

An Evaluation Regarding the Usability of "Vaccaj" Methods of Nicola Vaccai in Professional Music Education

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Abstract

In Professional music education programs voice training has an important place in order to educate music teacher candidates well-equipped. In this context, it is thought that works such as aria, aria antice, lied, folk songs and methods and studies supporting technical development are thought to have a great importance in voice training towards learning - teaching techniques appropriate to the requirements of music teachers' profession. It is observed that the institutions providing professional music education benefit from voice training study books within the scope of individual voice training. In this research, the opinions of the instructors were taken related to the purpose of examining the use of the method called "Vaccaj" by Nicola Vaccai in the institutions providing professional music education. At the end of the research; it was determined that the "Vaccaj" method can be used for individual voice training courses in professional music education institutions, it is an important method in terms of technical skills development, the method is suitable for voice training objectives, being arranged for different voice groups contributes to the technical and musical achievements of students in individual voice training studies, the students had difficulties in the process of piano accompanied performances and that the study books prepared for voice education were not sufficient in terms of quantity and that the method was prepared on a different language from the native language of the students creates difficulty in the process of vocalization.

Keywords: Professional music education, voice training, Nicola Vaccai, "Vaccaj" method

1. Introduction

Voice training, which has a significant place in music education, is a planned and programmed interaction process which is applied to the targets planned with predetermined principles and methods. In this process, the aim is to bring the necessary musical behaviours to an individual through his/her own life in order to use his/her voice correctly, beautifully and effectively (Töreyn, 2000: 86-87; Çevik, 2006: 647).

In line with this overall aim, it is seen that voice education has an important place in the programs in order to educate musical teacher candidates in professional music education programs well supported.

Voice training, which is defined as the process of developing a correct, beautiful and effective form of speech, eliminating speech disorders and attending to the protection of voice health in accordance with the area where the teacher candidates will use the voice, (Töreyn, 1999; Türkmen, 2007: 3) has an indispensable importance in professional music education programs. In the content of voice education lessons, while bringing in these mentioned behaviours, in line with the necessities of being music teacher profession towards teaching-learning techniques aria, aria antice, lied, folk songs etc. pieces and methods and studies supporting technical development are used. In this context, it is thought that methods and studies have great importance in voice training.

According to Say (2012), etude is expressed as "pieces of practice written for the purpose of overcoming certain difficulties, with emphasis on musical values in music education, foreseeing improvement of the technique at mastery level (Say, 2012: 259).

According to Toker and Apaydınlı (2016), the etude is defined as short pieces including superior music value written to improve the sound and instrument technique (Toker & Apaydınlı, 2016: 501).

Etudes, which provides necessary musical substructure for more effective vocalization, are seen as being very important in terms of eliminating the many difficulties that students may encounter and also being beneficial to technique regardless of the level and type (Temiz, 2006, s. 398; Toker & Apaydınlı 2016: 501).

For that purpose, it is seen that in the institutions that provide professional music education, the etudes books of the composers such as Nicola Vaccai, Heinrich Concone, Georges Dandelot, Ettore Pozzoli and Heinrich Panofka were used for the voice education (Toker & Apaydınlı, 2016: 501).

In this research, the opinions of the related instructors were received in order to examine the usability of the method called "Vaccaj" by Nicola Vaccai in the institutions providing professional music education. Depending on the purpose of the research, the following questions were searched:

1. What are the views of the instructors on the usability of the "Vaccaj" method as a training material in individual vocal training courses?
2. What are the views on the "Vaccaj" method within the individual voice training courses of the instructors regarding the contribution of the students to the general education process?

3. What are the views of the instructors about contribution of the "Vaccaj" method during the gaining of techniques like staccato, legato, arpeggio etc. in individual vocal training lessons?
4. What are the views of the instructors about the usage of the "Vaccaj" method in terms of musical in individual voice training lessons?
5. What are the views of the instructors regarding the difficulties encountered by the students during the piano accompaniment stage of the individual voice training courses of the etudes taking place in the "Vaccaj" method?

2. Method

In this chapter, information about the design of the research, data collection tools and obtaining the data is given.

2.1 Research Design

Qualitative research method was used in this study. Qualitative research is a research aimed at realizing perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic manner (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006: 39).

2.2 Research Group

Typical case sampling was used in determining the sample group of the research. Typical case sampling is the selection of an average case that is not unusual in the universe about the research problem, and this case is examined as an example (Büyüköztürk, KılıçÇakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2012: 91).

The interviews conducted for the research were carried out by the teaching staff of Uludag University Faculty of Fine Arts Education Department, Music Education Department of Individual Voice Training and with Bursa Zeki Müren Fine Arts High School and Antalya Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fine Arts and Sports High School individual voice training course teachers.

2.3 Data Collection

The data of the research was collected with a semi-structured interview technique from interview technique types. In semi-structured interviews, the investigator can influence the flow of the interview with pre-determined questions. The investigator gives the interviewee the opportunity to respond to questions to a desired extent by him/her (Türnüklü, 2000: 547).

An interview form consisting of five open-ended questions was prepared by the researcher. These questions were asked to three field specialists in order to obtain the validity, and in line with the opinion of experts, the questions were finalized for implementation.

2.4 Analysis of Data

At this stage, descriptive analysis techniques were benefitted from in the analysis of the data obtained from the interview questions. In descriptive analysis, it often includes the direct citation to reflect participants' views (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006: 224).

The data obtained from the research were grouped by the researcher and analyzed and interpreted. When quotations were made, the names of the participants were coded as participant 1 (P1), participant 2 (P2).

3. Findings

In this chapter, the findings obtained from the answers given to the research questions by the lecturers participating in the research are included.

Table 3.1 presents participants' views on the usability of the "Vaccaj" method in the Individual Voice Training classes.

Table 3.1. Instructor views' on the usability of "Vaccaj" method in individual voice training courses

I think that the Vaccai Method provides a systematic progression of the technical skills of the students especially at the beginning level of singing education. However, I have seen that students had difficulty in getting a singing technique other than in their mother tongue. P1
The "Vaccaj" method is one of the important resources that can be used to gain singing techniques to the students. P2, P4
I use it in my lessons because it is a method that is designed from simple to complex. I also think this method should be used because there is a limited number of sources written for singing education. However, the first 10 tracks in the method can be used in individual voice training courses of the Faculty of Education of the Department of Music Education; I think it is more appropriate in terms of degree of difficulty for the students who are trained at the conservatory level of the next parts. P3
I think that it can be used in individual voice training courses because it is a method that is prepared for accompanied, from simple to complex. P5
I think that it contributes to the development of the technical skills of the students. P6

Instructors seem to think that the "Vaccaj" method can be used for individual voice training courses in

institutions providing professional music education. However, a participant method has indicated that the fact that the students are different from their mother tongue had difficulties in the voice training process. Another participant stated that the first 10 parts of the method were more suitable for use in voice education in the Department of Music Education of the Faculty of Education and next etudes are more suitable for students at the conservatory level to use in voice training. Nevertheless, it is seen that all the participants think that the "Vaccaj" method is an important and usable method because of the limited number of sources available at the level, which will provide the technical skills for vocal education in institutions providing professional music education.

Table 3.2 shows the participants' views about the contribution of students to the general education process in the "Vaccaj" method in the Individual Voice Training courses.

Table 3.2. Views of the instructor on "Vaccaj" method in individual voice education courses for the contribution of students to the general education process

I think that the method has made important contributions to the students who have started their singing lessons in terms of writing not a boring harmony for the students to study but with pleasure, developing the Bel canto style for the purpose and forming the way of saying in accordance with the objectives aimed at the student. P1, P4
The involvement of etudes aimed at establishing breath-voice connection provides important contributions in terms of overcoming similar technical difficulties in the pieces of the students. P3
I think this method is guiding me in terms of being able to plan the achievements of the students in terms of technique. P5
Taking etudes that are appropriate for individual sound characteristics to produce the correct sound makes a great contribution to the student's ability to acquire correct behaviors in a technical and musical sense. P6

All participants indicated that the "Vaccaj" method was a major contributor to the general education process in individual voice training courses. Also, some instructors stated that the method is written in the direction of the objectives of the sound education, which provides significant gains in technical and musical aspects. One participant stated that the method contributed positively to the development of the "Bel canto" style.

In Table 3.3 the views of participants about the contribution of "Vaccaj" method during the gaining of staccato, legato, arpeggio etc. techniques in Individual Voice Training lesson were included.

Table 3.3. The views of instructors about the contribution of the "Vaccaj" method during the gaining of techniques like staccato, legato, arpeggio etc. in individual voice training lessons

For each studies like tone study, syncopation, chromatic ups and downs, appoggiatura and octave having etudes prepared separately for each technical achievement while not being boring, can be sung enthusiastically and these etudes including all kinds of difficulties that students may encounter in different pieces contribute greatly to reach targeted achievements. P1, P4
I think that the method has great contributions in terms of achieving desired objectives from student with the guidance of an educator. P2
I think there are great contributions in using techniques like staccato, legato, arpeggio etc. which take place in aria and aria antiches. P3
I think that it is an appropriate method to obtain achievements for both individual voice training and individual instrument singing courses. P6

All of the participants stated that the method was a great contribution factor in reaching the appropriate technique that need to be gained, and to individual voice training courses gaining. In addition, one participant stated that taking part of etudes in method for each technique gaining which prepared separately and including all difficulties that may be encountered in pieces have contributions to reach aimed gaining.

Table 3.4 contains the participants' views on the use of the "Vaccaj" method in the musical sense of Individual Voice Training courses.

Table 3.4. Instructor views on the use of "Vaccaj" method in individual voice training courses for musical meaning

Individual voice training and individual instrument training target the achievement of students in singing class also musical meaning achievements. I see that the method is a great contribution to reaching the targeted musical achievements, as it was prepared by the singing pedagogue Nicola Vaccai. P1, P6
As it was prepared by a singing pedagogue it is believed that it is beneficial for being able to make musical analysis which is one of the achievements of individual voice training class learning achievements. P2, P4
It provides significant achievements in musical meaning. P5

All participants noted that the method contributed greatly to the musical achievement of the students. In addition to this, some of the instructors stated that the method was prepared by a singing pedagogue and that it was an important contribution to the musical analysis which is one of the achievements of the individual voice training lesson.

Table 3.5 contains the views of participants on Individual Voice Training classes the difficulties that

students experience in the stage of vocalization with piano accompany of etudes taking place in “Vaccaj” method. Table 3.5. Contains instructor views about the difficulties that students experience in the stage of vocalization of etudes with piano taking place in the “Vaccaj” method in individual voice training classes

The fact that the method is prepared in Italian language causes the students to have difficulties in the way of vocalising the pieces with piano accompaniment. P1
The students are having trouble vocalising with piano accompaniment. P2, P3
I did not see that the students had great difficulties during the piano vocalization stage. P4
I see that individual voice training students have difficulties both in the stage of the sight-read and in the piano accompanied vocalization stage. P6

The vast majority of the participants stated that students had difficulty in vocalizing the pieces with piano accompaniment that was included in the "Vaccaj" method used for their individual voice training classes. Also, one participant stated that as the method was prepared in a different language from the mother tongue of students, it has an impact on experiencing this difficulty in vocalization with piano accompaniment.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

In accordance with findings obtained from this research, the “Vaccaj” method can be usable in institutions which provide professional music education for Individual Voice Training classes. It is an important method in terms of the development of technical skills, the method is appropriate for voice training targets and as it is arranged for different voice groups it is seen that it contributes technical and musical achievements of students in individual voice training studies.

Also, the result has been reached that while vocalization of etudes taking place within the method of piano accompaniment, students experienced difficulties, the books prepared for voice training are not enough in terms of quantity and as the method is prepared in different language to the mother tongue of the students difficulty is caused in the stage of vocalization.

The following suggestions can be made in the framework of the results obtained:

In institutions providing professional music education it is very important for music teacher candidates to use the voice correctly and effectively which is one of the most effective tools all through their professional life. Aiming for this purpose, it is seen as necessary that, music teacher candidates should be trained with voice training program to produce and correctly use the voice, to strengthen the voice and to broaden the voice.

It is important in terms of professional achievements to work with planned piano accompanied etudes aimed at developing the technical skills of the teacher candidates prepared especially for these purposes, such as the "Vaccaj" method. For this reason, besides the methods prepared for improving the technical skills in different language, it is important that the methods for developing Turkish singing, which are appropriate to the characteristics of the Turkish language, are prepared to be used as materials in the voice education lessons and contribute to the field.

Etudes are considered as important in terms of using correct breathing and voice techniques, singing with correct articulation, providing intonation quality and obtaining vocalization behaviors of musical expressions like staccato and legato in the process of voice training of music teacher candidates. In order to realize these achievements in individual voice training classes, it should be given place to etude studies and education process of students should be supported by etudes.

In individual voice training lessons, the usage of piano accompanied pieces and etudes is very important in terms of contribution to musical sensitiveness and richness expression of music teacher candidates. In voice training lessons it is thought that giving place to piano accompanied etudes contributes to being more professional for teacher candidates. For this reason, it is seen necessary for teacher candidate benefit from piano accompanied etudes in the process of voice training.

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