Historical transformations of techniques for overcoming performance anxiety in the context of professional training of a modern vocalist

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**Abstract.** This paper studies the problem of overcoming performance anxiety, which, to one degree or another, every musician faces throughout his educational and professional activities. The success of his professional self-realization in the modern socio-cultural space will depend on what productive ways aimed at eliminating negative manifestations of performance anxiety as an integral part of musical performance and gaining organic stage freedom will be found by the future vocalist. The performing activity of a musician can be characterized as an extremely tense, responsible, complex, stressful process. The problem of the relationship between the personality of a musician and his ability to evoke a state of stage freedom during a performance is one of the most interesting topics for research, but at the same time, one of the most difficult to solve. A theoretical analysis of the literature on the problem considered in the paper, the study of the basic practical pedagogical principles of the development of the state of stage freedom in the professional training of a modern vocalist served as the basis for revealing the specifics of the interaction between a teacher and a student on the basis of joint work on the formation of professional and spiritual qualities of a modern vocalist. Based on the analysis of the historical practice of psychophysical trainings, in particular, some ancient Eastern practices; continuity and specificity of the methods, techniques and exercises of the Russian theater school, the paper identifies effective ways of forming the professional qualities of a vocalist's personality, in particular, stage freedom.

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1 Introduction

Performance anxiety is an integral part of musical performance. This anxiety can be both positive, inspirational, and have an extremely negative impact on all creative activity and even, as indicated in the work of Marco Mula and Michael R Trimble [1], on human health. It is necessary to understand the genesis of performance anxiety, the factors that determine its occurrence, provoke the performer to panic, have uncontrollable fears, horror before going on stage and communicating with the public. If initially, introducing the concept of “stage freedom”, K.S. Stanislavsky considered this phenomenon only as one of the techniques that help the development of the performer's creative well-being, overcoming performance anxiety, then over time, with the formation of modern methods of individual psychoregulation and performance psychotechnics, as discussed, it became clear that external (physical) stage freedom and internal (mental) freedom undoubtedly depends on the level of the vocalist's general development - on his culture, education, spiritual and emotional responsiveness, moral feeling. And the development of only external techniques through numerous and very diverse trainings, as noted by Andrew White [2], will not give an effective result without relying on the whole complex of the vocalist's personal qualities.

In the works of such great directors as Meyerhold, Vakhtangov, Nemirovich-Danchenko, a number of features of overcoming performance anxiety and gaining stage freedom have been revealed. Creativity is based on inner sensations, soul, feelings, which is subconscious. That is, as noted by S.S. Kupchichev [3], creativity is created at the level of intuition and a burst of inspiration. But not all talented people have this ability. This occurs as a result of acquired inhibitions, fears or so-called physiological defects. This creates a barrier between human and creativity. And no matter how simple it may seem in words, in reality, mastering the conscious technique requires a huge contribution, effort and incredibly hard work on yourself, your body and, of course, consciousness. And this is quite difficult, because many people are waiting for an instant result, thinking that if they read a couple of books and everything will become clear and all the problems will immediately evaporate, as if they never existed. But this is not so, achieving the result will require daily work. Physical inhibitions, as noted by Maratos A, Gold C, Wang X, Crawford M. [4], are a consequence of the psychological state of a person. This problem is most acute for musicians, especially vocalists, because the singer's instrument is his vocal apparatus, and therefore he himself. The intonation of the performer plays an important role. The voice inhibition affects not only the delivery of sound and the beauty of its sound, but also the health of the singer himself. If you do not get rid of the inhibitions in time, this will lead to serious illness and irreparable loss of voice. If you do not get rid of the inhibitions in time, this will lead to serious illness and irreparable loss of voice. In search of answers to these questions, let us turn to the book of a modern French philosopher, psychologist and educator, the founder of the largest school of personal development in Quebec. It is the work of Liz Burbo that helps to understand that diseases, including voice inhibitions, are of a psychological nature. This is the body's cry for help, and it demands help. After all, if an instrument is broken, as Michael Trimble and Dale Hesdorffer believe [5], it needs to be repaired in order for it to sound again.

At the beginning of the 20th century, such areas of scientific knowledge as bioenergetics and psychotronics did not yet exist. Rose Whyman [6] notes that in his work on the study of the artist's personality, K.S. Stanislavsky relied on the research of such psychologists as W. James (1842-1940), S. James (1843-1923), T. Ribot (1839-1916), as well as on the oriental psychotechnics popular in scientific circles of that time. And what is the famous system of K. Stanislavsky if not a system of
psychological self-adjustment to the creative process? As noted by Sergei Tcherkasski [7], from there he borrowed such concepts as “radiation”, “irradiation”, “radiation perception”, which are found quite often in modern scientific literature, but at that time they were an innovation.

2 Method

In his search, Stanislavsky came to an understanding of the need for professional training designed to activate the creative potential and the formation of the most important component of the actor’s personality, which he called intuition or awakened superconsciousness: “I completely obey to creative initiative, I learn to help it ... Hindu yogis, who have achieved miracles in the field of the subconscious and superconscious, give a lot of practical advice in this area” [7].

The methods of Buddhism, Zen (Chan) -Buddhism, aikido, and yoga are currently used in some systems of actor’s psycho-training (the methods of E. Barba, E. Grotovsky) and are of significant interest in terms of work on the formation of the vocalist's performing freedom and overcoming performance anxiety. Let's dwell on some of them.

Hatha yoga. In addition to exercises specially designed for the vocalist to work on himself and release from muscle clamps, exercises used in ancient Eastern practices are very useful. Every vocalist needs to be focused and concentrated in order to do his job well. He must be fully involved in the creative process and he needs to be aware of the many factors that determine the excellent level of his performance. The vocalist should not be in the clouds, but the mind can become so one-pointed that it can completely dissolve in the music. Since professional musicians have to practice daily and for long hours, they must be very disciplined and determined. Even the most determined and ambitious musicians need willpower to practice when they “don’t want to”. It takes courage and bravery to practice the same thing over and over again in order to finally do it in front of the audience in a way that touches them, reaches out to them, so that it makes them experience and feel the full emotional depth.

In order to learn to sing well, a vocalist needs attention, concentration, determination, willpower and self-control. In music, as well as in any other activity, in order to reach heights, according to Pablo Ramos Ramos [8], you need to work hard on yourself and train endlessly. These qualities are very important. Practicing yoga, a person learns self-discipline and improves their willpower. With the help of yoga, according to Hanna Tolchieva [9], a person develops a focused and concentrated mind for brilliant performance. You can learn to use your body to maintain correct posture and comfortable movement while performing, helping you avoid injury and perform with greater expression.

Yoga has eight steps. Four of them are dedicated to the physical health of the body. The most important, in our opinion, is hatha yoga. It is divided into two stages: asana and pranayama. The word hatha itself consists of two parts: ha - “sun” and tha – “moon”. It combines in itself the unity of two opposites, two principles. Hatha is a healthy body and a healthy mind. Hatha yoga is a set of physical exercises that allow you to improve your health and learn how to control your body. The complex includes asanas - a kind of exercise (asana means “position of the body”). However, the correct position of the body is not everything. Great importance in hatha yoga is attached to breathing, which should be during the exercise.

There are many different types of breathing. In hatha yoga, the type of breathing is chosen depending on the purposefulness of the exercise. Each exercise is performed consciously, while concentrating your attention on a specific organ that needs to be
influenced. Therefore, when performing asanas, willpower develops and the mental state of the human body is strengthened. Respiratory gymnastics teaches breathing control and is called pranayama. Correct breathing is a prerequisite for performing asanas. Yogis distinguish three types of breathing:

Lower (diaphragmatic or abdominal (more typical for men)). During abdominal breathing, the diaphragm descends on inhalation, this provides the greatest flow of air to the lungs).

Middle (costal). This type of breathing occurs due to the movement of the ribs and the expansion of the chest. Since during such breathing only the middle part of the lungs is filled, correspondingly less air is supplied than, for example, during diaphragmatic breathing. In combination with abdominal breathing and costal breathing, the lungs receive satisfactory ventilation.

Superior (clavicular). This is the most unproductive type of breathing, it occurs due to the raising of the collarbones and allows only the upper part of the lungs (alveoli) to be filled with air.

The main complex of breathing exercises consists of four exercises. It is important to keep in mind that if one exercise has not been mastered, you cannot go on to the next one.

Exercise No 1. Lower breathing.
1) Get into a comfortable position (for example, sit on the floor (cross-legged), or lie down, or stand up). The back, head and neck should be in line.
2) Exhale all the air from the lungs completely. Inhale, while the stomach should be drawn in, and the chest should rise.
3) Inhale slowly through the nose and feel the stomach filling with air. At this time, do not change the position of the chest and do not move your arms, but start a slow inhalation non-stop.

Exercise No 2. Middle breathing.
1) For this exercise, you should take the same comfortable position as in the previous one.
2) Inhale slowly and deeply through the nose without pausing, exhale slowly. Only the ribs are involved, so everything else must remain stationary. When inhaling, the chest expands, when exhaling, the chest narrows.

Exercise No 3. Superior breathing.
1) The same posture as in the previous exercises.
2) Exhale all the air.
3) Inhale slowly and deeply through the nose. The collarbones and shoulders should rise.
4) Exhale smoothly, while lowering the shoulders down.

Exercise No 4. Full breathing.
This exercise is done exclusively while lying on your back. It consists of four stages and you need to do it no more than 10 times.
1) Breathe out all the air from your lungs.
2) Inhale slowly. The diaphragm is lowered, the abdomen is filled with air. As soon as this happens, you need to immediately proceed to the next stage.
3) The rib cage expands and the middle part of the lungs fills with air.
4) Inhale air without stopping. The shoulders and collarbones will rise.

The exhalation is done in the same sequence as the inhalation, just as slowly and smoothly. First, the stomach is drawn in and air is released from the lower part of the lungs, then the ribs go down, then the collarbones and shoulders go down. At the end of the exhalation, it is necessary to draw in the stomach.

This set of exercises should be performed until it is completely mastered.
Practicing yoga, professional vocalists can develop the skill to relax muscles, balance opposite sides of the body, eliminate inflammation and pinching of nerves and muscles, improve endurance, stability, strength, plasticity and flexibility of their joints, and build overall strength help their body perform its tasks at its best without depleting it.

Taijiquan gymnastics. Taijiquan gymnastics is an ancient Chinese discipline that helps a person to improve both physically and spiritually, and is a combination of meditative exercises and a complex of graceful, flowing movements. This type of gymnastics improves coordination of movements, and also strengthens the nervous system, which, in turn, is important for the future musician teacher, because the nervous system plays a huge role, and both internal and external liberation depend on it.

To do the exercises, you must follow several rules:

- Breathing should be free, slow and calm.
- All your attention should be focused on your own body.
- All movements should be slow and smooth.

The principle of this practice is that the whole body should be relaxed. Relaxation strives for softness, which is replaced by hardness, and then vice versa. Slow movements should be followed by fast ones, and fast ones should be followed by slow ones. Self-monitoring of the level of physical activity is an important factor. You need to measure your pulse several times during classes.

Since proper breathing plays a huge role for vocalists, breathing exercises with elements of psychoconcentration should be considered.

Aikido system. Aikido is a Japanese martial art that focuses not only on physical training and techniques, but also on the ability to manage your relaxation through training your mind. Valeria V. Burbygina [10] believes that both the ability to strain and the ability to relax is especially important in aikido. During relaxation, the muscles are given the opportunity to use their reaction to the fullest. Thanks to the repetitiveness of the techniques being practiced, muscle memory will work even in stressful situations. And stress is a musician's main enemy and can significantly affect his performance. Therefore, the repetition of the exercises presented in aikido makes it possible to use this technique as efficiently as possible.

Following the method proposed by Stanislavsky, it became possible to reproduce the entire complex gamut of human feelings and experiences, all the richness of psychological shades of the stage image, using an elementary palette of physical actions on stage, realized through the simplest movements. Stanislavsky's system consists of two sections:

1st section. Here a strong emphasis is placed on the actor's problems arising in the work on himself. This is a psychophysical process (mind, feelings, will, perception, external and internal data of the actor) to which attention, imagination, technique of the vocal apparatus, plasticity, a sense of rhythm, etc. are connected.

2nd section. In this section, the main idea is the work of the actor on the role - this is his reincarnation on stage and merging with the character.

3 Results

In the works of Konstantin Sergeevich Stanislavsky, there are two elements that are especially important for musical performers - muscle relaxation and breathing. It is necessary to release tense muscles. For this it is necessary to learn how to lie like animals or small children. In order to learn to lie like a child, you need to release your muscles from all clamps and tensions. This state of relaxation gives the body effective
bodily rest. With the help of complete physical release, you can give your body a rest and renew it in a short period of time (an hour, two hours) in such a way that sometimes it is impossible to rest even overnight.

Muscle relaxation is essential for the freedom of the body and for the regulation and control of the body's internal muscle processes. With the help of it, the naturalness of postures and the release of movements from clamps are achieved. One of the most important muscle relaxation exercises is that you need to feel those muscle groups that spontaneously tense up unnecessarily. To do this, you need to lie on the floor or on any other hard, but at the same time smooth surface and try to catch your inner sensation, to feel where the clamp is. For a better result, you need to tell yourself where the clamp is now felt, for example: “The clamp is in the neck”. Next, you should relax and remove the tension concentrated in the neck. Then we catch our sensations again. “The clamp is in the leg”. And again, we relax and remove the tension. And so on. You should look for more and more clamps and immediately loosen and remove them. This is quite difficult, since not having time to completely get rid of one clamp, the next one immediately appears. The more you find them, the more others appear, the more you listen to the tensions in your body, the more you will have to fight against them. It is like a vicious circle, and it is infinite in its essence. Therefore, you need to work, look for a problem and solve it, over and over again, then there will be a result. Muscle tension cannot be completely eliminated, but with the help of regular exercise, you can develop the habit of achieving a bodily state on stage similar to normal.

In the collection of exercises for students by Stanislavsky, Nick O'Brien [11] states that muscle relaxation is the most important condition for maintaining creative well-being. Relaxation exercises should be done until they reach automaticity, until the ability to instantly tension and release any muscle on command appears. According to Stanislavsky, a vocalist who is not able to master his own voice can be compared to an excellent musician who must play a faulty instrument, trying to convey extraordinary music to the audience, but a damaged instrument does not allow him to do this, distorting all sounds, making them fake and delivering the strongest difficulty of perception both for the performer and for the listener.

Exercise 1. It allows developing the correct posture and ensuring comfortable work of both the performing apparatus and the muscles involved in the respiratory process. To perform this exercise, you need to get up, then slowly, unhurriedly, vertebra by vertebra, lower your head, shoulders, back and dangle limply for a certain period of time. After that, you should rise smoothly and slowly. Care should be taken to keep the neck muscles loose, the head heavy, and the knees slightly bent. This exercise must be repeated several times (4-6).

Exercise 2. It will help control your posture. Come to the wall, and, leaning your back against it, feel the five points of contact with it - heels, calf muscles, buttocks, shoulder blades and the back of the head. This is natural upright posture. And the habit of bending, stooping, leaning back, pushing the neck forward or backward creates the very body clamps that distort our natural voice.

Exercise 3. Many people have a clamped jaw, which significantly distorts the natural timbre, diction and voice. It is worth stopping to pull the chin forward during a speech and the vocal apparatus will stop clamping, and a different sound quality will appear. You need to open your mouth and free your jaw. For more results, you can touch the lower jaw and massage the facial muscles. This will help you more fully feel the tightness and help yourself get rid of it and free your face. The tongue should lie relaxed, lowering the jaw down with your hands, you need to gently move it.
Exercise 4. Imitation of a horse snorting helps remove stress from the lips.

Exercise 5. Head rotation and neck warm-up. Releases the muscles of the channel through which sound travels (neck, throat, tongue, pharynx).

Exercise 6. To awaken the chest resonator. You need to knock yourself on the chest like a monkey while making the sound “Aaaa”. The awakening of resonators is also not an unimportant process, because they enhance and enrich our sound.

Exercise 7. To awaken the head resonator, gently tapping your face with your fingers, make the sound “Mmmm”.

Exercise 8. Pull your lips forward, and then smile broadly, showing your teeth. It is advisable to do it several times.

Exercise 9. It is necessary when working on sound. The mouth must be opened as wide as possible (so that 3-4 fingers enter, vertically). It is necessary to open space for sound, give it volume. A yawn will help make room for your voice. You can just imagine a yawn, raise your palate and open your throat, while slowly uttering vowel sounds.

Exercise 10. Articulatory gymnastics. Taking your favorite tongue twister, pronounce it from very slow to very fast, while not forgetting to articulate exaggeratedly in order to warm up the speech apparatus.

What is being done and created in life natural and by itself, automatically, is specially prepared for showing on stage and requires a psychotechnical approach. Psychotechnics teaches consistency, the execution of stage actions in a logical order, the transfer of ordinary actions that are performed by a person every minute in life to a public performance. The main task is to work on inner technique and inner well-being.

There are special techniques of psychotechnics. For example, let’s consider the stages of the communication process from the point of view of psychotechnics.

1st stage. The artist enters the room. Considers all those present. Focusing on the conditions that surround him, chooses the object.

2nd stage. The artist approaches the object and, with the help of actions, intonations that are striking to the person with whom he wants to communicate, attracts the object's attention.

3rd stage. Preparation of the object for easy perception of thoughts, feelings, experiences belonging to the subject.

4th stage. Transfer of thoughts, feelings to the object with the help of voice, accents, intonations, words, transfer of one's energy, an attempt to make the object not only hear what the subject conveyed to him, but also internally see and understand it.

5th stage. The object's response and its exchange of energy with the subject. For stage communication, you must follow all five stages step by step. Their observance is not so difficult, it is enough to put a little effort, time and, of course, a little practice.

4 Discussion

According to the researchers Shcherbakova A., Korsakova I., Ganicheva Y. [12], one of the most important problems of vocal pedagogy is the formation of a comfortable psychological sensation of a musician on stage. It is not enough to learn how to play a piece on any instrument; it is also important to learn how to perform it in front of the audience, and therefore, to be correctly understood by it.

There are many factors that can interfere with contact with listeners. These include:

— sickness;
— bad equipment;
— distractions (conversations during a speech, unmuted sound on mobile devices, etc.);
— disinterest of the public.

All of the above can make the performer worry, nervous, anxious. There can be many reasons for worry, but more often than not, the cause is a huge sense of responsibility. After all, just as a theatrical artist should strive to live his stage role as if he were actually living it, to merge with the role, so the musician must achieve complete unity with the work he performs in order to convey the ideas and thoughts of the composer to the listener.

In fact, according to E. Ryzhova [13], an actor and a musician are only transmitters, conductors from the author to the listener. The musician should take the audience with him into the world of images, sensations and experiences. As researchers A.I. Shecherbakova, A.V. Kamenetz, Yu.V. Ganicheva, E.A. Meleshkina say [14], many performers carefully study the subtleties of the musical text, which is confirmed in the work of Florence Bouhali, Valeria Mongelli, Michel Thiebaut de Schotten, Laurent Cohenah [15], endlessly rehearse all aspects of the upcoming performance, but, going on stage, they lose the ability control everything that happens. Therefore, the teacher is faced with the task of forming the skills of the stage freedom of the student during the stage performance.

Exercises on the interaction of a teacher and a student based on joint work to form the skills of stage freedom according to Stanislavsky

Exercise 1.
The teacher invites all students to alternately strain and release various muscles: neck, shoulders, abdomen, arms, etc. At the same time, he makes sure that both tension and release are maximized each time. As a result of this exercise, students get used to fixing attention on a specific muscle group and recognizing the tense and free state of each organ.

Exercise 2.
The teacher offers students to sit down as comfortably as possible and muscle by muscle, in a certain sequence (from bottom to top or top to bottom, i.e. starting from the toes and ending with the muscles of the face or vice versa), release the whole body from tension to almost zero (the state of the body during sleep) and maintain the necessary tension only in those muscles that hold the body in a sitting position. In other words, the body must be released to the point where it falls from the chair. If this exercise is performed correctly, the head should fall on the chest, the mouth should open, the lower jaw should drop; the forehead is completely free, the eyebrows are not moved or raised.

Exercise 3.
At the command of the teacher, all students simultaneously change their body position. After that, they carefully check whether there is any excessive stress left somewhere that needs to be removed without changing the position of the body.

Exercise 4.
Feel the norm of muscular tension while walking.

Exercise 5.
To rearrange any object from place to place in order to immediately remove the tension that remained in the muscles after overcoming the weight of the object and is now unnecessary.

Numerous options for the application of modern methods of conscious psychoregulation in performing psychotechnics are undoubtedly associated with the awareness of the importance of the significance of Stanislavsky's legacy and the need to develop, continue and actualize his ideas.
Nowadays, innovative training systems have been developed based on the latest research in the field of psychology and physiology. In this regard, it will be useful to refer to the experience of the famous Polish director, teacher and theorist of theater Jerzy Grotowski, who in his own theater was engaged in special psychophysiological training of the troupe in order to maximally sharpen the ability of the “total actor” to abandon himself, turning the performance into an act of a kind of sacred rite.

5 Conclusions

It is impossible to create a single “recipe” how to make sure that any vocalist's performance in public will always be a success. Such a task will be considered impossible by both the most prepared teacher-methodologist and the virtuoso musician. Each person is a unique individuality, which means that the methods of overcoming the negative sides of performance anxiety in the professional training of a vocalist should always be based on the individual qualities of the internal and external characteristics of the personality.

Performance anxiety, as the most important form of social activity of the performer, is the result of the work done, an indicator of his physical, mental and creative abilities. A public presentation, on the one hand, shows the result of the performer's work, on the other, it reveals the disadvantages and shortcomings that were in this work. Analysis of the historical transformation of psychophysical trainings, in particular, some ancient Eastern practices, continuity and specificity of the methods, techniques and exercises of the Russian theater school will help the modern vocalist to determine effective ways of gaining stage freedom and overcoming performance anxiety.

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