

Practice the Technique of Singing Vietnamese Light Music Song for Middle-age Female Voices

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Abstract

Classical chamber music vocal techniques, typically the bel canto singing style, have been shaped with many methodical methods. In our country, several famous vocal pedagogues have compiled and written books on teaching vocal music such as Nguyen Trung Kien and Ho Mo La. Unlike classical chamber singing, currently, in our country, there are no books or unified in-depth research on light music singing techniques. While classical vocal techniques require strictness and the singer must accurately perform every detail recorded in the song, light music is characterized by a fairly free and comfortable way of singing from the mouth, how to vibrate your voice, process sound to express your work... Singers can be creative from their point of view, as long as they create their mark and attract listeners.

Keywords—Light music, singing techniques.

I. BREATH

In Western classical vocal music, breathing is divided into 3 main types: chest breath, chest breath combined with abdomen and belly breath. Singing learners will have to practice all 3 types of breathing. Singing like this can satisfy the most complex singing genre, opera, with various techniques and emotional states. Depending on the nature and characteristics of the song's melody, the singer uses which breath. In particular, when singing opera, the singer must have a resonant, loud voice that can overcome the entire backing orchestra (including the symphony orchestra) to reach the audience sitting in the auditorium without the need for any means of support. Which aid magnifies the sound? Therefore, the singer will have to sing in a low-pitched, raised voice with deep breathing techniques and abdominal breathing will be used often.

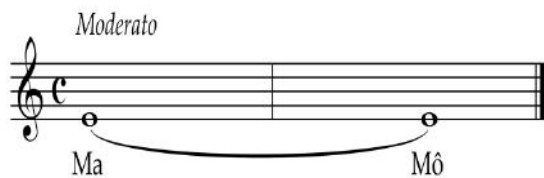
As for singing light music by a mezzo-soprano, the sound reaching the audience must be close to the voice, the words must be very clear, many short sentences like whispering confessions (usually in the first part of the song), so the singing should be gentle, comfortable, emitted naturally, no need for deep breathing, chest breathing will be used a lot. This is one of the unique characteristics of light music singing.

When researching techniques for singing light music for mezzo-soprano voices, the writer met Teacher - People's Artist Ha Thuy (April 22, 2024). She is a veteran lecturer in teaching light music singing at the Military University of Culture and Arts. She has trained many generations of students, and many of her students won first prize in Sao Mai and Sao Mai rendezvous line light music, many other international light music awards and those students later became famous singers of Vietnamese light music such as Ho Quynh Huong, Van Mai Huong, Huong Tram, Ngoc Anh... With extensive experience in teaching light music singing, she has many methods for students to develop their singing voice. She shared about breathing in singing light music: "Mezzo-soprano singing needs to practice chest breathing main. When you need sound for many people to listen to, microphones and electronic sound techniques will be very helpful for singing soft music in magnifying the sound, unlike classical chamber singing or opera singing".

The breathing practice for mezzo-soprano as mentioned above is to practice all 3 types of breathing but focus more on chest breathing to apply it to gentle singing and sing the lyrics in the song. First of all, the practice method, like classical singing and bel canto singing, is to practice from simple to complex, from easy to difficult, paying special attention to meticulously practicing how to inhale, compress, and push the breath at the stage. just

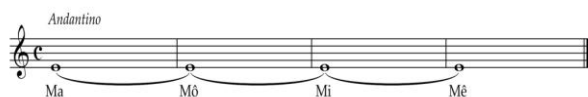
learning to sing. Initially, you need to practice simply, then gradually increase. For example, with the following sound pattern, when first learning, you only practice 8 beats with 2 ma tones, using moderato tempo:

Example number 1



After you have practiced steady breathing, practice chanting 16 beats with the sounds ma, mo, mi, and me at the andantino tempo. The best way to practice is to stand still, holding the sound firmly in one position:

Example number 2



Taking chest breaths is the shallowest method of taking breaths. When applied to singing, it will be comfortable and gentle. However, in light music songs, there are also many long chants, many songs have a second verse or a climax with consecutive verses of strong intensity, requiring full breath and breath and a voice with inner strength. strong. Furthermore, when performing light music, singers often have to sing and dance at the same time, so practicing deep breathing is necessary, but it is not so focused and becomes the core like classical chamber singing. Therefore, people who learn to sing light music still have to practice breathing according to classical techniques. That means, you still have to know how to take a deep breath (belly breath) so that when you need to apply it to the song, there are places where it needs to be a bit long, especially in the climax of strong and intense singing, singing combined with dancing.

To practice deep breathing, inhale quickly and push down on the diaphragm, hold the breath tightly, and then push it out slowly. The important thing is to control the breath well. Once you have performed the process of inhaling, compressing, and pushing the breath well, practice the sounds combined with movement to improve your breathing. Sound samples to practice combining movement to improve breathing often have a flexible, rhythmic melody:

Example number 3



In general, any sound pattern can practice breathing. When practicing legato, staccato, accent singing, and fast singing techniques, are all related to breathing techniques. An important thing is that the practice sound patterns of classical singing and singing light music when copied on the sheet music may be the same, but when practicing classical singing, how can the sound be guaranteed to produce the sound while singing light music without producing the sound? are allowed to vibrate and add notes according to the singer's strengths.

You can immediately take the verse with long breaths in the song and turn it into a vocal practice model to practice breathing, such as singing the song *Midday Dream* by Giang Son:

Example number 4



With the above verse, in practice you can sing in 2 breaths, taking the breath after the word "path", but for vocal training, you can only sing in 1 breath with the sound pattern "ho.. eh..". Once you have trained your voice with sample sounds, applying it to songs with lyrics will make it easier to sing. To do so, you must practice deep breathing, take a full breath along with your belly breath, compress the breath, and slowly push it out when singing.

In short, breath training for mezzo-soprano singing light music has some of the same activities as classical chamber singing but focuses on practicing a lot of chest breathing and does not necessarily strictly follow the exact music score. is a unique characteristic of light music singing.

II. SPEECH

From the outside, the mouth of a singer singing light music appears to be quite wide open, but in fact, the way the mouth opens is still different from Western classical chamber music. With singing light music in general, and mezzo-soprano vocals in particular, the most important thing is that the singing is close to the voice, the sound is thick and resonant, so the mouth needs to be comfortably wide open and sometimes open horizontally (not vertically), without lifting. Raise the palate and uvula, because this will create a muffled and raised sound like opera singing, which is not suitable for singing light music. Practice with the sounds a, oh, u, i, ê... like classical vocal music. It is necessary to analyze and compare to understand the singing styles of both classical and light music styles to apply them most appropriately.

Singing light music has many forms, styles, and styles depending on the creativity and innate talent of each singer. The singer always creates his or her mark, so there are also styles of singing with a flat voice a horizontal mouth, and a wide-open voice. husky sound, no need to refine it like classical singing, as long as it sounds strange and creates a beautiful feeling. However, for learning to sing professional light music, practicing the mouthpiece to achieve a round, thick, beautiful sound must still be practiced so that when applied in practice, the singer must be able to sing songs with sound. beautiful, you still have to learn the basic mouth shape of classical vocal music to apply some other techniques such as legato, and staccato... But when singing light music, if you want to create your style, the singer finds a way to open his mouth. to best suit the genre and musical nature of the song they choose to express.

III. PRACTICE SOUNDS IN THE BARS

For Western classical vocal music, it is almost mandatory for soprano and mezzo-soprano to be able to sing in the chest voice, mix voice, and head voice. When singing light music, the mezzo-soprano mainly sings in the chest voice, only when reaching some high tones does she sing in the mixed voice. Some people, when they first learn to sing soft music, almost only sing in their chest voice, so when they sing loudly, it is quite rough and the listener feels tired. Such a voice cannot be maintained for long, it easily hurts the throat, and when the singer gets old. Young people can lose their voice and lower their voice. If you want your voice to develop well, you must practice singing in all 3 registers. When applying to songs, use mainly 2 registers: chest voice and mixed voice.

Practicing all three tones also helps your voice expand your vocal range and sing high notes gently and comfortably. Many people, when they first learn to sing, can only reach the c^2 note which is very difficult, but when they practice singing according to classical vocal techniques with 3 zones, they can reach the c^3 note, which means their vocal range is expanded by 1 octave 8. The disadvantage of many female mezzo-soprano voices is that the sounds in the chest voice are quite thick, warm and resonant, but the sounds in the mixed voice are quite blurred and smaller, creating an uneven sound color. Vocal training to sing in the mixed voice and head voice will contribute to making the mixed voice sounds more resonant, less faint, and gradually becoming more even with the chest voice sound.

The note transitioning to the mixed voice of a mezzo-soprano can easily reveal uneven tones. Solving this problem does not happen overnight, but requires a

long practice process, even up to 1 year or more. Learners will have to pay close attention when practicing vocal sounds to gradually improve the sound patterns and when practicing from chest voice to mixed voice so that the sound of the mixed voice resonates evenly like the chest voice. To do this, you must especially keep the sound of the two tones connecting the two zones unified in one position, paying attention to the balanced volume between the two tones. Initially, you can handle the sound in the chest voice without singing too loudly. will deviate from the sound of the mixed voice. Later, when you have practiced well and the sound of the notes in your mixed voice is even and loud, you can sing comfortably in the chest area.

Example No. 5: Sound range and pitch (popular) of mezzo-soprano singing Vietnamese light music



With classical chamber singing, from the chest voice range to the mixed voice range of the mezzo-soprano, some people start singing the transition note g^1 or a^1 , but with light music singing, to create a thick, powerful, resonant voice. , these sounds are still sung by many singers in the chest voice, even up to the notes h^1 and c^2 , some people still sing in the chest voice but have to wait until d^2 to sing in the mixed voice. In particular, singer Cat Tien sang the song Mot Mai by musician Tuan Phuong up to d^2 , still singing in her chest voice. Singers Ho Quynh Huong, Van Mai Huong, and Tran Thu Ha have solved very well the technique of converting chest voice to mixed voice.

In addition to using vocal training patterns commonly used in classical singing, singing gradually raised by semitones to practice the tones of the tones evenly, with singing light music for female melodies, the method of using one tone pattern (at the same time) can be applied. pitch) singing in 3 registers: chest voice, mixed voice, and head voice. The purpose of this practice is to help learners clearly understand how to sing in the registers. You can use the sample sounds below for practice.

Example number 6



Ma a a...

With the above sound sample, first, sing in the head voice, take a deep breath, and bring the sound up to the frontal sinus. The sound comes out in front, bright and

flying, without raising the voice so as not to be confused with classical vocal singing. Next is singing in the mixed voice bar, the sound can be more intense than the first voice bar, the breath is pushed out evenly and kept in one position so that the sound is even, and the mouth is slightly wide open, Do not bring the sound to your forehead. Finally, sing in the chest voice area, completely in a natural voice, the sound will sound stronger, take a breath from the chest, the la si notes will be a bit rough so you need to pay attention to be gentle, push them up high with the Breathing, be careful not to use force.

Similarly, you can practice in all 3 areas with a longer and more difficult sound pattern as follows:

Example number 7



The following is an example of how to apply 3 Thanh Khu singing to the song Roof of the Sea Village by Nguyen Cuong, which is a light music song with ca tru influences that can be applied to a female voice singing light music. In the following paragraph, sing with The tone completely chest voice, the mouth is open comfortably, the chest breath, the sound is thick and resonant, showing the narrative quality. Singing sounds are brought out from the oral cavity, not raised to the frontal sinuses or raised and pronounced clearly like speech:

Example number 8 ROOF OF THE SEA VILLAGE (Excerpt 1)



Moving to the second part of the song, on the c2 notes, you can sing in a mixed voice, take deep breaths into your lungs, and gradually bring them down to your belly and behind your back to be able to sustain long with strong intensity, widen your mouth, creating sound. ringing but not making a sound:

Example number 9 ROOF OF THE SEA VILLAGE (Excerpt 2)



. Go to the sentence with the highest note of section 2, sing in a mixed voice with strong intensity on notes c² and d² corresponding to the word "singing verse", then push the sound up to the first voice bar at notes f² and d² corresponding to the word "singing". ugh" with a light intensity, without making a sound but with a clear sound,

combined with vibrating and pouring beads in Ca Tru singing and then processing down to the mixed vocal range in the remaining notes.

Example number 10 ROOF OF THE SEA VILLAGE (Excerpt 2)



Vibration technique

In light music, there is a special way of singing that many singers use (though not all), which is vibrato singing, also known as vibrato. The vibrato is completely different from classical vocal music, the vibrato is exaggerated and interrupted like an echo at the end of a musical stroke or phrase. This way of vibrating requires students to have innate talent but still needs practice. This is a difficult technique. Many people learn to sing light music but the vibrato lacks softness. When applied to songs, they are often dry and stiff and forcefully imitate videos of sample singers.

Vibrato is mainly performed in narrative songs with leisurely or moderate tempo; fast songs often use little or no vibrato technique. Vibration at the end of the musical stroke, on relatively long sustaining sounds. Note that it should not be done on sounds with short duration because the vibration here needs to be clear, it sounds like the sound is broken and not seamless, but it absolutely cannot be. Take a breath while vibrating. Even though the vibration is clear, it must be handled with a light intensity, so that it is delicate. The technique of vibration is the technique of breathing. When vibrating, the sound creates sound waves and certain vibrations because creates many sounds with short durations. If you are not careful, the pitch of the sound will change, so you must keep breathing evenly when exhaling in vibrating sounds.

Example No. 11: Practice vibrating each sound



The above model can be applied to vibrate each sound. For example, when singing the first son note with the sound i, sing straight into the letter i and vibrate after the phase of entering the letter. When vibrating, it will create the feeling of almost hearing a few more i..i..words but all gone. With gentle force, the vibrated letter i will not be as clear as the main letter i but as an echo of that letter. Therefore, vibrato in soft music compared to classical vocal music is considered exaggerated vibrato, sounding intermittent like an echo. Sounds with the letters e, a, o... do the same thing.

After practicing the vibration of each sound, practice the voice with a sound sample that only vibrates at the end of the musical stroke like the sound sample below.

Example No. 12: Practice vibrato at the end of a musical stroke



Once you have practiced vibrato well in vocal training, you can apply it to songs. Choosing the vibrato of sounds in the song also requires great care. You cannot vibrate arbitrarily and not every musical stroke should vibrate at the end. Vibration in words with vowels will be clearer. Sounds with consonants at the end of sentences create closure. You can avoid vibrating or you must know how to vibrate to keep the sound in the throat.

Example No. 13 PURPLE FLOWERS IN THE YARD (Excerpt)

Slowsurf Nhạc và lời: Thanh Tùng

With the song Purple Flowers in the Yard by Thanh Tung, you can only vibrate a few notes in the whole song, like the whole paragraph below. The words "flag" and "khe" are open vowels so they vibrate clearly, while the words "em" ", "pink", and "bird" if you want to vibrate, just gently vibrate the sound in your throat.

In general, the vibrato technique is difficult, requiring many innate elements in singing light music, but if practiced, it will be better. How to vibrate depends on the singer's aesthetics, melodic sensitivity, and creativity. It doesn't have to vibrate according to the music, but the important thing is that the vibrato must create an aesthetic feeling.

IV. SING WITH LIGHT MUSIC RHYTHMS

The rhythm of light music songs has two outstanding characteristics: 1/There are often many inversions and unbalanced rhythms, requiring a skewed singing style. 2/The rhythm of light music songs is often associated with dances such as Disco, Chachacha, Rumba, Slow-Rock, Slow Surf, Tango, Valse, Boston, Bossa Nova, Pasodoble... Maintain a steady rhythm, especially Synchronized rhythm is one of the qualities of a light music singer. It takes practice to adapt and be flexible with light music rhythms, even when practicing vocals, singing, and performing.

4.1. Practice vocal with syncopated rhythms, inverted beats combined with offset accents

Usually in classical vocal practice, vocal practice samples do not have inversions or inversions, and the melody is easy to sing so that the singer can focus mainly on sound technique, shaping each sound without having to pay much attention to the length and rhythm. For singing light music songs, vocal training with syncopation and inversion is quite necessary. Cultivate the habit of singing difficult rhythmic forms in addition to sound techniques, even if the learner can transform the entire vocal practice sentence. In terms of duration, creating more syncopation and off-key accents is also acceptable. Practicing vocals with syncopated rhythms is a relatively difficult technique because you have to pay attention to both singing technique standards and the correct rhythm. Need to practice from easy to difficult, initially practice with the following sound pattern:

Example number 14



Mô ma mi mê Mê ê ê ê Mô
ma mi mê

This vocal practice pattern is quite simple, the rhythm is not difficult, only syncopate at the end of the stroke, you need to sing in syncopation at the end of the music, the mouth and breath are still paid attention to singing correctly when you reach the syncopation sound you need to emphasize. and stroke that sound. As you get better, use more syncopated patterns like below:

Example number 15



4.2. Sing with light music rhythms combined with background music practice

First of all, it is necessary to become familiar with and distinguish the rhythms by practicing with many different songs combined with musical accompaniment. For example, practice singing Slow Rock with the song Hanoi in Autumn by Trinh Cong Son, practice Disco with the song Oi My Loving Life by Nguyen Ngoc Thien, Rumba with the song Into the Summer by Le Huu Ha... Look In general, there are many songs with many different rhythms, you need to practice to master the rhythms. When singing with the accompaniment, you are not only correct but also flexible, graceful, and able to master the rhythm.

In addition to practicing discrimination, practicing singing with a variety of rhythms of many songs, another

way to practice is to sing with many different accompaniment rhythms for the same song. Doing this will make you very flexible and smooth when performing on stage. Pairing accompaniment with the band will also be very convenient. For example, with the song "It's Not Because of Autumn" by Phu Quang, poem: Giang Van can be sung in many rhythms and styles as follows:

Example No. 16 IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF AUTUMN
(Excerpt)

- Pop Ballad rhythm:



- Tiết điệu Slow Rock:



In addition, the song "It's Not Because of Autumn" can also be sung with the rhythm of Blues, Slow Sulf... This way of singing changes the tempo, even changing the rhythm of the music, this is the difference in musical singing. Light with classical vocal music, the singer can create something different from the original pitch of the song while only keeping the correct pitch. The important thing is to listen appropriately.

V. CONCLUSION

Vietnamese light music was officially formed after 1975 and developed strongly into a genre of music familiar to the masses, especially attractive to young people. The way of singing light music has many differences from classical chamber singing in terms of breathing, mouth shape, and voice vibrato... It is not as strict and structured as classical singing, but is free and comfortable, with a strong personal impression. as long as it creates a beautiful feeling and attracts the listener. Learning to sing professional light music in general, and mezzo-soprano in particular, understanding the characteristics, and knowing how to practice singing light music will be able to express the correct style of light music songs and be successful.

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