PRACTICES OF ENGLISH DICTION FOR SINGERS 1900-1971

THESIS

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Specialized training in English diction for singers became increasingly prevalent in the twentieth century. Along with this growth, a small but significant literature on the subject developed. There are divergent practices recommended for American singers, displayed by nine authors in ten books published between 1900 and 1971. A comparative study yields pedagogies of vowel and consonant production. Issues of sounds in context, including proper linkage and stress, adjustments from speech to song, and practices dictated by musical style, are paramount. The literature demonstrates an increased use of International Phonetic Alphabet symbols as a pedagogical tool. The areas of kinesiology and acoustical research are suggested for further study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Throughout the twentieth century, specialized training for singing in English has become increasingly prevalent. Conservatories and schools of music in both the United States and the United Kingdom offer instruction expressly in English diction for singers. Along with this growing prevalence, a small but significant literature on the subject developed. To examine the diction practices recommended to singers, the following compares practices advocated by this literature. The manuals selected for this study met the following criteria: books published in the twentieth century, directly addressing the subject of English diction in singing, and intended for American singers.

The goal is to analyze the content of each author's contribution, and its usefulness in acquiring the mechanics of correct English diction in singing. Some isolate each sound in the English language and its production, using specific classifications and terminology. Controversy arises not from opinions about how to produce individual sounds, but rather from varying uses of these sounds in context. There is some disagreement over which vowel sounds the singer should choose, especially when combining these sounds

into diphthongs. Varying treatment of consonants occurs when initial, medial or final. Attention to the pedagogy of linking sounds together into syllables and words, and threading words into understandable phrases and sentences with proper stress and emphasis is essential. The literature contains suggestions for modifications of speech sounds to counteract variations such as duration and pitch. Different musical styles also dictate specialized diction techniques in performing opera, oratorio and art song.

Ten manuals written by nine authors are examined. Many books were inspected, but did not meet the criteria. The handbooks of Jones and Henschel treat only the "expressive" use of words when singing, with limited examination of individual sounds, their adaptations and modifications.

Henry Gaines Hawn's Diction for Singers and Composers appeared in 1911. He was the president of the Hawn School of the Speech Arts, Inc., located in New York City at Carnegie Hall. Hawn also became an instructor of elocution at the Polytechnic Institute in Brooklyn, president of the New York State Association of Elocutionists, and president of the National Speech Arts Association. Russell cites Hawn's essay as an excellent work "for some seed-thoughts on expressive diction."1

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1. Louis Arthur Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers (Boston: Ditson, 1905), iv.

Louis Arthur Russell (1854-1925) was an American singing-teacher, pianist and organist. He studied voice with William Shakespeare and George Henschel in London. Russell founded the Newark College of Music in 1885, and organized the Newark Symphony Orchestra in 1893.2 He wrote many books for singers; his English Diction for Singers and Speakers became a popular, respected diction work.3

Clara Kathleen Rogers (1844-1931), an English soprano and singing teacher, published many books for singers. Clearcut Speech in Song and English Diction in Song and Speech are particularly relevant. The daughter of composer John Barnett, Rogers studied voice with Goetz in Berlin and Sangiovanni in Milan. She made her operatic debut in Turin in 1863, under the stage name Clara Doria. Rogers came to the United States in 1871, where she taught voice in Boston, and became a professor of singing at the New England Conservatory of Music in 1902.4

The background and experience of elocutionist Dora Duty Jones is unknown. She published Lyric Diction for Singers, Actors and Public Speakers in New York in 1913, and The Technique of Speech in 1909.

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2. Brent Jeffrey Monahan, The Art of Singing (Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1978), 282.

3. Monahan, The Art of Singing, 185.

4. Ibid., 281.

Adele Baldwin was a singer, author and teacher in the early years of this century. She taught voice at the Institute of Musical Art and the Finch School, both in New York. A contralto, Baldwin was a soloist for the New York Oratorio Society, the Boston Handel and Haydn Society and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Her work is entitled Laeis-Baldwin System of Practical Phonetics for Singers and Speakers.

The works of Baldwin and Jones include diction practices in foreign languages and English, such as German, French and Italian. Baldwin also considers Spanish.

George Henschel was a naturalized British conductor, composer and baritone singer. Born Isidor Georg Henschel in Germany (1850), he was knighted in England in 1914. Henschel studied at both the Leipzig Conservatory and the Royal Conservatory at Berlin. In 1875 Henschel sang Bach's St. Matthew Passion, conducted by Brahms, with whom he became friendly. Henschel was appointed conductor of the newly formed Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1881. He settled in England in 1884, and remained there until his death in 1934.5 Henschel produced Articulation in Singing in 1926.

Madeleine Marshall, a teacher and coach of singing in English, was an instructor at the Juilliard School of Music,

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5. J. A. Fuller-Maitland, "Henschel (Sir) George (Isidor Georg)," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom (London: Macmillan, 1954), IV, 242-43.

the School of Sacred Music, the Union Theological Seminary and the Metropolitan Opera. Her The Singer's Manual of English Diction, published in 1953, is the preeminent work on singing English diction. Recognized as "that significant and pioneering book," it "has opened an unbelievable number of eyes and ears."6

Dorothy Uris began researching, writing about and teaching English diction for singers at the request of voice teacher Lotte Leonard, who sought her advice as a speech consultant. Uris teaches speech and diction for singers at New York's Mannes College of Music and Manhattan School of Music. A diction coach for the Metropolitan and Santa Fe opera companies, Uris also works privately with many professional singers.

Lloyd Pfautsch is a teacher, author, conductor and professor of music. He has had many years of experience as a choral conductor, and directs countless choral workshops and clinics. Pfautsch teaches choral techniques at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

Some background on the events in speech and phonetic history leading up to the twentieth century is necessary to the understanding of this literature. The years 1840 through 1860 saw the beginning of a phonetic revolution. It began in England when Isaac Pitman and Alexander J. Ellis decided to

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6. Lloyd Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers (New York: Lawson-Gould, 1971), iii.

develop shorthand into phonetic type. Their system, devised during 1846 and 1847, was endorsed by the British Phonetic Society and became the basis for an "American alphabet." In America in 1851, Isaac Pitman's brother Benn collaborated with the Longley Brothers, another family important in phonetic history. Published in Cincinnati in 1855, with an introduction by Ellis, The American Phonetic Dictionary of the English Language was the first to employ phonetic type. The symbols assigned to the sounds of English were employed in transcribing the entries. The work contained a table entitled "The American Phonetic Alphabet," a listing of these symbols with key words for sound identification.7 Andrew Comstock produced an American version of the Pitman-Ellis alphabet in 1846, and may have been the first English or American elocutionist to invent a phonetic alphabet. Comstock's symbols, intended to be international, represented a daring and innovative approach during this period in history. In England, Alexander Melville Bell published his important treatise Visible Speech in 1864. This work received the support of the British Phonetic Society, of which Bell was a member. He later emigrated to America, where his teachings developed a following.8 Rogers

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7. Karl R. Wallace, History of Speech Education in America (New York: Appleton, 1954), 332-33.

8. Ibid., 334.

calls Bell the father of the Phonetic System for Visible Speech.9

The International Phonetic Alphabet (I.P.A.) was developed by Ellis, Paul Passy, Henry Sweet and Daniel Jones. Adopted by the International Phonetic Association in 1888, I.P.A. is significant for presenting a symbol for every sound in a language.10 Four of the nine authors compared in the following study make use of I.P.A. symbols. In an effort to find a common denominator, where possible I.P.A. symbols are given for the sounds presented in the remaining manuals.

Early in the twentieth century, dictionaries using I.P.A. symbols included those by Jones (British)11, and Kenyon and Knott (American).12 The co-written Kenyon-Knott dictionary was the first to employ the customary pronunciation used by most Americans, called Northern American by its authors. Wallace names it General American speech.13

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9. Clara Kathleen Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song (Boston: Ditson, 1927), 40.

10. "International Phonetic Alphabet," The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed. (Chicago: The Encyclopaedia Britannica Co., 1991), VI, 352.

11. Daniel Jones, Everyman's English Pronouncing Dictionary 12th ed., (London: Dent, 1963).

12. John Samuel Kenyon and Thomas Albert Knott, A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English (Springfield: Merriam, 1944).

13. Wallace, History of Speech Education in America, 337-38.

In spite of the appearance of these phonetic alphabets and dictionaries, the particulars for the creation of good diction developed slowly, not until after 1863. In this year Helmholtz advanced the theory "that pronunciation, articulation and enunciation were subject to the tangible laws of physics."14 The investigations of Helmholtz and his contemporaries enabled Seiler and Garcia to begin studying and teaching how good diction can be achieved.15 These developments strongly influenced twentieth-century manuals on English diction.

While the terms "diction" and "pronunciation" are often interchangeable,16 diction is more commonly defined as a process comprising the three fundamentals of articulation, enunciation and pronunciation. "Articulation refers more specifically to the adjustment and movements of speech organs (the articulators: tongue, lips, teeth) involved in the formation of a sound, especially a consonant."17 Articulation therefore deals with the most minute element,

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14. Hermann L. F. Helmholtz, Die Lehre von der Tonempfindungen als physiologische Grundlage fur die Musik (Braunschweig, 1877), cited in Brent Jeffrey Monahan, The Art of Singing (Metuchen, Scarecrow, 1978), 187-203.

15. Monahan, The Art of Singing, 187.

16. Sergius Kagen, On Studying Singing (New York: Dover, 1950), 33.

17. Dorothy Uris, To Sing in English (New York: Boosey, 1971), 14.

the individual sound. "Enunciation has to do with the individual sounds combining to form syllables."18 Correct enunciation involves clarity of articulation. The term pronunciation defines "an integrative or combining process whereby vowel and consonant sounds are united into larger rhythmic groupings called syllables, words and phrases."19 Articulation deals therefore with distinctness and correct formation. Enunciation is associated with fullness and clarity. Pronunciation outlines sound and accent. These are the three components of the study of vocal expression and the utterance of words, known as "diction."20

All sounds in English are divided into two main categories, vowels and consonants. No differences exist among the authors about the primary functions of these two groups. Vowels sustain the tone while consonants give clarity of meaning. "Vowels are the more positive sounding-parts of speech, and are particularly the elements upon which singing-tone is sustained." Consonants are "the articulating elements of speech." Together, "vowels are the texture of language; consonants are the joints which shape

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18. Henry Gaines Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers (New York: Hawn School, 1911), 27.

19. Victor Alexander Fields, Training the Singing Voice (New York: King's Crown, 1962), 190.

20. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 2.

and characterize that texture."21 There is consensus that consonants and vowels have complementary functions. "In a reciprocal process, vowels lend consonants clarity and carrying power as consonants in turn set vowels going."22 There is little consistency of opinion about the method of achieving balance between vowels and consonants. Pfautsch maintains that "vowel production dominates consonant articulation almost to the point of encouraging the neglect of consonants." Notwithstanding, the disciplines for the production of each should be stressed equally.23 Henschel agrees that the amount of strength, mental and physical, put into the singing or sounding of consonants is equivalent to that for the vowels.24 Uris claims that since vowels are sung with greater intensity than consonants, consonants therefore need greater vocal effort.25

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21. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 10-11.

22. Uris, To Sing in English, 58.

23. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 13.

24. George Henschel, Articulation in Singing (Cincinnati: Church, 1926), 33.

25. Uris, To Sing in English, 260.

CHAPTER II

VOWELS, DIPHTHONGS AND TRIPHTHONGS

Comparison of the treatment given vowels must be supplemented by a discussion of diphthongs and "triphthongs." There is divergent opinion among the authors about the designations of individual vowel sounds. Where one lists a certain vowel as a single element, others will describe this vowel as ending with a glide or vanish sound. Still another author will classify that sound a diphthong with two distinct components. For instance, Rogers differentiates between compound vowels and diphthongs, compound vowels being written with one letter in words or syllables, and diphthongs with two.1 Marshall and Pfautsch are the only authors who use the term "triphthongs." These apparent conflicts will be analyzed in the discussion of individual vowel sounds.

Vowels are "one of a class of speech sounds in the articulation of which the oral part of the breath channel is not blocked and is not constricted enough to cause audible friction."2 A diphthong is "a gliding monosyllabic speech

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1. Clara Kathleen Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song (Boston: Ditson, 1927), 31.

2. "vowel," Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield: Merriam Webster, 1988), 1323.

sound . . . that starts at or near the articulatory position for one vowel and moves to or toward the position of another."3 Hawn and Uris are unique in their description of a diphthong as two elements combining to form a new, third sound, representing a distinctive English vowel.4 A triphthong is "a speech item consisting of three successive sounds that serves or is capable of serving as a monosyllable."5 As defined here, a diphthong is designated in phonetic transcription by two symbols, triphthongs by three symbols.

To put individual sounds in an authoritative frame of reference, Kenyon-Knott's I.P.A. listing of English vowels and diphthongs will be used as a basis for comparison (see Table 1). Kenyon-Knott provide key words and transcriptions for sound identification.

Table 1. The Phonetic Alphabet: Vowels

Symbol	Spelling	Spoken Form	Note
[i]	bee	[bi]	
[ɪ]	pity	['pɪtɪ]	
[e]	rate	[ret]	
[ɛ]	yet	[jɛt]	
[æ]	sang	[sæŋ]	
[a]	bath	[baθ]	heard in the East: between [æ](sang) and [ɑ] (ah)

3. "diphthong," Ibid., 357.

4. Henry Gaines Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers (New York: Hawn School, 1911), 119 ; Dorothy Uris, To Sing in English (New York: Boosey, 1971), 81.

5. "triphthong," Webster, 1263.

[ɑ]	ah	[ɑ]	
	far	[fɑr]	
[ɒ]	watch	[wɒtʃ]	between [ɑ] (ah) and [ɔ] (jaw)
[ɔ]	jaw	[dʒɔ]	
	gorge	[gɔrdʒ]	
[o]	go	[go]	
[ʊ]	full	[fʊl]	
[u]	tooth	[tuθ]	
[ɝ]	further	[ˈfɝðɚ]	accented only, r's sounded
[ɜ]	further	[ˈfɜðɚ]	accented only, r's silent
[ɚ]	further	[ˈfɝðɚ]	unaccented only, r's sounded
[ə]	further	[ˈfɜðə]	unaccented only, r's silent
	custom	[ˈkʌstəm]	unaccented
	above	[əˈbʌv]	unaccented
[ʌ]	custom	[ˈkʌstəm]	accented
	above	[əˈbʌv]	accented

Diphthongs

Symbol	Spelling	Spoken Form
[aɪ]	while	[hwaɪl]
[aʊ]	how	[haʊ]
[ɔɪ]	toy	[tɔɪ]
[ju]	using	[ˈjuzɪŋ]
	fuse	[fjuz]
[ɪu]	fuse	[fɪuz]

Source: John Samuel Kenyon and Thomas Albert Knott, A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English (Springfield: Merriam, 1944), xvii.

In the following comparison, the vowel sounds are translated into I.P.A. symbols wherever possible, but only Baldwin, Marshall, Pfautsch and Uris make use in their texts of these symbols. Neither Jones nor Henschel include a listing of English vowel and diphthong sounds in their

treatises. Their manuals are therefore not represented in the following points of comparison:

[i] as in "bee"

All of the authors treat this sound. Hawn described five so-called "long" vowels, introduced as they appear in the alphabet, a,e,i,o,u, of which [i] is the second, as ending with a vowel glide or vanish. He explains these vanishes as an unavoidable momentary reshaping caused by the act of closing the vowel sound. He advises to avoid emphasis of this.6 Russell and Rogers consider these vowels to be diphthongs, although Rogers lists [i] as an exception, naming it as the only simple sound among the five.7 Russell defines this vowel sound as the diphthongal combination ih-e [ɪi].8 Baldwin concurs with Rogers, maintaining that [i] should not be pronounced as a diphthong by singers.9

[ɪ] as in "pity"

There is no controversy with this vowel sound, except for its use as the second element of some diphthongs.

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6. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 125-26.

7. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 31.

8. Louis Arthur Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers (Boston: Ditson, 1905), 18.

9. Adele Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Practical Phonetics for Singers and Speakers (New York: Phonetic Publishing, 1923), 127.

Baldwin uses both stressed and unstressed forms of [ɪ]. For Baldwin, the first and second syllables of "pity" have slightly different vowel inflections. Only Baldwin lists these stressed and unstressed counterparts as two individual vowel sounds.10

[e] as in "rate"

Hawn describes [e] as ending with the vanish ee [i].11 Baldwin, along with the sound [e], adds a diphthong to her table that Kenyon-Knott do not. This is the sound in the word "vein," transcribed as [eɪ].12 Pfautsch instructs the singer to use the diphthong [ɛɪ] in place of [e] when sung on a note of long duration.13 Rogers, Russell, Marshall and Uris do not include the singular sound [e]. Russell and Rogers term this sound the diphthong [ɛi].14 Marshall states that while [e] is necessary in proper speech, it is improper for singing. The diphthong [ɛɪ]

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10. Ibid., 134.

11. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 125.

12. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 129.

13. Lloyd Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers (New York: Lawson-Gould, 1971), 25.

14. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 18 ; Clara Kathleen Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech (Norwood: Plimpton, 1912), 33 ; Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 31.

replaces the closed [e] sound.15 Uris omits [e] in her I.P.A. table, substituting [eɪ].16 Observe the divergent opinion about pronunciation (see Table 2).

Table 2. Summary of Diphthongal [e]

[eɪ]	[ɛi]	[ɛɪ]
Hawn	Russell	Marshall
Baldwin	Rogers	Pfautsch
Uris		

[ɛ] as in "yet"

Rogers does not include [ɛ] in her first manual, but treats it in her second. All others list [ɛ], with no variations.

[æ] as in "sang"

As with [ɛ], Rogers does not include this sound in her first manual, contending that an Italian a should be used in its place.17 Russell and Marshall disagree with Rogers. Russell maintains that the sound of a in the words "ask" and "am" are the same sound. In executing this vowel, the student may rely upon what he terms "borrowed color." When singing, the mind should be fixed on [ɑ], at the last minute thinking of the a in "am" [æ]. Sung in this manner, the

15. Madeleine Marshall, The Singer's Manual of English Diction (New York: Schirmer, 1953), 164.

16. Uris, To Sing in English, 287.

17. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 21.

vowel sound has "filled back" and become larger, as in [ɑ], but retains the closed and bright vowel characteristic belonging to [æ].18 Marshall insists [ɑ] not be substituted for [æ]. She restricts the use of the former vowel to singing of a more formal nature and to words requiring a British accent. Otherwise, [ɑ] shows carelessness, faulty technique or affectation.19

[a] as in "bath"

[a] is a sound represented as being between [æ] and [ɑ]. Russell, Pfautsch and Uris do not include this sound. Uris uses the symbol [a] in diphthong form, but [a] does not appear in her I.P.A. vowel table. She supplies only the closely related vowel sounds [æ] and [ɑ].20 Rogers includes [a] in her second treatise only, describing it as having the open quality of [ɑ], more sustained than [ä].21 Baldwin replaces the symbol [a] with [ɐ], noting that in the United States many wrongfully choose the sound [a] when [æ] is preferable. Careful use of [a] is a discriminating

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18. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 24.

19. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 185-88.

20. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 20 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 16 ; Uris, To Sing in English, 287.

21. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 42.

characteristic.22 Disagreeing with Baldwin, Marshall contends that [a] is not suitable for singing. [a], "called the intermediate a because it is between [ɑ] as in father and [æ] as in cat," lacks uniformity in speech. In singing the shadings of [a] and [ɑ] are so alike as to be indistinguishable.23 Kenyon supports Russell, Pfautsch, Uris and Marshall, who do not use [a]. Kenyon argues that [a] "occurs in General American only in the diphthongs aɪ and aʊ, and as an occasional unconscious variant of æ. It is used by some speakers in New England and New York City in words like ask."24

[ɑ] as in "ah"

This sound is found in each of the manuals, and is uniformly represented throughout as the sound in "father," or as Italian a. Discussion of this vowel relates to the previous discussions of [æ] and [a]. Relying principally on Kenyon, Vennard provides historical insight into these sounds. [ɑ] was prevalent in sixteenth century British English, but its usage disappeared in the seventeenth century. "Sheridan's pronouncing dictionary (London 1780) did not include it; nor did phonetic transcriptions by

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22. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 133.

23. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 163.

24. John Samuel Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 10th ed. (Ann Arbor: Wair, 1951), 27.

Benjamin Franklin (1789); and Hale (1799) shows [æ] in such words as 'aft,' 'balm,' 'carve,' and 'gaunt.' The latter two authorities are American." Present General American calls for [æ] in many strong words. [ɑ] reappeared in modern British speech, and its influence on Eastern and Southern American speech can be heard. Nineteenth century Webster and Oxford dictionaries proposed [a] as a compromise between the sounds [æ] and [ɑ].25

[ɒ] as in "watch"

Russell, Rogers and Pfautsch list [ɒ], commonly described as a sound between [ɑ] and [ɔ].26 Baldwin also mentions this sound, substituting the symbol [ɵ] for the symbol [ɒ].27 Uris omits [ɒ] from her discussions.28 Marshall found that [ɒ], when elongated in singing, lost its principal characteristics, becoming either [ɑ] or [ɔ].29 Kenyon concurs with Marshall and Uris, noting that [ɒ] "is

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25. William Vennard, Singing: the Mechanism and the Technic (New York: Fischer, 1967), 142.

26. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 18 ; Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 43 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 16.

27. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 143.

28. Uris, To Sing in English, 287.

29. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 163.

not often heard in General American, being usually replaced by ɑ."30

[ɔ] as in "jaw"

Baldwin includes both [ɔ] and [c]. She classifies [ɔ] as a mid-back-open rounded vowel, as in "door," and [c] as a low-back-close-rounded vowel, as in "law," advising the singer to distinguish carefully between these sounds.31 Baldwin's definition of these two sounds is in contradiction with Kenyon. The sound in "law" is represented in Baldwin as [c], and in Kenyon as [ɔ].

[o] as in "go"

Kenyon-Knott represent the alphabetical pronunciation of the fourth English vowel sound, "long" o, as [o]. They present no corresponding diphthongal spelling. Russell presents only simple [o],32 and Baldwin prescribes the use of pure, lip-rounded [o] when singing, avoiding the diphthongal form [oʊ] often used in speech.33 Hawn claims that [o] ends with the vanish [u], but does not classify [o]

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30. Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 27.

31. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 140-41.

32. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 20.

33. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 138.

a diphthong.34 Rogers, Marshall and Pfautsch include in their English vowel sounds both [o] and a diphthongal designation. Rogers adds [ou], Pfautsch [oʊ].35 Marshall says [o] should be used only when completely unstressed; in most situations the diphthong [oʊ] is the correct vowel sound.36 Uris includes only the diphthong [oʊ]; the symbol [o] does not appear in her I.P.A. listing of English vowel sounds.37 Note that only Hawn and Rogers dictate [u] as the second vanishing-element; all others choosing [ʊ].

[ʊ] as in "full"

There is general agreement about the pronunciation of this sound. Rogers omits it from her first book, and characterizes it as a variation of [u] in her second.38

[u] as in "tooth"

Each manual includes this sound. There are no variations.

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34. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 125.

35. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 32 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 16.

36. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 172.

37. Uris, To Sing in English, 287.

38. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 44.

[ɝ] and [ɜ] as in "further"

According to Kenyon-Knott, [ɝ] has a slight fricative release; [ɜ] is pure vowel. Both locutions appear in stressed syllables. Hawn includes the vowel sound in "fur," indicating the presence of the consonantal articulation. He ascribes the vowel with a sound of closing, "the unavoidable sound which the final letter 'r' always steals for itself from the vowel preceding it, or the vowel following it."39 Rogers alone recommends that the r in these words is unpronounced.40 A slight prolongation of the vowel sound replaces r.41 Russell and Uris designate [ɝ] with r sounded. Russell describes the r in this context as having "a vanishing characteristic almost vowel-like."42 Uris says the variety without r should be avoided; Standard American calls for r to remain intact. However, in later instructions, Uris suggests the establishment of a brief r, "more color than consonant."43 Baldwin, Marshall and Pfautsch say that pronouncing r is conditional. In their I.P.A. tables, Marshall and Pfautsch use the symbol [ɜ],

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39. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 126-27.

40. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 43.

41. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 52.

42. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 26.

43. Uris, To Sing in English, 120-22.

Baldwin the symbol [ɚ] as in "urge."44 Baldwin states that r is often silent but may be sounded as "a vowel of obscure or mixed quality," especially when followed by a pause or another consonant.45 In opposition to Baldwin, Marshall and Pfautsch maintain that r is never sounded before a consonant, but is always sung before or between vowels.46 In the word "further," the first r is not articulated; it merely contributes to the vowel's spelling.47

[ɚ] as in "further"

Only Hawn and Uris include [ɚ]. It is the unstressed counterpart of stressed [ɝ], with r sounded. Hawn designates this sound as the a in "friar."48 Uris uses the I.P.A. symbol given above.49

[ə] as in "further"

[ə] is the neutral vowel, or schwa.50 It is the

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44. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 136 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 123 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 16.

45. Ibid., Baldwin, 99.

46. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 146 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 57, 128.

47. Ibid., Pfautsch, 128.

48. Hawn, Diction for Singer's and Composers, 113.

49. Uris, To Sing in English, 74, 124-25.

50. Vennard, Singing, 138.

unstressed counterpart of [ʌ] and will figure prominently in later discussions of English stress patterns in context. [ə] is the equivalent of [ɚ] without any sounding of r. Russell, Baldwin, Marshall, Uris and Pfautsch include this sound. There are no points of contention. Note that syllables transcribed with [ɝ], [ɜ] and [ɚ] always contain the letter r in their spelling. The letter r may or may not be present in words pronounced with the neutral vowel [ə].

The treatment or omission of r in the four preceding vowels, and in the r diphthongs to be scrutinized shortly, can be better understood by consulting authorities on speech. In [ɝ] and [ɚ], the hook placed on the symbol takes the place of r in phonetic transcription. It shows an r-colored vowel, called retroflex r, whose symbol is [ɹ]. This r sound is itself the vowel, developed over the past two or three centuries out of consonantal r. Kenyon refers to it as the non-syllabic r vowel.51 In General American, [ɝ] and [ɚ], with indicated [ɹ], represent a more common pronunciation than [ɜ], and [ə] (schwa in a syllable spelled with the letter r).52 The instructions of Russell and Uris are patterned after General American standards. The symbols [ɜ] and [ə] represent regional speech practices common to parts of New England, the New York City area and parts of

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51. Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 196, 201.

52. Arthur J. Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice, 1960), 176.

the southern United States.53 Marshall and Pfautsch prefer these vowels, which are without r coloring.

[ʌ] as in "above"

Each author includes this vowel sound. Kenyon-Knott call for its use in stressed syllables. Pfautsch alone recommends the use of [ʌ] over [ə] in either stressed or unstressed position.54

[aɪ] as in "while"

In Kenyon-Knott the vowel sound in the words "while" or "ice" is considered a diphthong. Hawn describes this vowel as having the vanish ee [i], but he alone does not classify it as a diphthong.55 Russell has not one but two "long" i sounds. Along with a single sound as in "lie," he presents a diphthong, as in "aisle," ah-ee [ɑi]. Russell prefers [i] as the second element, but at times an intermediate vowel may be necessary, that between [i] and [ɪ].56 All the remaining authors present only one "long" i sound, and always in diphthong form. Differences among the other treatises arise in opinions about which combination of vowel

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53. Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 197-98.

54. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 34.

55. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 125.

56. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 35.

sounds comprise the diphthong. Baldwin and Uris use the same form as Kenyon-Knott, [aɪ], although Baldwin uses the symbol [ä] for [a].57 Marshall and Pfautsch use the I.P.A. symbols [ɑɪ],58 while Russell and Rogers, prefer [ɑi].59 The second element of this diphthongal pronunciation provoked strong comment. Baldwin states that [i] should never substitute for [ɪ] in diphthongs.60 Marshall also insists that [i] never appears as part of a diphthongal combination.61 Uris cautions that using [i] as the second element instead of [ɪ] is a distortion.62 The use of [ɑ] over [a] is a continuation of the inconsistencies observed in the individual discussions of these vowel sounds (see Table 3).

Table 3. Summary of [aɪ]

[aɪ]	[ɑi]	[ɑɪ]
Kenyon-Knott	Russell	Marshall
Baldwin [äɪ]	Rogers	Pfautsch
Uris		

57. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 70 ; Uris, To Sing in English, 287.

58. Marshall, The Singer's Manual of English Diction, 123 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 16.

59. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 35 ; Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 32.

60. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 129.

61. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 165.

62. Uris, To Sing in English, 103.

[aʊ] as in "how"

This sound is represented in each handbook, with variations in the choice of diphthongal components. No author uses the transcription advanced by Kenyon-Knott. The [ɑ] uniformly replaces [a], and [u] replaces [ʊ] in most cases (Table 4).

Table 4. Summary [aʊ]

[aʊ]	[ɑu]	[ɑʊ]
Kenyon-Knott	Hawn	Baldwin
	Russell	Marshall
	Rogers	Uris
	Pfautsch	

[ɔɪ] as in "toy"

Each work has a representation of this diphthong. Hawn, Baldwin, Marshall, Uris and Pfautsch combine the same vowel sounds as Kenyon-Knott, [ɔɪ]. Russell uses the form [oi].63 Rogers initially agrees with Russell, choosing [oi],64 but changes the first element of the diphthong in her second book, using [ɔi].65

[ju] as in "using" and [ɪu] as in "fuse"

[ju] and [ɪu] are the only English diphthongs in which

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63. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 18.

64. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 32.

65. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 32.

the first element is short, the second sustained. They are known as reverse diphthongs. All other diphthongs are long/short. Kenyon makes the distinction that [ju] always occurs in initial position, unlike [ɪu].66 In each manual, except for Baldwin and Marshall, only one diphthong serves both functions. Baldwin and Marshall do not designate an English diphthong for this sound, including it with the consonants.67 Marshall contends that all diphthongs are long/short, and that the sounds [i] and [u] never appear in them.68 She explains that spoken words with u and ew spellings, like "lute" and "dew," can be formed with or without a y sound [j], when u and ew follow the letters d, n, l, s, t, th or double l. Words like "music," "cure" and "few" have only one pronunciation. Although the y [j] plus [u] sound occurs in speech, the y should be elongated in singing, the sound becoming ee-u [iu].69 Baldwin explains that [j] occurs initially, as in "use" or medially, as in "mute." "In weakly stressed forms of words such as you, the j often becomes the vowel i; the singer is advised to use

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66. Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 29.

67. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 110 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 180.

68. Ibid., Marshall, 165.

69. Ibid., 139.

j."70 Uris lists [ju] in her I.P.A. table, as in fuse.71 Similarly, Hawn holds that the u in you is the combination y-oo [ju], and not e-oo [iu].72 Rogers and Pfautsch, agreeing with Marshall and contrary to Hawn and Uris, use the diphthong form [iu], whether initial or medial.73 Russell is unique. He changes the first element of the diphthong, designating ih-oo [ɪu].74

Table 5. Summary of [ju]

[ju]	[ɪu]	[iu]
Hawn	Russell	Rogers
Uris		Pfautsch
(Baldwin)		(Marshall)

There exists in Kenyon a class of sounds known as the centering diphthongs with r. These include [ir] as in "we're," [ɪr] as in "weir," [ɛr] and [æ r] as in "there," [ɑr] as in "far," [ɔr] as in "for," [ʊr] as in "poor," and [or] as in "gourd."75 In conjunction with these examples and opinions expressed in the books under study, an issue

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70. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 110. Baldwin refers here to the sound [j], not the letter j.

71. Uris, To Sing in English, 287.

72. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 123.

73. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 22 ; Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 31 ; Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 16.

74. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 31, 37.

75. Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 222.

arises: are they sounded as diphthongs, or are they concluded with a consonant articulation? Kenyon maintains that the designation diphthong is correct, defining diphthong as a gliding, monosyllabic speech sound comprised of two vowel elements. In these diphthongs, the two elements are the vowels [i], [ɪ], [ɛ], [æ], [ɑ], [ɔ], [ʊ] or [o] and retroflex r [ɹ] or the neutral vowel [ə]. Under General American directives [ɹ] is retained. In Eastern and Southern American practices, the diphthong ends with the neutral vowel [ə].76 Marshall and Pfautsch alone list these diphthongs in their I.P.A. tables, and transcribe using [ə] and [ɚ], noting that r sounds when the diphthong precedes a vowel sound. While Marshall selects [ə] as the final element, agreeing with Kenyon,77 Pfautsch chooses and defends the use of [ɚ].78 Hawn acknowledges the special treatment words like "fair," and "more" require. "'More' really equals mo-er, so closely tied together as to sound like one syllable, . . . but this has created such difficulties that it seems best to teach it as a phonetic element."79 Uris disagrees. She contends that "these are

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76. Ibid.

77. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 174.

78. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 57. This is inconsistent. [ɚ] is intended for use under stressed situations. The second diphthongal element is not the sustained or accented component.

79. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 126.

not diphthongs but actually heard as two distinct segments." She goes on to say that "delivered 'r-less' in song as a diphthong of one syllable the words become artificial and, worse, most difficult to understand."80 Russell also insists that final r be pronounced in words like "hear" and "near." To sing he-uh and ne-uh is poor English, and fails to recognize the musical quality of r.81 Rogers calls for two separate syllables, with no r articulation. The word hear becomes he-uh [hiə]; the r is silent except when connecting to a vowel sound in a succeeding word.82

Pfautsch and Marshall use the term triphthong to identify the sounds found in the words "fire" and "tower." Each of these sounds end with the neutral vowels [ə] in Marshall and [ɚ] in Pfautsch. Kenyon also acknowledges these special combinations, using the same terminology. He points out, nevertheless, that they can be easily broken down into a diphthong plus a syllabic vowel.83 Pfautsch states "a triphthong can be thought of as a combination of two diphthongs,"84 while Marshall terms it a diphthong plus

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80. Uris, To Sing in English, 154.

81. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 42.

82. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 53.

83. Kenyon, American Pronunciation, 222.

84. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 75.

the neutral vowel [ə].85 None of the other authors use this terminology.

Learning correct diction principles for singing vowels requires more than a listing of sounds coupled with key words for identification. "Vowels traditionally have been specified in terms of the position of the highest point of the tongue and the position of the lips."86 Those vowels for which the tongue's highest point is in the front of the mouth are called front vowels; there are also back and mid-vowels. If the tongue is forward, the vowel is said to be bright. Dark, or somber, is the label applied if the tongue rests farther back in the mouth. The terms high, or close, refer to the vowels in which the tongue is highest. The tongue is lowest in the low, or open, vowels. The lips may be rounded or not rounded.87 These terms are vowel definers; they clarify the method of production and describe the unique quality of individual vowel sounds. Following is a comparative discussion of all ten manuals about the inclusion of various vowel definers and their pedagogy.

Neither Hawn, Russell, Rogers nor Marshall recommend manipulation of the vocal apparatus during vowel production.

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85. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 181.

86. "Speech," The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed. (Chicago: The Encyclopaedia Britannica Co., 1991), XXVIII, 87.

87. Ibid.

They rely on the proper cultivation of the ear for automatic adjustment of the necessary organs, especially the tongue.88 Hawn, Russell and Rogers insist that the singer cannot, and need not, attempt to bring the muscles of the throat and mouth under conscious control. "The whole vocal action is involuntary and takes place only in response to the singer's intention to utter a given sound."89 Rogers grudgingly furnishes a chapter entitled "Positions of the Tongue for the Different Vowels" for those whose ears fail them, inscribing it "to the cripple we offer a crutch!"90 Marshall does not consider conscious movement of the vocal organs impossible, merely unnecessary.

Jones speaks sharply against colleagues who maintain that controlled muscle movement cannot be achieved. "If the control of these mouth resonances were automatic--if . . . it were only necessary to think a vowel in order to 'tilt the tongue' into the correct position for singing that vowel--one would be forced to conclude that the majority of singers have very feeble powers of thought."91 Jones

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88. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 122 ; Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 7 ; Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 35 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 122.

89. Ibid., Rogers, 18.

90. Ibid., 39-44.

91. Dora Duty Jones, Lyric Diction for Singers, Actors and Public Speakers (New York: Harper, 1913), 200-01.

provides the reader with traditional tongue classifications (high-front, high-back, etc.) and reiterates the importance of the tongue and lips in vowel formation in a section entitled "Studies in Vowel Placing." Detailed exercises for shaping the vowel chamber are not given. For more information on this subject, Jones refers the singer to a previous work, The Technique of Speech.92

Henschel avoids entirely any technical descriptions of singing diction. He concerns himself with the singer's expressive delivery of words in their musical context.

Baldwin, Marshall, Uris and Pfautsch incorporate methods of study for learning the pronunciation of vowels and diphthongs. They treat the sounds individually, introducing I.P.A. symbols, giving key word examples and noting special considerations. Baldwin, Marshall and Uris, but not Pfautsch, provide lists of practice words containing the appropriate sounds. Marshall, Uris and Pfautsch supply musical examples from vocal literature. Baldwin does not. Baldwin heads her discussion with a consolidated mouth diagram showing vowel location.93 Pfautsch furnishes mouth diagrams for each individual sound, the diphthong and triphthong diagrams being superimposed images of their various elements. Marshall's pedagogy is essentially non-

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92. Ibid., 198-203.

93. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 69.

directive, except for the required lip rounding of a few vowels.94 Baldwin refers to vowel placement using such terms as High-Back-Open Rounded Vowel, Mid-Back-Close Rounded Vowel, etc. Unlike Marshall, her pedagogy is much more direct, using step by step description of tongue, lip and palate movement. Pfautsch omits palate movement, but includes jaw motion. Uris also describes lip and tongue action, but instead of palate or jaw considerations, she includes mouth formation.95

Four of the books include charts or diagrams showing sequential relationships between the vowel sounds. Rogers reprints Alexander Melville Bell's tabular arrangement of vowels, but gives no explanation other than that it "will be found convenient as showing the serial relations of the sounds."96 Russell presents an arrangement of two series of "abrupt prime" vowels, explained as pure vowels which do not end in vanishes or glides. The scheme leads "from the front mouth back to the complete vowel ah, which requires all possible resonance." The vowels in the first series are bright, thin or small. These vowels are placed high and forward in the mouth. The second series is somber or large.

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94. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 122.

95. Unlike Baldwin, Uris chooses to omit traditional speech terms to avoid confusion for the reader. Uris, To Sing in English, 82.

96. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 33.

Here the tongue is lower and farther back in the mouth.97 Pfautsch designed his chart to show the sequence employed in one set of vowels as the lips gradually protrude and the jaw raises, and another set of vowels in which the lips relax and the jaw gradually drops.98 Uris presents several "vowel ladders." One ladder arranges the unrounded vowels by order of tongue front arch highest to lowest and by mouth position most closed to most open. Another ladder contains the rounded vowels by order of tongue back arch highest to lowest and by lip shape from the smallest circle to the largest oval position. The central vowels, in which the middle of the tongue rises slightly, are located between these two ladders.99

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97. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 17-18.

98. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 17.

99. Uris, To Sing in English, 74-75.

CHAPTER III

CONSONANTS

Consonants are "speech sounds . . . characterized by constriction or closure at one or more points in the breath channel."1 Traditional speech terminology addresses itself to the place and the manner of this obstruction, and to the states of the glottis. Terms denoting place refer to the upper and lower structures of the vocal tract involved in consonant articulation. They are bilabial (the two lips), dental (tongue tip or blade and upper front teeth), alveolar (tongue blade or tip and the teeth ridge), retroflex (back part of the teeth ridge and tongue tip), palato-alveolar (tongue blade and back part of the teeth ridge), palatal (front of tongue and hard palate) and velar (soft palate and back of tongue). "There are six basic manners of articulation that can be used at these places of articulation: stop, fricative, approximant, trill, tap, and lateral."2 The terms describing the states of the glottis are voiced or sonant, and voiceless or surd. Most of the voiced consonants have voiceless cognates. Variations in the

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1. "consonant," Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield: Merriam Webster, 1988), 280.

2. "Speech," The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed. (Chicago: The Encyclopaedia Britannica Co., 1991), XXVIII, 86.

timing of glottal activity are aspirated, denoting the existence of a period of voicelessness prior to phonation, and unaspirated.

Judging from the books under study, teaching correct diction practices for the articulation of consonants does not require a rigid categorization of the sounds according to these specific terms. There is a lack of consistency in terminology used in diction manuals for singers throughout the century. Terms alone may not be helpful if presented without explanation, especially if the reader lacks a given understanding of their meaning. Therefore, a comparison of each handbook's content must focus on instructions for consonant articulation, and on methods of study.

Hawn's table of English consonants in divided into two sections, semi-vowels (shaped tone and breath) and consonants (shaped breath), a classification consistent with the terms voiced and voiceless. He gives no instructions about their formation. Places of articulation are deliberately omitted; Hawn maintains that the articulators are not under the singer's conscious control. Hawn suggests that "if the consonants give trouble in singing, it may be well to sing the vowels, putting on the proper consonantal sound, first the initial consonants, and in another exercise the final consonants, then lastly, the words as a whole."3

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3. Henry Gaines Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers (New York: Hawn School, 1911), 133.

Mastery of consonant articulation is taught by progressing from speech to song. "The corrective work must be begun in speaking and reading of words; and the singing of English will take care of itself, with some slight exceptions."4

Russell groups the consonants into pairs, sonant and surd, and "also indicates the place of explosion in the mouth."5 For legato singing he advises the singer "to reduce the explosive, percussive, or fricative characteristics of consonants to the least possible degree, without destroying their articulative intent."6

In her first treatise, Rogers classifies the consonants according to manner, but not place, of articulation. She defines certain "mute" consonants, p, t, and k, as those which can only be heard by means of an explosion of the air in the mouth. The remaining classifications (vocals, buzzes, sonants and flated [sic] sounds) are given but not defined. She suggests numerous exercises, targeting single and double consonants with simple vowels in combination.7 This author's second volume is more complete. Various classifications regarding manner of articulation are

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4. Ibid., 134.

5. Louis Arthur Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers (Boston: Ditson, 1905), 52.

6. Ibid., 51.

7. Clara Kathleen Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech (Norwood: Plimpton, 1912), 42-45.

expounded, and an explanation of consonant placement and the articulators involved is added.8 Exercises to promote flexibility are included in both manuals. Hawn holds that in the production of both vowels and consonants, articulators are not under the singer's direct regulation.9 Rogers agrees only insofar as vowels are concerned. With consonants, she writes "as all the parts employed are subject to our conscious control, we are able to make with complete accuracy all the different contacts and recoils required."10

Jones ignores consonant production, referring the reader to the earlier work The Technique of Speech for this information. Henschel uses idiosyncratic terminology, such as liquid, strong, soft or mute consonants, but primarily concerns himself with the expressive use of words in singing, not the production of individual sounds.

Baldwin, Marshall, Uris and Pfautsch provide the largest, most understandable information regarding consonant production. They define classifications and offer instructions for the manner and place of articulation. The latter three also include directions for practice and examples from musical texts.

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8. Clara Kathleen Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song (Boston: Ditson, 1927), 19-23.

9. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 128-29.

10. Ibid., 18.

All of the authors, in varying degrees, address the issue of consonant connection and treatment depending on position within a word or syllable (see Chapter IV). The letter r has several English productions; as a consonant, it can be simple, flipped, or rolled. In I.P.A. transcription, the symbol [r] represents all three pronunciations. Simple or American r results by moving the tip of the tongue up toward, but not touching, the gum ridge behind the upper front teeth. When r is flipped or rolled, the tongue vibrates against the gum ridge. Flipped r receives a single stroke of the tongue; trilled r is produced by repeatedly flipping the tongue against the gum. The authors disagree over which of the three [r] productions should be used under any circumstances when singing English. Hawn chooses American and rolled r, Russell and Marshall prefer American and flipped r, Rogers uses rolled r or none at all (silent), Baldwin recommends flipped or rolled r, Pfautsch justifies all three types of r and Uris calls for only one, American r in all cases.11

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11. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 121 ; Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 61 ; Madeleine Marshall, The Singer's Manual of English Diction (New York: Schirmer, 1953), 8, 16 ; Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 46, 52-54 ; Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 61 ; Adele Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Practical Phonetics for Singers and Speakers (New York: Phonetic Publishing, 1923), 99-100 ; Lloyd Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers (New York: Lawson-Gould, 1971), 127-30 ; Dorothy Uris, To Sing in English (New York: Boosey, 1971), 169-72.

According to Baldwin and Rogers, when r is initial in a word it should be rolled. Russell instructs the singer to use flipped r. Pfautsch says American, flipped or rolled r are all acceptable depending upon the musical circumstances. Uris recommends an American r, strongly sung, in initial position.

When r appears between two vowels, or preceding a vowel (even in an adjoining word), Rogers and Baldwin call for the r to be rolled. While Rogers states that final r should be rolled into the initial vowel sound of the following word, Baldwin disagrees: the r is fully completed and the vowel receives a new breath-impulse. Uris prefers an unstressed American r, moving in a forward direction. Marshall recommends American or flipped r, and Pfautsch flipped or rolled r, depending upon the musical setting.

R following a consonant in the same syllable (as in "bring") should be flipped according to Pfautsch, rolled according to Baldwin. Marshall instructs the singer to use American r. In the body of a word, when followed by one or two consonants (as in "hard"), Baldwin prefers flipped r. Marshall and Pfautsch believe this r should be silent; Uris calls for a brief coloring of r. Russell states that flipped r should be used in medial position; here Pfautsch finds flipped or rolled r acceptable. Final r is often flipped, per Russell and often silent, per Rogers. Other instances where r remains silent are before a pause (Marshall), and

always before a consonant (Marshall and Pfautsch), even a consonant in an adjoining word.

Marshall instructs that r is sung only before a vowel. Vennard shares an anecdote on this subject. After giving a lecture at the University of Illinois, Marshall was pressed by three Midwestern voice teachers, Vennard, Bruce Foote and William Miller, about her r dropping philosophies. Foote asked Marshall if she meant for the phrase "Twere best that we were parted" to be sung as "Twuh best that we wuh potted." Marshall replied "if an American singer thinks he is making the [r] silent he will reduce it to an acceptable minimum, but force of habit will cause him to sound it enough to meet the requirements of General American English, which the majority uses in the United States. The 'silent r' thus becomes a teaching stratagem."12 Uris states that while this theory may work "as a device," the singer should not rely on psychology, but focus upon the correct pronunciation of r.13

Some consonants receive an added vowel sound or explosion of air after their articulation. Russell, Baldwin, Henschel and Uris agree that this is not desirable in song. Russell calls for the reduction of all explosive

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12. William Vennard, Singing: the Mechanism and the Technic (New York: Fischer, 1967), 175.

13. Uris, To Sing in English, 172.

characteristics of consonants to maintain legato.14 Baldwin supplies no instruction, other than "the final consonant should be completed or released by itself."15 Henschel's remedy is to glide the consonant into the following sound, or with a phrase-ending consonant, "simply cease singing with your lips closed."16 Uris points out that the consonants p, t, k, b, d, or g, sometimes misnamed "stop-plosives," do not break the line by exploding or stopping. These consonants end abruptly only when final in a phrase, "with a percussive effect, not a gust of air."17 Rogers says the consonants p, t and k must rely on the explosion of the air in the mouth for audibility.18

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14. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 51.

15. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 41.

16. George Henschel, Articulation in Singing (Cincinnati: Church, 1926), 42-45.

17. Uris, To Sing in English, 59.

18. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 42-45.

CHAPTER IV

CONTEXT

Chapters II and III compare instructions and study plans for isolated vowel and consonant production. Singing demands the combination of these elements into understandable words and phrases within a musical framework. This chapter reveals varying ideologies and methods about contextual application. Two major issues arise for comparative scrutiny: linkage and stress.

Pedagogical precepts on linkage address two related areas. Singers must learn proper syllabification (division within words), and treatment of adjoining sounds (separation/connection between words and syllables).

Hawn instructs the singer to "begin and end each tone with the exact consonants belonging to the individual syllable."[1] Compliance with linking practices given by Hawn and other authors requires knowledge of syllabification. Marshall and Uris warn the singer to disregard misleading divisions given in dictionaries and song texts. They adopt a method where consonants begin a syllable wherever possible.

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1. Henry Gaines Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers (New York: Hawn School, 1911), 12.

Thus the word "legendary" is divided le-gen-da-ry.2 Rogers opposes this. She calls for anticipation of consonant sounds; the example is divided accordingly as leg-en-dar-y. She calls for the separation of multiple consonants between vowels; the word "asking" becomes as-king.3 Uris disagrees with Rogers. Anticipating consonants interrupts the legato line.4

The literature varies concerning treatment of adjoining sounds between and within words. Although differing in method, goals are consistent: attainment of understandability and preservation of legato.

As cited above, Hawn calls for consonants to begin and end their respective syllables. Consonants take time from the vowel. Russell, Marshall and Uris maintain that final consonants are generally connected in a forward direction, leaning into the following word or syllable.5 Russell demonstrates that the phrase "he did not go" would be sung

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2. Madeleine Marshall, The Singer's Manual of English Diction (New York: Schirmer, 1953), 7 ; Dorothy Uris, To Sing in English (New York: Boosey, 1971), 60.

3. Clara Kathleen Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech (Norwood, Massachusetts: Plimpton, 1912), 76-79.

4. Uris, To Sing in English, 60.

5. Louis Arthur Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers (Boston: Ditson, 1905), 27-29 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 120 ; Uris, To Sing in English, 56-57.

"he di-dno-tgo."6 The linking method suggested by Uris, whether negotiating consonant plus vowel, vowel plus vowel, consonant plus consonant or vowel plus consonant, is a "one long word" approach. Connect sounds, "singing right through the bar line." Uris tells singers to not address the final or initial consonants of words, but of phrases.7 Baldwin insists that final consonants are never linked over to initial ones.8

Rogers, Henschel and Pfautsch do not recommend linking final consonants in a forward direction. Linking takes place by attaching the initial consonant to the preceding word's final. Consonants are sounded in advance of the note or beat on which their syllable falls.9 Rogers anticipates the consonant whether the final of the preceding word is a vowel, consonant or double consonant.10 Time is taken from the vowel of the preceding word or syllable. In the adjoining words "lambs stay," the consonants m, b, s, and t

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6. Ibid.

7. Uris, To Sing in English, 162-63.

8. Adele Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Practical Phonetics for Singers and Speakers (New York: Phonetic Publishing, 1923), 38.

9. Lloyd Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers (New York: Lawson-Gould, 1971) 83.

10. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 76.

take their time from the vowel a in "lambs." Thus, the a in "stay" is heard on that word's note or beat.11

Regardless of their methods for linking final or initial consonants, Russell, Rogers and Marshall maintain that sounds are separated if word meaning is jeopardized.12 Separation prevents the phrase "before I'm old" from being heard as "before I mold." Uris disagrees. In calling for word separation, Russell, Rogers and Marshall invite destruction of the legato line. Proper word stress and linkage will preserve understandability.13

Rogers, Baldwin and Marshall instruct singers to divorce final vowel sounds from initial ones. Marshall limits this separation to cases where the adjoining vowel sounds are identical.14

English is a stress language. Understandability relies heavily upon the preservation of natural rhythm and cadence patterns. The manuals discuss two kinds of stress: accent and emphasis. Accent refers to the strong and weak patterns

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11. George Henschel, Articulation in Singing (Cincinnati: Church, 1926), 9-10.

12. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 58-59 ; Clara Kathleen Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song (Boston: Ditson, 1927) 75 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 65-66.

13. Uris, To Sing in English, 58.

14. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 75 ; Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 37 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 64.

of syllable stress inherent in English. Emphasis is the prominence a syllable or word receives by the individual performer.

If vowels receive the same treatment in accented and unaccented syllables, a very unnatural English diction results. Following is a comparison of neutral vowel application and treatment of specific unstressed word endings present in the texts.

Marshall calls for use of the neutral vowel [ə] in unstressed syllables or monosyllables of various and limitless spellings. The unaccented syllables of "sadness," "idol," "titan," "patience" and "rapture" all are sung with [ə].15 Baldwin also stresses the importance of employing [ə], but unlike Marshall notes that it "varies slightly in quality according to the text letter which it represents and its position in a word."16 Uris surpasses Baldwin's instructions, outlining four unstressed vowels of "corresponding weakness vital to English speech rhythms." [ə] is most commonly used, as in the unaccented syllables of "adore" and "system." [ɪ] is preferable in the weak elements of words like "regret" and "vision." [ɛ], which has limited unstressed use, applies to the final syllables of "wilderness" and "presence." All -ful and -ure endings make

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15. Ibid., Marshall, 150.

16. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 134.

use of weak [ʊ], as in "joyful" or "rapture." Uris warns that "weakened vowels cannot be reduced to a single exact sound."17 Pfautsch agrees with Uris to an extent, noting the use of unstressed [ɪ] and [ɛ]. He differs drastically from Marshall, Baldwin and Uris in stating that [ə] appears often in speech, but infrequently in song. [ʌ] should be used in place of [ə], even in unstressed syllables.18 Russell does not employ neutral vowels. He discusses the treatment of weak endings in words like "prison" and "golden," "never substituting any sound of any other vowel than that in the word."19

Several authors provide instructions for the vowel treatment in specific word endings. Words with -ly, -y and -ies endings, such as "lovely," "happy" and "marries," are pronounced using [ɪ] according to Hawn and Marshall. Hawn says [i] may be substituted if necessary to the composer's rhyme; Marshall insists the singer refrain from changing the vowel under these circumstances.20 Uris calls for short, unstressed [i] in -ly, -y and -ies word endings. She asserts that this is the standard pronunciation.21 Words such as

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17. Uris, To Sing in English, 118-20.

18. Pfautsch, English Diction for Singers, 34.

19. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 28.

20. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 29, 124 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 129-30.

21. Uris, To Sing in English, 84-87.

"apple," "cradle" and "thistle," which end with unstressed -ple, -dle, -ble or -tle require consideration. Baldwin and Marshall maintain that [ə] should be inserted between the two consonants.22 Russell and Uris invite the singer to concentrate on the singable quality of the letter l on short tones, adding a vowel only when the syllable is sustained. Uris inserts a brief [ə], Russell [ɛ].23 Rogers says a vowel sound should never be interpolated.24

Hawn, Russell, Rogers and Uris address the subject of emphasis. Hawn requires the highlighting of key words and their components, mainly by intensifying consonants.25 Hawn and Uris suggest employing variations in pitch, volume, intensity, tone quality, duration or adding pauses.26 Rogers tells singers to employ a gradation of strength, not just the strong delivery of one word over another.27 Other than suggesting the singer examine or speak texts aloud before singing them, only Hawn and Uris include methods for ascertaining which words to stress. Hawn presents the five

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22. Baldwin, Laeis-Baldwin System of Phonetics, 40 ; Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 151.

23. Russell, English Diction For Singer's and Speakers, 29 ; Uris, To Sing in English, 189-90.

24. Rogers, Clearcut Speech in Song, 57-58.

25. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 23-24.

26. Ibid., 140-41 ; Uris, To Sing in English, 28.

27. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 83-85.

laws of emphasis: emphasize thoughts not words, emphasize all contrasted thoughts, emphasize new thoughts, emphasize thoughts which contrast with unexpressed ones, and emphasize thoughts unusually used.28 The method Uris presents for "sense stress" is unique among the authors. "Singers need system, not guesswork; they need a coherent approach, organized specifically for the study of English texts."29 This approach is based on the identification of strong and weak word types in English and emphasizing them accordingly. Nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are strong word types and carry the burden of conveying the meaning. All four must be prominent, but the noun and the verb in a phrase (the thing and the action) receive primary emphasis. Adjectives or adverbs, which modify nouns and verbs, can be phrases or single words. Singers must determine which modifier belongs to a noun or verb and attempt to link them. Like Hawn, Uris believes in accentuating the negative. Words like "no," "never" and "nor," and prefixes like -un or -in convey meaning. The five weak word types in English are articles, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns and auxiliary verbs. They provide necessary contrast if sung with reduced volume and intensity.30

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28. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 136-40.

29. Uris, To Sing in English, 20-21.

30. Ibid., 20-41.

Differences exist between the sung and spoken word. The singer must adjust to changes in pitch, compass, relative length, musical capability and quality.31 Twentieth-century authorities have given attention to reconciling textual clarity, the musical setting and physical limitations of the singer.

When a composer sets an insignificant word or syllable on a note of long duration, or places a stressed word on a lesser note, Hawn insists that the singer change the musical notation; he asserts that the laws of diction overrule the arbitrary laws of music.32 Uris agrees that an adjustment in durations may be acceptable: dotting a note or borrowing time from one note to add to another. A strategic pause may be inserted to signal a strong word.33 Russell disagrees. Singers cannot safely alter the rhythm of a piece of music to correct errors in word setting; the composer must be respected. A compromise must be reached, doing justice to both the text and the music. Place accents correctly, regardless of misplaced musical stress.34

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31. Alexander J. Ellis, Speech in Song (London: Novello, n.d.), 10-11.

32. Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers, 28-33, 18.

33. Uris, To Sing in English, 28.

34. Russell, English Diction for Singers and Speakers, 63-65.

Vowels often lose their identifiable long and short qualities when set to music. Uris notes that short vowel sounds are more open than long ones and should retain this quality even when sustained to unnatural lengths.35 Russell believes that use of consistent vowel-color, or shape, will help distinguish the vowels from each other when singing, where the duration of the vowels is dictated by the composer.36

Marshall and Uris concur that vowels must be modified in the highest reaches of the voice. Marshall instructs the singer to substitute [ɑ] for both [ɛ] and [æ] on very high notes.37 Uris presents a detailed vowel ladder illustrating "the modification from a relatively closed vowel to a more open one." Sopranos have the greatest need for modification, but tenors and mezzo-sopranos can also benefit. Basses and baritones modify vowels in reverse, moving from more open to more closed vowels as they ascend.38 Marshall and Uris maintain that listeners will continue to hear the original word. Rogers and Jones disagree. They assert that it is possible for singers to pronounce clearly, even on high notes. No modification is

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35. Ibid., 156.

36. Ibid., 15-16.

37. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 127, 137.

38. Uris, To Sing in English, 77-78.

necessary. With flexibility and proper control of the organs of articulation, singers should be able to produce any given vowel on any given pitch within their range.39

Specific performance practices can be dictated by musical style. Only Marshall offers a few specific suggestions for singing opera, oratorio, art songs, or sacred music. She has recommendations on which [r] should be articulated before a vowel. The flipped r should be chosen when performing opera, with the exception of words containing dr and tr combinations where American r should be used instead. American r is used in sacred music and art songs, with three exceptions. Between vowels, on very high notes, and when cr and gr combinations occur in dramatic words (or in those difficult to project), flipped r should be used. British folk songs and works by Gilbert and Sullivan also follow the procedure given for art songs. Only American r should be used in all other types of music.40 In cases where r is flipped, singers should substitute [ɑ] for the vowel sound [æ].41

Singers can only make limited use of the "three basic intonation patterns and their many variations." Performing

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39. Rogers, English Diction in Song and Speech, 88-89 ; Dora Duty Jones, Lyric Diction for Singers, Actors, and Public Speakers (New York: Harper, 1913), 149-50.

40. Marshall, Singer's Manual of English Diction, 16.

41. Ibid., 187.

recitative in opera or oratorio provides one of the few occasions for singers to take advantage of the inflections possible in English. Upward inflection of the voice should be used for questions, downward inflection for statements. The singer may also employ down-up and up-down inflections to provide variation.42

It is clear that all authors intend the application of their diction principles to include the performance of opera and oratorio. Rogers, Henschel, Marshall and Pfautsch provide musical examples borrowed from the oratorio scores of Handel and Mendelssohn. They set basic diction standards for all singing in English. Uris writes: "We cannot direct our concern to opera in English, but to the English in opera, and in art songs, oratorio, or in any other form that unites music and words."43

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42. Uris, To Sing in English, 63-64.

43. Ibid., 10.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Beginning with Baldwin in 1923, continuing with Marshall in 1953, and then with Uris and Pfautsch in 1971, the increased use of International Phonetic Alphabet symbols as a pedagogical tool is evidenced. Baldwin's book is the last to provide terminology traditionally used in treatises on speech and phonetics. Clarifying information for the use of vocal articulators in producing vowel and consonant sounds is descriptively and thoroughly imparted after 1923 only by Uris and Pfautsch. Using Kenyon as a model illustrates the effect of regional speech trends on the books of Rogers, Marshall and Pfautsch, who employ Northeastern and Southern practices for vowel production.

Uris' method of applying emphasis to words in phrases, based on weak and strong word types, represents a unique approach in the study of singing diction. No other author provides an equally systematic, easily identifiable approach.

Throughout the century, the principles of mechanics and anatomy in relation to human movement, known as kinesiology, grow evermore prevalent as applied to singing. The earlier manuals of Hawn, Russell and Rogers deny conscious control of vocal articulators, relying on the ear for automatic

adjustment, especially in vowel formation. Later books acknowledge the singer's faculty and responsibility in understandable sound production. Jones and Uris instruct singers to use kinesiology as a learning and performing stratagem. Students need a conscious sense of muscular movement associated with sound production.1 "Kinesthetic sensation, or the feel of the sound, is an additional guide to the accurate vowel."2

If the study of kinesiology is an area for further study, so is the influence of acoustic research on twentieth-century diction practices. Jones is particularly interested in the "voice-chord," with its fundamental or tonic primary tones and its first harmonic, the resonant tone.3 Chapter IV includes suggestions for vowel modification in high registers of the voice provided by Marshall and Uris. The works of Helmholtz, Ellis, Vennard, Large, Peterson and Barney are concerned with acoustical and vowel formant theories.

One thing alone is clear. Teachers and singers will always confront the responsibility of accurately conveying words wedded to music. At the beginning of this century,

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1. Dora Duty Jones, Lyric Diction for Singers, Actors and Public Speakers (New York: Harper, 1913), 202.

2. Dorothy Uris, To Sing in English (New York: Boosey, 1971), 156.

3. Jones, Lyric Diction, 144-45.

Hawn wrote that "detail work is necessary to success in any art."4 Sixty years later, Uris stated "Dealing with English as of now, teachers continue to cultivate its clarity and artistry in all song material that students and performers must learn."5 The twentieth-century literature about English diction practices for singers demonstrates an evolutionary process begun before the scope of this study, and continuing beyond.

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4. Henry Gaines Hawn, Diction for Singers and Composers (New York: Hawn School, 1911), 13.

5. Uris, To Sing in English, 10.

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