s the difference between *poco a crescendo* and *subito mezzo forte*?”

After the rehearsal break, some of the sopranos did not end their chattering and the student-elected president of the group stood up and declared their behavior unacceptable. This shows a level of discipline built into the group that allows for students to keep each other accountable to be fully engaged in rehearsal. Several other times in rehearsal, students would help each other to sing the correct pitch or rhythm. One girl raised her hand to speak to her alto section and let them know they were not counting a quarter note correctly. This type of leadership in the group helps the conductor focus on larger details since the students are so responsible for the music.

Their repertoire consisted of songs in multiple languages including Estonian, English, French, and Latin. The choir sight-sang an Estonian folk song by first identifying the key signature and marking in some of the needed solfege. Conductor One cautioned them to use their time wisely by writing in only the solfege that would be confusing for them such as altered chromatic notes, fast passages, or large intervals. At first the students sang on neutral syllables while the piano played the highly rhythmic part with them. Then Conductor One opted for the students to sing only on solfege and then with hand signs added in. While the rhythms were not all accurate, most of the pitches in this new folk song were correct.

The students carefully watched Conductor One's conducting as he led them through several full run-throughs of the pieces that they were performing that week. The students were highly attentive during this time and their faces expressively matched the meaning of the music and text. Conductor One was thoroughly entrenched in the musical phrases and drawing out as much dynamic power from the forte passages as well as controlling the force of the subdued measures. Conductor One commended the students' artistry specifically on the production of the appoggiaturas in one song and applauded their expressivity. The students responded warmly to him. No student seemed shy to ask a question to their director, and all the choir affectionately referred to him on a first-name basis.

Conductor Two's Rehearsal Description

Conductor Two began his rehearsal promptly with some exercises to expand the range of the students. Throughout the warm-up, he queried about the quality of vowels and breath control. The students were able to engage the questions about their singing with detailed explanations with how they could correct their singing posture or vowel production to achieve the desired result. As the students would sing through their warm up scales using lightly Italian accented solfege, Conductor Two would occasionally pause them and say, "I'm so sorry, why did I stop you?" The attentive students would answer by selecting and describing a problem with either their singing energy, space, or breath.

One metacognitive exercise he wrote on the board used numbers to illustrate pitch relationships. The students were to audiate and then sing the correct sequence of notes. After some initial engagement with this mental strategy to hear pitches in the mind, he turned it into a competitive game by asking "Who wants to be on the champion league?" Whichever students felt most confident volunteered by raising their hands and then singing the sequence he pointed to on the board. The students that sang on the "champion league were met with the enthusiastic applause of their peers.

Throughout the warm-up and most of the rehearsal, the piano was only sparsely played though not for starting pitches. Conductor Two expected the students to sing an A when instructed to do so and then find their respective pitches from there. While many Kodály instructors use a tuning fork to sing an A to their students, Conductor Two bypassed this step by expecting the students to audiate the pitch without the need of a director singing to them or a piano playing the pitch.

While these students were mostly in sixth through eighth grade, they demonstrated a high-level of focus during the warm-up and the challenging repertoire. One student that was causing a distraction was politely asked to step into the hallway to compose herself before rejoining the class as a constructive chorister. This was the exception however, as the rest of the class was prepared with choir binders on their chairs and pencils in their hands. Students revealed a level of personal responsibility to the music and their group by quickly shooting their hand up whenever they realized they made a mistake. Conductor Two reminded them about this practice in the second half of the evening by saying “Please show me hands when you make a mistake.” Conductor Two made sure to involve the whole choir in the music making process as often as possible by having all voice parts sing the alto line at times. Even though only the altos would perform that part, having the rest of the group sing the part engaged them in the rehearsal, exposed them to a supporting harmony part, and gave them a more concrete overall sense of the flow of the repertoire.

During the rehearsal, the students’ repertoire consisted of songs in English, Latin, Estonian and sung in all seven of the modes: Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, Locrian, and even the octatonic scale. During warm-ups the students sang up the Ionian scale and down the Dorian scale as a way of familiarizing them with the various modalities while singing them also. Conductor Two taught the octatonic scale, which was the basis of one of their songs, by having the students sing an ascending scale with the solfege La Ti Do La Ti Do La Ti Do. Since the choir was so

familiar with the La Ti Do relationship, it was simple for them to sing this pattern thrice rather than to alternate whole and half steps. Conductor Two was very committed to this rehearsal technique and made sure all students were experiencing success before he had them layer four groups to do it simultaneously in order to build a fully diminished seventh chord.

Conductor Two reinforced the skill of sight-singing by having students hold their choir binders with correct posture and then write the solfege in their parts before singing. This allowed time for each chorister to work out his or her part by audiating and writing before singing. At times he would say, "Take twenty seconds and look at your music." This short vocal break gave the young choristers an opportunity to determine what needed to be fixed and audiate how they would sing those upcoming measures accurately at the end of the respite.

While the students did focus intently, they also engaged their conductor by looking up often and laughing during his humorous moments. His conducting engaged the students as would expressively use both hands to convey the musical phrasing. While he sat in his conducting chair, he would snap the beat loudly rather than count during the preparatory patterns.

Description of Conductor Three's Rehearsal Description

One word to describe Conductor Three's rehearsal is focused. There is an energy that permeates the entirety of the practice time from the moment all the girls begin

singing an A on a neutral syllable at the start of their warm-up to the closing announcements and questions. Conductor Three did not personally lead warm-ups but had the vocal trainer from their department spend the opening fifteen minutes singing through the whole range of the girls while focusing on vowel production, pitch accuracy and breath control. The vibrancy of over forty young women's voices echoed through the practice hall as one powerful and forceful sound.

While the girls did focus well during the almost three-hour rehearsal, they could be seen smiling, laughing, and congratulating each other during the practice time and break periods. After one soprano had a solo section, the entire group displayed their enthusiasm by clapping for her. Two second sopranos turned to each other and high fived after a particularly difficult section to recognize their hard work paying off.

After the break, they reconvened by singing again a concert A which was then followed by some pointed reminders by one older student that every chorister be mindful of cleaning up their area after rehearsal. She spoke with conviction and a sense of ownership of the group. This type of in-house student leadership may have helped to focus some of the newer members to the group and teach the independent responsibility that being in the chorus requires.

They began with a difficult eight-part harmony piece based on the whole tone scale that they sight read for the first time confidently and accurately. Before singing, Conductor Three had the entire group chant only the rhythms of specific bars that she

anticipated would be troublesome for the girls. This both prepared the girls for success in sight-reading and demonstrated their director's preparation and foresight. Conductor Three commented afterward that she was impressed and delighted at the success of the group's first sight reading of the piece. I remarked that it looked as if the girls were sight-singing the score, but it did not sound that way because of how polished it was on their first run-through of it.

The students' confident faces and voices reflected the sure conducting of their director. From her conductor pedestal, Conductor Three conducted time while pointing out entrances and calling out musical reminders. At times she would walk up to a vocal section and lean in to inspect suspect pitches, and other times she would sing aloud the third or fifth of the chord that was not prominent enough to her ear. While she did support the group's needs by conducting fundamental concepts such as dynamic contrasts and beat patterns, she expected each singer to independently carry the responsibility of the overall musical sound. After two beat preparations, all girls were expected to come in confidently and in tune with their parts. Once their director called out a page number and measure number, the girls were expected to be prepared to begin singing their part without help from the piano as soon as the beat was counted. The focused energy was obvious because for the first fifty minutes of the rehearsal before the five-minute break, the only pauses in the music making was for a quick correction by Conductor Three which rarely consisted of more than a sentence or two before forging onward with the music.

Final Rehearsal Observations

Throughout all three rehearsals one theme that emerged was the role of student leadership. This was evident through the many interactions in which students would encourage or admonish one another to more constructive behavior or more accurate singing. The role, structured or not, that student leadership played on focusing all the choristers may have provided for the directors to spend their time on rehearsing more details. This student leadership may have its roots in the role of personal responsibility many students seemed to exhibit by their long attention spans, independently marking their scores, and preparation outside of rehearsal. There may be a link between the level of expectation and musical responsibility a director places on their student and the sense of personal responsibility and ownership of the music this fosters. A student with a high level of personal responsibility to the group and music coupled with a director's high expectations regarding singing new music may be more prone to sight-sing without the help of rote singing and piano accompaniment.

Another theme common in all three rehearsals was the director's expectation of students singing accurate pitches without the help of the piano. While an accompanist was present for all three director's rehearsals, they were utilized in varying degrees apropos to the texture and style of music as well as the director's value. In the mainly a cappella music that Conductor Two's choir sang, the accompanist rarely played even while following along. This was obviously a predetermined effort because the pianist would only play under Conductor Two's direction or to point out a wayward note.

Conductor Three's pianist mentioned after a rehearsal that Conductor Three knew how to use an accompanist – not too little or too much. Conductor One sometime doubled as his own accompanist when the pianist had to leave sometimes. He did express that becoming less reliant on the piano was a long-term goal. This shared intent among the choir directors coincides with readying students to become self-sufficient in audiating new music while sight-singing. Whether it was expressly stated or not, each conductor in their own way denied students the ease of hearing their pitches played on the piano in favor of producing them unaccompanied.

Finally, all the directors focused on sight-singing quite often in rehearsals partly due to the necessity because of the sheer number of performances. More importantly though, each director readily agreed to the value of sight-singing in regard to their teaching philosophy. While there are immediate benefits to a choir that can easily sight-read newly composed music for their numerous upcoming concerts, there are also the long-term benefits of growing musicians who curiously look into reading from unfamiliar music scores and develop into lifelong learners of music.

Video Performance Analyses

The following tables display the researcher's ratings of a taped live performance for each of the conductor's respective choirs. The rubric employed was designed by California Music Educator Association (CMEA) for their Bay Section Choral

Performance. After each group's performance was observed live and then re-listened to again by the researcher, each choir received a superior rating.

Analysis of Conductor One's Performance.

Table 1.4 Conductor One's Superior Scoring From CMEA Rubric

Quality of Sound	Technique	Musicality
<p><i>Tone Quality/Intonation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superlative tone quality and vowel uniformity achieved throughout the performance. • Tone is consistently focused, full, clear, resonant, and uniform. • Exceptional breath support and management. • Performers demonstrate outstanding sense of tonal center. • Melodic and harmonic intonation is always evident. • Highly developed listening and adjusting skills. <p><i>Blend/Balance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend and tone across the ensemble are consistently uniform. • Balance between melodic and harmonic lines reflects exceptional listening skills. • Exceptional blend and balance in all registers and textures. 	<p><i>Rhythm/Precision/Facility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensemble cohesiveness is outstanding at all times. • Remarkable control of pulse, tempo, and rhythmic patterns. • Precision and clarity are exemplary. • Attacks and releases are performed correctly. • Technical facility is superb. <p><i>Articulation/Diction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation of consonants and vowels is correct and language-appropriate. • Enunciation of text is clear, precise, and stylistically appropriate. • Diphthongs are performed correctly. 	<p><i>Interpretation/Style/Phrasing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performers pay attention and follow the conductor • Stylistic elements are always appropriate and the performance is highly musical. • Tempo choices are tasteful and appropriate. • Mature, expressive, and dynamic shaping of musical phrases at all times. <p><i>Expression/Sensitivity/Dynamics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplary communication between conductor and ensemble creates a polished and professional performance. • Expression is authentic, sensitive, and highly effective. • Extraordinary performance that explores the entire dynamic spectrum. • Facial expressions are sometimes evident.

Conductor One's choir performed with a level of musicality that bespoke the talents of their director and belied the age of the performers. Each soloist or duet blended well enough to mix with the ensemble while remaining heterogonous. Each obscure Latin or Estonian text was performed with a sense of musical weight and significance despite the audience unfamiliarity with the language. Conductor One realized the musical goals and expectations of each rehearsal through this performance.

Analysis of Conductor Two's Performance.

Table 1.5 Conductor Two's Superior Scoring From CMEA Rubric

Quality of Sound	Technique	Musicality
<p><i>Tone Quality/Intonation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent tone quality and vowel uniformity achieved most of the time. • Tone is consistently focused, full, clear, resonant, and uniform. • Exceptional breath support and management. • Performers demonstrate outstanding sense of tonal center. • Melodic and harmonic intonation is always evident. • Highly developed listening and adjusting skills. <p><i>Blend/Balance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend and tone across the ensemble are consistently uniform. 	<p><i>Rhythm/Precision/Facility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensemble cohesiveness is outstanding at all times. • Remarkable control of pulse, tempo, and rhythmic patterns. • Precision and clarity are exemplary. • Attacks and releases are performed correctly. • Technical facility is well developed; minor flaws occur during the most demanding passages. <p><i>Articulation/Diction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation of consonants and vowels are appropriate, but not always uniform. • Enunciation of text is clear, precise, and stylistically appropriate most of the time. • Diphthongs are performed correctly most of the time. 	<p><i>Interpretation/Style/Phrasing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performers pay attention and follow the conductor • Stylistic elements are always appropriate and the performance is highly musical. • Tempo choices are tasteful and appropriate. • Mature, expressive, and dynamic shaping of musical phrases at all times. <p><i>Expression/Sensitivity/Dynamics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplary communication between conductor and ensemble creates a polished and professional performance. • Expression is authentic, sensitive, and highly effective. • Crescendos, diminuendos, and other dynamic indications are performed tastefully most of the time. • Facial expressions are sometimes evident.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance between melodic and harmonic lines reflects exceptional listening skills. • Exceptional blend and balance in all registers and textures. 		
---	--	--

The student's in Conductor Two's choir are young, but their treble voices sing with the maturity of older choristers. Their vowels are tall for the most part, their faces intent yet innocent, and their conductor seems to be speaking volumes though only through his conducting gestures. The level of communication between choir and conductor is evident and likely will continue to grow as this group matures into high school.

Analysis of Conductor Three's Performance.

Table 1.6 Conductor Three's Superior Scoring From CMEA Rubric

Quality of Sound	Technique	Musicality
------------------	-----------	------------

<p><i>Tone Quality/Intonation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superlative tone quality and vowel uniformity achieved • throughout the performance. Tone is consistently focused, full, clear, resonant, and uniform. Exceptional breath support and management. Performers demonstrate outstanding sense of tonal center. • Melodic and harmonic intonation is always evident. • Highly developed listening and adjusting skills. <p><i>Blend/Balance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend and tone across the ensemble are consistently uniform. • Balance between melodic and harmonic lines reflects exceptional listening skills. • Exceptional blend and balance in all registers and textures. 	<p><i>Rhythm/Precision/Facility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensemble cohesiveness is outstanding at all times. • Remarkable control of pulse, tempo, and rhythmic patterns. • Precision and clarity are exemplary. • Attacks and releases are performed correctly. • Technical facility is superb. <p><i>Articulation/Diction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation of consonants and vowels is correct and language-appropriate. • Enunciation of text is clear, precise, and stylistically appropriate. • Diphthongs are performed correctly. 	<p><i>Interpretation/Style/Phrasing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performers intently follow the conductor all of the time. • Stylistic elements are always appropriate and the performance is highly musical. • Tempo choices are tasteful and appropriate. • Mature, expressive, and dynamic shaping of musical phrases at all times. <p><i>Expression/Sensitivity/Dynamics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplary communication between conductor and ensemble creates a polished and professional performance. • Expression is authentic, sensitive, and highly effective. • Extraordinary performance that explores the entire dynamic spectrum. • Facial expressions are evident.
--	---	--

Conductor Three walked onto the stage with as much confidence in her students as the students displayed in their conductor and their expression of the music. The audience reacted to the enthralling dynamic contrasts and expressive rests with a sense of stillness and anticipation. This choir sang not only the music but entwined their songs

with that “X-factor” that engages the listener and challenges the conformity of the modern concert hall.

Final Analysis of Performances

Because each group so competently performs the fundamentals of singing properly, the result is a polished performance. However, since any musician is aware that checking off all the correct notes, rhythms and tempi is only part of the music, that final aspect of musicality comes into play. From the raw power and stunning diction of Conductor Three’s group to the focused and vibrant dynamics of Conductor One’s choir, to the pure, open vowels of Conductor Two’s group, there is an engaging sense of musicality that is hard to quantify. A polished performance is not always a musical performance. These students transform the notes on their page to memorized sounds in their mind that express themselves in the communal art of choral singing.

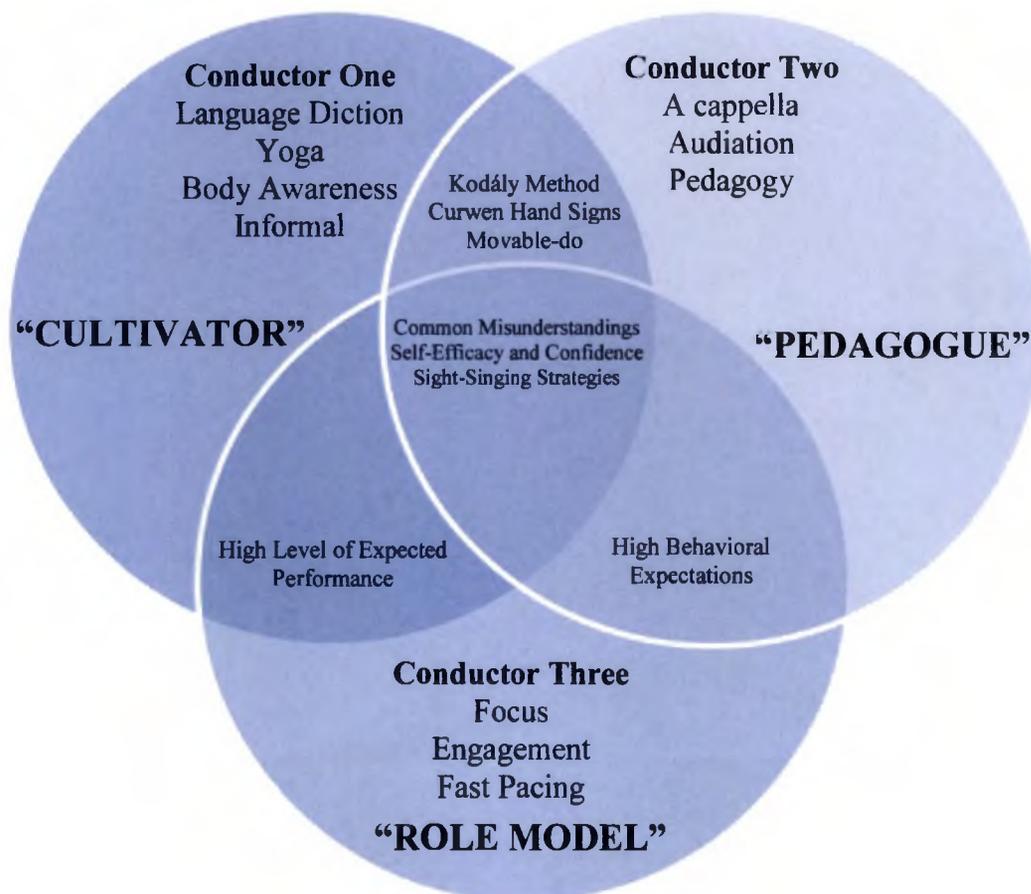
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the concept of audiation taught through sight-singing in professional children's choirs through a set of interviews, observations, and performance analyses. This process was conducted on three Bay Area directors and their respective children's choir.

Table 1.7 Venn Diagram of Shared Conductor Themes



Because of the music-positive learning environment of Conductor One, I have given him the title of “Cultivator” based on the research gathered from his interview, rehearsal observation and performance analysis. During rehearsal, he laughed with students and made a welcoming atmosphere to sing and create meaningful music experiences. While at times his rehearsal was more informal than the other conductors, he did not sacrifice the musical integrity of the songs but would spend considerable time just having the students sit scissor-legged on the risers and pronounce the French lyrics in rhythm without singing. He would clearly correct any mispronunciations and call on one French-speaking student for further diction guidance. One other way he invited students into the music-making process was to have them connect with their breath and body by starting the class with a few simple yoga postures. This helped to center their minds in readiness for the sight-singing to come. His practice of allowing students to silently audiate sight-singing excerpts before being asked to sing is effective according to Killian and Henry’s research (2005). Even after the rehearsal concluded and students came up to speak with him, he was continuing that overarching conversation of developing life-long music makers. Toppling the top-down hierarchy, one can easily see through speaking and observing this educator how he has impacted so many through the years to conduct, sing, and compose new choral works for children.

After interviewing, Conductor Two thanked me for letting him “nerd-out” about music education methodologies. Ever the “Pedagogue,” he passionately learns, discusses and teaches his Kodály methodology. When speaking about inner-hearing and audiation,

he would pause to clarify what these terms means specifically to him and how he uses them. His higher education learning was all the more profitable to him because of his analytical mind that processed working practice strategies for himself into useable choral strategies. Not only did he firmly believe in his methodological convictions but he also consistently exercised them in the classroom. Even though students sometimes tired of the stretching inner-hearing process he guided them through, he resolutely persevered in teaching. His practice of having the students studiously pencil in the solfege in their scores echoes Lovorn's (2016) research which suggests that practice contributes to better sight-singing accuracy scores. The success of his young choristers confirms his effective pedagogy.

Conductor Three played the part of "Role Model" through her charisma, passion, and confidence. Students observing her dynamic conducting responded with clear entrances and cutoffs. Her insistence on focused and prepared breaths for entrances roused the choristers to give their utmost. The student's eyes were riveted on her and she engaged her students by walking up to a certain section to listen in to the parts being sung. Her high level of expectations arouses student's self-belief to a level that they can take musical risks with confidence. She sets the pace of the rehearsal with by preparing in advance, using time wisely, and maximizing the singing time over talking. Her approach to using sight-singing extensively to learn music for performances contrasted with Demorest and May's (1995) research that found many high-school directors defer to rote-singing to prepare for performances. She demonstrates how to practice musically even in

how she leads a rehearsal. Using her trained voice to sing the desired effects, she bypasses the need to explain her intentions with words. Conductor Three is an example of being able to do all that asks of her students.

Conductor One and Two overlap in many ways, one being their mutual respect for one another. They both emphasize using Kodály method and Curwen hand signs, though Conductor Two implements them further. Both are thoroughly convinced of the effectiveness of the movable-do system to train audiating students which contrasts with Davenport (1992) but is supported by May's (1993) research.

Conductor Two and Three both share similar high behavioral expectations of their students even though their pacing of rehearsal differs. Conductor Three and One both expect world-class performances of their choir. Their attention to detail and urging for students to actualize momentous musical moments in world premieres are testimonies of noteworthy intentions they have for their group.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to gather qualitative data on how three directors of professional children's choirs taught sight-singing with a focus on audiation. All three directors were interviewed with questions regarding their views and experience in teaching an audiation-centric approach to sight-singing. The answers to those interviews were triangulated against rehearsal observations of their groups and analysis of their performance.

This study discovered three main themes emerged through the director interviews, rehearsal observations, and performance analysis. The data mining process of the interview uncovered the three main themes to be (1) Common Misunderstandings, (2) Self-Efficacy and Confidence, and (3) Sight-Singing Strategies. Each of these themes had multiple supporting themes from the interviews that were exhibited in the rehearsal observations and demonstrated in the performances.

The theme, common misunderstandings, was chosen for its representation of several hindrances that directors warned against repeatedly across the three interviews. One significant obstacle found was that excessive use of the piano in rehearsal was unhelpful in promoting audiation during sight-singing because of student's reliance on the instrument for providing pitches rather than producing them in their mind. Another deterrent to audiation was the use of copying and imitating sounds, such as rote singing or copying a peer, as a consistent rehearsal technique. Because choirs with developed ears may still sing musically with imitation, it may deceptively sound as if they are audiating the score by themselves. Brittain's (1998) findings concur that the presence of just a handful of competent sight-singers in a choir may be enough to fake sounding as if the whole choir can competently sight-sing. Another important impediment that surfaced was teaching micro to macro when first sight-singing a song. This compulsion to fix all student errors during the initial stages of learning the music focuses distracts from the choir gaining a well-balanced view of the music. These common misunderstandings were identified and cautioned against in the research.

The second theme that arose in the research was the notion of self-efficacy and confidence. Each director spoke and practiced some empowering words or behavior that strengthened the idea of student's confidence in their sight-singing abilities. One director would teach through a purposeful series of questions that resulted in the students discovering they knew the answer to the proposed question all along. The pedagogue's gentle guiding of the student's awareness to specific questions enabled them to find they already knew the correct answer and could access it by audiating and then singing it. Another director would implement small opportunities for her students to sing in duets or solos thereby creating times of success for the students to recall later. Also, another director invited students into the learning process by asking them their opinions about the music and how to solve certain technical problems. This cultivated a positive learning environment of respect where students felt encouraged to speak their minds, make mistakes, and continue growing.

The research also brought up many sight-singing strategies as an abundant theme among the interviewees. Because of their success teaching sight-singing, these directors have compiled a mass of methods to help students audiate and sight-sing successfully. The use of movable-do solfege appeared readily in this research marking it as a tool used to effectively teach audiation through sight-singing whether by writing it in, singing scales on solfege to prepare tonality before singing, or to teach harmonic function. Using the body to connect to the music through rhythm was another action the directors employed. While one director incorporated yoga, another would pat or snap a steady

rhythm to the music. All directors encouraged some form of bodily movement to the music to help connect the mind and body during sight-singing.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, a host of effective sight-singing strategies were brought to light in addition to common misunderstandings on what is helpful in teaching sight-singing, some of which overlapped with Killian and Henry's (2005) research. The theme of self-efficacy in sight-singing is an uncommonly researched concept and could be a central idea to future research exploring the effects of student's efficacious beliefs compared to their actual sight-singing testing scores.

Because as Demorest (2001) reminds us, "teachers teach as they have been taught" (p. 1), the music education community could benefit from an exposure to new and effective sight-singing strategies. Though Conductor Two found ways to incorporate his graduate instruction into practical methods for his choir, research that explores teacher-training strategies for alternative methods of teaching sight-singing would help the music teaching community.

While this research uncovers a small qualitative chapter on the subject, there is a substantial gap in the literature regarding quantitative data for the past two decades of American choral music instruction of sight singing practices. Sanders (2017) declares that academia needs, "More descriptive research that relies on methods other than self-reporting as a means to collect data on sight-singing practice" (p. 15). Also, there has

been no nationwide study recently done on this topic Every study includes only a few select, neighboring states.

No standardized sight-singing system exists except the individual schools of thought taught by various universities that push certain music methodologies. More qualitative research involving randomized and larger samples in addition to quantitative data on the trends and effectiveness of audiation based sight-singing practices may pave the way to educators developing an accepted standardized curriculum for teaching sight-singing.

While this research examines the practice of sight-singing in professional children's choirs, there is an existing need for research that explores a practical means of implementing excellence in sight-singing teaching in the public-school system as well. Would it not be wonderful if as Choksy (1981) states, for the next generation of students learn to sight-sing "in the same way that an educated adult . . . reads a book: in silence, but imagining the sound" (p. 8).

References

- Audiation. (2017). Retrieved from <https://giml.org/mlt/audiation/>
- Bennett, P. (1984). Tricks, masks, and camouflage: Is imitation passing for music reading?. *Music Educators Journal*, 71(3), 62-69.
- Bluestine, E. (2000). *The ways children learn music: An introduction and practical guide to music learning theory*. GIA Publications.
- Boyle, J. D., & Lucas, K. V. (1990). The effect of context on sightsinging. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 106, 1-9.
- Brittain, L. M. (1998). Sight-singing pedagogy: Research applied to classroom methods. *The Choral Journal*, 39(1), 9-18.
- Brown, K. D. (2003). An alternative approach to developing music literacy skills in a transient society. *Music Educators Journal*, 90(2), 46-54.
- Choksy, L. (1981). *The Kodály context: Creating an environment for musical learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Cobb, B., & Eskew, H. (2001, January 01). King, E(lisha) J.. Grove Music Online. Ed. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.jp11net.sfsu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e0000047429>.

- Cobb, B., & Eskew, H. (2001, January 01). White, Benjamin Franklin. Grove Music Online. Ed. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.jpllnet.sfsu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630e-0000030206>.
- Avenary, H., & Eppstein, U. (2001, January 01). Jerusalem. Grove Music Online. Ed. Retrieved from <https://www-oxfordmusiconlinecom.jpllnet.sfsu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630e0000014277>.
- Colwell, C. M., & Heller, G. N. (2003). Lowell Mason's the song garden (1864–66): Its background, content, and comparison to a twentieth-century series. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(3), 231-244.
- Daniels, R. D. (1986). Relationships among selected factors and the sight-reading ability of high school mixed choirs. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 34, 279-289.
- Daniels, R. D. (1988). Sight-reading instruction in the choral rehearsal. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 6(2), 22-24.
- Darrow, A. A., & Marsh, K. (2006). Examining the validity of self-report: middle-level singers' ability to predict and assess their sight-singing skills. *International Journal of Music Education*, 24(1), 21–29.

- Davenport, L. G. (1992). American instruction in sight-singing then and now. *The Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education*, 13(2), 90-111.
- Demorest, S. M., & May, W. V. (1995). Sight-singing instruction in the choral ensemble: Factors related to individual performance. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 43(2), 156-167.
- Demorest, S. M. (1998). Sightsinging in the secondary choral ensemble: A review of the research. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, (137), 1-15.
- Demorest, S. M. (2001). *Building choral excellence: Teaching sight-singing in the choral rehearsal*. Oxford University Press on Demand.
- DiPietro, J. A. (2000). Baby and the brain: Advances in child development. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 21(1), 455-471.
- Dr. Suzuki Speech. (1964). Retrieved from <https://www.giocosostrings.com/giocoso/fyi/speech.aspx>
- Elliott, D. J. (1993). When I sing: The nature and value of choral music education. *Choral Journal*, 33(8), 11-17.
- Elliott, D., & Silverman, M. (2015). *Music matters* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Eshelman, D. (1992). Leading a renaissance in training adolescent boy singers. *Choral Journal*, 33(3), 23-27.
- Floyd, E., & Bradley, K. D. (2006). Teaching strategies related to successful sight-singing in Kentucky choral ensembles. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 25(1), 70-81.
- Gordon, E. (1997). Edwin Gordon responds. *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 5(1), 57-58.
- Gordon, E. (2007). *Learning sequences in music: A contemporary music learning theory*. Gia Publications.
- Headington, C. (1976). *History of Western Music*. Schirmer Books.
- Hicks, C. E. (1980). Sound before sight strategies for teaching music reading. *Music Educators Journal*, 66(8), 53-67.
- Jacobi, B. S. (2012). Kodály, literacy, and the brain: Preparing young music students to read pitch on the staff. *General Music Today*, 25(2), 11-18.
- Johnson, G. J. B. (1987). *A descriptive study of the pitch-reading methods and the amount of time utilized to teach sight-singing by high school choral teachers in the north central region of the American Choral Directors Association*. (Unpublished master's thesis, University of Nebraska, Lincoln).

- Jordan-DeCarbo, J. (1986). A sound-to-symbol approach to learning music. *Music Educators Journal*, 72(6), 38-41.
- Kendall, J. (1996). Suzuki's mother tongue method. *Music Educators Journal*, 83(1), 43-46.
- Killian, J. N., & Henry, M. L. (2005). A comparison of successful and unsuccessful strategies in individual sight-singing preparation and performance. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 53(1), 51-65.
- Larson, S. (1993). The value of cognitive models in evaluating solfege systems. *Indiana Theory Review*, 14(2), 73-116.
- Lovorn, T. (2016). The effect of writing solfège syllables into choral repertoire on the sight-reading ability of high school choir students. *Texas Music Education Research*, 15, 24.
- Lucas, K. V. (1994). Contextual condition and sightsinging achievement of middle school choral students. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 42(3), 203-216.
- May, J. A. (1993). *A description of current practices in the teaching of choral melody reading in the high schools of Texas* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Houston).
- McClung, A. C. (2001). Sight-singing systems: Current practice and survey of all-state choristers. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 20(1), 3-8.

- McClung, A. C. (2008). Sight-singing scores of high school choristers with extensive training in movable solfège syllables and Curwen hand signs. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56(3), 255-266.
- Miller, K. (2010). “Like cords around my heart”: Sacred harp memorial lessons and the transmission of tradition. *Oral Tradition*, 25(2).
- Robertson, P. (2001). Early American singing organizations and Lowell Mason. *The Choral Journal*, 42(4), 17–24.
- Rosenshine, B. (1995). Advances in research on instruction. *Journal of Educational Research*, 88(5), 262–268.
- Sanders, J. (2017). *Teaching musicianship to singers in a high school choral program: a portrait of three choral directors and their pedagogies* (Doctoral dissertation, Boston University).
- Sanders, P. D (2018). The sabbath school movement, two early children’s Psalm books, and their influence on the introduction of public school music education in the United States. *Contributions to Music Education*, 43, 117–135.
- Scherer, F. M. (2004). *Quarter notes and bank notes: The economics of music composition in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*. Princeton University Press.

- Scott, L. K. (2004). Early childhood brain development and elementary music curricula: are they in tune?. *General Music Today*, 18(1), 20-27.
- Siler, H. (1956). Toward an international solfeggio. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 4(1), 40-43.
- Suzuki, S. (1969). *Nurtured by love: A new approach to education*. New York: Exposition Press.
- Temperley, N. (1981). The old way of singing: Its origins and development. *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 34(3), 511-544.
- Tucker, D. W. (1969). *Factors related to the music reading ability of senior high school students participating in choral groups*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley).
- Wallace, D. (2011). Parts of the whole: Cognition, schemas, and quantitative reasoning. *Numeracy*, 4(1), 9.
- Woodford, P. G. (1996). Evaluating Edwin Gordon's music learning theory from a critical thinking perspective. *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 83-95.
- Zinar, R. (1984). Shinichi Suzuki the mother-tongue method. *The American Music Teacher*, 34(1), 26.

Appendix A

Interview Questions for Choir Directors

1. What value do you place on sight-singing?
2. From your experience, what could you tell me that has been valuable to you regarding either learning or teaching sight-singing?
3. What role does sight-singing play in your teaching/rehearsal?
4. What kind of cognitive or mindfulness strategies, such as audiation, do you teach to improve sight-singing skills?
5. How do you assess the student's sight-singing?
6. Do stronger sight-singing skills help students advance to more advanced tiers in your choir?
7. Can you explain the system you emphasize while teaching sight-singing such as movable-do, using solfege, Curwen hand signs?
8. What advice would you give me as a choral teacher to help teach sight-singing?

Appendix B

Observational Checklist from Conductor One's Rehearsal

- ✓ Concept of audiation was addressed or mentioned
- ✓ Use of solfege in singing
- ✓ Some review of past class material
- Use of technology
- ✓ Use of manipulatives
- ✓ Use of Curwen hand signs
- ✓ Use of student writing
- Use of recording for student listening
- ✓ Students used pencils
- ✓ Sight-singing material used (sheet music)
- Rote singing or call/response singing
- ✓ Solo singing
- ✓ Small group singing
- Rhythm drills or exercise

Number of students in rehearsal: *40*

Age range of students in rehearsal: *Grades 7-10 (Under the age of 16)*

Level of experience of students: *About 5 years of singing experience*

Level of student participation and attention: *Great when needed yet relaxed and focused*

Movable-do or fixed-do: *Movable-do*

A capella or piano accompaniment: *Both*

Rote singing or sight-singing or parts played on piano: *All solfege and some parts sung*

Notes: _____

Appendix C

Observational Checklist from Conductor Two's Rehearsal

- ✓ Concept of audiation was addressed or mentioned
- ✓ Use of solfege in singing
- ✓ Some review of past class material
- Use of technology
- ✓ Use of manipulatives
- ✓ Use of Curwen hand signs
- ✓ Use of student writing
- Use of recording for student listening
- ✓ Students used pencils
- ✓ Sight-singing material used (sheet music)
- Rote singing or call/response singing
- ✓ Solo singing
- ✓ Small group singing
- Rhythm drills or exercise

Number of students in rehearsal: *43*

Age range of students in rehearsal: *Middle School*

Level of experience of students: *1-2 years and choir camp*

Level of student participation and attention: *High; very engaged*

Movable-do or fixed-do: *Movable-do*

A capella or piano accompaniment: *Both*

Rote singing or sight-singing or parts played on piano: *All solfege and some parts sung*

Notes:

Some students were restless before the break. They wanted to move on to the next song or just start moving.

Appendix D

Observational Checklist from Conductor Three's Rehearsal

- ✓ Concept of audiation was addressed or mentioned
- Use of solfege in singing
- ✓ Some review of past class material
- Use of technology
- Use of manipulatives
- Use of Curwen hand signs
- ✓ Use of student writing
- Use of recording for student listening
- ✓ Students used pencils
- ✓ Sight-singing material used (sheet music)
- Rote singing or call/response singing
- ✓ Solo singing
- ✓ Small group singing
- ✓ Rhythm drills or exercise

Number of students in rehearsal: *41*

Age range of students in rehearsal: *High School*

Level of experience of students: *Experienced; 3-5 years*

Level of student participation and attention: *High*

Movable-do or fixed-do: *Movable-do*

A capella or piano accompaniment: *Both*

Rote singing or sight-singing or parts played on piano: *Both sight-singing and piano parts played*

Notes:

Appendix E

CMEA Bay Section Choral Performance Rubric

CLASSIFIED 1	1					2					3					4				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
<p>QUALITY OF SOUND</p> <p>Take the quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic tone quality concepts are understood Blend is approached, heard, or noted Voicings are noticeable either incorrect Heard support notes as necessary and read clearly Basic intonation skills used to deal with problems as advised <p>Blend/Intonation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of blend and intonation are seldom evident Individuals and sections tend to reinforce Blending and intonation skills are inchoate and/or <p>TECHNIQUE</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamentals are not used as a tool for intonation Blending process and voice accuracy for section unclear Basic intonation skills are not used to deal with problems <p>Articulation/Phrasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Articulation are seldom evident <p>MUSICALITY</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable 	<p>QUALITY OF SOUND</p> <p>Take the quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic tone quality concepts are understood Blend is approached, heard, or noted Voicings are noticeable either incorrect Heard support notes as necessary and read clearly Basic intonation skills used to deal with problems as advised <p>Blend/Intonation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of blend and intonation are seldom evident Individuals and sections tend to reinforce Blending and intonation skills are inchoate and/or <p>TECHNIQUE</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamentals are not used as a tool for intonation Blending process and voice accuracy for section unclear Basic intonation skills are not used to deal with problems <p>Articulation/Phrasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Articulation are seldom evident <p>MUSICALITY</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable 					<p>QUALITY OF SOUND</p> <p>Take the quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic tone quality concepts are understood Blend is approached, heard, or noted Voicings are noticeable either incorrect Heard support notes as necessary and read clearly Basic intonation skills used to deal with problems as advised <p>Blend/Intonation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of blend and intonation are seldom evident Individuals and sections tend to reinforce Blending and intonation skills are inchoate and/or <p>TECHNIQUE</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamentals are not used as a tool for intonation Blending process and voice accuracy for section unclear Basic intonation skills are not used to deal with problems <p>Articulation/Phrasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Articulation are seldom evident <p>MUSICALITY</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable 					<p>QUALITY OF SOUND</p> <p>Take the quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic tone quality concepts are understood Blend is approached, heard, or noted Voicings are noticeable either incorrect Heard support notes as necessary and read clearly Basic intonation skills used to deal with problems as advised <p>Blend/Intonation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of blend and intonation are seldom evident Individuals and sections tend to reinforce Blending and intonation skills are inchoate and/or <p>TECHNIQUE</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamentals are not used as a tool for intonation Blending process and voice accuracy for section unclear Basic intonation skills are not used to deal with problems <p>Articulation/Phrasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Articulation are seldom evident <p>MUSICALITY</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable 					<p>QUALITY OF SOUND</p> <p>Take the quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic tone quality concepts are understood Blend is approached, heard, or noted Voicings are noticeable either incorrect Heard support notes as necessary and read clearly Basic intonation skills used to deal with problems as advised <p>Blend/Intonation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of blend and intonation are seldom evident Individuals and sections tend to reinforce Blending and intonation skills are inchoate and/or <p>TECHNIQUE</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamentals are not used as a tool for intonation Blending process and voice accuracy for section unclear Basic intonation skills are not used to deal with problems <p>Articulation/Phrasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Articulation are seldom evident <p>MUSICALITY</p> <p>Intonation/Blend/Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Blend is not used as a tool for intonation Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable Phrasing of consonants and vowels is noticeable 				
	<p>OTHER FACTORS - 10 POINTS</p> <p>Quality of Music (1-4 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriateness for the occasion and style Quality and variety of the music Quality of rehearsal notes, records, etc. Overall impression <p>Self-Start (1-2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems evident and equipment Appropriate rehearsal notes Blending Self-start <p>Effect of Presentation (1-4 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any noticeable weaknesses of the area while the conductor leads the choir or choir is self-starting (1-4 points) <p>Self-Start (1-2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems evident and equipment Appropriate rehearsal notes Blending Self-start <p>Other Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other factors 																			