

**TOWARDS A CURRICULUM FOR
TRAINING UNDERGRADUATE CHORAL
CONDUCTING STUDENTS IN
SOUTH AFRICA**

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ABSTRACT

It is a feature of present-day schooling, in South Africa and abroad, that music teachers are expected to organise and direct vocal ensemble activities, yet adequate preparation provided in higher education courses for this role that the school music teacher has to fulfil seems lacking.

The purpose of this study is to compile a knowledge base that will enable the planning and development of a choral conducting curriculum, for use in South African tertiary institutions. The curriculum will be aimed at aspirant teachers in primary and secondary schools and community leaders who are culturally aware and who have a responsibility and interest in the choral field.

The discipline of choral conducting as a recognised subject of an undergraduate study package is a relatively new academic field in South Africa. The envisaged curriculum needs to enhance the proficiency of choral conducting students within an educational context.

The thesis is presented in five chapters of which Chapter 1 represents the background to the study, Chapter 5 summarises the study with recommendations and a conclusion, whilst Chapters 2 – 4 constitute the greater part of the research. Chapter 2 – **Towards a definition of an effective conductor**, offers a perspective on the various roles of conductors and investigates the nature of the art of choral conducting in order to move towards a definition of an effective conductor. In Chapter 3 - **Current choral conducting curricula**, the present situation with regards to choral conducting curricula in Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America is discussed. Chapter 4 – **Choral conducting skills**, examines the knowledge and skills that ought to be part of a choral conductor's proficiency. The meaning of each component and its characteristics are discussed. The primary method of research was the review of literature in order to acquire an in-depth understanding of the theme under investigation. The researcher also used the Internet as source of information on national and international choral conducting curricula.

Keywords: choir, choral conductor, conducting techniques, curriculum, music education, musicianship skills, rehearsal techniques, South Africa, undergraduate studies.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The impetus and need for designing a choral conducting curriculum arises from the researcher's own interest and experience as a choral conductor for more than 15 years, and his involvement in adjudicating national and international choral competitions and festivals. There it is evident that most South African choral conductors have had little or no formal training in choral conducting. The discipline of choral conducting as a recognised subject of a study package for beginner choral conducting students is a relatively new academic field in South Africa.

It is a feature of present-day schooling, in South Africa and abroad, for example, that music teachers, and even those teachers not specifically trained as music educators, but with exposure to choir singing as part of their background, are expected to organise and direct vocal ensemble activities, yet preparation provided in higher education courses for this role seems lacking. "Elementary and secondary school music teachers often direct the school chorus, choir, orchestra, or marching band, as well as give group and private lessons. They instruct students in the technical aspects of music, conduct rehearsals, and evaluate student performance" (Careers 2011). Personal experience in presenting workshops for choral conductors, and adjudication sessions, points to a deficiency in training of communicative, technical and expressive skills in directing, and conducting vocal ensembles. Such skills undoubtedly form an integral part of the role of any choir conductor.

Choral conducting involves communication. "Conducting relies on elusive factors that go beyond the scope of beat pattern and beat symmetry and conducting technique" (Jordan 1996:xiii). It requires the interaction and interdependence of the conductor and the choir; the various sections within a choir; the members within these various sections; the composer and the conductor-choir liaison; the composer-conductor-choir relationship and the audience.

There is an actual vocabulary involved in conducting which must be acquired to enable conductors to communicate with their choirs. This 'language' enables conductors to transfer the knowledge they acquire through analysis and training. If they cannot communicate, their knowledge and musical training are of limited value.

It is necessary to investigate the dual characteristics of choral conducting, theoretical and practical, as it affects the design of a choral conducting curriculum. The theoretical concepts and practical skills of choral conducting should be facilitated in such a curriculum. The knowledge base that will form the foundation for such a curriculum should be all-embracing in order for the educational outcome of the curriculum to be focused on deepening students' theoretical and practical understanding of issues related to choral conducting, while at the same time increasing their professional expertise and commitment.

1.2 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this research is to gather knowledge and explore aspects of the conducting phenomenon in order for relevant South African curriculum to be developed, designed for aspirant teachers in primary and secondary schools and community leaders who are culturally aware and who have a responsibility and interest in the choral field. Relevant institutions, tertiary institutions as well as community based institutions offering training in choral conducting, will be made aware of the creation of such curriculum. Envisaged programmes need to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and understanding of choral practice within an educational context. Students in choral conducting should be able to deepen their theoretical and practical understanding of issues related to the subject.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is based on the following main research question:

What should the fundamental components for choral conducting curriculum for beginner choral conducting students in South Africa be?

In formulating the principal question the following sub-questions were identified:

- What are the characteristics of an effective choral conductor?
- What is the present situation of choral conducting curricula in South Africa? Are they comparable to international curricula?
- What are the attributes of an effective conductor that should be included in choral conducting curricula?

1.4 LIMITATIONS

This study focusses on the gathering of knowledge towards the compiling of curriculum for the training of beginner choral conducting students; the writing and compilation of an actual curriculum is beyond the scope of this study.

Chapter 3 – Current choral conducting curricula, represents the gathering of different institutions' choral conducting curricula. It is not primarily intended to offer an detailed comparative analysis thereof, nor is it intended to offer the reader an insight into the viewpoints and outcomes of the students enrolled in the programmes mentioned. From the responses collected, it was clear that a great deal of music making occurs in an 'unofficial' capacity, that is, not as part of academically accredited subjects.

“South Africa has a vibrant and well-developed choral music scene that incorporates many musical genres and is evident in most, if not all, sectors of South African society” (Hammond 2004). However, a discussion of the specific features of the South African choral landscape does not form part of the scope of the study. South African choirs tour abroad and deliver favourable results in International choral competitions (see Chapter 3.2). In order for South African choirs to maintain a competitive international ranking and reputation, choral conductors ought to be adequately trained to lead ensembles of whatever particular local variety and cultural group.

Within the framework of this study an attempt was made to refer to specimen programmes in countries that are representative of the successful current trends in choral conducting (listed in the discussion of international conducting subject outlines Chapter 3.4). South African tertiary institutions do not all offer choral conducting as either an obligatory or elective subject. This study attempts to describe the current state in the offering of choral conducting training in South Africa and abroad; analysis or evaluation of programmes is not offered. Similarities and differences are merely stated with a view to establishing that which is common and that which is diverse in the field.

1.5 PROCEDURE

This study focusses on the compilation of a knowledge base to support the composition of curriculum for the training of beginner choral conducting students. The research approach used literature reviews, interviews and personal communication, and internet surveys of selected choral conducting curricula offered nationally and internationally.

The primary method of research was the review of literature. A wide spectrum of sources was consulted, which included books, journals, dissertations, reports and curricula of different international tertiary institutions. These were studied in order to acquire an in-depth understanding of the theme under investigation.

By means of consultation, as well as through correspondence, personal contact was established with people who could provide information on curricula in different parts of the country and the world. The researcher conducted interviews with choral conductors and concentrated on those active in tertiary institutions. Information was gathered through interviews with the heads of departments, programme leaders and individuals responsible for choral activities at such institutions.

The internet proved to be an exceptionally valuable source of information. Through joint discussion groups on Choralnet (2011) the researcher was exposed to developments in the field of choral conducting training, and by means of subsequent e-mail communication, valuable correspondence took place with specialists on the subject matter.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter 1 – **Background to the study**, describes the design of the research. Background to the problem is given and the research proposal is formulated in the light thereof.

Chapter 2 – **Towards a definition of an effective conductor**, offers a perspective on the concept of an effective choral conductor.

Chapter 3 – **Current choral conducting curricula**, discusses the present situation with regards to choral conducting curricula in Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. These countries and particular institutions therein were selected. The motivation for inclusion of institutions discussed can be found in Chapter 3.2.

Chapter 4 – **Choral conducting skills**, examines the knowledge and skills that ought to be part of a choral conductor's proficiency. The meaning of each component and its characteristics will be discussed in a concise investigation of the main elements which should be present in choral conducting curricula.

Chapter 5 – **Summary, recommendations and conclusion**.

1.7 NOTES TO THE READER

- The following terms are used synonymously: choir and chorus, (choral/choir) conductor and (choral/choir) director.
- In Chapter 3, the terms subject and course are used synonymously, while programme refers to a degree or diploma.
- Where more than one author is listed for references, all the references are in alphabetical order.
- Where secondary sources are quoted, the assurance is given that the author made every possible effort to but could not locate the original source(s).
- Where literature may seem dated it is nevertheless included as still relevant and important today.
- Some of the literature has newer or reworked versions available. However, in some cases the older versions were used because of the authoritative impact they still have.
- The large number of references in the dissertation are used to validate the context.
- Wherever possible exact page numbers are supplied. However, where this is not the case the researcher gives the assurance that the reason is, for example, because the information comes from a website where page numbers are not given.
- At the beginning of each sub-section of Chapter 3.3, the website reference is given for that institution. Unless otherwise indicated, all information which follows comes from those websites, including direct quotations in inverted commas.

CHAPTER 2

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF AN EFFECTIVE CONDUCTOR

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the role of conductors and conducting and investigates the nature of the art of choral conducting in order to move towards a definition of an effective conductor. What follows is an attempt to separate out the most important qualities of such a choral conductor.

2.2 THE CONDUCTOR IN HISTORY

Conducting and the role of the conductor as known today have evolved and are a relatively new occurrence, not dating back more than about one hundred and fifty years, although “today’s choral conductors have roots that extend far back in time” (Phillips 2004:4). Phillips (2004:4) asserts that there is enough “historical evidence that choral singing existed in many of the earliest civilizations”, necessitating a leader of the musical process.

Historically, conductors have been responsible for directing performing groups – orchestra, chorus, band, opera – in order to bring about complete coordination of all players and singers. The use of hands to indicate melodic motion was a technique of not only early Egyptians and Sumerian conductors but also early conductors of Gregorian chant. In addition to melody, conductors have historically been responsible for the beat or pulse of music (Yarbrough 1975:134).

Although Yarbrough refers to leaders of musical activities as conductors in the quotation above, there is no direct evidence that they were actually conducting. Robinson and Winold (1992:37) claim that there are sufficient examples in history of musical happenings, suggesting some kind of central control in musical performance. Honigsheim and Etzkorn (1989:108) make mention of several forerunners of the conductor: “the Greek musician who beat the rhythm with his sandals, the Roman who used oyster shells for this purpose, the Arab employing castanettes, and the first violinist (or concertmaster) and harpsichordist who indicated when to begin playing a movement”. According to Robinson and Winold (1992:31) “little is actually known about the origin of the conductor in choral performance, but it is safe to speculate that musical direction, even in its most primitive form, evolved from a need to control instrumental and vocal forces rather than from a desire for expression and interpretation”. None of these forerunners of conducting could have been regarded as innovators, as Honigsheim and Etzkorn (1989:108) point out that they “all performed according to a musical tradition”. In the vocal literature of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, the tempo of

the pieces was indicated by an up and down movement of the hand which then became the even, regulating pulse. This movement, a stroke, is described as “a successive motion of the hand directing the quantity of every note and rest in the song with equal measure, according to the variety of signs and proportions” (Galkin 1988:247). In the musical performances of the fourteenth to sixteenth century the conductor's function was no more than minimal time-beating.

In the seventeenth century the function of the conductor was still only that of a time-beater and coordinator of the musical activity; interpretative conducting, as known today, was not yet a factor in musical performance. The sixteenth-century practice of directing with some kind of stick, or roll of paper, was replaced in most churches by the keyboard player who also directed while playing the harpsichord or organ. “The choral conductor in the Baroque era often directed from the harpsichord or organ. Because Baroque music was metrically organized, beat patterns began to emerge that distinguished one beat from another in a repeated gesture” (Phillips 2004:8). The emphasis during this period was on the composer who sat at the keyboard, directing his own works. The function of the leader in the seventeenth century was simply to control performances from the viewpoint of tempo and rhythm. “Conductors of the Baroque era were mainly interested in holding the secure tempo and rhythm. No established system of conducting technique was taught or known at the time” (Phillips 2004:8). Conducting techniques that existed were individual and not codified into accepted practices.

In the eighteenth century, “one role of the conductor continued to be as keyboardist, especially in churches where the organist assumed such a leadership role” (Robinson and Winold 1992:38). By the early eighteenth century, time-beating as a continuous motion of the hand appeared and by the end of the eighteenth century the beat patterns in use today were well established. Together with the decrease in choral compositions and the increase in orchestral compositions the nature of musical direction was changed – “the revolution in orchestral composition – and within the orchestra itself – wrought by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven had set off a parallel revolution in the art of musical direction” (Krueger 1958:5). “When choral and orchestral forces were joined, dual positions often existed in which the choral director, seated at the keyboard, was assisted by the concertmaster” (Phillips 2004:9). However, the attributes of the interpretative conductor were still lacking. Honigsheim and Etzkorn (1989:108) note that conductors in this era rather followed tradition and had a function of “watching to see that the music was performed exactly as written. The conductor was not expected to provide his own individual interpretation”. Conducting was still a metrical rather than an interpretative procedure. Prior to this, conductors were part of the performing force, and led the ensemble from within the group. “Out of necessity, the conductor began to re-

place the performer as the principal leader during performances. Because many of these early conductors were composers, their role as interpreter was central in the evolution of the profession” (Ulrich 2009:48).

The role of the conductor as interpreter and the accompanying evolution of the profession that Ulrich refers to became evident in the Romantic era, when “the technique of conducting became a topic of debate, especially between the composers Mendelssohn and Wagner. Mendelssohn favoured a more conservative style of classical conducting that adhered to the written page. Wagner, however, believed a conductor should make great use of tempo rubato, thus bringing his own ideas of interpretation to the score” (Phillips 2004:9). Durrant (2003:76) summarised the role of the nineteenth century conductor by stating “the conductor was needed to provide the mechanisms for keeping large forces together as well as to create a single, unified expressive interpretation of the music”.

The post nineteenth century conductor has become an essential element in a musical performance, and is rated as a performing artist. With post nineteenth century composition techniques it is necessary for a conductor to have extensive training to deepen his/her skills and knowledge. Honigsheim and Etzkorn (1989:108) point out that

the ‘great’ conductor emerged only after the rise of impressionism and subjectivism. This conductor does not feel that he is simply a link between the composer and listener, but that by his personality and corresponding individual interpretation he adds a new element to the composition. The public comes to hear not only the composition but also his interpretation.

The choral conductor in the latter half of the twentieth century and now in the twenty-first century has emerged as a virtuoso and an artist in own right. In Brunner’s article *Choral Repertoire: A Director’s Checklist* (1992:29) he refers to “all aspects of the choral art – healthy vocal technique; basic skills of listening and sight-reading; music theory; history, and appreciation; musical sensitivity, expressions, and aesthetic response”. Art can be considered as “the conscious production or arrangement of sounds, colors, forms, movements, or other elements in a manner that affects the sense of beauty” (Anderson 2007). Freer (2007:27) further magnifies choral conducting as an “intricate balance between the needs of singers, the composer’s intent, the demands of audiences, and the personal and aesthetic goals of conductors”.

What an effective conductor really is, remains a somewhat open question. Durrant (1996:188-191), in his pursuit of a model for an effective conductor, recommends that consideration be given to the following elements, in no defining hierarchy:

Philosophical principles underpinning the role of the choral conductor

- Knowledge of the choral repertoire.
- Knowledge of the human voice.
- An image of the music prior to rehearsal.
- An awareness of the aesthetic potential of the music – including the composer's intentions in this respect.
- An understanding of the nature of the conductor's role.

Musical-Technical

- Appropriate aural and error detection skills.
- Effective conducting technique.
- The ability to demonstrate accurately and musically.
- Recognition of the importance of warming up voices.
- Strategies for establishing the character of the music at the earliest opportunity.

Behavioural-Interpersonal

- The capacity to create a positive non-threatening environment for music making.
- The capacity to communicate clearly and unambiguously.
- The desire to encourage healthy singing.
- The capacity to enable choral and vocal development.
- The ability to make singers feel confident and comfortable.
- The skill to pace rehearsals effectively.
- The expectation of the highest standards possible.

Howard Swan cautions choral musicians to include the three “h's”—“honesty, humility, and humor along with the musicianship that they are expected to possess in order to achieve excellence” (Fowler 1987:127). Lyn Whitten offers five sets of standards according to which a conductor can measure him/herself in terms of effectiveness. They are “musicianship, taste and artistry, perspective, education, and communication” (Paine 1988:37). The present-day conductor must be a complete musician, under whose guidance choristers are steadily developing their own musicianship.

2.3 THE CONDUCTOR AS PERSONA

Ward-Steinman (2010:1) describes choral music teaching as a “joyful profession”. She continues by citing some characteristics of the inspirational teacher by classifying them into musical skills, teaching characteristics and then “the most essential personal skill (is) the desire to be a choral music teacher” (2010:2). The author agrees with Ward-Steinman’s (2010:3) statement that “choral music teaching is an honourable life’s work, and demands commitment to excellence”.

In a recent publication by the Department of Employment and Immigration of the Government of Alberta, Canada, the personal characteristics of a choral conductor in an Occupational Profile were listed as:

- self-confidence and leadership skills
- good communication skills
- a genuine appreciation of each person's contribution to the group
- creative problem solving skills
- the ability to work long hours and within a limited rehearsal schedule, often in stressful or demanding musical settings
- they should enjoy taking charge and controlling situations, and developing innovative approaches (Alberta Occupational Profiles 2009).

The task of the choral conductor today is one characterised by a multi-faceted set of skills. Given this, developing an approach to prepare future conductors for this diverse and complex profession is challenging. What are listed as personal characteristics of a choral conductor by the Alberta Government leave one with a divide between natural abilities (talent) and teachable attributes.

“A conductor's charisma is generally seen to be both indispensable and unteachable. Without the capacity to ‘impose his personality’ on the ensemble, the conductor is nothing but a ‘mere time beater’” (Garnett 2009:192). As Garnett correctly states, some conductors have the ability to inspire greatly. In *Five Centuries of Choral Music: Essays in Honor of Howard Swan* (Paine 1988), Jameson Marvin's description of Howard Swan provides insight into how conductors can be perceived by their supporters:

... the personification of integrity, energy, soul-enriching purposefulness. Those who know him know of his breadth of humanity, his passionate support of high-quality music and music-making, his unique charisma and spirituality, his enthusiasm, and his love of music and of his fellow man (Paine 1988:15).

The art of choral conducting is a serious one and the conductor must not be seen as a first-rate musician in one field who yet has a “wish to exhibit himself in a capacity in which he is obviously third-rate” (Krueger 1958:7). Conducting is a complex matter, and the mastery of its physical technique, though important, is still but a small part of the total art. Sound training, technical conducting skill, musical talent of the highest order, thorough knowledge of musical style, consummate musicianship plus experience are indispensable ingredients for development of a good conductor (Robinson and Winold 1976:30). Harold Schonberg (1968:15) describes the conductor as someone with “commanding presence, infinite dignity, fabulous memory, vast experience, high temperament and serene wisdom”.

In her essay *Integrity in the Teaching and Performing of Choral Music*, Lynn Whitten comments that “choral conductors with integrity strive toward impeccable musicianship, develop their analytical and critical capacities for evaluation of score and sound, inform themselves about a composition and its style, and have the musical and artistic finesse to perform not only what is explicit in the score but also what is implicit” (Paine 1988:35).

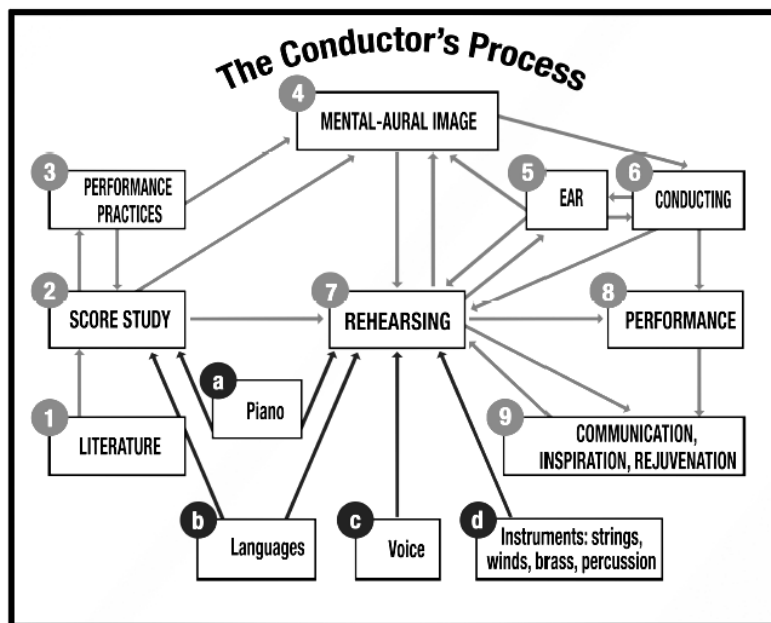
The indefinable qualities of personality, which are essential for dynamic leadership in other fields, are also necessary ingredients in musical leadership. Added to these leadership imperatives, the distinctive vocal and musical demands of choral performance bring yet another dimension to the complexity of the choral conductor's art. Considering the cited qualities of a successful conductor like Howard Swan, and Whitten's statement about the integrity of a choral conductor, a definition of an effective choral conductor tends to be even more unclear.

The teachable attributes of an effective conductor remain an important question. The role of the conductor is a strange one, as stated by Lebrecht in his book *The Maestro Myth*: "he plays no instrument, produces no noise, yet conveys an image of music-making that is credible enough to let him take the rewards of applause away from those who actually created the sound" (Lebrecht 1991:2). Decker and Herford (1988:3) assert that an effective conductor acknowledges the challenge by assuming "responsibilities as an interpreter of music, a teacher of skills, an organizer of experiences, a self-motivated learner, and a sensitive human being". As an interpreter of music, the conductor has the responsibility to search for the composer's intent and faithfully re-create the music. As teachers of skills, conductors need to be comprehensive musicians who can pass on effective ways of developing musicianship skills. As an organiser of experiences, the conductor has a responsibility for creating incidents that contribute to the musical growth and thinking of "each person as a special kind of musician" (Decker and Herford 1988:4). A dynamic conductor's impact is predicated upon his/her diversity, and this "diversity must be a product of achievement: solid, consistent performance" (Stanton 1971:110).

The conductor needs to be a self-motivated learner in order to explore, research and learn what is new in the field of choral conducting and with choral singing as an art form in order to keep fascination with this art alive and healthy within him/herself and the students. The researcher agrees with Collins (No date) who expressed the following sentiment about choral singing as an art form: "Singing is the gift, discipline is the way, and making music is the art. Art is our way of expressing life experiences in an extraordinary way". Music carries emotional qualities and can evoke human response in a distinctive way. In order to optimise the emotional strength of music in the choral communication process, it is necessary for the choral conductor to be a sensitive human being him/ herself.

2.4 THE CONDUCTOR AS REHEARSAL TECHNICIAN

Finn asserts that complete choral conductors are skilled in two roles, both as creators and re-creators. “First they should be commissioned to create, for they must make and maintain in dependable proficiency a singing unit which will invariably function throughout the diapason of choral tonalities and timbres aesthetically and with convincing musicianship” (Finn 1944:3). They are charged with the second duty of re-creating, reviving and reactivating compositions at each performance. Knowledge of choral art is imperative: furthermore, a “comprehensive musicianship and a philosophy of music which is based on history, psychology, and aesthetic criticism” (Finn 1944:4) is necessary. James Marvin (Paine 1988:17) provided a perspective on the interrelationship of the multi-faceted responsibilities of the choral conductor. Marvin proposed a diagram of this interrelationship, which he called “The Conductor’s Process” (see below).



(Paine 1988:17)

As can be deduced from Marvin's diagram, the rehearsal is seen as the situation where a conductor's effectiveness is chiefly demonstrated.

As an outflow from the previous paragraph, it is safe to assume that the quality of the performance is influenced by the effectiveness of the rehearsal. Training of choral conductors should therefore not only focus on aspects like the development of conducting gestures, performance, technique and style issues, but rehearsal technique and competency in rehearsing should enjoy healthy attention.

Though the public perception of a conductor is that of one who only performs atop a podium, most of the conductor's work is actually done behind the scenes in preparation for a performance. It is during the preparation period that musical awareness, sensitivity, and learning take place. The success of a rehearsal depends largely upon the conductor's skills, preparation, understanding, organization, and imagination (Brunner 1996:37).

Gumm (1991), Parker (1990) and Petty (1987) are amongst the many authors who have written dissertations on how the effectiveness of a conductor relates to his/her skills in rehearsal. Marvin's statement "Whether a conductor is effective or less effective can be seen in the rehearsal" (Paine 1988:18) supports various authors' findings on the relationship between effectiveness and rehearsal skills. While each aspect in Marvin's diagram impacts on at least one other aspect and the composite of the aspects represents the ideal conductor, each of the elements cannot be fully realised without the ability to rehearse.

In a study by Martin J. Bergee of the University of Missouri-Columbia, *A Scale Assessing Music Student Teachers' Rehearsal Effectiveness*, he identified three factors as essential aspects of music teachers' rehearsal effectiveness: Conducting Technique, Teacher-Student Rapport and Instructional Skill. Bergee appointed a panel of experienced music educators to rate eight student teachers' rehearsals, and compared the adjudication panel's ratings with the student teachers' final performance-based teaching evaluations. The three factors with the sub-items are listed below as they give the reader a very concise yet comprehensive synopsis of interrelated issues in a choral rehearsal. By using these factors as criteria, the effectiveness of a conductor within a rehearsal situation can easily be assessed.

1. Conducting Technique

- Effective use of left-hand gestures
- Extensive repertory of beat styles
- Conducts in manner that indicates character of music
- Acceptable interpretation of music
- Thorough knowledge of score
- Effective command of beat patterns
- Clearly indicates accents, attacks, releases and dynamics
- Maintains tempo accuracy and stability
- Conducts phrases as well as beats
- Demonstrates high level of intensity

2. Teacher-Student Rapport

- Constructively and effectively manages student behavior
- Demonstrates ability to motivate students
- Interprets accurately psychological mood of group
- Gives precise, understandable explanations and directions
- Communicates confidence and assurance
- Uses variety of teaching techniques
- Paces rehearsal effectively
- Uses techniques that minimize off-task behavior

- Provides for individual rates of learning
 - Exhibits marked enthusiasm
3. Instructional Skills
- Uses vocabulary appropriate to level of students
 - Appears organized and efficient
 - Effectively uses instructional aids
 - Relates material to other fields
 - Demonstrates ability to follow lesson/ rehearsal plan
 - Poses pertinent questions
 - Uses effective reinforcement techniques
 - Relates content to prior and future learning
 - Uses correct grammar and pronunciation
 - Maintains professional demeanor (Bergee 1992:5-13).

In his article *Carefully Crafting the Choral Rehearsal*, the author David L. Brunner (1996:37-39) recapitulates the characteristics of a dynamic teacher/conductor as one who can successfully handle a rehearsal, who is “a thoroughly trained musician, possessing excellent musicianship ... has a sincere enthusiasm for music, children, and teaching”. The author subscribes to the list of characteristics provided by Brunner. Brunner (1996:37-39) further accentuates good aural skills; good conducting technique; sufficient knowledge in performance practices, vocal technique, score study; and good oratory skills as part of a dynamic teacher/conductor.

In an article by Freer (2009), *Beyond Error Detection: a Cycle of Pedagogical Skills for Choral Conductors*, the author mentions the need for a choral teaching philosophy and how that philosophy is realised in and through the rehearsal.

Whether conscious to us or not, our philosophies are telegraphed through the rehearsals we design and the feedback we provide to our choristers. In the words of conductor James Jordan: Why do people come to sing for you? Not because of your musicianship or your beautiful conducting gestures. They come because of you. When your hands come down, the important thing is that you care about the choir, not the right notes or right rhythms (Freer 2009:45).

The rehearsal, and what happens in a rehearsal, is so important that most aspects taking place on stage during a performance is a reflection of what occurred during the rehearsal. “The training of conductors should put emphasis on developing a set of skills to ensure a successful and rewarding rehearsal process” (Ulrich 2009:49). This is supported by Bower in his article *Musical knowledge and Choral Curriculum Development* where he describes the rehearsal process as “where students apply knowledge to real-life problems and solve those problems with analytical thinking and action” (2004:37).

In Parker's literature review for his study *Ensemble members' perception of student conductor effectiveness* (1990) he observed that “when rehearsal technique and conductor effectiveness is outlined, one common theme among conducting texts is to maximize the time the ensemble is engaged in playing or singing” (Parker 1990:1).

The effective conductor always works towards a goal. The performance is the motivating goal for the rehearsal, although it should not be the goal of the whole process. Prior to the performance, rehearsing takes place. Prior to the rehearsal the conductor chooses the literature, or is presented with it or an exemplar such as a recording. The score or recording should be studied and questions concerning style and performance practices have to be considered. Through stylistic and structural analysis, the conductor develops a mental/aural image that prepares him/her for the rehearsals. In the process of rehearsing, the conductor uses his/her ear, conducting technique and communication skills. His/her rehearsal skills lead the choir toward a unified musical concept of the composition. The nine aspects in Marvin's diagram can be viewed as fundamental characteristics of the effective conductor (Paine 1988:17):

1. Knowledge of literature.
2. Efficient score study ability.
3. Knowledge of performance practices.
4. The ability to develop a mental/aural image of the composition from score study.
5. An effective ear to fulfil the mental/aural image during rehearsal and performance.
6. A reliable conducting technique in order to reveal musical meaning as well as pulse and metre.
7. The ability to rehearse effectively.
8. The ability to create successful performances, where conductor, performers and audience experience energising musical excellence.
9. Effective capabilities to communicate and inspire.

James Cox emphasizes that a conductor must “acquire a teaching style that is conducive to productive rehearsals and become aware of how your teaching style is perceived by your students” (1989:27).

2.5 THE CONDUCTOR AS EFFECTIVE TEACHER

It is the task of every conductor to unlock the beauty and joy of the printed score to the singers. “Superb musicianship and score analysis skills are prerequisite” qualities for any conductor (Yarbrough 2002:32). In order to start identifying what other attributes an effective conductor must have, “focus on the conductor as teacher, musical collaborator, and peda-

gogue” (Ulrich 2009:48). To get to the end result, which is what the audience enjoys in a concert, teaching had to take place, and an effective conductor will be an effective teacher. To measure someone’s effectiveness can also be to judge his/her level of competency in the specific field. In Gumm’s article *The Development of a Model and Assessment Instrument of Choral Music Teaching Styles* (1993) different styles of teaching in the choral rehearsal are examined and it is clear that conductors are in essence all music teachers. Apart from the “logistical leadership, a conductor guides the ensemble through performance by embodying the emotional intent of the composer, unifying their emotional expression” (Nagoski 2010:20).

Effectiveness is often measured by the outcome of the final product: if a concert was a success, the conductor is competent; if the concert was a failure, the conductor is judged to be incompetent. The effectiveness of conductors (teachers) is to be determined by the “quality of their students’ musical performances, an evaluative procedure still very much in effect today” (Brand 1985:16). This statement of Brand (1985) still holds truth in the current choral landscape.

An extensive body of research exists on music teacher effectiveness. Brand (1985:13) shows that as early as 1837, schools in Boston, USA, were seeking effective music teachers for their newly established music departments. Ulrich (2009:49) places emphasis on the teaching facet of a conductor by saying “how the conductor teaches the ensemble on day-to-day basis is the critical factor in reaching a successful and rewarding musical experience for students, conductor, and audience alike”. But how hard it is to specify the characteristics of an effective conductor/teacher Brand (1985:14) clearly shows in his article *Research in Music Teacher Effectiveness*: “Apparently, there are almost as many conceptions of effective music teaching as there are students, principals, music supervisors, parents, and music educators and researchers”.

Henley and Yarbrough (1999) conducted a study, *The Effect of Observation Focus on Evaluations of Choral Rehearsal Excerpts*, in which they investigated the impact of the following categories on effective rehearsing: Use of rehearsal time, Musicianship, Accuracy of instruction, Student attentiveness, Student performance, Enthusiasm, Intensity, Pacing and Personality. The outcome of their study was that “there is enough extant research showing the importance and effectiveness of these variables to more vigorously encourage their emphasis in music teacher training programs” (1999:317).

In a study done by David J. Teachout from the Pennsylvania State University (1997), *Pre-service and Experienced Teachers' Opinions of Skills and Behaviors Important to Successful Music Teaching*, the author constructed a questionnaire listing 40 teacher skills and behaviours. The questionnaire was sent out, completed and returned by two groups, one being preservice music teachers and the other experienced teachers. The 40 skills and behaviours are:

1. Enthusiastic, energetic
2. Maximise time on tasks
3. Involve students in the learning process
4. Possess competent conducting gestures
5. Maintain students behavior (strong, but fair discipline)
6. Have a pleasant affect; sense of humor
7. Be knowledgeable of subject matter materials
8. Possess good lesson planning skills
9. Maintain an effective rehearsal pace
10. Frequently make eye contact with students
11. Move toward and among the group
12. Be goal-orientated
13. Maintain a high-level of professionalism
14. Employ a positive approach
15. Possess excellent singing skills
16. Possess musical knowledge (theory, history, etc)
17. Use of effective physiological communication (body language)
18. Display confidence
19. Maintain high musical standards
20. Possess excellent ear-training skills
21. Be knowledgeable and proficient with secondary instruments
22. Be patient
23. Be organized
24. Have excellent speaking skills (diction, tonal inflection, vocabulary)
25. Easily develop a positive rapport with people
26. Possess proficient piano skills
27. Be creative, imaginative, and spontaneous
28. Maintain excellent classroom management and procedures
29. Be able to motivate students
30. Display a high level of musicianship
31. Possess excellent sight-reading (sight-singing) skills
32. Possess strong leadership skills
33. Be flexible and adaptable
34. Be able to present a lesson with clarity
35. Be able to manage finances well
36. Possess an understanding of teaching/learning strategies
37. Be able to work with students of different ages and abilities
38. Employ a variety of materials/activities within a lesson
39. Manage stress well
40. Be mature and have self-control (Teachout 1997:41-50).

Teachout identified seven items common to both groups' list of ten top ranked items – they were “Be mature and have self-control”, “Be able to motivate students”, “Possess strong

leadership skills”, “Involve students in learning process”, “Display confidence”, “Be organised” and “Employ a positive approach” (Teachout 1997:45).

In a similar study to that of Teachout, done by Kelly (2007:62), *High School Band Students’ Perceptions of Effective Teaching*, it was clear that students regarded the items “Maintain high music standards” and “Is knowledgeable of subject knowledge” as important attributes of effective teachers. Kelly’s study showed that there “appears to be a fundamental assumption in performance-based classes that success or failure can be attributed to the effectiveness of the teacher” (Kelly 2007:57). Kelly highlighted previously investigated social variables related to teacher effectiveness and categorised them into personal characteristics, visual characteristics and teacher classroom behaviours.

Personal characteristics shown to affect teacher effectiveness include a teacher’s age, voice pitch, and the volume of a teacher’s voice, a charismatic and enthusiastic personality, maturity, a positive attitude and a strong desire to help others ... The influence of visual characteristics on teacher effectiveness has been investigated Teacher dress, posture, and facial expression are visual characteristics that have been shown to affect the perceptions of effective teachers. Teacher classroom behaviours – variables such as teacher enthusiasm, energy, involving students in the learning process, possessing a sense of humor, and frequent eye contact have been cited as positive behavioural factors on teacher effectiveness (Kelly 2007:58).

Teachout’s 40 listed attributes (1997), adapted by Kelly (2007), can be viewed and summarised into three main approaches to effective teaching as found in Brand (1985:14):

- Personality based – effective teachers are democratic, fair, alert, understanding, kindly, stimulating, original, attractive, responsible, steady, confident, responsive, and poised.
- Pupil performance – the effect that the teacher has on learners.
- Mastery of a complex set of competencies (teaching and rehearsing skills, musical knowledge, human relations techniques, and management skills).

Brand’s (1985:14) research in Music Teacher Effectiveness has as important conclusion the following:

Effective music teachers tend to be extroverted, enthusiastic, and care sincerely for their students. Such teachers are competent in musicianship (particularly in diagnosing and correcting musical errors and in using voice in demonstrating performance technique), in classroom and rehearsal management, and in the ability to relate lesson objectives to student interests and needs. Frequent eye contact, use of physical gestures, and variation of facial expressions and speaking voice are characteristics of many effective directors.

2.6 THE CONDUCTOR AS MOTIVATOR

It is interesting that Teachout (1997:49) recommended that there should be a stronger emphasis on the development of “techniques for motivating students and for building self-confidence”. Stamer (2009:25) found in his study *Choral Student Perceptions of Effective Motivation Strategies*, that “one of the primary responsibilities of choral music educators is to determine effective strategies to encourage choral student motivation to ensure that learning is taking place and the musical goals are attained”. Stamer indicated that “student motivation was enhanced when the teacher was seen as enthusiastic, nurturing and interested in student progress” (2009:26). The classroom or rehearsal room is an important environment where motivation takes place. Stamer (2009:26) mentions “other important teacher characteristics and actions are a good disposition, tone of voice, use of encouraging language, and personal interest in each student”. An effective conductor thus needs to pay attention to motivation strategies:

Student motivation in the choral rehearsal is critical to the individual musical growth of the participants and to the musical growth of the ensemble. One of the choral music educators’ primary responsibilities is to motivate students to ensure that learning is taking place and that musical goals are realized (Stamer 2009:29).

2.7 THE CONDUCTOR AS COMMUNICATOR

A conductor has the dual task of communicating both verbally and on a non-verbal level. In a study done by Kimberly van Weelden (2002) titled *Relationships between Perceptions of Conducting Effectiveness and Ensemble Performance*, the author explored conductor effectiveness by investigating relationships between ensemble performance and the conductor’s visual appearance characteristics (eye contact, facial expressions and posture). Conducting technique, the use of arms, hands, the effectiveness of the preparatory beat, etc. are all important aspects in a conductor’s technique. Van Weelden indicates, however, that the effectiveness and success of the conductor’s non-verbal communication skills include subtler aspects beyond conducting gestures. “These aspects include how conductors are perceived by ensembles through their non-verbal behavior before the first note of music is played. This perception is directly linked to how conductors portray themselves through posture, how they carry themselves, and their physical appearance” (Van Weelden 2002:166).

Van Weelden continues by asserting that non-verbal communication, in the broadest sense, “encompasses physical appearance, use of space, touch, time, smell, non-verbal vocal be-

haviors, aspects of the environment, face and eye behaviors, and gestures and movements” (2002:167). Many conductors endeavour to perfect the skill of successfully communicating and conveying non-verbal messages using gestures and the body and facial expressions. There are numerous textbooks guiding conductors in perfecting the skill of non-verbal gestural language. As Sharp (1996) writes in the foreword of his book *Precision Conducting: The Seven Disciplines of the Masterful Conductor*:

Conducting is a language, and as such must be driven by a common set of rules if it is to be understood. Conducting is, however, a gestural language. Like mime or sign language, conducting communicates within a non-verbal context. Therefore, precision conducting is absolutely necessary in order to accomplish precision performance, even if ample rehearsal time has been allotted to verbally amplify the gestural language (Sharp 1996:viii).

Van Weelden, however, indicates that “the whole of a conductor's non-verbal communication skills includes subtler aspects beyond those gestures. The whole of the human body is a means by which to express what happens in a man's inner being” (2002:166).

The importance of developing effective non-verbal ways of communicating is also emphasised in an article by Alan J. Gumm, *The Speechless Rehearsal: logical solutions*. Gumm explains that choral directors follow the belief that talk is considered to be a primary way to teach, “with the understanding that students learn by verbally being told what to do or know” (2010:17). Developing non-verbal ways of conveying a message is encouraged by Gumm since from “the singer's point of view, more time is spent mentally sorting out a conductor's words – both relevant and irrelevant to the choral experience – than physically practicing the techniques and art of singing. The negative consequence is that as conductor-talk lingers, singers tend to pay less attention and get off task” (2010:17).

Gumm (2010:20) describes two problems during conductor-talk:

First, conductor-talk signals that there will be nothing for singers to do until the conductor stops talking excluding listening which is essentially an inactive mental task. Therefore singers find more personally, relevant and engaging things to do, such as letting their minds wander, chatting with a neighbour, or finding more interesting distractions elsewhere. Second, conductor-talk signals that talk is the thing to do when singing stops, so singers follow the example and add their own talk.

With more effective non-verbal communication skills, conductors can work towards reducing the “amount of conductor-talk, make rehearsals more productive and efficient, keep singers motivated through an active and engaging approach, and lead to beautiful and intelligent singing results” (Gumm 2010:21).

Another aspect of communication is the success with which an individual applies social skills. The authors Hamann, Lineburgh and Paul (1998) claimed in a study, *Teaching Effectiveness and Social Skill Development*, that a positive relationship exists between social skills and teaching effectiveness. The author agrees with them that basic communication skills can be categorised into three groups: “these are skills in sending, receiving, and regulating or controlling” (1998:90). These skills are classified into six categories described as social skills.

Social skills include Emotional Expressivity, “non-verbal sending”; Emotional Sensitivity, “receiving and decoding non-verbal displays of others”; Emotional Control, “regulating non-verbal ‘self’ communication”; Social Expressivity, “engaging others in social interaction”; Social Sensitivity, “decoding and comprehending verbal communication of others”; and Social Control, “skill in social self-representation and in directing communication in social settings” (Hamann, Lineburgh and Paul 1998:90).

These authors make a very important recommendation that “consideration must be given to the establishment of programs and procedures that help preservice teachers develop individual social skills, especially in those areas found to enhance teaching effectiveness” (1998:99).

2.8 THE CONDUCTOR AS LEADER

Rowbury (2010) poses the question “Does your choir really need a conductor (and if so, how many)?” in an article debating the need for a choral conductor to lead the musical process. The Guardian (2011) also asked whether a conductor is really necessary. The public perception in response to the posed question can be summarised by the following response on The Guardian’s website:

The only time I believe the conductor to be redundant is in the performance itself. The leader of the orchestra could easily fill this role, but, conductors just love to bask in their own insignificance. Choral conducting is a completely different kettle of fish - this requires a lot of input during the performance and can vastly change the performance (2011).

Lubans (2013) sings the praise of the conductor-less Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in his article *A Noisy Orchestra*. Lubans investigated democratic workplaces and makes valuable mention of the “conductor-less orchestra in the Soviet Union: ‘Persimfans’, short for Perviy Simfonichesky Ansambl, or First Symphony Ensemble (1922–1932)” (Lubans 2013). In reference to the ‘Persimfans’ Lubans (2013) discusses the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra as a successful example of “a living, breathing example of a democratic organization, one that is self-managing and - while there are many leaders –

'leader-less'". Korom et al (2006:29), however, refers to this leaderless orchestra's music as "a kind of mechanical chamber music" and goes on to state that "the conductor does, in fact, elevate the level of music making on both logistical and artistic levels" (Korom et al 2006:29). Sabaneev and Pring (1928:309) stated nearly ninety years ago that the

orchestral members declare that in playing without a conductor they experience an uplift of the artistic spirit incomparably greater than when they are controlled by the baton, no matter who wields it. And one can believe this: for the first time the musician has felt himself to be an artist enjoying equal rights, a member of a powerful body, an artist utterly and finally responsible for his own performance and not obliged to share the appreciation and divide the laurels with some individual who, though in a position of authority, does not belong to the personnel of the orchestra.

Nevertheless, it can largely be assumed that a choir cannot function without a conductor when one accepts that

the choir director does more than conduct and lead a choir, he is also tasked to make sure the members attend rehearsals and be at their best when performing. He carefully chooses the pieces that the group will perform and makes sure everything is in order; from the vocal harmony down to the stage formation (Estrella: 2013).

In her book *The Conductor As Leader*, Ramona M. Wis presents a definition of leadership as "the way in which conductors use their skills, knowledge and character to create not only a fine musical product, but also a meaningful musical experience" (2007: x). Conductors are by the nature of their profession leaders – they lead from the podium a musical process. Not all conductors are born leaders, however: core values of good leadership are "vision, reflection, honesty, trust, character, and personal growth" (Wis 2002:18). But the question remains: how to become a conductor with leadership qualities?

The first step toward becoming a leader is to consciously examine one's beliefs about music – its nature, role, and power – and about teaching. Reading, reflecting on, and debating the writings of philosophers and educators in the field, especially within the context of a well-taught philosophy of music education course, can be life-changing. Without a consciously developed personal philosophy, there is little foundation on which to build personal leadership (Wis 2002:18).

Just as the art of conducting must be studied in order to master the skills, so must the aspect of leadership be studied. Wis asserts (2002:18) that purposefully studying leadership is the crucial second step in becoming a leader – "the first step is to consciously examine one's beliefs about music – its nature, role, and power – and about teaching". In studying leadership the conductor must decide which style of leadership would be the best for him/her or

his/her organisation. Two styles of leadership as discussed by Patterson (2003) in her paper *Servant Leadership: A Theoretical Model* can be considered.

Transformational leadership – the leader inspires followers to reach higher than they originally anticipated; thus, due to the focus on the organizational objectives, follower commitment is built around the objectives and followers are empowered to reach those objectives.

Servant leadership – the leader is one who seeks to serve, and this serving is a natural component of the leader. Somewhat paradoxical to the typical view of leadership, where the purpose is leading, servant leaders seek to serve first as the primary means of leading (Patterson 2003:2).

The author supports Wis's advocacy of the servant leadership for choral conductors because "the *servant-leader* paradigm applied to conductors provides a model for leadership that empowers ensemble members through positive influence, goals, and a vision for success" (2002:17). Wis further advises distinguishing between leadership and management.

While managers maintain a certain course, leaders have the ability to change course. Managers are focused on efficiency, whereas leaders are focused on effectiveness. Managers can get things done, but leaders have the ability to create a vision and inspire the momentum needed to move things forward (Wis 2002:17).

Mintzberg, as quoted by Atik (1994:23), compares "the good conductor to the good manager 'orchestrating everything in advance' and then sitting back and, except for the occasional intervention, enjoying the fruits of his efforts". It is important not to confuse leadership skills with management skills. "Conductors must be skilled, and their role indisputably charges them with many management tasks. But those skills and managerial abilities must be subordinated to the role of leader" (Wis 2002:18). A conductor not only leads, but the ensemble is dependent on him/her to "breathe life into the ensemble, choose the repertoire, establish musical standards, select singers, and lead performances" (Sigman 2009:1). That implies other dimensions of his/her leadership role on an artistic, managerial and governance level.

The type of leader the conductor is, is very important and must be linked to the goals and philosophies of both the institution/choir and the conductor personally. Atik (1994:22-28) in his study, *The Conductor and the Orchestra: Interactive Aspects of the Leadership Process*, investigates different perspectives of leadership paradigms. Atik used nineteen players, primarily from three major orchestras, eight administrators and eleven conductors to take part in open-ended interviews:

The respondents were encouraged to express their views on various aspects of the leader-follower relationship including the comparative values of the authoritative v. collaborative conducting styles, the proper distance between conductor and follower, the role of and necessity for hierarchy, the influence of the group

culture on the interaction and other themes related to the dynamics of the interactive leadership process (Atik 1994:25).

As an outcome of Atik's study (1994:25), it is clear that "aside from natural authority ... clarity of message, praise and the ability to demand" were the most frequently mentioned characteristics of an inspirational leader.

In the currently ever changing social climate, a conductor must still adopt one leadership style, and be an inspirational leader within that specific style. This applies especially in South Africa, where the multi-cultural situation "entails a dual focus on who is included and excluded in the current system as well as how they are included and excluded" (McKinney and Soudien 2010:1). Because of the changing social and corporate environment within the choral sphere, Wis offers the following as motivation as to why servant leadership is the most effective leadership style for modern conductors (Wis 2007:xi):

The leader functions more as a coordinator of efforts, an expert guide who helps individuals achieve a mutually beneficial goal. There is greater involvement by all participants in the organization and theoretically, more accountability, leading to a deeper, more meaningful experience.

Wis (2007:xi) continues writing on the importance of the outcome of such a leadership style by asserting that followers of such a leader take on ownership of the cause they are busy with; they feel that they invest something of their own into the cause, thereby shifting the focus to "them" and not to the one leading, standing in front.

In an effort to support Wis's acceptance of the servant leadership model for choir conductors, Sigman is quoted (2009:1) as saying that "in the world of choruses evolution and creationism sit peaceably side by side". Because of a choir being a living organism that thrives on a collaborative effort for the success of the organisational and musical efforts, conductors must be subservient to the higher goals of any choir, and that is to serve the music.

2.9 THE CONDUCTOR AS "CONDUCTOR"

To the average concert-goer, the time-beating function of conducting is the most apparent, and the competence and effectiveness of the conductor are judged on the basis of physical appearance and gestures. In the eyes of the amateur choral singer, these characteristics are seen as a means of communication evoking a certain empathic response that results in a satisfying choral experience (Robinson and Winold 1976:30).

The author agrees with the above statement by Robinson and Winold and recognises the amateur music lover's misconception of the conductor as a mere time-beater. It is, however, important to point out that with all the preceding issues in place to become an efficient, com-

petent conductor, without having a meaningful, developed and understandable gestural vocabulary, a choral conductor will fail in meeting the demands of the profile of a successful conductor. Nagoski (2010:21) notes that a “significant part of the conductor’s job is to communicate the expressive content of the composer in order to keep the performers unified in their expressive intent”. The effectiveness of this communication is ensured by teaching student conductors “acts of symbolic non-verbal communication gestures, which indicate tempo, dynamics, onsets and cutoffs, articulation etc.” (Nagoski 2010:21).

Garnett (2009:1) discusses the “truism in teaching choral conducting that the director should look like s/he wishes the choir to sound” by quoting Abraham Kaplan’s words “The single element that most affects the eventual sound quality of a chorus in performance ... is the actual conducting technique or physical movements of the conductor”. This suggests that it is of vital importance to develop an effective conducting technique for “the conductor’s physical demeanour has a direct effect on how the choir sings, at a level that is largely unconscious and involuntary” (Garnett 2009:1).

In Litman’s study on *The Relationship Between Gesture and Sound: A Pilot Study of Choral Conducting Behaviour in Two Related Settings* (2006), the author remarked that “choral conducting gestures can be as many and as varied as the conductors themselves” (2006:2). In determining the relationship between gesture and sound, Litman also shows that a “conductor’s gestures somehow consist of a translation of the intended movement and rhythm of music into a form of visible signs that are intended to shape the musical behaviour of the conducted in a common way” (2006:3). Durrant (2003:147) puts forward five categories to which individual choral conducting gestures could be allocated:

- *connotative gestures*, those which suggest the expressive character and nuance of the music;
- *literal gestures*, these are gestures which give an indication of the pulse and sense of where the performers are in the music;
- *helpful gestures*, these are gestures which are helpful in some musical, technical or vocal way;
- *inappropriate gestures* are those gestures which contradict either a musical, technical or vocal related expectation;
- gestures *shared* with the singers themselves; these are gestures which enable the singers better to understand a musical, technical or vocal issue, and they are often done by the whole choir.

In developing a gestural language it is important for conductors to stay true to the demands of the printed score and to realize that “how a choir sounds is affected, if not determined, by the deportment and actions of its director” (Garnett 2009:169). James Jordan’s (1996:9) statement: “If the sound coming back to you is not what you want, you must be willing to

accept that the sound is a mirror image of your conducting” further strengthens the idea that the gestures of a conductor have a profound influence on the vocal and musical outcome of the choir.

Garnett explains that there appears to be a kind of “metaphoric mapping across different parts of the body. The hands and arms are mapped onto the phonating larynx, so the musical qualities of gesture emerge as the tonal qualities of the voice” (2009:114). This statement reflects a significant influence on the importance of the development of a reliable gestural vocabulary, as it serves the very essence of the choral art, namely the vocal tone. “The gesture of the vocal conductor must at all times reflect the movement of air through the vocal mechanism. Suddenly angular patterns and subdivided rebounds adversely affect the flow of air and then directly affect the intensity of color of the tone” (Jordan 1996:114).

2.10 CONCLUSION

In striving to create a definition for an effective choral conductor, his/her persona and role as effective teacher, motivator, communicator and leader have been discussed. Apart from the obvious ability to communicate music meaning through gesture, and the conductor’s role as rehearsal technician, the effective conductor has the ability to inspire, through a culmination of his/her development as teacher, motivator, communicator and leader.

CHAPTER 3

CURRENT CHORAL CONDUCTING CURRICULA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to evaluate the contention that little systematic training of choral conductors takes place within higher education in South Africa, information was gathered through prospectuses and by accessing relevant websites and brochures outlining subject provisions. While a website or prospectus cannot always be relied upon to give detailed or accurate information regarding attitudes towards every aspect of musical training and skill development, it generally outlines the nature of music programmes and describes with some degree of accuracy the choral conducting topics that are offered.

In this chapter the present situation with regards to choral conducting curricula in Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America is discussed. Information was requested from an extended range of national and international universities where choral conducting appears as a separately taught degree subject. As many as possible of these institutions' programmes are described, but with the emphasis on programmes of quality. A motivation for the inclusion of institutions will be given in Chapter 3.2.

From the responses collected, it was clear that a great deal of music making occurs in an 'unofficial' capacity, that is, not as part of academically accredited subjects. Within the framework of this study an attempt was made to refer to specimen programmes in countries that are representative of the current availability of choral conducting subjects. Although the focus of the study is to gain information that will enable the development of a proposed curriculum for beginner study in choral conducting at tertiary institutions in South Africa, the writer also includes various postgraduate subjects of some of the international institutions. The objective of this chapter is not to make an intense comparative study of various conducting curricula, but rather to gather information of what is done in the field of choral conducting training which may be applied to the intended curriculum. The author condensed the available information relating to choral conducting from websites and brochures. Information is thus as it is on the websites or in brochures of the different institutions, hence the source address as part of the heading of every institution. Information that is omitted focusses on subjects other than choral conducting or subjects not influencing choral conducting.

3.2 MOTIVATION OF INCLUSION OF INSTITUTIONS DISCUSSED

The latest edition of the *International Directory of Music and Music Educational Institutions* (Bartle No date) contains details of 3,331 institutions in 157 countries. This directory was used as one instrument in an effort to find institutions, worldwide, offering the types of programmes which this researcher was interested in for the purposes of this study. Another instrument used was information on international choral competitions. Investigating the results of such competitions gives an insightful indication of countries with an active choral life. Choral competitions are, however, not necessarily an indication of the effectiveness of a country's choral conducting training programmes, but are nevertheless of interest to see which countries produce the most prize winners. It is not the goal of this research to discuss the benefits, detriments or purposes of competitions here; this information is merely used as motivational instrument for the inclusion of countries in the institution list.

The author used the Musica Mundi World Rankings (Interkultur 2010a) and the Rankings of The European Grand Prix for Choral Singing (2009) as well as statistics from the report of Balandras (2004) on the achievements of choirs from various countries at demanding international choral competitions in the period between 1995 and 2004. The Musica Mundi World Rankings (Interkultur 2010a) provide an "overall comparison of all choirs that have participated in the INTERKULTUR competitions since the year 2000". Interkultur is an organisation based in Germany "and is dedicated to the goal of bringing people of all nations, cultures and ideologies together in peaceful competitions and songs" (Interkultur 2010b). Competitions are offered in the following areas: Children's and Youth Choirs, Mixed Choirs, Female Choirs, Male Choirs, Sacred Music, Pop, Jazz, Gospel and Folklore.

For over twenty years the INTERKULTUR competitions have been amongst the most innovative events in the international choral scene. The choirs have been evaluated by high-ranking international adjudicators according to the MUSICA MUNDI evaluation system and awarded Golden, Silver and Bronze Diplomas and Medals (Interkultur 2010a).

In the world rankings offered by Musica Mundi (Interkultur 2010a) there are 207 choirs in the first 200 positions. The following table shows, in descending numerical order, how many choirs from what countries occupy these positions.

	Country	Number of choirs
1.	Indonesia	19
2.	China	17
3.	Sweden	14
4.	Russia	14

5.	Norway	12
6.	Czech Republic	10
7.	Germany	9
8.	Austria	9
9.	USA	8
10.	South Africa	8
11.	Republic of Korea	8
12.	Hungary	8
13.	Philippines	7
14.	Slovenia	5
15.	Singapore	5
16.	Poland	4
17.	Ukraine	3
18.	Spain	3
19.	Latvia	3
20.	Japan	3
21.	Finland	3
22.	Denmark	3
23.	Croatia	3
24.	Venezuela	2
25.	Malay	2
26.	Italy	2
27.	Great Britain	2
28.	Estonia	2
29.	Sri Lanka	1
30.	Turkey	1
31.	Taipei	1
32.	Portugal	1
33.	New Zealand	1
34.	Netherlands	1
35.	Israel	1
36.	Ireland	1
37.	Georgia	1
38.	Colombia	1
39.	Canada	1
40.	Cameroon	1
41.	Bulgaria	1
42.	Brazil	1
43.	Bosnia	1

44.	Australia	1
45.	Armenia	1
46.	Argent	1
47.	Lithuania	1

Table 1: Interkultur World Rankings

The author compared this list to the results of the European Grand Prix for Choral Singing (2009). The European Grand Prix for Choral Singing (GPE) is organized by the committees of the following choral competitions, from which the GPE contenders are selected:

- Concorso Polifónico Guido d'Arezzo (International Guido d'Arezzo Polyphonic Contest) – Arezzo, Province of Arezzo, Italy
- Béla Bartók International Choir Competition – Debrecen, Hajdú-Bihar county, Hungary
- Concorso «Cesare Augusto (C.A.) Seghizzi» (C.A. Seghizzi Competition) – Gorizia, Province of Gorizia, Italy (also known as the Seghizzi contest)
- Concurso Coral de Tolosa (Tolosa Choral Competition) – Tolosa, Basque Country, Spain
- Florilège Vocal de Tours (Tours Vocal Competition) – Tours, Indre-et-Loire, France
- International May Choir Competition «Prof. G. Dimitrov» – Varna, Varna Province, Bulgaria.
- International Choral Competition Maribor, Slovenia.

The GPE is an annual choral competition between the winners of the seven European choral competitions. Despite its name, it is not limited to European choirs; this is because choirs from any country can join the choral competitions in any of the GPE's member cities (The European Grand Prix for Choral Singing 2009). The following table shows how many choirs from what countries have won the European Grand Prix for Choral Singing between 1989 and 2012.

	Country	Number of choirs
1.	Sweden	5
2.	Slovenia	3
3.	Lithuania	3
4.	United States	2
5.	Philippines	2
6.	Hungary	2

7.	Russia	1
8.	Latvia	1
9.	Japan	1
10.	Denmark	1
11.	Argentina	1

Table 2: European Grand Prix for Choral Singing Winners

Balandras (2004) published an investigation “into the achievements of choirs from various countries at the most demanding international choral competitions” between the years 1995 and 2004. Balandras used 16 different competitions to arrive at a final ranking. Three rankings played a role in arriving at this final result: Ranking A is built from the full prize lists of the 16 different competitions; Ranking B is built from the number of overall winners of each competition and Ranking C only takes the European Grand Prix results into account since it was founded. The Final Ranking takes the three previous scoring rules into account and adds them together. Balandras’s final ranking, however, shows the countries in order of accomplishment and achievement and does not indicate the number of choirs per country:

	Country
1.	Slovenia
2.	Lithuania
3.	Latvia
4.	Estonia
5.	Norway
6.	Hungary
7.	Sweden
8.	Denmark
9.	Finland
10.	Czech Republic
11.	Moldavia
12.	Israel
13.	Belarus
14.	Austria
15.	Belgium
16.	Philippines
17.	Germany
18.	Ukraine
19.	Spain
20.	Switzerland

21.	Netherlands
22.	France
23.	Greece
24.	Bulgaria
25.	Italy
26.	Poland
27.	United Kingdom
28.	Serbia (Yugoslavia).

Table 3: Balandras Report Final Ranking

Comparing the three different tables thus far (see Table 4 below), the following countries were represented in all three tables in the first 15 places: Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, USA.

	INTERKULTUR World Rankings	Number of choirs	EGP	Number of choirs	Balandras Report
1.	Indonesia	19	Sweden	5	Slovenia
2.	China	17	Slovenia	3	Lithuania
3.	Sweden	14	Lithuania	3	Latvia
4.	Russia	14	USA	2	Estonia
5.	Norway	12	Philippines	2	Norway
6.	Czech Republic	10	Hungary	2	Hungary
7.	Germany	9	Russia	1	Sweden
8.	Austria	9	Latvia	1	Denmark
9.	USA	8	Japan	1	Finland
10.	South Africa	8	Denmark	1	Czech Republic
11.	Republic of Korea	8	Argentina	1	Moldavia
12.	Hungary	8			Israel
13.	Philippines	7			Belarus
14.	Slovenia	5			Austria
15.	Singapore	5			Belgium

Table 4: Comparison of results from Interkultur Rankings and Balandras report

The author decided to put these countries on the initial list of countries from which institutions were to be discussed. However, Graham Bartle (van der Sandt 2010a), who is responsible for the compilation of the *International Directory of Music and Music Educational*

Institutions (Bartle No date), recommended institutions from 46 different countries (listed in the *International Directory of Music and Music Educational Institutions* as having courses in choral conducting) to be contacted. After having analysed the outcome of the comparison made in Table 3 plus Bartle's recommendation, institutions from the following countries were first chosen: Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, USA. Institutions from the next list of countries were additionally considered, based on the available information on programmes offered: Australia, Canada, Estonia, Finland, Germany and the United Kingdom. Institutions from the Netherlands were also included because of the author's personal experience of having completed a choral conducting diploma in that country. The inclusion of South Africa automatically forms part of the justification for this research.

It must, however, be noted that South Africa is only represented on the Interkultur World Ranking list (Table 1) in position number 10 and not at all on the other two lists (see Table 2 and Table 3). Balandras (2004:3) asserts that there are two main streams of choral competitions: "strictly musical competitions, and commercial (and/or tourist) competitions". According to the results shown in Table 4 it seems that South African choirs tend to choose to go to "commercial competitions" (Balandras 2004:3). It must be taken into account that there are also choirs that choose not to go competitions, or simply cannot afford to go because of the costs of travelling and obtaining visas. Balandras (2004:8) refers to the competitions organised by the commercial company Interkultur (see Table 1) and that the results of these competitions are not mentioned in detail in his report, "in so far as they prove neither to be valuable nor to mean much". Balandras suggests that a "commercial competition philosophy" is not desirable and "choirs should not be directed that way" (2004:8).

McCormick (2009:15) asserts that such competitions help sustain a "corrosive commercial reality" wherein musicians are portrayed as contenders instead of artists (2009:21). McCormick further explains "why the Olympic metaphor emerges so consistently in general news coverage of competitions. The fused performance with which the general public identifies is the conquering hero and musical champion" (2009:25). Because of the commercially published Interkultur World Rankings, the choice to go to more commercially driven competitions might arise from a desire of conductors "to fill their own ranks, thereby reproducing a distinction between consecrated performers and lesser musicians. This distinction rests on the illusion that competition winners possess a 'rare talent'" (McCormick 2009:6). This statement by McCormick is further strengthened by Stamer who refers to the "nonmusical detriments of the contest experience" and that because of competitions "there is too much emphasis on ratings" and "competition produces winners and losers" (Stamer 2004:6). The absence of

South African choirs on the results lists of “high level international choir competitions” (Balandras 2004:2) used by Balandras in his report (Table 2: European Grand Prix for Choral Singing Winners, and Table 3: Balandras Report Final Ranking) can be debated at length: however, it is not the purpose of this research to discuss the merits or demerits of choral competitions – “music educators are generally divided in their opinions about the effects of the competition movement” (Burnsed and Sochinski 1983:25).

The possibility does exist that the absence of South Africa on the lists of Table 2: European Grand Prix for Choral Singing Winners and Table 3: Balandras Report Final Ranking can be attributed to the absence of “music personalities” that Balandras (2004:9) refers to: “The very good results some countries have achieved are often due to outstanding musical personalities, to such an extent that if one of them were not to appear, the countries’ results would be dramatically altered”. The probability is that such “musical personalities” do exist, but that “very few of them feel it is appealing to deal with international competition, especially abroad” (2004:9). Balandras mentions Hungary as an example of one of the countries “in which strong musical personalities involve themselves regularly in international competitions”, a statement based on the country’s “valuable and regular results” (2004:9) in “high level international choir competitions” (Balandras 2004:2).

All this is, no doubt, a result of a long tradition, but also the fruit of a faultless musical education from early childhood. Perhaps choir singing and choir conducting teaching are best organized and best maintained in that country (Balandras 2004:9).

The above words by Balandras raise the question whether there are enough adequately trained conductors in South Africa, sufficiently skilled to lead a choir to obtain good results in international choral competitions. Another issue that arises from Balandras’s statement is the effectiveness of the South African music education system in producing the “musical personalities” that Balandras (2009) refers to in his report. This most certainly merits further research. It is the goal of this research to gather knowledge and explore aspects of the conducting phenomenon in order for relevant South African curriculum to be developed. The above information on choral competitions is merely used as a motivational instrument for the inclusion of countries in the list of institutions.

Choral conducting training programmes from institutions from the following countries will thus be discussed: Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The choice to represent more than one

institution from a country was made on the availability of information on programmes offered, and on the quality of those programmes.

3.3 DATA ON CHORAL CONDUCTING SUBJECTS

The following information is derived either from personal email correspondence with individuals, or from consultation of mentioned institutions' websites on the content of choral conducting programmes.

3.3.1 AUSTRALIA:

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

(http://www.acu.edu.au/courses/undergraduate/music/bachelor_of_music?PROGRAM=BMUSIC#description)

Choral conducting as a subject is offered as part of the Bachelor of Music programme at the Australian Catholic University. The Bachelor of Music programme provides

a balanced training in practical and theoretical areas of music, leaving Career Opportunities as open as possible. Alongside rigorous historical and theoretical studies, students are trained in practical skills preparing them for careers as professional musicians.

The Australian Catholic University claims to prepare students for an array of career opportunities and includes "solo performance, accompaniment, vocal and keyboard teaching, conducting, choral training, arrangement/composition, and church music".

The subject of choral conducting at the Australian Catholic University is called Choral Training. Students can enrol for the subject over at least two years of the BMus programme, with the option of continuing this study in the third year. The programme provides

students with valuable ensemble performance skills that may be applied in school, community and church situations. Workshops with other students provide training in conducting skills and choral training techniques, and experience in choral singing is gained as a member of the Campus Choir.

The following study fields related to choral conducting are covered in the programme offered by the Australian Catholic University:

- Study of the art and techniques of choral rehearsal and direction
- Directing of an approved choir
- Choral conducting technique

- Accompaniment
- Repertoire studies.

The subject descriptions are not supplied. The Australian Catholic University places a high emphasis on students having to perform in an ensemble to gain valuable experience as part of a performance group. Before selection the students have to meet the following prerequisites: a satisfactory level of proficiency in English and an acceptable level of competence in areas of pipe organ, piano, harpsichord or voice. All candidates have to do an interview and an audition. The specific audition requirements are not available.

**3.3.2 AUSTRIA:
UNIVERSITÄT FÜR MUSIK UND DARSTELLENDEN KUNST (UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC
AND PERFORMING ARTS), GRAZ
([http://www.kug.ac.at/studium-
weiterbildung/studium/studienrichtungen/dirigieren.html](http://www.kug.ac.at/studium-weiterbildung/studium/studienrichtungen/dirigieren.html))**

This University offers a similar programme to that of the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna (see 3.3.3 below). This programme is a Bachelor's degree with emphasis on orchestral conducting, choral conducting and Korrepetition (vocal coaching). After the first six terms of studies the candidate receives a Bachelor's degree, followed by another four terms after which a Master's degree is earned. Apart from the importance placed on the obtaining of a basic theoretical knowledge of music and conducting, special value is put on practice-orientated training by regular co-operation with vocal and/or instrumental ensembles.

The students receive instruction in a comprehensive range of subjects related to the choral art (a capella, symphonic, oratorio, opera, vocal chamber music and avant garde repertoire). Music of diverse periods, cultures and genres is studied to provide the students with extensive repertoire knowledge. The subject fields offered in the programme can be summarised as:

- Introduction to Orchestral Conducting
- Choir Conducting
- Vocal Coaching
- Harmony
- Counterpoint
- Instruments and Acoustics
- Aural training with emphasis on Composition and Theory
- Notation practices in Contemporary Music
- Form in Music

- Analysis of Music
- Music History
- Piano
- Voice Building
- Opera Practices
- Choral Practices
- Foreign Language: Italian
- Theory, and Style and Performance Practice
- Theatre orientated Labour Law Practices.

The subject descriptions are not supplied. It can be seen from the list of subjects on offer that this programme not only concentrates on choral conducting skills, but also on developing students' skills in conducting an orchestra which is a necessary skill for any choral conductor – “choral conductors generally have only limited experience rehearsing and performing with orchestras. As a result, many of us prepare ourselves badly for rehearsals and concerts” (Demaree et al 2004:3).

Candidates who wish to study at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, have to do an entrance examination that consists of the following parts:

- written examination testing the following aspects:
 - aural skills
 - knowledge of music history
 - harmony and counterpoint skills
 - Instrumental and music score knowledge
- practical aural examination
- oral examination testing knowledge of instrumentation
- practical examination displaying level of skill in instrumental playing:
 - piano
 - voice
 - basic conducting.

3.3.3 AUSTRIA:

UNIVERSITÄT FÜR MUSIK UND DARSTELLENDEN KUNST (UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS), VIENNA

(<http://www.mdw.ac.at/index.php?pageid=162>)

The University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna offers both orchestral and choral conducting and builds on its long tradition of training conductors. At this University it is possible to obtain a diploma in conducting, majoring in either orchestral or choral conducting or Korrepetition (vocal coaching). The entrance examination for candidates who wish to study at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna is broken down into the following parts:

Part A:

1) Written:

- Aural skills exam (intervals, chords and cadences, one and two-voice dictation, rhythmic dictation, pinpointing errors, identifying various timbres and musical styles).
- Theory test (counterpoint and harmony, reading scores, musical forms and repertoire).
- Analysis of musical forms with an orchestral score from the Viennese Classical era.

2) Practical:

- Sight singing
- The examining board will select from the followings tasks:
 - Sung repetition of chord tones and short sequences of intervals.
 - Sight singing of an easy tonal or modal melody a cappella. Repetition of the same melody with dissonant piano accompaniment, canon, etc.
 - Memory test, sung repetition and transposition of an easy tonal melody (played three times).
 - Sight singing of atonal sequences of intervals a cappella.
 - Sight singing of a melody or recitative with accompaniment.
- Performance of an easy prepared vocal piece (e.g. Schubert Lieder, Volume 1).

Candidates must first pass the first part of the examination to be admitted to the second part.

Part B:

- Sight reading easy pieces on the piano.
- Performance of a Beethoven sonata of medium difficulty of the candidate's choice and another piece of medium difficulty of the candidate's choice.
- Additional performance on an instrument other than piano, if the candidate so chooses.
- Conducting: The conducting examination is to be held, if possible, as a rehearsal with a string quartet or a small instrumental or vocal ensemble. The examining board will choose from the following group of pre-selected works:
 - For orchestral conducting: Beethoven: 1st Symphony, 1st, 2nd and 4th movement Mozart: Divertimento No. 3, KV 138, Mozart: Kleine Nachtmusik, 1st movement, Schubert: Unfinished Symphony, 1st and 2nd movement
 - For Choral Conducting: Mozart: Ave Verum, Bach: Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern (BWV 436), Bruckner: Locus iste.
- Interview with the candidate on general music culture, repertoire, etc.
- Students whose native language is not German must submit proof of German proficiency before admission to the selected studies that allows them to sufficiently follow lectures and understand coursework.

The objectives of the programme “aim to impart students the skills necessary to competently direct musical ensembles with respect to the specialisations offered in each of the areas of concentration”. The author finds it encouraging that the university aims to introduce “the students to the entire field of music theory and gives them a solid basis to draw on for later performing activities”, and then in the next stage of the programme students get the opportunity

to “deepen and expand their knowledge and focus on areas of specialisation in line with their chosen area(s) of concentration”.

The degree is divided into two stages, and takes a total of 10 semesters to complete. The following very descriptive account of the degree programme is offered:

A choir director should be able to inspire choir singers, work in teams and lead groups. Students develop their conducting technique and body language beginning in the first stage of studies and learn to use these to express and convey musical ideas, as well as to interpret choir repertoire ranging from the Renaissance to the present day representing both the secular (including opera) and sacred genres.

The very first sentence of the above quotation “A choir director should be able to inspire choir singers, work in teams and lead groups” – is reassuring that the university recognises that a “conductor must have power to inspire, incite, and command” (Coward 2003: 250) and that after a conductor has worked towards revealing the music’s musical meaning “communication takes place, realizing music’s profound capacity to inspire” (Paine 1988:31).

This programme also acknowledges the choral conductor’s work with the voice as instrument and need to have a thorough knowledge thereof:

Working with a choir or vocal ensemble differs primarily from working with an orchestra in that the “instrument” of the choir is the human voice, even the human body itself. Working with vocalists therefore requires choir directors to have profound knowledge of the workings of the human voice in all its facets: musical, physical, physiological and verbal. Solid training based on required and elective courses in voice and language is indispensable and is aimed at enabling students to:

- Use singing to demonstrate, express and explain,
- Develop the range and endurance of their own voices,
- Be able to sing with impeccable intonation and to adapt and adjust to all types of tempering systems,
- Heightening others’ awareness for nuances in timbres and differences in sound,
- Recognising all types of technical vocal problems and communicating solutions.

The author supports this University’s inclusion of working with the voice as an instrument, thereby developing each singer’s own voice and increasing knowledge on how to treat the voice as an instrument. In this regard Fuelberth (2003:13) emphasises “the issue of inappropriate vocal tension” and advocates “the ability of choral conductors to use conducting gesture effectively in maintaining a sense of vocal well-being and health among singers”.

The programme offered by this University is very comprehensive, not only on a theoretical level, but also offering sufficient practical exposure to the art form. A summary of subjects offered during the degree programme is as follows:

- Choir Conducting
- Orchestral Conducting
- Piano
- Voice Building
- Music Analysis
- Score Playing
- Choir rehearsal methods
- Aural Training and Solfeggio
- Composers and Music Theorists
- Introduction into Historical Style Practices
- Style and Performance Practices
- Form Analysis
- Generalbass (Thorough bass).

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.4 CANADA:

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON, ONTARIO

(<http://www.queensmusic.ca/music/>)

This School of Music offers in the area of Music Education a programme that introduces students to the basic principles of conducting and baton techniques. The course focusses heavily on conducting technique, teaching students “to use conventional right-hand conducting patterns for duple, triple and compound duple metres, right-hand cueing, and will analyze compositions to prepare for conducting”.

Other methods of developing the choral conductor take place in class with activities including

movement, creative activities (composition and/or arranging), strength training, peer conducting, small and large group discussions. Course evaluation will consist of participation (required for peer conducting), assignments and quizzes, and a written and practical final examination.

The names of subjects and the descriptions are not supplied.

To be admitted, candidates should prepare a 15-minute audition consisting of

at least two works of contrasting style/period (at the minimum admission level for the instrument described above) that demonstrate their technical skill and musical understanding. Candidates will also be required to take an aural perception test and to write a brief theory (rudiments) test on the audition day. The ear test

includes intervals, simple melody identification and elementary melodic dictation. The theory rudiments test includes key signatures, scales, intervals, and the appropriate grouping of notes and rests in different time signatures. The last step in the audition process is a brief meeting with a member of the faculty who will answer questions and provide additional information.

3.3.5 CZECH REPUBLIC: CHARLES UNIVERSITY, PRAGUE (www.pedf.cuni.cz/khv)

Choir Conducting is offered as a study programme at the Faculty of Education of the Charles University. A Bachelor of Music degree is offered where Choir Conducting can be chosen as a specialisation field. Prospective students will have to do an entrance examination consisting of the following elements:

- Singing
 - parts of choral compositions (soprano and alto, or tenor and bass):
Dvořák: Eja mater (from Stabat mater), with recording.
 - Mozart: Ave verum corpus (mixed choir a capella), with piano accompaniment.
- Sight sing a simple unison song.
- Conducting
 - Smetana: Má hvězda (My Star), Západ slunce (The Sunset, from Three women songs), with piano accompaniment.
 - Dvořák: Slavonic Dance No. 8, with recording.
 - The applicant will listen to an unknown recording and then conduct the character of the piece.
- Play choral scores on the piano:
 - Smetana: Má hvězda, Západ slunce.
 - Mozart: Ave verum corpus (mixed choir a capella).
- Sight Reading a simple three part choral score.

The following courses, with their descriptions, are offered to students:

- *Choral Conducting – Rudiments of Conducting Technique I, II*
Development of basic conducting techniques, practice with folk songs and choral repertoire.
- *Eurhythmics*
Development of accomplished movement of both arms and the whole body. Movement in expression of music.
- *Score Reduction for Piano I, II*
Development of individual skills to create and play choral score reductions on the piano, using closed and open vocal scores.
- *Folk Guitar I, II*
Playing the chords, cadences and their use in accompaniment of folk and popular songs.
- *Figured Bass I, II*
Figured bass in interpretation of baroque and classical keyboard music. Transformation of this specific notation to the modern score.

- *Music Listening Activities I, II*
Individual reconnaissance of contemporary musical life with a view to choral concerts.
- *Choral & Vocal Pedagogy*
The examination of vocal pedagogy in a choir and the development of basic singing skills.
- *Musical Aural Analysis I, II*
Development of aural analytic skills related to the melodic, harmonic and rhythmical components of a composition.
- *Sight Reading & Accompanying I, II*
Development of the skill to read quickly and play nimbly vocal, choral and instrumental compositions adequate to the individual level of a student.
- *Choir Conducting – Working with Scores I, II*
Development of advanced conducting technique, analysis of choral compositions from a conducting perspective.
- *History of Choral Music I, II*
An examination of European choral singing from the Middle Ages to the present. Prominent choirs, conductors, composers and choral compositions.
- *Playing the Electronic Keyboards I, II*
Specific facilities of the electronic keyboards and their use especially in accompaniment of choral singing.
- *Advanced Conducting I, II*
Individual study of choral repertoire and of larger choral works both a cappella and with instrumental accompaniment. Students will be required to rehearse and conduct a choir in performance.
- *Choir Rehearsal V, VI*
Continue in singing in a mixed or chamber choir. It is necessary to attend both rehearsals and performances.
- *Choral Literature*
History of choral music concentrating on more detailed analysis of representative works for all kinds of choirs.
- *Choral Arranging*
Arranging of different musical pieces (especially folk and popular songs or other brief compositions) for vocal ensembles.
- *Conductor's Practicum I, II*
Using the conducting, instrumental and vocal skills in studying a new composition and leading a rehearsal of a vocal group set up from a study group.
- *Ensemble Singing*
Singing in a small ensemble and examination of differences between choral and ensemble interpretation. The repertoire depends on the number of students and voicing
(Charles University: No date a).

In this programme, a student has to perform at least once with a choir, in the position of conductor or instrumental accompanist. The inclusion of *Eurhythmics* as a course offered in the programme resonates with the author's recognition of the value of including meaningful rhythmic movement training to conductors that "facilitates and reinforces the understanding of music concepts, enhances musicianship and focusses awareness on the physical demands of artistic performance" (Sanchez 2011).

3.3.6 ESTONIA:

THE ESTONIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE, TALLINN

(<http://www.ema.edu.ee/index.php?main=571>)

Estonia is one of the countries that has an extensive training programme for choral conductors. The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre recognises that a choir needs “an educated and able conductor in order to develop”. On attending numerous international symposia and choral competitions, the author encountered the Estonian Chamber Choir with Tõnu Kaljuste as conductor, as well as the female choir of Estonian Choral Conductors under the direction of Ants Soots (one of the choirs of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre). The impression that they left is one of profound dedication to the art of choral singing. It is for this reason that the curriculum of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre will be discussed in depth to show the level of training, and to fully comprehend the standing of Estonian choirs in the international choral field.

The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre states that an applicant for choral conducting must possess the following:

- good qualities suitable for becoming a choral conductor;
- abilities and interest to work as a music teacher at a public school;
- good musical hearing, memory and taste;
- high spiritual culture and a broad-minded vision to serve as a true leader of a group;
- knowledge of basic conducting techniques;
- a healthy vocal organ and sufficient singing skills;
- knowledge of basic vocal techniques.

For the entrance examination for choral conducting, the applicant must:

- conduct from memory two choral works, which differ in character and style; one of them must be a cappella; the other may be either a cappella or with piano accompaniment; in addition, the applicant will be asked to play on the piano one of his/her prepared works (must be a cappella);
- analyse the works prepared for the audition according to the following criteria:
 - relationship of music to text;
 - theoretical analysis;
 - personal concept and interpretation of the work;
 - sightread on the piano a choral work (four staves);
- improvise the accompaniment for a children's song; the applicant shall choose this song in advance and should be prepared to transpose it by a whole step higher or lower;
- sing a song while accompanying himself/herself on the piano or a cappella; the song, chosen in advance by the applicant, may be a folk song.

In addition, the conducting audition also checks:

- knowledge of the fundamentals of choral work within the scope of the music school course;
- knowledge of the most important choral compositions in classical and contemporary choral literature;
- knowledge of Estonian cultural history;
- piano playing skills. The applicant must perform:
 - 1 polyphonic work;
 - 1 technical piece or etude;
 - 1 sightreading.

The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre Conducting Department has been in existence for over 50 years. Three curricula are offered in the Conducting Department:

- The curriculum for the Bachelor's degree programme of Choral Conducting
- The curriculum for the Bachelor's degree programme of Symphonic Conducting
- The curriculum for the Master's degree programme of Choral Conducting.

The curriculum of the choral conducting speciality provides education in respect of practical skills and work experience. For the latter a practice choir is available, where the first and second year students work and sing in the choir made up of the students of the corresponding year.

The curriculum of the Bachelor's degree programme with specialisation in choir conducting has been drawn up according to principles guaranteeing the graduate the knowledge and skills of a professional musician. The knowledge essential to a choral conductor, and the skills for dealing with different styles and types of choirs on both the amateur and professional levels, are dealt with in the curriculum. General educational preparation in order to ensure a wide cultural background is also included in the curriculum which has as goals the preparing of choir conductors with “professional skills and knowledge”. The programme aims to equip students with knowledge and skills to be able to function as a “Choral Conducting teacher and music theory teacher”.

The curriculum consists of subjects in the following fields:

- area of emphasis courses
- core music courses
- humanities
- teacher training courses.

Students have a choice from the following subjects in order to make up the required credit points for the choral degree programme:

- Arrangement
- Bachelor's Exam Choral Score Reading
- Basic Elements of Orchestral Conducting
- Choral Conducting
- Choral Literature
- Conducting
- English
- Free Style Polyphony Analysis
- Gregorian Chant
- Gregorian Choir
- History of Art
- History of Early Music History of Music in the 19th Century Estonian Music
- History of Early Music Music Before World War I
- Introduction to Culture Project Management
- Introduction to Estonian Folk Music
- Introduction to the History of Music
- Methods for Teaching Solfeggio
- Methods of Choral Work
- Methods of Z. Kodály
- Mixed Choir and work with Work with Choir
- Modernism and Music Theatre
- Music Aesthetics
- Music Criticism
- Music Psychology
- Musical Style in the 20th Century
- Overview of Psychology
- Pedagogical Practice
- Piano
- Piano Free accompaniment
- Practice of Teaching Solfeggio.
- Practice Pedagogical Philosophy
- School Music Didactics
- Solfeggio
- Stylistic Harmony Counterpoint
- Theoretical Knowledge of Orchestral Instruments
- Vocal Ensemble Methods
- Vocal Studies.

The subject descriptions are not supplied, yet the choral conducting programme offered by the Estonian Academy of Music impresses with a wide array of subjects forming students into well-rounded choral conductors. Adding an extra dimension to the programme is the offering of the subject *Introduction to Culture Project Management*. Conductors' roles are more than just unveiling the music and the interpretation thereof – “The twenty-first century conductor is a scholar, house manager, salesman, performer, peripatetic workaholic who can swing from Mozart to Messiaen” (Hunt et al 2004:146). Managing an ensemble is not only about communicating the meaning of the printed score to singers but also “about positive reinforcement and motivation” (McGlone 2010).

3.3.7 FINLAND:

SIBELIUS ACADEMY OF MUSIC, HELSINKI

(http://www.siba.fi/attach/ops0809b_eng_kirkkomus_helsinki.pdf)

The Sibelius Academy of Music in Helsinki, Finland, offers a comprehensive choral conducting programme. The course offerings are distributed between the degree programmes in orchestral and choral conducting, Music Education, Church Music and Music Performance. Choral conducting is offered as a subject in the Music Education Department, Church Music Department and the Department of Performance.

All prospective music students are expected to have versatile soloist skills and theoretical qualifications and experience of ensemble playing or singing. The entrance examination is in three sections. The first section consists of

- a) An audition in the main instrument.
- b) A music theory and solfège assignment and interview.
- c) A test in conducting.

All sections consist of several parts. All parts are compulsory. An applicant will be rejected if he/she fails to perform any single part of the examination.

Applicants for the programme of choral conducting at the Sibelius Academy are

expected to have versatile soloist skills, theoretical qualifications and experience of ensemble singing.

The entrance examination is in several sections. It will consist of

a) An instrument and voice audition and an audition in choral conducting. In the audition, the applicant shall be prepared to present a sample of his/her conducting and rehearsal skills in five choral compositions, which will be sent to the applicants in advance. The audition will also test the applicant's ability to give a choir its notes using a tuning fork, to sing choral parts, to play a choir score in the original key and transposed, and sight reading. The applicant will also give an audition in a main instrument and voice unaccompanied. An applicant can give an audition on several instruments.

b) Tests in music theory, solfège and aural perception and an interview. The test in music theory and solfège will measure aural perception and short-term musical memory. The applicant's music cognition and score-reading skills will also be measured, for example on the piano. The interview will assess the applicants' educability and suitability for the profession.

All sections of the examination include several parts. All parts are compulsory. An applicant will be rejected if he/she fails to perform any single part of the entrance examination.

Students following the Degree Programme in orchestral and choral conducting have to take the following subjects:

- Analysis and arrangement of Choral Literature.
- Conductor Coaching (for other students than orchestral conducting majors). The objective of this subject is to learn the basics of conducting techniques and score reading; to become familiar with orchestras and orchestral repertoires by studying basic conducting patterns, score reading and analysis; clefs and temperament.
- Choral Conducting. The objective of this subject is to equip students to be able to work with a high artistic standard; to study the working methods of different choir types, and to acquire an understanding of Western choral literature, study demanding works in choral literature; to acquire an understanding of the vocal techniques required by the different periods of choral music and to be able to apply them in practice. Students get a general overview of the repertoire and vocal characteristics of different choir types; learn to observe the trends of choral music, and qualify for further studies.
- History of Choral music
- History of Finnish Choral music
- History of Music
- Music theory
- Research and Writing skills
- Solfège.

From the above account of subjects offered the author finds the subject *Conductor Coaching (for other students than orchestral conducting majors)* a valid inclusion which addresses the fact that the conducting technique for choral conductors differs from the technique used to conduct an orchestra. As part of this programme the Sibelius Academy also coaches students in Conducting Gestures and Style and Performance Practices, pertaining to the differences and similarities between the main historical music periods.

Students in the Degree Programme in Music Education are familiarised with music in general, furnishing them with

the competence to teach subjects related to music education and to provide them with pedagogic skills. Upon completion of the degree programme, students will be able to work as teachers of music at the comprehensive school and the upper secondary school, as well as to serve in several positions that require expertise in music education. In addition, students attain the skills for further studies.

Students have to take choral conducting as part of the qualification requirements for music teachers.

Students examine the conducting technique of choir rehearsals, choral conducting and vocal technique. This module covers different types of choral notation, from early music to graphic notation, the challenges of different languages and the applied psychology of choir work.

The Degree Programme in Performance offers students two subjects where they are required to sing in an ensemble: Choir Singing and Chamber Choir:

- Choir Singing
Objective: To become familiar with rehearsing and performing a large-scale musical work.
- Chamber Choir
Objective: To learn the singing technique required by a demanding choral repertoire; to develop a widened knowledge of styles and stylistic demands in music, and to be familiar with an adequate amount of basic repertoire and the latest choral music.

Valuable practical experience is gained by students singing in choirs as part of their training. Students practise ensemble singing by rehearsing and performing material suitable for different types of configurations; they learn to control their voices in relation to the other members of the group, and study useful vocal ensemble repertoire.

As can be seen in the following structure and course descriptions of the Degree Programme in Church Music, extensive opportunities are available for students to develop their skill as choral conductors. Finland has two state churches, the Lutheran Church and the Orthodox church. The musicians for the latter are trained at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu. However, “the majority of the Finnish population belongs to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland (80.7 percent in 2008)” with the second largest religious group in Finland being the Finnish Orthodox Church at just over 1 percent with 58,445 members (Kotiranta 2003:1). The author therefore focuses only on the training offered to musicians and conductors at the renowned Sibelius Academy.

- Laboratory Choir
To practice making music with church song sources from approx. AD 900-1500, both in theory and through practical examples. Work is mainly based on original scripts and early prints, and supports the application of skills and knowledge of musical paleography. The song repertoire is not rehearsed. The objective is that during the module, students learn to interpret neumes and chorale notation, practice singing from early scripts, expand their knowledge of the basics and are exposed to a variety of performance practices.
- Conducting
Basics of Conducting
To acquire the basic skills in rehearsing and conducting parish ensembles, and to acquire the technical conducting skills for studies in ensemble conducting and further choral conducting subjects.
Syllabus:
 - the basics of conducting technique and the historical background of conducting
 - studying the similarities and characteristics of choral and orchestral conducting
 - choosing a repertoire
 - different instruments.

Choral Conducting, level A

To be able to work independently with a high artistic standard; to master the conducting technique required by the most demanding works in choral literature; to acquire an understanding of vocal techniques required by the different periods of choral music and to be able to apply them in practice, and to expand overview of the repertoire and vocal characteristics of different choir types; learn to observe the trends of choral music, and qualify for further studies.

Syllabus:

- specific challenges of conducting technique and vocal technique, music analysis exercises
- examining interpretation issues of choral music
- rehearsing and conducting 10 choral works (one must be accompanied) representing different styles with a vocal group and the student's own external choir(s)
- teaching choral conducting and practical training (6 credits, included in choral conducting pedagogic studies).

Choral Conducting, level B

To qualify for conducting a demanding repertoire and for possible further studies

Syllabus:

- tuition of choral conducting and singing in a choir
- individual tuition on choral conducting
- tuition in orchestral conducting
- periods of orchestral work
- arrangement exercises.

Choral Conducting, level C

To qualify for rehearsing and conducting a more demanding repertoire; to understand the basics of voice technique at the level required by the repertoire; to study Finnish and international choral literature; to be able to use a choir as an artistic instrument in parish work.

Syllabus:

- methods of leading choir rehearsals
- conducting technique and voice production and care
- specific challenges and choir notation of different style periods
- the psychology of choral work
- rehearsing a repertoire consisting of 9-12 songs
- participation in the rehearsal choir as a singer
- participation in the Ensemble Conducting study module.

Choral Conducting, level D

To master the basics of analytical listening; to be able to lead the rehearsal of small groups; to become familiar with different choir types and main choral literature; to study the repertoire used in choral conducting studies. To learn how to rehearse, conduct and pitch a choir; to study choral literature specifically suitable for parish work; to be able to conduct choirs in parish work.

Syllabus:

- active listening and analysis
- basics of score playing
- tuning and vertical perception of the score
- rehearsal technique
- conducting technique

- vocal technique
- pronunciation of foreign-language texts in choral literature
- specific challenges of different style periods
- the psychology of choral work
- rehearsing a repertoire consisting of 9-12 songs
- participation in the rehearsal choir as a singer
- conducting a children's choir.

Ensemble Conducting

To develop the competence in leading rehearsals and practising the choral and orchestral works used in parish work, and to promote the use of chamber and orchestral music.

Syllabus:

- developing conducting technique
- score structure in different orchestral configurations
- characteristics of an amateur and a professional orchestra
- organising rehearsals, and rehearsal techniques
- characteristics of different instruments, tuning, phrasing, bowing, dynamics, tuning problems, etc.
- guiding beginner ensembles
- playing in an ensemble
- small-scale instrumentation exercise.

Choral Singing

To study and actively participate in the rehearsal and performance of a large-scale work in which the choir plays a significant role. Students can apply to substitute this module with the Chamber Choir study module.

This module can be repeated several times.

Chamber Choir.

Syllabus:

- to master the vocal technique necessary to perform a demanding choral repertoire
- to achieve the high standard of rhythmic clarity in singing as required for tonal purity and ensemble work
- to be able to apply different types of choral expression
- to maintain individual artistic expression
- to learn to control one's voice in relation to other ensemble members.

The author supports the Sibelius Academy's focus on the development of conducting skills which coincides with Thornton's belief "that every music director must be first and foremost a superb conductor" (Thornton 2004).

3.3.8 GERMANY:

UNIVERSITÄT DER KÜNSTE BERLIN, BERLIN

([http://www.udk-](http://www.udk-ber-)

[ber-](http://www.udk-ber-)

[lin.de/sites/content/topics/colleges/music/study_courses/artistic_training/church_music/index_eng.html](http://www.udk-ber-))

The Berlin University of the Arts (Universität der Künste Berlin) offers tuition in choral conducting as part of different diploma programmes. Students enrolled at the College of Music partaking in one of the following study courses: School Music, Church Music and Music Education, all have the opportunity of being exposed to training in choral conducting.

The entrance examination consists of the following:

1. Written paper in composition.
2. Written aural tests.
3. Oral/practical examination:
 - Performance of 1 moderately difficult piece of own choice from each of the following epochs: Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern.
 - Sight-reading of operatic piano scores.
 - Sight-reading of orchestral scores.
 - Aural tests.
 - Conducting of two compulsory works (played on two pianos) announced four weeks in advance of the examination.

A high emphasis is placed on the training of teachers for School Music. The syllabus comprises three pillars: practical artistic tuition, musicology and music theory, as well as music education. Students in the School Music programme can enrol for choral conducting as part of the subject *Music Education* package. This

is aimed at training qualified music teachers for music schools and the private sector. The artistic, educational and academic parts of this course of study are complemented and consolidated by practical training in music schools in Berlin and Brandenburg.

The Institute of Church Music offers choral conducting in the form of special seminars (e.g. conducting of children's choirs). The Institute's choir 'Collegium Cantorum' consists of students and guests and is the 'practice choir' for students on the conducting course.

Students having completed their studies as school or church musicians or graduates of first degree courses can further their studies in choral conducting in the Music Education programme. The course of study choral conducting consolidates and broadens experiences in choral teaching and conducting. A requirement of admission is the previous study of choral

conducting for at least four semesters with a 'good' graduation pass. "During studies, students can, amongst other things, sit in on rehearsals with professional choirs as well as public performances".

The study programme choral conducting deals with the following areas:

- Aural Tuition
- Choir Conducting
- Choir Singing
- Music History
- Piano Tuition
- Practical sessions with singers and choirs
- Rehearsal Techniques
- Score Playing
- Voice Tuition.

The subject descriptions are not supplied. The curriculum content has the development of the student's knowledge of choral conducting and of interpretation abilities as goals. Both the ability of the student as choir music educator and as interpreter (stylistic and performance practice knowledge) are high priorities in the programme.

3.3.9 HUNGARY:

LISZT ACADEMY OF MUSIC, BUDAPEST

(<http://www.lisztakademia.hu/study>)

Choral conducting as subject is offered as part of the BA in Music degree. Students at the Liszt Academy of Music are able to major in choral conducting as an undergraduate course for 6 semesters and are instructed in mastering choral conducting in two subjects: Conducting practice (with piano) and choral conducting (with choir) (van der Sandt 2011a).

The admission requirements for studies in choral conducting state that students have to have good aural skills, knowledge and competency in harmony and counterpoint and playing the piano on a medium level. The audition consists of the following elements:

1. Conducting compositions from the following periods:
 - Renaissance: J. Bennet: Weep o mine eyes (Invitation to madrigals 2, Stainer and Bell, London), T. Morley: Springtime mantles every bough (Invitation to madrigals 1, Stainer and Bell, London).
 - Romanticism: F. Mendelssohn: Die Primel, Op. 48/2. (Edition Peters), F. Mendelssohn: Neujahrslied, Op. 88/1. (Edition Peters).
 - 20th century: Zoltán Kodály: Köszöntő (mixed choir), Béla Bartók: Héjja, héjja, karahéjja.

The candidate must have an in-depth knowledge of the pieces from memory. The candidate will conduct and, if necessary, correct and rehearse with the choir present at the audition – one piece from each of the above styles.

2. Singing:

Presentation of two art songs or folk song arrangements with piano accompaniment of contrasting character and style with piano accompaniment - from memory.

The university will provide the piano accompanist, but the candidate may also bring one.

3. Score Reading:

Presentation of 2 or 3-part examples from “Olivér Nagy: Partitúraolvasás, partitúrajáték” – knowing the alto and tenor keys is necessary.

4. Solfège, music theory:

General requirements: in-depth understanding of the theory of classical harmony (diatonic and chromatic triads and seventh-chords). Writing and playing of four-part harmonic progressions in closed position with appropriate voice-leading (see rules of keyboard harmony); knowledge of Baroque and Viennese classical forms and genres.

4.1 Written examination:

1. Dictation of a short chorale excerpt by J. S. Bach. Expectations: notation of the outer parts (soprano and bass); indication of the harmonic progression with figures above or below the bass line (figured bass).
2. Writing out, in close voicing, of a four-part harmonic progression (Roman and Arabic numerals of keyboard harmony are used).
3. Dictation of a tonal two-part musical excerpt.
4. Dictation of an atonal twentieth-century musical excerpt.
5. Dictation of a two-, three- or four-part harmonic progression series of approximately 10 intervals, triads or seventh chords).
6. Dictation of the rhythm of an atonal musical excerpt (circa 6 measures).

4.2 Oral examination:

1. Playing (on the keyboard) of four-part harmonic progressions in closed position with appropriate voice-leading.
2. Assessment of the applicant's knowledge of form on the basis of a detailed formal analysis of the musical pieces performed at the instrumental audition. Extra copies of the scores have to be provided by the applicant.
3. Sight-singing of a tonal melody in unison.
4. Recognition and singing of intervals, triads and seventh-chords on a given pitch.

5. Piano: as compulsory subject students have to prepare the following;

- Bach: 2 pieces from the Three-part Inventions, or a prelude or fugue from the Wohltemperiertes Klavier,
- A full sonata by Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven,
- Two solo pieces – one has to be by Bartók or by his contemporaries.

6. Folk music

An informal conversation about the folk music of the candidate's country will be conducted.

Students have to successfully pass the following subjects in order to qualify for the BA Music (choral conducting):

- Acoustics
- Aesthetics
- An elective course
- Choral Conducting as main subject
- Composition
- Concert Attendance
- Contemporary Music
- Ethics
- European Culture and Tradition
- Folk Music
- History of Hungarian Music
- History of Western Music
- Music Theory
- Orchestration
- Percussion
- Performing Practice
- Philosophy
- Practice Participation in Diploma Concerts/Choir Member
- Preparation for the Diploma Concert
- Repertoire Studies
- Secondary Piano
- Solfège
- Transposing and Score Reading
- Vocal training.

The subject content for choral conducting as main subject spread over 6 semesters is as follows (van der Sandt 2011a):

- The demonstration of conducting patterns: 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4
- Conducting/beating in one-beat patterns: 2/8, 3/8, 3/4, 2/4
- The conducting of the main metric units – in different musical characters
- The conducting of 6/4 metre (with subdivision of the pulses in the bar)
- The conducting of alternating metres, changes in metres and non-symmetrical metres
- The correct execution of the cut-off
- The conducting of adjustable tempos: giusto and parlando
- The conducting and execution of the correct gestural suggestion for the typical Hungarian dotted and reversed dotted rhythm
- The conducting of gradual changes of tempo
- The understanding of and the ability to conduct the correlation of accents between the text and the music
- The conducting of simple characters: giusto, legato and non-legato
- The conducting of dynamic changes (crescendo – diminuendo)

- The conducting of fermatas in different parts of the bar, and understanding their relationship with the musical progress
- The conducting of sudden changes in 4/4 tempo and of C into alla breve
- The conducting of sudden change of dynamics and tempo
- The development of aural abilities in order to give the starting pitch to a choir
- The conducting of accompanied pieces, developing direction, control and cooperation
- The conducting of recitativos
- The conducting of extreme tempos
- The ability to adapt the style of conducting for the different musical periods.
- The developing of the independence of the left hand
- The conducting of the recitativo in the psalms of H. Schütz
- The conducting of recitativo secco, and recitativo accompagnato
- The conducting of Choir-fugue in the Classical compositions
- The ability to link the different sections of one composition
- The conducting of simple Gregorian chants
- The conducting of Romantic period features in terms of tempo, dynamic, and agogic accents.

The preceding list is extensive in the detail as to what students are taught. One aspect that impresses the author is the coaching of students in the conducting of recitatives, since it plays such an important part in the interpretation of masses, cantatas and oratorios. Prof. Kutnyanszky, programme leader of the choral conducting programme at the Liszt Academy of Music, provides the music used as instruction material. One can see from the list that it is wide-ranging and represents a broad variety of musical genres and styles (van der Sandt 2011a):

- giusto folk songs
- easy canons
- easy two-part pieces
- Kodály: biciniums, compositions for children's choirs
- Bárdos: „Kicsinyek Kórusa”
- compositions for children's choirs by Szőnyi, Járdányi, Kerényi, and Veress
- easy chorales by J.S.Bach
- uncomplicated, short, different characteristic instrumental parts
- Lassus: motets for two parts
- homophonic madrigals, villanellas by Azzaiolo and Regnart
- compositions by Kodály: “Jó gazd'asszony”, “Éva szívem, Éva”, “Cu föl lov-am”, “Hajnövesztő”, “Nagyszalontai köszöntő”, “A magyarokhoz” (canon – in one part), “Cohors generosa”, “3 gömöri népdal”, “Héja”, “Nyulacska”, “Karácsony pásztortánc”, “A csikó”, “Ave Maria”, “Zöld erdőben”, “Villő”, “A süket sógor”, “Egyetem-begyetem”, “Adventi ének”, “Köszöntő”, “Cigánysirató”, “Csalfa sugár”, “Lengyel László”, “Szép könyörgés”, “Norvég”, “leányok”, “Akik mindig elkésnek”, “Öregek”, “121. genfi zsoltár”, “Sirató ének”, “Hegyi éjszakák”, “Italian madrigals”, “Rab hazának fia”, “Kit kéne el-venni”
- compositions by Bartók: “Ne menj el”, “Játék”, “Huszárnóta”, “Karahéjja”, “Ne hagyj itt”, “Levél az otthoniakhoz”, “Bolyongás”, “Leánynéző”, “Kánon”,

“Lánycsúfó”, “Senkim a világon”, “Legénycsúfó”, “Leánykérő”, “Four Slovakian Folksongs”, “Tavaszi”, “Keserves”, “Bánat”, “Párnás táncdal”, “Leánynéző”

- easy European folk song arrangements
- uncomplicated compositions by composers of the 20th century: Balassa, Poulenc, Distler, Eben
- canzonettas by Claudio Monteverdi
- easy 3-4 part madrigals by Weelkes, Morley, and Bateson
- compositions for children’s choir by Kocsár Miklós
- short, strophic pieces from the Romantic period (Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Liszt)
- Schütz: “Kleine geistliche Konzerte”
- motets by J.H. Schein
- chansons by Janequin, Sermisy, Certon, and Le Jeune
- Britten: “Ceremony of Carols”, “Flower Songs”
- medieval music by Dufay, Dunstable, Ockeghem
- motets by Palestrina, “Canticum Canticorum”
- fugue-constructural parts in the masses by Haydn and Mozart
- demanding motets by Poulenc, Distler, and Eben
- demanding compositions for children’s choir, by Farkas, Szokolay and Reményi
- “Évszakok zenéje” (The Music of the seasons) by Kocsár Miklós
- Hindemith: 6 chansons
- movements of cantatas by J.S.Bach
- opera-choruses from operas by Mozart, Gluck, Donizetti, Muszorgszkij and Verdi
- folksong arrangements and easy sacred compositions by Bárdos Lajos
- Britten: “Missa brevis”.

Other than for choral conducting as main subject, the subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.10 NORWAY:

NORWEGIAN STATE ACADEMY OF MUSIC, OSLO

(<http://www.nmh.no/english/study/programmes/undergraduate/church/59688>)

Norwegian institutions of higher education are divided into university and college sectors. The university sector includes four universities and six university colleges in Norway, which together have an estimated total of more than 78,000 students. These institutions carry out research and offer instruction at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, through to doctoral studies. The universities provide research-based education that combines scholastic breadth and high educational standards within a full range of disciplines. The universities are especially responsible for postgraduate and research training, and for fundamental research.

The Norwegian State Academy of Music offers music education at a very high level in Norway, with both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in a wide range of musical

fields. All potential students at Norwegian universities and colleges are expected to have successfully completed the Norwegian upper secondary education or an equivalent international education. Auditions are designed to ascertain whether an applicant fulfils the musical qualifications required at the beginning of a course of study. Applicants are expected to have a good standard of performance on their main instrument, and basic knowledge and ability in music theory, formal analysis and the history of music, in addition to well-developed aural skills. Auditions for Conducting, Composition, Music Education and individual programmes have additional elements. The basic audition consists of the following stages:

Stage 1

The applicant performs the set works (this does not apply for composition) to demonstrate technical and musical standard and maturity. If this test is passed, the applicant may proceed to the next stage.

Stage 2

Theoretical knowledge and aural tests are conducted as follows:

Music theory

- rudiments of music.
- elementary harmonic analysis including identification of chords and cadences in a given score, and the ability to score the same in 4 parts.
- formal analysis: recognition of simple musical forms in connection with questions on the rudiments of music.
- history of music: ability to place musical samples in a historical context.

Aural test

In the written test the candidate will be required to:

- identify and compare given intervals.
- identify the mode of the key (major or minor) in passages and chords, which may be in close position or spread out, in root position or inverted.
- identify the tonic of a given melody.
- add the missing notes to a partially given melody (music dictation).
- to identify which version of a melody corresponds to a musical sample.
- identify the time signatures of given samples.

The test will include both excerpts from recordings and passages played on the piano.

Stage 3

The remaining audition material is performed, and sight reading and quick study is tested. The examination board may also test general musical knowledge and theoretical understanding.

The subject choral conducting at the Academy gives the student the option of developing technical and musical abilities as a choral conductor at a high professional level. Modules in this subject include analysis, aural training, arranging, composition and score reading as well as conducting experience with the Academy's choir. The student is expected to conduct a choir of his/her own choice outside the Academy during studies. Undergraduate students can obtain a degree with the following choice of major subjects:

- Church music
- Composition
- Instrumental or vocal teaching
- Music education
- Music performance for all instruments and singing.

As electives students can select from the subjects Choral Conducting, Choir and Church Music Choir to make up their undergraduate package. The descriptions and aims for the three mentioned subjects follow:

- *Choral Conducting*
Subject content: artistic and practical management of choirs and ensembles. Conducting, sound production, repertoire, warming up practice, rehearsing methods and interpretation.
Aims: to prepare the student to start, manage and conduct his/her own choir/ensemble.
- *Choir*
Subject content: to perform, to a high level, a varied choral repertoire including music from different epochs and genres.
Aims: to provide knowledge of choral literature and give the students experience as choristers. Participation provides knowledge on how to work with timbre, intonation, rhythm, text, phrasing, dynamics, homogeneity and articulation.
- *Church Music Choir*
Subject content: the Church Music Choir is the practice choir for the church music students. The choir works with choir literature from different periods and various styles and genres.
Aims: to acquire knowledge of the choir repertoire and experience as chorister. Participation provides knowledge about how to work with timbre, rhythm, text, phrasing, dynamic, homogeneity and articulation.

After obtaining a degree, students can continue their studies in choral conducting by acquiring a postgraduate qualification in choral conducting. They can choose from the following subjects:

- *Choral Conducting*
Subject content: the student works with conducting techniques, gesticulation, suppleness and flexibility.
Aims: to develop the student's abilities as a conductor and qualify him/her to conduct different types of ensembles.
- *Choral Didactic*
Subject content: choral music education aims, planning and assessment, vocal didactic, aural training didactic, teaching didactic, communication and management.
Aims: to develop the student's ability to plan, implement and assess own work with choirs and ensembles, to prepare thoroughly for rehearsal and performance, to instruct others.
- *Choral Practice*
Subject content: practical instruction of the chamber choir and vocal ensemble at the Academy, work with student's own choir. It is expected that

the student conduct his own choir during the course of study, plus practical projects one week each year, where the student works with different regional choirs and presents courses to the local choral conductors.

Aims: to give the student experience and training in working with different types of choirs and vocal ensembles, practise under guided tuition as a choral conductor, train the student how to teach choral conducting.

- *Written Assignment*
Subject content: the student has to write an essay related to the subjects Choral Didactic and Choral Conducting.
Aims: to give an introduction to scientific methods and research so the student can approach theoretically a problem related to Choral Conducting and Choral Didactic.
- *Vocal Tuition*
Subject content: to provide training in analysing different types of voices, how to use vocal technique as a means of musical expression, how to use own voice as model for the choristers, how to teach voice training and voice technique.
Aims: to develop the student's own voice and introduce basic principles for voice physiology related to the development of own voice.
- *Choral Singing*
Subject content: the student takes part in the choirs at the Academy.
Aims: to give the student experience as a chorister and a broader knowledge of the repertoire.
- *Stage Management for Choir*
Subject content: stage solutions related to choir music and choir in movement.
Aims: to develop an awareness of the student's own body and to provide basic training in movement.
- *Performing Practice*
Subject content: lectures and performing.
Aims: to study Performing Practice from different periods in depth.
- *Didactics for Children's Choir*
Subject content: discussion of aims and models for organising children's choir, exploring repertoire adapted to the children's age and musical maturity, rehearsal methodology, ear training and intonation, relevant literature related to the development of the child's voice, change of voice, work with children's choir, etc.
Aims: to develop a knowledge base and awareness of the special problems connected with children's voices.

The Norwegian State Academy of Music, Oslo distinguishes itself by offering the subject *Stage Management for Choir* with the subject content: “stage solutions related to choir music and choir in movement, and aims to develop an awareness of the student's own body and to provide basic training in movement”.

It is clear from the programme for the training of choral conducting students by the Norwegian State Academy of Music that students will exit with a comprehensive base of knowledge to be able to function as conductors of different types of choirs. The amount of practical ex-

perience of both having to sing in an ensemble and the conducting of a choir is a positive element of this programme.

3.3.11 PHILIPPINES:

UNIVERSITY OF PHILIPPINES

(http://www.upd.edu.ph/music/new_dept_conducting.htm)

The Department of Conducting and Choral Ensembles of the University of Philippines offers the following undergraduate study programmes: Bachelor of Music, major in Choral/Instrumental Conducting, and a Diploma in Creative and Performing Musical Arts, major in Choral/Band Conducting. “The task of the Conducting and Choral Ensemble Department is to provide professional instruction to eventual leaders of the numerous local choruses, bands and orchestras” (http://www.upd.edu.ph/music/new_acad_bmprog.htm).

The entrance requirements for applicants consist of a Music Theory examination and a practical Talent Audition. “Only students who pass the Music Theory Exam can take the Talent Audition”.

The department offers a five year course of study providing a well-rounded preparation for a professional career in music revolving around a core of applied and theoretical subjects. The subjects offered in the choral conducting programme are:

- Choral Practicum (two 1-hour public recitals of representative choral works covering the periods from Renaissance to Contemporary)
- Fundamentals of Conducting
- Performance Analysis of Major Choral Works
- Performance Analysis of Philippine Choral Works
- Performance Analysis of Small Choral Works
- Performance Analysis of Works for Children’s Choir
- Performance Analysis of Works for male and female Chorus
- Principles and Technique of Choral Conducting.

The subject descriptions are not supplied. The University of Philippines offers courses on analysing the performances of a different variety of choral works. This is a valuable approach to learn to understand issues surrounding the preparation of a choir for performance through analysing by listening and looking at performances of choral works. According to the [Socialsciencedictionary.com](http://socialsciencedictionary.com) (2008) performance analysis is the process

to identify and respond to opportunities and problems, and through study of individuals and the organization, to determine an appropriate cross-functional solution system. It is the process by which we determine when and how to use education and information resources.

The emphasis that the Department of Conducting and Choral Ensembles of the University of Philippines places on Performance Analysis is a progressive step towards the preparation of students to be able to function in the practical reality of conducting choirs.

3.3.12 RUSSIA:

ACADEMY OF CHORAL ART NAMED AFTER V.S. POPOV, MOSCOW

(<http://www.axu.ru/>)

The Academy of Choral Art offers a three year music diploma with specialisation in choral conducting. The author did not succeed in securing any admission requirements for prospective students, either on the Academy's official website or via communication with lecturers at the Academy.

The following courses are presented as part of the curriculum (subject contents are not supplied):

- Analysis of musical forms
- Arrangement of musical works for various types of choirs
- Conducting Technique
- Dance/Scenic Movement
- Harmony
- History of Arts, Music and Modern Music
- Latin (with emphasis on Latin used in vocal texts)
- Legal regulation in the field of culture
- Management in the field of music culture
- Rehearsal Methods
- Methods of teaching solfège
- Musical editing
- Information Technology (with emphasis on the use of music software)
- Musical Psychology
- Instrumentation
- Pedagogy
- Phoniatrics and Voice Hygienics
- Pianoforte
- Polyphony
- Repertoire Studies
- Score Reading
- Solfège
- The study of Russian national music
- Working with choirs – studying works with different types of ensembles.
- Theory of liturgical singing
- Vocal training.

Additional courses

- Basics of text editing
- Composing

- Foreign languages
- Modern dance
- Musical algorithmic
- Operatic basics
- Vocal techniques
- Scenic speech and acting (breathing; use of voice and registers, precision and placement and the formation of the sound, the use of speech as an action for transmitting feelings and ideas)
- Sound engineering in music
- Symphonic conducting.

The author considers the inclusion of a course like *Legal regulation in the field of culture* a valuable contribution in the training of any musician having to enter the professional market.

3.3.13 RUSSIA:

MOSCOW CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC

(<http://old.mosconsv.ru/english/page.phtml?1033>)

The following aspects constitute the basics of the choral conducting syllabus at the Moscow Conservatoire of Music (van der Sandt 2010b). Choral conducting is offered as subject as part of the requirements for a Diploma in Music. Students can already choose choral conducting in their first year of tertiary education. In order to be accepted as a first year student at the Moscow Conservatoire of Music, students have to audition in the following areas:

- Specialty field
- Solfeggio and harmony (written and oral)
- Russian (written and oral)
- History of music
- Piano.

When a student chooses choral conducting the following subjects are also part of the required curriculum:

- Harmony
- History of Choral music
- History of music
- Musical form
- Piano
- Polyphony
- Practice of working with a choir
- Score reading
- Solfeggio.

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.14 SLOVENIA:

SLOVENIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC

(<http://www.ag.uni-lj.si/>)

The Academy for Music forms part of the University of Ljubljana. Choral conducting is offered in three specialisation programmes: Choral Conducting, Music Pedagogy and Sacred (Church) Music. Choral conducting is taught as main subject in the programme of choral conducting or as an obligatory subject in programmes for music teachers and church musicians. In order to be accepted as a student in the choral conducting programme an entrance examination must be completed with the following requirements:

- a. Applicant must demonstrate:
 1. Sight-reading skills on piano,
 2. Sight-singing skills from sheet music,
 3. Sight-transposition skills of orchestral instruments on piano,
 4. Conducting skills,
 5. Memory skills by memorizing orchestral or choral music score in a given time.
- b. Piano test
 1. Virtuoso study (Czerny Op. 740, Clementi, Moszkowski, Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, Scriabin, Rachmaninoff, etc.),
 2. J. S. Bach - Prelude and Fugue from the Well-Tempered Clavier,
 3. Sonata by L. van Beethoven as a whole (Op. 2, 7, 10, 13, 14, 22, 26, 27, 28),
 4. 19th or 20th century composition,
 5. Composition by a Slovenian composer.
- c. Applicants must:
 1. Demonstrate their knowledge of classical harmony (diatonicism, chromaticism, enharmonicism) by further developing the given melodic and harmonic features in the scope of at least 16 bars,
 2. Produce a 3-part strict counterpoint in the style of a Renaissance motet using imitation technique and double counterpoint.

According to Prof. Marko Vatovec (van der Sandt 2011b) the choral conducting programme focusses on educating choral conductors to be able to deal successfully with all kinds of choral music (a cappella and vocal-instrumental) from different ages of music history. In the programmes for Music Pedagogy and Sacred (Church) Music the focus is mostly on a cappella music. Conductors are trained to work with school and amateur choirs. Students in all three programmes conclude their studies conducting one of the three choral ensembles of the Academy of Music with a concert of choral music. As part of the students' final examination a thesis has to be written in which the chosen compositions for the final concert are analysed from historical, formal and structural perspectives. Slovenian educational legislation prescribes a Magister degree for all teachers as a condition for employment (van der Sandt 2011b). Hence, in the programmes of Music Pedagogy and Sacred (Church) Music there are

no intended exit examinations in the bachelor's degree programme; students can automatically continue and complete a Magister degree.

The following subjects are offered for choral conducting students (van der Sandt 2011b):

Obligatory subjects:

- *Choral Conducting*
Development of conducting technique, score analysis and interpretation of scores from 16th to 19th century concerning stylistic demands
- *Score reading*
Reading, analysing and playing orchestral, choral orchestral and vocal-instrumental scores on piano.
- *Conducting*
Preparation for work with choir and orchestra, knowing different rehearsal approaches, knowing the work of national choirs and orchestras, gaining conducting experiences.
- *Harmony 1,2*
Knowing and composing harmonies from 16th century until 19th century, using material of different church, folklore and tonal modes, theoretical and analytical knowledge of different harmonic structures, both traditional and experimental.
- *Counterpoint 1,2*
Managing and composing Renaissance vocal and modal polyphony in Palestrina's and Bach's style.
- *Solfeggio 1-3*
Development of aural capabilities following the development of composition technique through different ages.
- *Form*
Knowing different structures of musical composition.
- *Instrumentation*
Knowing the technical possibilities of different instruments, understanding the relations between instruments in different smaller or bigger ensembles.
- *Piano 1-3*
Knowing, analysing and playing piano literature.
- *Vocal technique*
Knowing physical and acoustical laws of singing organs, individual forming of voice, singing vocalises.
- *Choir and Orchestra*
Assisting the conductor in choral and orchestral rehearsals.
- *Music history 1-2*
Knowing world music and Slovenian music history.
- *Generalbass*
Knowing how to use cadences and lead phrases, improvising according to bass numbers.

Optional Subjects:

- *Psychology*
Basic knowledge of psychology based on the development of children and adolescents.
- *Pedagogy*
Knowing the school system, solving discipline problems.

- *Music didactics*
Development of didactical competence for teaching music education.
- *Jazz harmony*
Reading and writing chord symbols, managing and using harmonic and stylistic laws of different jazz styles and ages.
- *Arranging for small ensembles*
- *Arranging for big ensembles*
- *Cembalo*
- *Gregorian Chant Choir*
- *The art of performance*
- *Music acoustics*
- *Polyphony*
Transcribing old music from 15th to 17th century.
- *Historical performance practice*
- *Psychology of Music*
- *Music palaeography*
Transcribing old music from ancient Greece until 17th century.
- *History of jazz*
- *Techniques of editing musical editions*
- *Music and technology*
- *Aesthetics of Music*
- *Sociology of Music*
- *Slovenian Folk and Popular Music*
- *Anthropology of Music and World music.*

No subject descriptions are supplied. The Slovenian Academy of Music has as an obligatory subject *Piano* that students have to take for three years. The author finds this very positive since the playing of scores is an important part in learning to know the printed score, and without this important skill, conductors' efficiency in score study may be impaired.

3.3.15 SOUTH AFRICA:

THE CHOIR ACADEMY SA

(<http://www.choiracademysa.co.za/>)

The Choir Academy SA is a formal institution, functioning under the auspices of the North-West University, with the vision of promoting the art of choral conducting at all levels in South Africa and to empower conductors to promote choral singing nationally and internationally. According to Prof. Hetta Potgieter (van der Sandt 2012a) the Choir Academy SA has as student target group not only student teachers and teachers already practising, but also community based choir conductors. The Choir Academy SA offers Short Courses, Foundational Courses, Intermediate Courses, Advanced Courses and Certificate Courses in choral conducting. The prerequisites to register for one of the courses are: a student must be the conductor of a choir and must have completed a minimum of UNISA Grade 1 in the theory of music (UNISA 2012).

The following aspects of choral conducting are covered in the presented courses:

- Aspects of interpretation: Choral sound and technical aspects, diction, articulation and pronunciation, tempo & intonation
- Aural development
- Compiling a concert programme
- Conducting, repertoire & terminology
- Copyright (introduction)
- Dynamics & tone colour
- Repertoire Studies
- History of music
- Organization of a choir including the year program
- Stage etiquette, final rehearsals & performances
- The 1st choral rehearsal of the year
- The studying of a song
- Theory of music
- Vocal development
- Voice classification & auditions.

3.3.16 SOUTH AFRICA:

NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY, PORT ELIZABETH

(<http://www.nmmu.ac.za/default.asp?id=1503&bhcp=1>)

Information on choral conducting subjects at South African tertiary institutions such as NMMU is sparsely presented. (It must be stressed that the South African universities mentioned below represent the most comprehensive information available at present in higher education in the country. The information was gathered through what is available on the internet and from interviews with the heads of departments or programme leaders).

The School of Music, within the Faculty of Arts of this University, has three undergraduate choral conducting programmes. These programmes provide students at various levels, from basic to advanced, with practical skills, as well as theoretical knowledge, in music education, choral conducting and choral adjudication. The admission requirements for prospective students are to have a minimum practical standard equivalent to UNISA (UNISA 2012); ABRSM (ABRSM 2013) or Trinity Guildhall (Trinity Guildhall 2009) Grade 6 and a minimum of Grade 5 Music Theory. Programme details given are:

Certificate in Applied Conducting

This programme provides a broad practical understanding of choral conducting – communicating music through gesture – and develops students' theoretical knowledge, sight- and score-reading skills, keyboard abilities and rehearsal techniques. Concentrating on repertoire for choral festivals and competitions, students will be equipped for careers in choral conducting and the teaching of basic music knowledge.

The curriculum offers the following subjects:

- Applied conducting techniques
- Aural development in choral training
- Basic rudiments of music
- Choral repertoire
- Keyboard abilities
- Rehearsal techniques
- Sight singing and score reading
- Vocal health.

Advanced postgraduate studies in choral conducting

This programme is designed for experienced, actively working choral conductors, and provides advanced conducting techniques of international standard and in-depth understanding of choral repertoire through the ages. The programme's curriculum offers the following subjects:

- Adjudicating skills and criteria
- Advanced Applied Conducting – communicating music through gesture
- Advanced intonation skills and new choral notation
- Choral sound and perception
- Stylistic Interpretation: Baroque, Classic, Romantic and Modern Choral Compositions.

The subject *Advanced Applied Conducting* for the post-graduate diploma for experienced choral conductors provides a realistic representation of what this Music Department has to offer in terms of choral conducting training:

Subject contents:

- Advanced perspectives on choral intonation
- Choral sound: vocal health, homogeneity within a diversity of styles, experimenting with different choral formations
- Communicating through gesture
- Exploring and conducting Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, contemporary, and African choral music
- Exploring various international possibilities for a-cappella singing
- Keyboard and score reading abilities
- Perspectives on choral sound
- Principles of adjudication
- Rehearsal techniques/methodology.

The third programme offered is the Diploma in Music Education.

This programme equips students with the knowledge and skills for careers in music teaching, melodic composition and choral conducting, and qualifies them as professional adjudicators for choir competitions. The curriculum consists of subjects in

- Applied Choral Conducting
- Aural Development
- Creative Movement
- Music Education

- Music in history and society
- Practical Music
- Theory of Music.

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.17 SOUTH AFRICA:

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY, POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS, POTCHEFSTROOM
(http://www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/lettere/musiek/programme_voorgraads_e.html)

Choral conducting is offered only as an undergraduate subject in the third year of study in the degrees Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts, Music and Society. Candidates enrolling for any of the music programmes offered by the North-West University have to have UNISA Grade VII in an instrument and UNISA Grade V (UNISA 2012) in theory or at least an average percentage of 60% in Music as designated South African National Senior Certificate subject or another approved equivalent standard in Music. A Practical audition and a theoretical admission test must be taken successfully.

Based on the fact that the subject is awarded the lowest number of credits of any subject in the programmes it must be assumed that it is only an introduction to the rudiments of the art form. No further information on the subject is published. Choral conducting is also mentioned in the programme description for the Diploma in Music as part of the subject *Music Education*:

- apply basic understanding of challenging choir conducting techniques and notation reading skills on Tonic Sol-fa, lyrics, rhythm and pitch in a repertoire of multi-cultural songs on the piano, guitar, soprano recorder;
- demonstrate acquired practical skills by performing challenging notation reading skills on Tonic Sol-fa, lyrics, rhythm and pitch in a repertoire of multi-cultural songs and pieces on the piano, guitar, soprano recorder;
- choir conducting techniques.

3.3.18 SOUTH AFRICA:

SOUTH AFRICAN COLLEGE OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, CAPE TOWN
(<http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/sacm/under.html>)

At the South African College of Music the subject *Choir Training* is offered as part of the undergraduate degree programmes. Students studying BMus Ed as well as students studying the Teacher's Licentiate Diploma in Music can take the subject as an elective. The audition for applicants to the Music Department consists of a written music theory test (the minimum

standard for entry is Grade VII UNISA (UNISA 2012); ABRSM (ABRSM 2013) or Trinity Guildhall (Trinity Guildhall 2009) and the performance of 2 contrasting pieces from different style periods. Scales and arpeggios may also be included in the audition. The candidate will also have to play a short piece of sightreading. It is not clear to the author after consulting the website of the South African College of Music, whether students taking *Choir Training* as subject are submitted to the same audition process as students in other areas of study.

The subject *Choir Training* is a year course, one period per week. The course outline is as follows: “Provides a method for training, conducting and managing choirs. Students will conduct and train a choir as part of the course”. Judging from this brief description, and that it is only one period per week, the assumption is made that this is only an introductory study to the fundamentals of choir training.

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.19 SOUTH AFRICA:

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, DURBAN

(<http://music.ukzn.ac.za/DegreesDiplomas.aspx>)

The University of KwaZulu-Natal launched The Opera Studio and Choral Academy (OSCA) in January 2002. It came into being

as a response to the extensive vocal talent emerging from the choral movement in South Africa. These young singers grow up as members of school and community choirs, participating in competitions regionally and nationally, and develop a passion for music and song, which they want to follow professionally - as soloists, choristers, conductors and educators
<http://music.ukzn.ac.za/Facilities/OSCA.aspx>.

OSCA is a centre “dedicated to the professional development of vocal music in South Africa, and to fostering appreciation of vocal music in the wider community”

(<http://music.ukzn.ac.za/Facilities/OSCA.aspx>).The purpose of OSCA is threefold: The training of students, to facilitate access to study and to support the development of local music production.

The University offers an Undergraduate Diploma in Music Performance and a Bachelor of Practical Music where students have the option to specialise in choral conducting. The Undergraduate Diploma in Music Performance is a 3-year programme and the Bachelor of

Practical Music is a 1-year programme after completion of the Undergraduate Diploma in Music Performance. OSCA also offers a Music Foundation Programme, which is a

one year, full-time, broad-based programme that provides foundation work for all music students. It provides a preliminary year of study for students who cannot be admitted to a degree or to either the Diploma in Jazz and Popular Music or the Diploma in Music Performance. Students who have already been admitted to diploma or degree study but who need remedial work in one or more areas, may register for one or more of these modules. Completion of this programme does not grant automatic access to further study.

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.20 SOUTH AFRICA:

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, PRETORIA

(<http://web.up.ac.za/sitefiles/file/2011%20yearbooks/Education%202011.pdf>)

Not only is choral conducting offered as a subject in the Faculty of Humanities, but students enrolled for a B Ed degree (in the Intermediate and Senior Phase, and the Further Education and Training Phase) in the Faculty of Education, also have the option to include choral conducting as an elective subject. The Department of Humanities Education in the Faculty of Education offers the following subjects in which choral conducting is dealt with:

- Choir Conducting and Stage Production
- Interdisciplinary Music Practice
- Methodology of Music Education.

Dr Riekie van Aswegen, Senior Lecturer and course presenter, states that “when schools appoint music specialists, they expect from these teachers to be able to direct choirs as well as stage productions” (van der Sandt 2012b). In order to meet these needs the subjects offered include theoretical as well as practical components and are also strongly connected to community based projects.

The following aspects are covered in the courses:

- Conducting Technique (Basic Conducting Technique and Interpretation)
- Repertoire (Aspects that influence the choice of repertoire and criteria for the choice of repertoire)
- Auditions
- Rehearsal Technique (How to ensure successful rehearsals, Positive Discipline, The Rehearsal Room, How to achieve success with part-singing, Choir Formation)

- Voice Production (Aspects that influence the quality of tone production, Voice exercises to promote good voice production)
- Adjudication (Intonation, Sound Quality, Interpretation, Tempo, Diction, Portraying the Text, Choir Discipline, Accompaniment, Choice of Repertoire, Communication with the audience)
- Accompaniment (A Cappella Singing or Accompaniment. Rehearsals, Personality, Musical and Technical Requirements, Co-operation between conductor and accompanist, Balance, The Position of the Piano, General Hints, Keeping the piano in good condition, Accompaniment: Other instruments than the piano)
- Concert performances (The value of performances, Hints for successful performances, Stage Procedure)
- Administration (Parent Involvement, Conditions for Effective Organisation, Non-musical qualities required of a conductor)
- Choral Terminology (van der Sandt 2012b).

The yearbook of the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria does not contain any reference to entrance requirements for prospective students.

3.3.21 SOUTH AFRICA:

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, PRETORIA

(http://web.up.ac.za/sitefiles/file/Faculty%20B%202011/FINAL_HumanitiesFB_2011_English.pdf)

The Music Department offers the subject choral conducting as an optional subject for the BMus programme in the third and fourth year of study. Students enrolled for the BA Mus programme can take choral conducting in their third year of study as an optional subject. Choral Direction is also available for post-graduate students as an elective subject.

The curriculum content for choral conducting over a two-year period is as follows:

- Choir conducting theory: developing a knowledge base of the theory of choral conducting
- Choir conducting: the development of reliable conducting techniques
- Ensemble participation: students are required to sing in one of the University's choirs
- Keyboard skills
- Philosophy of choral music education
- Rehearsal techniques
- Repertoire and style study
- Score study techniques.

The purpose of this subject is to help the student acquire the necessary basic knowledge and skills concerning choral directing.

The descriptions of subjects are not supplied.

The yearbook of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Pretoria does not contain any reference to entrance requirements to the Department's music programmes.

3.3.22 SOUTH AFRICA:

UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH, STELLENBOSCH

(<http://academic.sun.ac.za/music/programmes.html#undergrad>)

The University of Stellenbosch offers education and exposure to choral conducting as part of the packages of the following undergraduate programmes: BA Programme in Music (General), Diploma in Practical Music (three year course), BMus Programme (four-year programme), Music Certificate Programmes, Higher Certificate in Music (one year).

The choice of subjects and descriptions are not supplied.

Prospective students at the Music Department of the University of Stellenbosch must at least have a practical standard equivalent to UNISA Grade VII examination and theoretical knowledge equivalent to any of the examining bodies (UNISA (UNISA 2012); ABRSM (ABRSM 2013) or Trinity Guildhall (Trinity Guildhall 2009)) Grade V theory examination.

3.3.23 SOUTH AFRICA:

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE, BLOEMFONTEIN

(<http://www.ufs.ac.za/content.php?pageid=5905>)

The Music Department offers studies in Choral Directing as a module of choice for the following undergraduate programmes: BMus, BA Mus, Diploma in Music, the Church Organist Diploma and the Diploma in Choral Directing.

The Diploma in Choral Directing provides students with a fundamental knowledge of the theory of music and a specialised training in different aspects of choral directing. Career opportunities include choral director in primary and secondary education and in community work; teacher in primary education or at music centres or privately.

To be accepted as a student at the Odeion School of Music at the University of the Free State, in addition to the general requirements for admission to the University, students must

have at least UNISA Grade VII (or equivalent qualification) in practical instrument and UNISA Grade V (or equivalent qualification) in theory (UNISA 2012).

The subjects offered for the Diploma in Choral Directing are as follows:

- Keyboard skills
- Music theory
- Subject content: working towards proficiency in Music Theory
- Choir conducting
- Subject content: the development of reliable conducting techniques, score study techniques, and rehearsal technique
- Choir techniques
- Subject content: developing a knowledge base of the theory of choral conducting for example intonation, breath management, historical overview, etc.
- Repertoire and style study
- Subject content: repertoire and style practices of all the major music history periods
- Applied Music Studies
- Systematic Music Studies.

The descriptions of subjects are not supplied.

3.3.24 SWEDEN:

THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MUSIC (KMH), STOCKHOLM

(http://www.kmh.se/visasida_en.php?p=5&t=KD)

The author received master classes from the Swedish maestro Eric Ericson on three occasions. The insight and methodology of Ericson are an inspiration to him. The Swedish choral tradition has been a model for the renewal of choral singing in many other countries. Over the years, Swedish choral singing has developed into a well-known export product. This export product is referred to by to Clytus Gottwald in Reimers and Wallner (1993:140) as the “Swedish Choral miracle” – this can suggest a number of things:

It can mean a distinctive quality, ‘sound’ differing from what is to be heard in other countries. It can be the intensive and extensive educational activities in the training of choral singers and choirleaders. It can be the quantitative phenomena: more than half a million Swedes (out of a population of some 8.5 million) being regular choir members. But it may also be connected with the music itself, the diversity of output: practically all Swedish composers write choral music, and at choral concerts one encounters, side by side, a long succession and variety of traditions – from pre-classical, classical, classical-romantic, “bolder” romantic and national romantic music to the variously historicising and modernistic traditions of the past 100 years or so.

Applicants for conducting programmes

shall send a good quality video/DVD of a concert or rehearsal clearly marked with the applicant's name. The camera should be focused on the conductor from the front, i.e. as seen by the orchestra or choir members. On the basis of the videos/DVDs submitted, some applicants will be selected and invited to personally participate in the entrance examinations held in Stockholm in March each year. (Applicants to any KMH conducting programme including guest student programme must personally participate in entrance examinations in order to be accepted. It is not possible to apply to KMH conducting programmes only by recording/video/DVD!).

The Department of Choral Conducting and Singing at this University offers a wide variety of subjects and seminars in choral conducting, ensemble conducting, the methodology, and practice of choral work. Information from the website of the KMH offers the following information:

Education at KMH is organised in three cycles, in line with the Bologna agreement for higher education in Europe:

- Undergraduate level (normally three years of full time studies)
- Graduate level (normally two years of full time studies)
- Postgraduate (Research) level (normally four years of full time studies).

Choral conducting can be found as part of the following study programmes:

- Advanced Graduate programme in choral conducting
- Bachelor Undergraduate level
- Degree of Master (two years) in Music
- Master in Music (Vocal coach, Chorus master and choral conducting)
- Master of Education in Music
- Teacher training (undergraduate/graduate level).

Foundation studies in choral conducting are based partly on one-to-one tuition and group conducting, choral methodology, music theory and practice. The continuation course includes weekly sessions with KMH's professionally engaged vocal ensemble, as well as form, ear training, intonation, score reading, repertoire studies and extramural conducting assignments. The continuation course involves regular collaboration with the Swedish Radio Choir and the Royal Stockholm Opera.

The tuition takes the form of seminars, individual instruction and supervised choral conducting. Conducting, being the main subject, is supplemented with theoretical subjects such as ear training, harmony and counterpoint, instrumentation, score playing and form analysis. The final task of the choral conducting student will be the conducting of a public concert featuring a choir.

The subject choral conducting includes work with a practice choir, individual and group tuition. The conducting students are allowed to practise their skills by conducting the KMH vocal ensemble (sixteen professional choral singers) both in rehearsal and in public concerts. They also have supervised practice with ensembles from outside KMH. Choral methodology subjects are offered with the aim of building up and refining the choral conductor's skills and knowledge of coaching, rehearsal, choir psychology and his/her fulfilment of the role as a leader. The subject *Choir and Movement* emphasises the “connection between the voice and the body, Eurhythmics and movement are used both as a learning method and as means of expressing and interpreting the music on a visual and kinaesthetic level”.

Seminars with in-house and visiting lecturers are arranged to give a comprehensive view of the Swedish and international choral repertoire. There are also subjects in children's choir and youth choir methodology. The department offers subjects for professional choir conductors, both in the form of advanced master classes and methodology courses of varying levels.

The subject descriptions are not supplied. What draws the author's attention is that the Royal University College of Music emphasises individual tuition, thereby offering high level attention to the development of student conductors' technique.

3.3.25 THE NETHERLANDS:

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC GORINCHEM IDE (INSTITUUT VOOR DIRIGENTE EDUKATIE – INSTITUTE FOR CONDUCTOR'S TRAINING)

(<http://www.hogeschool-ide.nl/english/frhgs.htm>)

The Dutch system of professional music education has a two-fold structure: initial degree programmes (first phase) and advanced programmes (second phase). Students are provided with theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding in the particular musical field of their main instrumental subjects. Theory of music, music history, cultural history, educational skills and terminology and pedagogy are also extensively dealt with.

The School of Music Gorinchem IDE has as objective to

educate prospective conductors and solo-singers at the highest level, so they will be able to perform at their best, individually and in a team, in the world of music. This does not only include an individual teaching in technical and artistic matters, but also the development of a sense of responsibility within the artistic and pedagogic field.

Students are trained for their prospective professions by means of individual and group lessons, given by teachers and guest-teachers, all of them professionals in their specific fields. According to Joop Schetz, the director of the IDE, “Conductors and Vocalists (Performing and Educating) have, like no other artist, a double task:

- as a dedicated artist he/she has to focus on re-creation,
- as a leader of a group, he/she has to inspire and instruct the group”.

The curriculum is designed to equip the student with the necessary knowledge and skills and consists of the following subjects spread over four years:

- Analysis
- Choir Education
- Choral Literature
- Counterpoint
- General music education
- Music history
- Piano
- Practical Choir
- Principal subject: Conducting Technique
- Solfège
- String- and Wind-instrument and/or Voice
- Theory of Harmony.

The following components are dealt with extensively in the course:

- Building a choral culture
- Conducting Technique
- Literature knowledge
- Practical work with a student's choir, chamber choir, and jazz choir
- Rehearsal Technique
- Score playing and reading
- Vocal Technique, choral sound, warming up, and auditions
- Vocal Training.

The author did not succeed in securing any admission requirements for prospective students, either on the School's official website or via communication with the programme leader. The subject descriptions are not supplied.

As part of the training students have to build up an extensive collection of choral repertoire and get to know the main genres and most important works in the different choral genres in the subject *Literature knowledge*. The author finds this exceptionally valuable since it is nec-

essary to have sufficient knowledge of available and appropriate repertoire to choose from for ensembles.

3.3.26 UNITED KINGDOM:

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

(http://www.ioe.ac.uk/study/MMAMUS_11.html)

Choral conducting as a subject can be found in the Department of Arts and Humanities. It is not offered on undergraduate level, but as part of the Music Education MA. The course is called Choral Conducting, Leadership and Communication.

This module is intended for participants who engage in conducting and directing choral activity in schools or in the community. It aims to identify areas for development in participants' professional practice and theoretical understanding in choral conducting and explore ways forward for effective conducting, leadership and communication. The University places high emphasis on addressing “skills and knowledge in the choral conducting area in order to enhance and develop quality singing and vocal development in school and other contexts”. Students are offered the opportunity to engage in conducting workshops and to be involved in research on choral conducting topics.

The University further claims to develop the student's

understanding of thinking, research and practice at the forefront of music education. By the end of the programme, students will:

- be able to make informed, critical judgements about your own and other people's musical and educational assumptions, values and practices
- have acquired an expanded understanding and repertoire of music teaching, evaluation and assessment techniques
- develop your knowledge and understanding about children's and older students' relationships to music as performers, composers and listeners (http://www.ioe.ac.uk/study/masters/pmm9_mus9im.html).

The subject descriptions are not supplied. The subject *Choral Conducting, Leadership and Communication* is found by the author to be a valuable inclusion in the programme content as it is intended to “provide areas for development in student's professional practice and theoretical understanding in choral conducting and explore ways forward for effective conducting, leadership and communication”.

3.3.27 UNITED KINGDOM:

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC, LONDON

(<http://www.ram.ac.uk/departments?departmentid=34>)

The Royal Academy of Music only offers a postgraduate choral conducting course which has been developed from its Church Music programme. It is a two-year course and

embraces a comprehensive range of sacred music for concert and service plus selected secular repertoire, culminating in the award of an MMus or MA. Choral Conducting is offered at undergraduate level as an optional choir-training class, not as a Principal Study (Royal Academy of Music 2013).

Conducting and rehearsal techniques, repertoire, performance practice and interpretation, editing and vocal technique are courses that are presented and are complimented by

contextual studies which examine the repertoire (chant, chorale and hymn, as well as art-music) and its relationship to the liturgy. The modern British choral tradition (both English and Latin) is taken as the practical and stylistic basis for exploration of a broad sweep of European sacred repertoire, related secular music and historically informed performance practices (Royal Academy of Music 2013).

Students enrolling for the postgraduate course in choral conducting have the added benefit of observing and working with a variety of choirs. Choral groups that are available to work with range from members of the Academy's Chamber Choir, the BBC Singers, the Choir of Royal Holloway, University of London and the adult professional and children's choirs of the London Oratory.

3.3.28 UNITED KINGDOM:

THE ROYAL WELSH COLLEGE OF MUSIC & DRAMA, CARDIFF

(http://www.rwcmd.ac.uk/other/news/inside_view/choral_conducting.aspx)

It seems that there are not many choral conducting course offerings in the UK when one judges according to The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama claim:

there are very few specialist choral conductors and opportunities to train professionally as a choral director are scarce, a problem that the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama has set out to change (The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama 2013).

The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama lay claim to add to the already existing courses for choral conductors but seem to focus on musicians who not only wish to conduct professional choirs or opera choruses but "offer training that would produce choral conductors that

could work in a variety of choral fields, from children's choirs to large city choral societies, and produce extremely versatile, employable graduates" (The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama 2013).

Students at the The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama can benefit by weekly one-to-one conducting and singing lessons. The course furthermore "provides training in voice production, vocal skills, rehearsal techniques, repertoire and approaches to working with different types and levels of choir" (The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama 2013). Students obtain practical experience by working with the College chamber choir and a bigger chorus. Students also have the privilege to benefit from the links the College has with organisations such as the National Chorus of Wales and the Chorus of the Welsh National Opera, and "each student has the opportunity to gain professional experience and make valuable industry contacts during a vocational placement" (The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama 2013). The author finds it commendable that students enjoy the opportunity to work with experienced ensembles to further strengthen their technical skills.

3.3.29 UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, CAMBRIDGE

(<http://www.mus.cam.ac.uk/applicants/graduate/mmus/>)

The University of Cambridge offers a M.Mus. in choral studies with the aim

to train musicians in the art of choral conducting; to instruct them in diverse aspects of the history and practice of choral music, with particular reference to theology and liturgy; to provide the opportunity to learn the technical skills required to work with historic repertoires and, for organists, to develop organ playing skills as both soloist and accompanist; to provide students with the experience of observing the daily workings of some of the leading Cambridge Chapel choirs.

The choral conducting programme at the University of Cambridge consists of the following four elements:

Choral Conducting: This part of the course consists of regular classes on conducting technique and, in addition, occasional seminars on vocal issues (such as rehearsal techniques, working with boys' voices, and vocal health) and issues of repertoire (such as interpreting early choral repertoire, and preparing modern choral scores). At the end of the course candidates will be required to rehearse and conduct a choir for approximately thirty minutes, using set works announced at the start of the course.

Seminar course: These seminars will cover a wide range of subjects including Music and Theology, the detailed study of a number of major choral works (such as Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*, or Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem*), and case studies in choral or organ performing traditions (using recorded sound). At the end of the course candidates will be required to take a three-hour written examination based on topics studied in the seminars.

Options: Candidates are required to select two of the following three options:

- An extended essay on any topic arising from the Seminar course;
- An edition of a piece of choral music not otherwise available in a modern scholarly edition; this should include an introduction and full critical apparatus;
- A performance either in the form of a choral recital or on the organ, either as a soloist or continuo player (including performance on the harpsichord).

College Placement: The final element involves placements with the leading Cambridge Chapel choirs. Each student will spend time observing the work of the all-male choirs at King's and St John's Colleges and several mixed-voice choirs including those at Clare, Caius and Trinity. Advanced singers may be able to deputise, and conducting opportunities will also be made available with these or other choirs.

The importance of the British cathedral choirs in the religious and cultural life of the nation is "well acknowledged" (Southwark Cathedral 2013) and the author sees the conducting opportunities offered at colleges in Cambridge as a distinctive aspect of the University of Cambridge course.

3.3.30 UNITED KINGDOM:

UNIVERSITY OF SURREY ROEHAMPTON, ROEHAMPTON

(<http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/postgraduate-courses/programmedetails.asp?xml=pg%5CAppliedmusiceducation%5Cindex.xml>)

Opportunities for studying choral conducting at undergraduate level do not exist at the Music Department of the University of Surrey Roehampton. There is, however, a post-graduate programme in Choral Education in the Faculty of Education. The MA in Choral Education was the first such graduate programme in the United Kingdom. It is aimed at music teachers in primary and secondary schools as well as others who are responsible for and have an interest in the choral area (conductors, church musicians, community and youth choir directors and singers). The programme intends to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and understanding of choral practice within an educational context. Students studying the courses will deepen their practical and theoretical understanding of issues related to choral and broader music education.

The key areas of study are:

- Conducting
- Dissertation
- Philosophy of music education

- Research methodology
- Singing and vocal development.

It is expected of the students to be involved in the following:

- Compositions and arrangements
- Critical and reflective analysis through essays
- Demonstrations
- Practical conducting
- Practical workshops
- Seminars
- Tutorials
- Video analysis
- Writing a dissertation.

By obtaining this postgraduate degree, students can enhance their professional knowledge and skills in choral conducting, and the programme also serves as preparation for further study and research. Students in the programme can also benefit from the ties that the University of Surrey Roehampton has forged with bodies such as the International Society for Music Education, the Association of British Choral Directors and the British Federation of Young Choirs, as well as with other universities around the world.

The University of Surrey Roehampton offers a course, *Philosophy of Music Education* which the author finds notable. It is important for every teacher and conductor to know why he/she is in the field of Music Education. The Philosophy of Music Education helps students' "skills and understanding of choral practice within an educational context. Students studying the course will deepen their practical and theoretical understanding of issues related to choral and broader music education".

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

3.3.31 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA, JACOBS SCHOOL OF MUSIC
(<http://www.music.indiana.edu/degrees/undergraduate/requirements/index.shtml>)

The need for training choral conductors in the United States of America is considerable, because of the fact that the USA education system provides for choral singing to be an accredited, recognised school subject. In a study done by Chorus America (2009:4) it was found that "choral singing continues to be the most popular form of participation in the performing arts" with an overall 22.9% of households reporting one or more family members participating in a chorus (Chorus America 2009:4). The United States of America boasts with two major choral organisations: The American Choral Directors Association, with more than ten

thousand active members, and Chorus America with “more than 1,600 choruses, individuals, and businesses members of Chorus America” (Chorus America 2010). Most of these members received their training within the borders of the USA. Just as diverse as the country, is the variety in choral conducting curricula at higher education institutions. An overview of more than one American institution's choral conducting curriculum is therefore included to provide a realistic representation of choral conducting subject offerings.

The Indiana University Choral Department presents courses in choral conducting from undergraduate beginners through doctoral choral conducting students.

Emphasis in the degree programs is on technical, aural and analytical skills developed through the study of masterworks from the various stylistic periods; there is also a strong emphasis on linguistic awareness, an immersion in stylistic studies, and the constant encouragement to become a complete musician skilled in orchestral and instrumental repertoires and their requirements as well as the choral ensemble.

This University has a unique tradition in the choral conducting study programme, and that is “the position of the choral mentor, a master teacher whose primary responsibility is to guide the graduate conductors in their research, analysis, and performance preparation in conjunction with the instruction from other members of the faculty”. The author finds this exceptionally valuable for students to be guided on an individual basis, thereby being granted the opportunity to be exposed to a tailor-made development programme based on each individual's strong points. No specific admission requirements for prospective students in the choral conducting programme could be obtained, either on the University's official website or via communication with lecturers at the University, except for that all students must pass a keyboard proficiency examination. Students whose primary instrument is not piano, organ, or harpsichord must take an examination for placement in Piano Classes. These studies have to be taken each semester until the Keyboard Proficiency Examination is passed.

The following degree programmes in choral conducting are offered:

- Graduate Minor in choral conducting
- Master of Music in choral conducting
- Doctor of Music in choral conducting.

There are the following undergraduate and graduate courses on offer:

- *Techniques for Conducting*
Fundamentals of score reading and baton technique.

- *Choral Conducting I*
Conducting patterns applied to elements of interpretation. Practice in sight singing. Class forms practice choir.
- *Choral Conducting II*
Choral conducting applied to tone, balance, diction, phrasing, and interpretation.
- *University Choral Ensembles*
Practical Choral singing experience.
- *Score Reading I-II*
Adequate skill at the keyboard. Performance at the piano of graded examples of scores, both vocal and instrumental. Development of sight-transposition skills.
- *Foundations in Choral Conducting*
Techniques for the beginning choral conductor, including basic fundamentals of stick technique, development of aural and rehearsal skills, and score analysis for the conductor.
- *Master's Choral Conducting I-II*
Study of the art and techniques of choral conducting as related to the study of the score. Major works from the choral and choral/orchestral literature are conducted.
- *Doctoral Choral Conducting*
Study of the art and techniques of choral conducting as related to the study of the score. Major works from the choral and choral/orchestral literature are conducted.
- *Choral Conducting Performance I-II*
Construct, rehearse, and conduct programme of major choral works with one of the department's major ensembles.
- *Master's Seminar in Choral Literature*
Historical and structural analysis of major choral literature from the Renaissance to the present.
- *Doctoral Document/Essay*
Guided research in the area of choral music culminating in a major research document to be defended before a faculty committee.
- *Doctoral Seminar in Choral Literature*
Historical and analytical studies of major choral literature.
- *University Choral Ensembles.*
Assignments made by audition during first week of classes. Most ensembles rehearse daily; several make various tours and are available for special performances.

The author finds it encouraging that students have the opportunity to be a part of an ensemble to obtain valuable practical experience, and the fact that such participation is accredited.

3.3.32 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY, JACKSONVILLE, ALABAMA

(<http://www.jsu.edu/catalogue/>)

The Department of Music offers a Bachelor of Music Education, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music with choral emphasis. The Bachelor of Music Education fulfils the require-

ments for the special professional certificate to teach music in public schools in the state of Alabama at both the elementary and secondary levels. The BA degree in Music with non-music minor offers a programme designed for the study of music within a liberal arts curriculum. The University makes provision for students to be unconditionally or conditionally admitted to the music programmes offered by the Music Department. Unconditional admission is granted if the candidate displays minimal or no academic skill deficiencies. Students admitted conditionally must be “continuously enrolled in prescribed developmental skills courses; participate in prescribed counselling and advisement activities; and remediate all academic skill deficiencies within one year”. No specific admission requirements related to displaying musical skills are mentioned in the yearbook of the University.

The following choral related subjects are available to the undergraduate student to fulfil the minimum requirements:

- *Choral Arranging*
Arranging and writing choral music for a variety of choral combinations and sizes with emphasis on those found in school and community settings.
- *General Instrumental Techniques*
An introduction to basic performance skills in major instrumental families (brass, woodwind, percussion). Designed for music majors in vocal/choral concentration.
- *Choral Literature for Teachers*
A survey of choral repertoire suitable for use by various levels of amateur and public school choirs and vocal ensembles.
- *Choral Conducting*
Training and experience in the techniques of choral conducting through the study of representative choral literature. Discussion of score preparation and rehearsal procedures.
- *Secondary Vocal Music Materials and Methods*
Professional preparation of teachers of vocal music with emphasis on theory, literature, teaching methods and organizational skills needed to teach in an effective public school choral program.

The author finds it stimulating that the programme includes the subject *Choral Arranging*, since arranging and writing choral music for a variety of choral combinations frequently forms part of any conductor’s responsibilities. Apart from the Jacksonville State University, two other institutions included in this discussion (School of Music, Queen's University, Canada and the Norwegian State Academy of Music, Oslo, Norway) also offer arranging for an ensemble as a subject in the study field of choral conducting.

3.3.33 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

(http://www.spu.edu/depts/fpa/music/mus_homepage.html)

The Music Department at this University seeks to help “students know themselves, develop their talents and abilities, appreciate their cultural heritage, and integrate their knowledge and skills in a life characterized by Christian faith, wholeness and service. Choral music is studied in this context and courses are designed to study the choral art in depth or enhance such study”.

The author did not succeed in securing any admission requirements for prospective students, either on the University’s official website or via communication with lecturers at the University.

The following subjects specific to Choral Study are offered:

- Choral Arranging
- Choral Conducting
- Choral Conducting Internship
- Choral Literature
- Choral Music Methods and Materials.

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

The courses are offered with the following goals and objectives in mind:

To enable the students to

- Refine basic conducting skills.
- Understand the relationship between text and music and how that affects conducting.
- Communicate expression to a choir through conducting technique using a wide palate of gesture.
- Achieve accuracy and conservation of motion for effective conducting.
- Learn techniques to assist a choir in proper tone production.
- Learn basic terminology which assists in score reading and interpretation.
- Analyze music in terms of form, harmony, and melody; how analysis relates to the text and conducting technique.
- Identify problem areas in conducting and discover ways to improve them.
- Discover ways of going beyond music in performance, creating artistic performance.
- Gain experience in preparing music for conducting.
- Identify and learn conducting gesture which may assist a choir in overcoming common choral problems
(<http://www.spu.edu/depts/fpa/choral/chorcond.html>).

The author finds it enriching that students are instructed how to adapt their gestural language in order to overcome common choral problems. It is clear from the above goals that students will develop a clear, yet expressive conducting technique by completion of their studies.

3.3.34 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

(http://www.stanford.edu/~sano/conducting/syllabi/Conducting_Syllabus_130C_2005.pdf)

Elementary choral conducting is offered as a subject in the programme for Undergraduate Music studies. It is built around a series of “courses in theory, musicianship, analysis, and music history, as well as performance (both individual and ensemble) and piano proficiency requirements” (<http://music.stanford.edu/Academics/ugradStudies.html>).

No specific admission requirements for prospective students in the choral conducting programme could be obtained, either on the University’s official website or via communication with lecturers at the University. The University however notes that

applicants who have an extraordinary talent in music, be it composition, conducting, or performance, and who are considering continuing their study and practice of music while at Stanford, may choose to submit a supplemental audition as part of their application to Stanford. This audition is not required, and in no way indicates that applicants intend to major or minor in Music, nor does it constitute an audition for departmental ensembles or lessons. Rather, it is a way in which applicants can demonstrate excellence outside the academic arena to the Office of Admission.

The general objectives of the course are to develop skills in the fundamentals of choral conducting. Topics to be addressed include

- baton/gesture technique
- diction
- literature
- methods and rehearsal procedures
- repertoire.

The specific objectives are:

- Continued development of the various physical components of the body involved in conducting.
- Developing fluency in various beat patterns and meters.
- Gaining control in conducting various dynamics and tempi.
- Achieving ease and grace in cueing.

- Gaining control and proper use of the left hand in conducting.
- Developing effective body and facial language.
- Combining all the above elements into dynamic conducting.
- Learning traditional forms in choral music and conducting select representative repertoire.
- Developing programming skills.
- Developing aural analysis and error identification skills.
- Developing skills in lyric diction and vocal pedagogy in the choral setting.

The subject descriptions are not supplied. In guiding students in developing programming skills, they are equipped with an important tool for when they enter the professional field of conducting. One of the many tasks expected of “conductors, one of the most creative and enjoyable is choosing appropriate repertoire for performing ensembles. Just as a composer must create musical ideas and then develop and order these ideas to arrive at a pleasing composition, so too does a conductor find musical ideas (appropriate pieces) and order them to create a pleasing concert programme” (Broeker 2000:26).

3.3.35 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ST. OLAF COLLEGE, NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

(<http://www.stolaf.edu/catalog/academicprogram/music.html>)

At the American Choral Director's Association National Convention 2001, 14-17 March 2001, the author heard the Manitou Singers of St. Olaf College and conducted interviews with the conductor and some choristers. It was evident from these discussions that the study of music at St. Olaf College develops the student's ability to understand and communicate the meaning of music through performance, composition, music history, theory, and experience in teaching. At St. Olaf College, music majors have the opportunity to pursue study in instruments or voice, composition, music education, music history and music theory, and to participate in a wide range of vocal and instrumental ensembles. Music ensembles and other areas of study are also available to non-music majors.

The Music Department offers the Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degrees. The Bachelor of Music is a professional music degree with approximately two-thirds of the course work in music. Students are admitted to the programme by audition, either as part of their application process or after beginning their studies at St. Olaf. The degree Bachelor of Music in Music Education leads to a public school teaching career immediately after graduation, although graduate study is an option as well. Students for the degree Bachelor of Music in Church Music usually continue to graduate or continue directly into the school as teachers,

or the parish as church musicians. Students seeking this degree have the choice of emphasis on organ playing or choral activities.

All full-time students are eligible to audition for membership in the music ensembles of the college: St. Olaf Choir, Chapel Choir, Collegiate Chorale, Early Music Singers, Manitou Singers, St. Olaf Cantorei and Viking Chorus. All Bachelor of Music students must participate in an official music ensemble every semester. For Music Education majors, this should include four semesters in band or orchestra (instrumental specialisation) or four semesters in choir (vocal specialisation). Students applying for programmes with choral emphasis have to prepare two songs or arias in contrasting styles to sing for the entrance audition. Additional entrance requirements comprise an examination covering basic music knowledge and a final entrance audition. Keyboard skills will be assessed once the student has been admitted. At St. Olaf College “music performance studies provide a direct opportunity to think and speak the language of music. Lessons integrate aspects of music's cultural and historical contexts, its theoretical properties, and the physical and psychological facets of performance”.

The following degree programmes contain a significant choral conducting section:

- Bachelor of Arts General Music Major with Teaching Credential
- Bachelor of Church Music, Choral Emphasis
- Bachelor of Music in Music Education
- Bachelor of Music with Elective Studies.

The following choral related subjects are available to the undergraduate student to meet the minimum requirements:

- *Conducting*
Students learn basic conducting gestures (with and without baton) through exercises in meter patterns, preparatory beats and cut-offs, cueing, dynamics, fermata, articulations, phrasing, left hand independence, and face/eye usage.
- *Choral Conducting*
Students learn conducting techniques for choral literature including research-based rehearsal techniques, vocal preparation, score study, and video self-evaluation of gesture and rehearsal. Course work also includes observation of conductors on campus and in the community.
- *Choral Literature I*
This course is a study of the smaller forms of choral music from the Renaissance to the present with an emphasis on music suitable for junior and senior high school and church choirs. Students study scores and recordings

and discuss representative style features and characteristics, interpretation, and conducting problems.

- *Choral Literature II*

This course is a study of the larger forms of choral music from the Baroque to the present. Students study scores and recordings and discuss representative style features and characteristics, interpretation, and conducting problems.

By presenting the subject *Choral Literature* the university offers students beneficial exposure to choral literature which will be valuable in their active conducting careers.

3.3.36 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

UNIVERSITY OF RIO GRANDE AND RIO GRANDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, RIO GRANDE, OHIO

(<http://www.rio.edu/academics/page.php?ID=schoolofflinearts>)

The mission of the School of Fine Arts is to

provide a quality learning environment for students. The undergraduate programs focus on close personal attention for students from a well-qualified arts faculty in modern facilities. The University's goal is to provide area schools with thoroughly trained teachers in the arts as well as provide students intent on a professional career, excellent opportunities to develop creative processes and techniques.

In the Department of Music, School of Fine Arts, choral conducting is offered as an undergraduate subject under the name Fundamentals of Conducting.

This course covers the presentation and development of basic conducting skills relative to all types and sizes of musical ensembles. In this course the student will conduct short excerpts of standard ensemble repertoire demonstrating clear entrances, cues, beat patterns, releases, interpretative indications, and other gestures necessary for a good performance. Students will learn methods for score preparation, rehearsal technique, and performance assessment (www.staff.rio.edu/lawrence/documents/Intro%20to%20Conducting.rtf).

The course is designed:

- To equip the student with basic conducting and rehearsal skills.
- To introduce the student to the different styles of music represented by the various periods of music history.
- To give the student an opportunity to practise conducting and rehearsal skills in a small group setting.
- To acquaint the student with the professional organizations and journals that support music
(www.staff.rio.edu/lawrence/documents/Intro%20to%20Conducting.rtf).

The Course Objectives are clearly defined as to equip students to be able to:

- Demonstrate ability to perform basic conducting patterns, i.e., elementary patterns, irregular patterns, and sub-divided patterns.
- Demonstrate ability to successfully cue attacks, releases, and fermatas.
- Demonstrate effective rehearsal techniques.
- Demonstrate ability to analyze a music score.
- Demonstrate ability to observe and critique conductors in rehearsal settings and submit positive comments and suggestions for increased success.
- Demonstrate ability to conduct the classroom ensemble by preparing and conducting music selections
(www.staff.rio.edu/lawrence/documents/Intro%20to%20Conducting.rtf).

The subject descriptions are not supplied.

Students applying to study music in the School of Fine Arts will be evaluated on vocal potential, as well as basic musical skills and expression. More specific prerequisites for prospective students are not supplied on the website.

3.3.37 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

WESTMINSTER CHOIR COLLEGE, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

(http://www.rider.edu/864_1681.htm)

One of the leading institutions with regards to choral conductors' training is the Westminster Choir College. "The reputation of this college lies to a great extent in its choirs and the success of its graduates. Alumni lead some of the finest choral programs in schools, churches, communities, and on campuses across the country" (<http://www.rider.edu/wcc/graduate-programs/choral-conducting>).

Westminster Choir College is a professional college of music with a unique choral emphasis that prepares undergraduate and graduate students for careers in performance, teaching, sacred music, and composition. In an atmosphere that encourages personal and musical growth and nurtures leadership qualities, Westminster Choir College complements professional training in music with studies in the liberal arts. Founded for Christian service, Westminster Choir College was a pioneer in establishing the highest standards in choral performance and church music. Today, the curriculum teaches pluralism and holds service through music to be ennobling, liberating, and integral to a rewarding and productive life.

Choral music is the focus of all music curricula. Students can major in Sacred Music and Music Education. The entrance examination for prospective students consists first of all of the submission of a preliminary screening recording in order to be considered for an invitation to an on-campus audition. The recording should contain the following:

1. Twenty to thirty minutes of conducting/rehearsing a choir that the candidate regularly conducts, or an ad hoc group formed for the taping. Camera positioned to show a head-on view.
2. Music of contrasting tempi that demonstrates legato and marcato gesture.

The Westminster Choir College faculty will review all of the submitted pre-screening recordings and invite selected candidates to audition on campus. The on-campus auditions will consist of three parts:

1. Interview - students should be prepared to:
 - Sing an art song or aria.
 - Play a short piece on the piano (such as a Bach Invention).
 - Discuss preparation, historical significance, and analysis of the assigned score.
2. Exams - students will be tested in Aural Skills and Sight Singing.
3. Conducting Audition.

Conducting instruction, required study of voice and vocal pedagogy, daily choral rehearsals and concert appearances of the choirs equip graduates for professional careers as conductors immediately following completion of the baccalaureate degree. Opportunities for choral performance on a professional level are ample, and students acquire a strong foundation in conducting technique and knowledge of choral literature. The following courses are offered as part of the degree programmes:

- *Chapel Choir*
The Chapel Choir is an ensemble comprised of undergraduate students in their initial year of study at Westminster. The ensemble provides the fundamentals of artistic choral ensemble singing. As part of that education, performance experiences may include concerts and tours. Repertoire includes motets, anthems and hymn anthems, minor works, folk songs, and spirituals.
- *Schola Cantorum*
The Schola Cantorum furnishes the core choral experience for students in their second year of undergraduate study. Ensemble participation emphasizes quality educational and artistic experiences through the study of choral repertoire selected from diverse stylistic and cultural backgrounds, including small masterworks from the Western tradition. Building on the pedagogical foundation established in Chapel Choir, students in Schola Cantorum expand the music, vocal, and choral skills that enable them to function as independent, flexible, and responsive choral musicians in their subsequent student and professional lives.
- *Westminster Choir*
The Westminster Choir of approximately 40 voices performs a wide variety of choral repertoire and aspires to the highest professional standards. Considered one of the finest choirs in the world, it regularly tours throughout the United States and has served as the chorus in residence for the Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, South Carolina, since the festival's founding in 1977. Members are selected through auditions from all Westminster students above the freshman level. The requirements for selection include good academic standing, strong musicianship, and superior vocal talent.

- *Fundamentals of Conducting*
Fundamentals of conducting, including posture, stance, conducting patterns, beat styles, attacks, and releases as they apply to a variety of musical phrases and shorter pieces of music. Focus on the student's ability to mold and evaluate choral sound and on the steps a conductor goes through to prepare a score.
- *Williamson Voices*
The Williamson Voices of Westminster Choir College is a select ensemble of approximately 32 singers with a unique mission that combines performance and outreach education. Repertoire is chosen from a broad spectrum of literature, including world music and contemporary choral works.
- *Westminster Kantorei*
An auditioned vocal ensemble specializing in music before 1750, with occasional forays into more contemporary repertoire. Although the ensemble will generally consist of around 16 singers, the exact make-up of the ensemble will vary from semester to semester, depending on the works to be studied and performed. The repertoire will include both works for vocal ensemble and works featuring significant solo work. The entire ensemble will rehearse three hours per week; singers assigned solo roles will meet an additional one and a half hours. Keyboardists may audition for the ensemble.
- *Symphonic Choir*
The Symphonic Choir is at the heart of the college choral community. For over 60 years it has appeared several times each year under conductors from all over the world with symphony orchestras of the United States and Europe.
- *Techniques of Conducting*
Continued development of technique with emphasis on more complex styles, including mixed meters and asymmetrical patterns, and on communication through appropriate gestures and immediate physical imagery. Rehearsal procedures, score preparation, and group vocal techniques are incorporated into the course.
- *Advanced Conducting*
This course explores the relationship of gesture to sound across a broad range of musical styles. Specific topics addressed may include score preparation, advanced rehearsal techniques, mixed meter, development of the inner ear, working with instruments, and baton technique.
- *Vocal Techniques for Choirs*
Study of vocal techniques appropriate for use in choral rehearsals and for teaching class voice. Techniques for effecting change in group vocal production are discussed, including such topics as the identification of group vocal problems and mental and physical preparation of a group for good vocal production. Techniques to be developed include (1) how to communicate information about vocal technique to amateur singers, (2) exercises used to develop choral sound by improving diction, dynamics, legato, staccato, martellato, high and low registers, resonance, vowel modification, etc., (3) how to train singers to use a vocal production specifically appropriate to the repertoire of various style periods and the demands of individual composers, and (4) conducting methods for good choral and vocal training. Recommended both for conducting majors and for students in other major programs, including those for whom the voice is not the primary performance medium.

- *Baroque Performance Practice*
A practical and theoretical study of issues of Baroque performance practice, including tempo, phrasing and articulation, ornamentation, rhythmic alternation, qualities of sound, continuo practice, influence of dance, affect, and national idioms. Primary source materials will serve as the basic core of readings for the course, supplemented and supported by recordings and contemporary resources. In the latter half of the semester, students will perform in a series of master classes.
- *Conducting Performance*
The performance requirement for graduate conducting majors.
- *Master Singers*
A laboratory choral ensemble serving as the choir for recitals conducted by its own graduate student members. Repertoire consists of shorter choral works drawn from all style periods, works appropriate for use in churches and in schools at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Two semesters are required for all graduate Choral Conducting majors, Sacred Music majors, and those Music Education majors who have selected conducting as the performance field.
- *Choral Conducting I*
An intensive study of conducting to develop technique, facial expression, breathing, and an understanding of how a choir responds vocally to specific gestures. Emphasis is placed on the approach to various style periods and their characteristic sound qualities and on the ability to listen to and evaluate choral sound while conducting.
- *Choral Conducting II*
A continuation of the developing of conducting skills using primarily 18th, 19th, and 20th century repertoire. Special emphasis is placed upon the relationship between gesture and sound, musical understanding, and techniques of teaching music in a choral rehearsal.
- *Choral Conducting III*
Continued work in the technique of conducting with emphasis upon conceptualizing music. Concentration on choral literature of the Renaissance and Baroque repertoire. Required for conducting majors and open to others by permission of the instructor.
- *Conducting Skills*
A practical course for the choral conductor designed to develop aural and rehearsal skills. An emphasis is placed on learning to hear the score, and strengthening the aural and gestural skills necessary for a conductor. Classes will be highly interactive, and will include score study, intonation work, aural skills drills, and gestural work.
- *Choral Literature I*
A broad survey of choral repertoire from Gregorian chant to present-day compositions. Emphasis is placed upon knowing the availability and sources of music of major composers and of music appropriate for performance in today's churches and schools.
- *Choral Literature II*
A study of selected major choral works, involving analytical and stylistic study. Oral reports by class members on assigned topics.

- *Graduate Conducting Review*
A course required for graduate students who need additional conducting experience. Course participants must demonstrate mastery of basic conducting techniques. Objectives include acquiring methods of score study and preparation, fostering the relationship between gesture and sound, understanding techniques related to differing musical style periods, developing a linear concept of music, and the sensing of an inner pulse in order to encourage effective vocal production.

The exposure students enjoy in the programmes offered by the Westminster Choir College is to be admired for its comprehensiveness. Students are able to choose from a variety of performing ensembles in order to gain experience and to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills in the specific genre of their choice.

3.4 DISCUSSION OF CONDUCTING SUBJECT OUTLINES

Although a website or prospectus does not always reveal the full extent and depth of training that takes place, a strong indication of the type of musical training and skill development was discovered through accessing Music Departments' websites and brochures outlining subject provisions.

3.4.1 PARTICIPATION IN ENSEMBLE SINGING

How does one learn a trait or skill the best? – To meaningfully master a skill where motor skills are involved, like conducting, the best way to learn to practise the newly acquired motor skill(s) is to have an instrument to practise on. This comparison can be applied to learning how to conduct. Acquiring the theoretical knowledge is essential; however, without the practical application of such acquired knowledge, the level of skilfulness of students after studying will vary. Of the 37 institutions consulted 24 do not require participation in an ensemble as part of curriculum requirements, 13 institutions do require ensemble participation as a valuable part of their training as choral conductors: it is with the aim “to provide knowledge of choral literature and give the students experience as choristers. Participation provides knowledge on how to work with timbre, intonation, rhythm, text, phrasing, dynamics, homogeneity and articulation” (Norwegian State Academy of Music: No date).

3.4.2 SPECIALISED CHORAL CONDUCTING PROGRAMMES

Of the 37 institutions whose choral conducting programmes were consulted, the following institutions offer specialised programmes in the field of choral conducting: Academy of Choral Art Named After V.S. Popov; Charles University; Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music; Institute of Education, University of London; Jacksonville State University; Liszt Academy of Music; Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University; Norwegian State Academy of Music; Royal Academy of Music, London; Seattle Pacific University; Sibelius Academy of Music; Slovenian Academy of Music; The Choir Academy SA; The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre; The Royal University College of Music (KMH), Stockholm; The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, The School of Music Gorinchem IDE (Instituut voor Dirigente Edukatie – Institute for Conductor’s Training); Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst (University of Music and Performing Arts), Graz; Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst (University of Music and Performing Arts), Vienna; University of Cambridge; University of Kwazulu-Natal; University of Philippines; University of Surrey Roehampton and Westminster Choir College.

Universities such as the University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz and the Westminster Choir College offer study programmes with specialisation in choral conducting with emphasis on preparing students for careers in the performance and teaching of choral music.

Universities in this category include a wide variety of music subject areas, and recognise that a choral conductor has to be thoroughly trained to become a well-balanced musician. The author deduced the following list of possible traits for a well-trained choral conductor from the curriculum content of such universities:

- good choral conducting and baton techniques,
- effective keyboard skills,
- an ability to conduct choir compositions with orchestral accompaniment,
- first-rate skills in harmony and counterpoint,
- first rate knowledge in Instruments and acoustics,
- excellent aural skills,
- a concentration on score studying skills where notation practices in contemporary music is necessary,
- a good knowledge of form in music,
- skills in the analysis of music,
- excellent knowledge of music history,

- the ability to do voice building,
- a well-developed singing voice,
- knowledge and exposure to opera and choral practices,
- a good working knowledge of foreign languages like Italian, German and French,
- knowledge and insight into performance practices of the different musical periods with insight and knowledge on historical style practices,
- the ability to play scores and skills in successful score studying,
- a set of well-developed choir rehearsal methods,
- healthy knowledge of choir repertoire and literature studies.

At the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, the curriculum for the training of choral conductors not only focusses on courses specialising in choral conducting, but other core music courses and subjects in the study of humanities and teacher training courses are also part of the package. The Sibelius Academy of Music in Helsinki, Finland is another institution with a comprehensive specialisation course for choral conductors, offering two courses for only singing in a choir or chamber choir with the objective “to become familiar with rehearsing and performing a large-scale musical work” (Sibelius Academy of Music, Helsinki: No date b) and “to learn the singing technique required by a demanding choral repertoire; to develop a widened knowledge of styles and stylistic demands in music, and to be familiar with an adequate amount of basic repertoire and the latest choral music” (Sibelius Academy of Music, Helsinki: No date b). Characteristic of most specialised programmes is that they offer individual tuition to conducting students. In this regard the Royal University College of Music, Stockholm aims to develop students on a basis of “one-to-one tuition and group conducting” (The Royal University College of Music: No date a).

The author deduced the following list of courses from the programmes of institutions consulted, for possible inclusion in the intended design of curriculum for the training of undergraduate South African choral conducting students:

- Analysis of Music.
- Aural training.
- Choir rehearsal methodology.
- Choir Repertoire and Literature studies.
- Choral Arranging.
- Choral Conducting Technique (including baton techniques and conducting choir compositions with orchestral accompaniment).
- Choral Conducting, Leadership and Communication.

- Foreign Languages like Italian, German and French.
- Form in Music.
- Harmony and Counterpoint.
- Instruments and Acoustics.
- Keyboard skills.
- Music History.
- Opera and Choral Practices.
- Performance Analysis of Small Choral Works.
- Performance Practices (historical style practices).
- Philosophy of Music Education.
- Score study.
- Singing.
- Stage Management for Choir.
- Voice Building (Voice Coaching).

3.4.3 CHORAL CONDUCTING PROGRAMMES AS PART OF A BROADER MUSIC EDUCATION

The following institutions whose choral conducting programmes were investigated offer choral conducting as part of a broader music curriculum without specialisation possibilities: Australian Catholic University; Moscow Conservatoire of Music; North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus; School of Music, Queen's University, Kingston; South African College of Music, University of Cape Town; St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota; Stanford University, Stanford, California; Universität der Künste Berlin; University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education; University of Pretoria, Faculty of Humanities; University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College; University of Stellenbosch; University of the Free State. These choral conducting courses are found as part of the curricula for a broader Bachelor in Music, Bachelor of Arts with Music, or Diploma in Music programme.

As an example of the above mentioned institutions the Berlin University of the Arts (Universität der Künste Berlin) offers tuition in choral conducting as part of different diploma programmes and all offer the opportunity of being exposure to training in choral conducting. All students are thus exposed to a certain degree of choral conducting, and it is seen as recognition of the fact that most school teachers will at some point in their teaching careers be involved with choral singing. The Berlin University of the Arts places a high emphasis on the

training of teachers for School Music and aims their programme “at training qualified music teachers for music schools and the private sector” (Universität der Künste Berlin: No date b).

3.4.4 SOUTH AFRICAN CONDUCTING SUBJECT OUTLINES

In many countries around the world, choral activity has been, for many years, and is still an integral part of the cultural life of schools, churches and communities. In a study on the value of choral singing in a multi-cultural South Africa, Barrett (2007: 73) shows that “through choral singing, a multi-cultural society is slowly being united and through this, singers rely on each other for support, advice, and friendship and they share beliefs”. Hammond (2004: 103) stresses the fact that

choral singing in South Africa has the potential to contribute significantly towards the realisation of this ideal, not only because it is an opportunity for South Africans of all races to interact and cooperate in a non-threatening environment, but also because it is a site for the renegotiation of South African identities. Choir is an inclusive genre with the potential to redefine South Africanness in a way that suits the heterogeneous ideal of the new South Africa.

In most South African communities choral singing is strong and healthy and for instance in church congregations, it materializes under the leadership of either the person responsible for the music in the church, or a volunteer with very little, if any, training in the field. In some communities the choir leader may have had training and examinations in some music studies, but it is unlikely that the same extent of training and examinations will have been taken (or offered) in choral conducting. Knowledge and experience gained in choral conducting will, almost by default, be due to the close association of the role(s) of organist/music leader and choirmaster. Music leaders at churches and music teachers at schools will rather, on the whole, have been appointed for their abilities to lead the musical accompaniment and/or teach music, which are more easily measurable than their choral conducting abilities. The duty to conduct the choir often comes as an extra responsibility. “It is a general expectation, nevertheless, that music teachers still conduct choral and instrumental ensembles as part of their job in schools, and some may also undertake such roles in the wider community” (Durrant 1994:57). As a good violinist does not necessarily make a good leader of an orchestra, so a good organist does not necessarily make a good choral conductor, nor a good music teacher a competent choral conductor. Estrella (2011) rightly points out that “education and experience is what makes a good conductor”. As stated above, there are other skills involved.

After having consulted the available choral conducting curricula of South African tertiary institutions, the author is of the opinion that ways in which choral conductors are trained in South Africa could be perceived as still being unsystematic and unstructured, and while courses (summer schools, weekend and day courses) may be available for those wishing to improve their skills in this field, there is little or too insignificant a concentration within the courses offered for music students at higher education level. Only two of the nine South African institutions consulted offer specialisation programmes in choral conducting. Through consulting South African universities' available subject descriptions it became apparent that the opportunities within higher education to develop choral conducting skills are not extensive, although options have increased over the past ten years, as the first ever concentrated choral conducting module in South African universities was presented in 2002 by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Too little emphasis is placed on choral conducting as a significant part of a whole undergraduate music programme. It does happen, nevertheless, that students gain opportunities to conduct ad hoc groups, choirs and orchestras outside the official, accredited music programme, and such activities are to be commended, as they encourage enterprise on the part of the students. There is, however, usually little opportunity for analysis and discussion of the students' conducting technique and effectiveness, or any actual instruction.

From the various subject descriptions it is deduced that choral conducting at undergraduate level usually occurs as part of the subject Music Education, and the subject field is not sufficiently represented in the composition of music training programmes.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The statement by Henry Coward (2003:249) that "what a conductor requires is self-reliance, and born mastery of the subject", can be debated. "Choir conducting is a complex musical practice, which claims a set of abilities regarding musical technical knowledge, notions of people management, psychological and pedagogical formation" (Fucci Amato and Amato Neto 2008:3). It is the contention of the author that choral conducting skills are not merely a natural ability, and that the training of choral conductors can only partially be absorbed and developed through experience, both by having been conducted and by actually engaging in the activity of conducting. While recognising the potential significance of craft knowledge – "The craft skill or knowledge is the practical application of the technical knowledge, the aural skills, the detection of errors and the general shaping – knowing when and how to deal and progress with the music" (Durrant 2009:338), a case can be made that there are musical,

non-musical and music-technical skills necessary for effective conducting which are teachable. These skills are arguably best transferred in a formal teaching environment, although the author recognises that learning and teaching also take place in informal environments and contexts like belonging to a choir or music ensemble . Through the consultation of the various institutions' music training programme contents, valuable information was obtained as to the extent and content of choral conducting programmes offered, and the level at which they can be presented, given the entrance requirements specified for student admission.

CHAPTER 4

CHORAL CONDUCTING SKILLS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the skills that ought to be part of a choral conductor's proficiency are examined. The meaning of each component and its characteristics will be discussed in a concise examination of the main elements that need to be present in choral conducting curricula. This study is a prelude to the development of South African choral conducting curricula. It is thus necessary to gather, analyse and synthesise information that should be dealt with in such curricula. The goals of institutions will differ from one another, and it will be the decision of each institution to what extent they would like their specific curriculum to be focussed on aspects specifically applicable and relevant to the cultural and particularly African context within their regions. Decisions might typically be dictated by the composition of their student body and the specific goals and outcomes of the courses presented.

What are the factors that contribute to developing a successful conductor? It is the aim of this chapter to discuss those skills that are teachable and not to deal with the debate as to whether successful conductors are born or taught.

Based on subject and course content information gathered in Chapter 3, the author believes the following aspects (which will be discussed further in the chapter as indicated by the section numbers in brackets) are all teachable attributes and should be included in curricula for the teaching of choral conducting students.

(4.2) Musicianship skills focused on five areas of technical importance

(4.2.1) Musicianship skills focused on Tone quality

(4.2.2) Musicianship skills focused on Diction

(4.2.3) Musicianship skills focused on Balance and Blend

(4.2.4) Musicianship skills focused on Intonation

(4.2.5) Musicianship skills focused on Precision

(4.3) Efficient skills in Score Study

(4.4) Knowledge about Auditions

(4.5) Sufficient knowledge and insight into Choral Literature

(4.6) Disciplined and well-ordered rehearsal technique skills

(4.7) The ability to communicate successfully

- (4.8) Knowledge about Accompaniment
- (4.9) Leadership and Management
- (4.10) Insight into the act of Performance
- (4.11) Knowledge of Performance Practices
- (4.12) A reliable Conducting Technique

A discussion of each follows.

4.2 MUSICIANSHIP SKILLS FOCUSED ON FIVE AREAS OF TECHNICAL IMPORTANCE

Musicianship in the context of the choral conductor means to have insight and to be able to integrate the afore-mentioned components in order to add value to the whole process of making music. Durrant (2005:1) confirms that the development of musical skills of the conductor is vital. The student conductor has to be led into developing his/her musicianship. Choral conducting curricula ought to create opportunities for such development. As the individual responsible for creating a long-lasting musical experience for both singers and audience, he/she leads a group of people to be part of something they have never done together before. A conductor is also responsible for bringing printed notes to audible life: in order to do so proficient ability should be acquired in the art of re-creating and staying true to the printed score. Durrant (1994:58) states that “the amount of score preparation will undoubtedly have an influence on the confidence the conductor exudes in the rehearsal”. He continues by stating that it is “expected that a conductor has to begin the study of music before the first rehearsal”. The author has the experience that many choral conductors are able to perform acceptably from a technical point of view, but the responsibility of the conductor is to make the singers aware of the musical elements in the composition and how the composer combined and used these elements to create the composition. A conductor should endeavour to unfold the music and guide his/her singers in understanding the music in spite of the pressures of performance deadlines. A conductor's knowledge and application of tone quality, diction, balance, blend, intonation and precision has an acute impact on his/her musicianship skills. Durrant (2005) considers the conductor's “knowledge of music and ability to transfer this knowledge and enthusiasm to the choir” as important. These factors and the basic minimum level of knowledge will subsequently be discussed.

4.2.1 MUSICIANSHIP SKILLS FOCUSED ON TONE QUALITY

“Vocal timbre refers to the quality or colour of tone being produced by a singer” (O'Connor 2013). Tone quality also refers to the overall composite sound that is the result of a group of people singing together. What tone quality or choral sound really is, is elusive when one wants to connect fixed terminology to it. In an article “The Swedish Sound”, Anderson (2001:37) observed four components characteristic of the sound of Swedish choirs: excellent legato line, emphasis on vowel formation, controlled vibrato and exceptional intonation. The tone quality of a choir is affected by the vocal production and voice quality of individual singers. The composite tone quality of a group of singers depends to a large extent upon the way in which the voices are blended together. Choral tone quality and blend are therefore inseparable from each other.

The discussion of tone quality is challenging for many reasons; the subjective nature of sound, the challenge of translating nonverbal entities into words, and the absence of a historical voice as a sound source, a sonic artefact surviving from history, all defy an ease of approach (Plank 2004:5).

As Plank rightly states, the discussion on tone quality is “challenging for many reasons” (2004:5). Aspects like cultural differences and linguistic factors further complicate the issue. Although there is a widely accepted emphasis on the importance of accurate intonation and healthy and good tone quality, cultural differences do play a role in the conception of these aspects. O'Connor suggests that the tone being produced by different singers is “to be primarily an anatomical difference and secondarily a cultural difference” (O'Connor 2013). Nieto and Kitzing (1993) states that “a suprasegmental property such as intonation, tone or stress also affects the production of voice” and that the “respective characteristics are perceived to be dependent on the language used” and is furthermore influenced by “different native languages”.

There is a tendency for choir directors to develop a particular tone quality for their choirs and to force all performed music into the mould of a preconceived sound.

Historical music offers a vast choice of different periods, different languages, different social backgrounds, different musical instruments, different ideas of what beautiful singing means - differing from generation to generation, from country to country (Plank 2004:5).

Plank continues by stating that music is sometimes forced into one mould based on a conductor's personal interpretations – “every piece of music sounds the same, no matter who the composer is or what the intention of the composition is” (Plank 2004:5).

It is desirable for a choir to sing with different kinds of tone quality in the course of a programme containing various styles of music. Varying tone qualities must “be shaped consciously according to the style of a piece. In other words, a good choral director should be able to conduct music of different periods according to its style and interpretation” (Yeh: No date). In performing music from different style periods, resonance has to be acknowledged as a common denominator that has to be present: “Choral singing that employs resonance as a fundamental ensemble virtue yields impressive results that lend themselves well to the varying demands of any choral score” (Quist 2008:27). The boundaries of altering tone quality in terms of the vocal ability of the choristers must be taken into consideration and then it is safe to “concentrate on pure and unanimous vowels, this will produce a sound which is appropriate and pleasant for every period of music” (Plank 2004:4).

A choral conductor has as task the re-creation of music that is on paper, or the recreation of the characteristics of music that is orally passed on. He/she should guide the singers towards a mental concept of the sound desired. Krueger (1958:21) describes this task of the conductor as having “two distinct phases: his conception of the composer’s intentions as these are stated in the score, and his realisation of that conception via his instrument”. The author agrees with Krueger when he states that it is in the second phase that the “conductor goes his own way, that the problems peculiar to his craft appear, for, to get at his instrument, to, actually have an instrument, he must persuade the players to give him the sounds needed for the recreation of the composition” (Krueger 1958:21).

As with extracting an acceptable sound from an orchestral instrument, choral conductors are responsible for teaching choristers to sing in the correct way, since choral tone quality is highly dependent upon the quality of each voice and how each individual singer actually sings. Singing may be defined as “the act of coordinating instantaneously the physical processes of respiration (breathing), phonation (the utterance of sound), resonance (the formation of vowels), and articulation (the formation of vowels and consonants into words)” (Wyatt 1974:26). As can be seen from Wyatt’s definition, knowledge of singing or vocal production is essential for the conductor and some proposed aspects for inclusion in the choral conducting curricula of vocal production will be outlined below.

4.2.1.1 TONE QUALITY – SOUND PRODUCTION

“Singing is a complex combination of physical and psychological processes” (Cairns: No date). Cairns (No date) continues to explain the importance of the development of good vocal production of choristers. “Tone quality is the very substance of choral singing” (Garretson

1986:35). A choral conductor must be well versed in the “fundamental aspects of vocal production within a choral setting in order to facilitate more effective singing” (Cairns: No date). Careful instruction in the mechanics of good vocal tone production is necessary for any choir of untrained singers.

The characteristics of a good solo tone are also characteristics that are desirable in a good choral tone. It is not possible to thoroughly teach voice in a choral rehearsal, but it is possible to incorporate certain fundamental aspects of vocal technique in these rehearsals (Lamb 2009a:1).

Lamb (2009a:1) continues by asserting that techniques used in obtaining a choral sound are to be basic principles of voice production. One of the most common ways of imparting a mental concept of tone is for the director to use his/her own voice, asking the choir to imitate that sound. Since people tend to imitate the idiosyncrasies of others, care should be taken that choristers do not imitate the vocal faults of the conductor. The conductor has the responsibility to be equipped with adequate knowledge of sound production in order to guide choristers in proper singing techniques. The technique conductors use to teach sound production should be evaluated the whole time. Collins (1999:211), for example, emphasises that teachers “should evaluate the results of the technique they are using, and if those results are bad, they will consider improving it”.

The voice quality of each singer is important to overall choral tone. Since the individual qualities result from the vocal production of each singer, it is important to discuss in detail some of the techniques of good sound production. It is, however, also important to mention the ongoing debate over solo singing versus choral singing – is it healthy for solo singers to sing in a choir?

Whether it is preferable for choir singers to sing with a fully resonant or less resonant tone quality frames a part of this ongoing discussion, particularly with respect to use of those notably strong resonance frequencies within the vocal tract known as the singer’s formant (Ford 2003:29).

In an article: The Acoustic Characteristics of Professional Opera Singers Performing in Chorus Versus Solo Mode in the *Journal of Voice*, the researchers Black, Cabrera, Chapman, Davis, Oates, Reid and Ternström (2007: 35) remarked that “singing in choral mode, therefore, required the ability to use a similar vocal timbre to that required for solo opera singing”. This supports the belief of the author that the principles of good production are the same for both soloist and chorister although demands of the repertoire of solo and choral music may dictate slightly different usage of the basic techniques.

4.2.1.2 TONE QUALITY – POSTURE

Garretson's (1986:39) summary of good posture for singers resonates with the author's own beliefs and refers to the singer's standing position ("the feet should be placed approximately 6 inches apart and the left foot preferably should be several inches in front of the right"), the weight of the body ("should rest to a great extent on the balls of the feet – not on the heels"), the position of the head (kept "perpendicular to the shoulders") and "the music must be held in such a position that the director may be easily seen without the singers lowering or raising their heads, since any deviation in the position of the head is likely to affect the tone quality".

When seated, singers' posture should be as close to the standing position as possible. They should sit on the front of the chair with part of their body weight supported by the feet, which should be flat on the floor. The posture of seated singers is likely to be correct if they are able to rise to a standing position easily without shifting their feet. "If singers are seated during rehearsal, they must sit with their weight shifted forward such that they could move easily to a standing position" (Brinson 1996:178). In the researcher's experience conductors do not pay attention to choristers' posture while sitting. Good posture is just as important when sitting as when standing, as singers spend much of the rehearsal time in a sitting position. Brinson (1996:179) notes that "good posture is the most basic tool for correct singing". It is thus important to show choristers the correct posture, and spend some rehearsal time correcting posture.

4.2.1.3 TONE QUALITY – BREATHING

Collins (1999:213) remarks that "between birth and adolescence, the natural process of inhaling and exhaling, even though it occurs several times a minute, becomes affected by bad habits". Brinson (1996:182) emphasises breathing as a very important factor in voice production: since it is the power supply of the vocal instrument, students must be taught to breathe correctly and to manage their breath.

It is important to clarify terminology used in connection with breathing. Writers (Brinson 1996, Collins 1999, Hylton 1995 and van der Vinne 1989) indicate the importance of differentiating between breath support (having adequate breath pressure to produce a tone) and breath control (the smooth maintenance of breath pressure over extended periods of time). The author agrees with the mentioned writers' recommendation for diaphragmatic-abdominal or diaphragmatic-costal breathing to be taught to choristers. To summarise the style of breathing would be to stress that the chest should be high at the outset, there has be a

sideward costal expansion, and the abdomen must relax to allow full descent of the diaphragm. Hylton (1995:13) stresses that conductors should “encourage the low abdominal breathing conducive to good singing”.

4.2.1.4 TONE QUALITY – RESONANCE

To the physicist, resonance is a relationship that exists between two vibrating bodies of the same pitch – “when one vibrator causes another to vibrate in tune with it, the phenomenon is called resonance” (Wyatt 1974:117). Quist states that “resonance is the intensification and enriching of a musical tone by supplementary vibration” (2008:3). It is the conductor’s task to guide singers to achieve a healthy, free and resonant sound and “the concepts of placement and resonance must be introduced and reinforced consistently during the choir rehearsal” (Brinson 1996:184). The conductor has to take care not to bewilder singers with confusing mental concepts of resonance, which might cause the tightening of muscles of the vocal mechanism. Hylton (1995:15) explains that “when tone is produced correctly, it will naturally resonate in all available areas”. The benefits of striving towards a resonant tone is highlighted by Quist (2008:2) in stating that “resonant singing creates possibilities with dynamic shading, subtlety of phrasing, and rich vibrant tone that astonishes listeners”. Quist further states “choral singing that employs resonance as a fundamental ensemble virtue yields impressive results that lend themselves well to the varying demands of any choral score” (2008:2) – the author’s personal experiences in this regard correspond with Quist’s view.

What is very important for the choral conductor is to guide his/her singers towards resonant singing in instructing them in methods to achieve correct breath support, control and management over their voices. “It is possible to teach the individuals in a choir to increase the level of resonance in their voices” (Quist 2008:3). The conductor should insist that they relax the vocal mechanism and, within this framework of relaxation, provide as much resonating space in the mouth and throat as possible. It is very important to stress that choral conductors should have a deep knowledge of the human voice and how to teach individuals to enhance the level of resonance in their voice production.

A resonant choral sound is connected to the level of resonance in each individual chorister’s voice. This is again linked to unification of sound and modification of vowels to achieve blend and balance. Conductors should understand the importance of healthy vocal instruction that will lead to rewarding music making. Quist (2008:35) highlights the importance for choirs to strive towards resonant singing: “Choirs that employ resonance in their singing tend to sing with better intonation, balance, blend, dynamics, and artistry”. The responsibility is upon the

shoulders of the conductor to teach this concept and it “requires time and study on the part of the choral director, but the results are compelling” (Quist 2008:35). The author’s own viewpoint matches Quist’s statement that

when the ensemble members begin to find the ring in their own voices, they will find it much easier to unify the tone as they learn to sing into the resonance of those around them. The choir can sing with more ease, not become quickly fatigued, and the collective blend will become aurally apparent because the sound is vibrant and rich and can be felt among members of the ensemble (Quist 2008:35).

4.2.2 MUSICIANSHIP SKILLS FOCUSED ON DICTION

The researcher agrees with Pfautsch (1971:3) that “good diction is the keystone in producing distinctive vocal and choral work”. Words are important in choral singing, not only in terms of the meaning of the text, but also in connection with other choral techniques. To make words understandable to listeners is one of a choir’s main goals as they communicate music through text. “Not only does the text enhance the emotional and intellectual content of the music, but it is also the most important part of the listening experience to many concertgoers” (Collins 1999:285).

Diction encompasses pronunciation (sound, accent), enunciation (fullness, clarity) and articulation (distinctness, correct formations). Anything that has to do with the sounds of the words comes under the heading of diction. The correct pronunciation of a language is of utmost importance, mastering the sound, and the correct accents in terms of stressed and unstressed syllables. Pronunciation also refers to vowel formation and speech inflection. The enunciation of the text refers to the uttering of words and sentences in an articulate manner to achieve clarity. Articulation refers to any speech sound, especially consonants. The distinctness and correct formations to produce sounds involve adjustments and movements of speech organs involved in generating a particular sound. Brinson (1996:194) recommends a working knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as an essential part of a conductor’s make-up to achieve success in leading choirs to correct diction.

Conductors need to receive instruction in how to deal with the stylistic, technical and linguistic aspects of choral/vocal music. “Although both music and lyrics are important, in vocal music it is the text that provides an explanation for the musical accompaniment. If the words cannot be understood, the song can become meaningless” (Vocalist 2013). The text not only provides an insight into the musical accompaniment but also into the compositional techniques used by the composer to give meaning to the text. It is important for conductors to

ensure that the text of repertoire is studied, analysed and grasped in order to deliver a meaningful interpretation that will be valuable to all parties involved in the performance.

This is most important, because words are, in my opinion, the most powerful things on earth. You might think that I, being a musician, attach more importance to the music than to the words, but I do not. In vocal music the words are paramount, and it is the function of the music, by sound, by rhythm, and by expression, to intensify and make more living the thought embodied in the words; hence the importance of having the message clearly and understandingly enunciated (Coward 2003:75).

It is the choral director's responsibility to equip him- or herself with the necessary knowledge to be able to guide choristers in correct diction to achieve maximum results. The need for the conductor to be empowered with the necessary knowledge is strengthened by Stanton (1971:56) who states:

the clean articulation of consonants necessary for understanding words results from a sure knowledge of position of lips, tongue, jaw, and throat required to make each consonant, and the ability to produce these without distorting the on-going flow of tone.

In textbooks the researcher encountered the following problematic elements relating to diction and that might arise in the performing of choral music:

- obstructing the vocal line
- vowel homogeneity
- vowel production in extremes of ranges
- consonants (Brinson 1996, Collins 1999, Hylton 1995, Stanton 1971 and van der Vinne 1989).

A brief discussion of each of the above problematic fields follows:

4.2.2.1 DICTION – OBSTRUCTING THE VOCAL LINE

“Good vowel production is central to good choral tone, blend and intonation” (Cairns: No date:5). Since vowels are vocal sounds produced with minimum obstruction from the articulators, they are advantageous in establishing and maintaining a vocal line. The same tonal quality has to be imparted to all vowels. Singing vowels with different qualities makes for a poor, inconsistent vocal line. “An important criteria for good singing habits is the homogenic shaping of vowels, in other words, they should sound as if they fit together, the vowels must be consistent with each other” (Cairns: No date:5).

Consonants are often the biggest perpetrators in obstructing the vocal line. “A consonant between two vowels must not interrupt the flow of vocal line” (Adler 1967:21). When articulating consonants, every effort should be made to maintain the vocal flow. Maintenance of the vocal line requires that voiceless consonants be as short as possible. Very helpful advice is to “sing as long as you can on the correct vowels and add the consonants and vanishing final syllable of diphthongs in a quick, crisp, intense fashion” (Collins 1999:298). Voiced consonants can contribute to the preservation of the vocal line, but the ideal is still to execute consonants in a manner not detrimental to the vocal line.

4.2.2.2 DICTION – VOWEL HOMOGENEITY

Hylton (1995:17) asserts that vowel unification or homogeneity is an important aspect of good basic vocal technique. Not only is it important for the sake of good diction to have unified vowels but “when choirs do not sing with unified vowels, their intonation will suffer” (Brinson 1996:192). The author agrees with the authors Brinson (1996), Collins (1999) and Hylton (1995), all indicating the importance of a conductor having an understanding of the acoustic and physiological implications of the five Latin vowels: *ee*, *eh*, *ah*, *oh*, and *oo*. Moving from *ee* through to *oo*, the sounds are from brightest to darkest. The conductor ought to be able to tell and show the choristers how to accomplish the task. The conductor has to try and isolate the error or errors, and help the singers correct the fault(s). The singers have to be guided in the correct formation of each vowel.

Many vowels are not pure, but consist of a glide from one vowel sound to another. When two vowels are combined in a glide, a diphthong is produced. In nearly every case, the first part of the diphthong is the most important and singers “must be taught to glide from one sound to another together with the rest of the group” (Bartle 1995:19). Singers should maintain the initial sound of the diphthong until very close to the end of the note value, shifting to the second vowel just prior to the following word, or immediately before releasing the tone. The technique for a singer is to “maintain the first vowel until the very last moment, minimizing the middle section in order to arrive at the last and the final moment” (Barker 2004:58). A common mistake with amateur singers is to sound the second portion of the diphthong prematurely, resulting in a distortion of the word. This kind of error in pronunciation should be avoided in choral singing.

4.2.2.3 DICTION – VOWEL PRODUCTION IN EXTREMES OF RANGES

In extremes of range, vowel quality often changes. “The choral conductor should not be timid about using his musical ear as a guide to the modification of vowel sounds. At the same time, any coloring must be done with taste, and with a concern that all of the choir is doing it together and to the same degree” (Lamb: 2009b). Collins (1999:310) is also of the opinion that “higher pitches require vowel modification (change of vowel color), particularly in soprano voices”. Based on Collins’s statement sopranos who are required to sing very high pitches, for example, can be encouraged to sing *ah*, regardless of the vowel indicated in the text. Lamb (2009b) is also of the opinion that certain “modifications are necessary in all voices in the extremes of the ranges” and that a more consistent tone and vowel is the result if higher tones are to be modified.

4.2.2.4 DICTION – CONSONANTS

“Vowels define the pitch and part of the style in singing. Consonants are complementary to vowels in that they define rhythm” (Sue 2013). A singer may develop a satisfying vocal line with well-formed vowels, but has the added responsibility of coping with the consonant sounds in the language. “It is the consonant that introduces, connects and concludes the vowel(s) of a word. Good articulation of consonants helps the projection of a word and make it be heard clearly and easily” (Sue 2013). Articulation of consonants can affect the sounds of the vowels that follow those consonants.

In the formation of consonants, the articulators are required to move into positions for occluding, diverting or obstructing the flow of air from the lungs. A degree of tension is required for producing many of the consonants. If the tension required for the articulation of consonants is allowed to continue as the following vowels are sung, then undesirable vowel quality is likely to be the outcome. “The consonant, whether voiced or unvoiced, need not play villain to the heroic vowel, but can serve as a beneficial agent in delineating the vowel more plastically than would otherwise be possible were one continuous string of vowel sounds to be sung” (Miller 1996:21). For accurate articulation, singers should use precisely the amount of tension required. Too little tension produces inadequate consonants that hinder the perception of the text. Too much tension results in over-pronounced consonants that may detract from the flow of the music. There is also an increased danger of tense vowels.

Phoneticians categorise consonants in a variety of ways. One of the common classification systems is based on the articulatory organs. Categories such as bilabials, labiodentals, lin-

gua-palatals and velars are used in this system. Hylton (1995:25) categorises consonants as pitched (voiced) consonants (*m,n,l,ng,r,th* – as in *thee* –, *v,z*), explosives (*b,d,g,k,p,t*), sibilants (*f,s,sh,ch,th* – as in *with*) and aspirate (*h*). Collins (1999:298), in a more simplified version, refers to only two categories: voiced and voiceless consonants. Occluding or obstructing the flow of air from the lungs produces voiceless consonants. There is no sound at all from the vocal cords. The flow of air is simply manipulated by the articulators without producing any vocal sound. The vocal line is momentarily broken when voiceless sounds are articulated. Every effort should be made to maintain the vocal flow. “Consonants have their own duration requirements that are to be respected, but they must not become predominant within the line; clear consonant articulation can take place without glaring interruption of the vowel” (Miller 1996:21). The voiceless sounds should be as short as possible. They ought to be pronounced very quickly, but with enough force to ensure that the audience hears them. Voiced consonants utilise a vocal sound while the articulators divert or obstruct the flow of air from the lungs. These sounds should contribute to the maintenance of the vocal line, and should never break it.

4.2.3 MUSICIANSHIP SKILLS FOCUSED ON BALANCE AND BLEND

Choristers have too often to hear that they are not blending, and balance is lacking, but how do choral conductors teach choristers how to ‘blend’? “The concept of choral blend is often adjudicated but seldom researched” (Basinger and Killian 2007:313). There are many ways to arrive at choral blend, and once again the concept of choral blend is very personal and subjectively influenced. “They attempt to accomplish ‘choral blend’ by using a somewhat ‘hooty’ or ‘boy choir’ production” (Jones 2000:3). Blend is too often prioritized above healthy singing techniques. Every singer’s unique tone quality must be nurtured within the context of a healthy, unburdened singing technique. “Voice matching to achieve choral blend (placing specific voices next to one another to achieve a blended sound within a section) is frequently recommended” (Basinger and Killian 2007:313).

After being taught proper vocal technique, choristers are expected to unify the choral sound as voices sing together. Collins (1999:305) points out that singers progress at different rates, displaying better technique than others at times. This affects the balance as well as the blend between voices. It is thus important for the choral conductor to have knowledge of balance and blend, and the factors influencing them, in order to be pro-active when problems arise.

4.2.3.1 BALANCE

Balance can be defined as “the degree of uniformity of quantity of tone among the singers and sections” (Crowther 2003:89). Factors affecting balance are:

- Number of singers
- Choir spacing and formation
- Range and voicing of the music
- Texture of the music.

- **BALANCE – NUMBER OF SINGERS**

The numerical balance of sections in a choir influences the balance of the sound, although “the proper ratio of singers is controversial, however” (Collins 1999:308). Collins refers to the varying practices of choir conductors to assign different numbers of singers to sections. Some directors recommend that each section has the same number of singers as every other section, while others recommend different proportions. Numerical balance does not always ensure that there will be tonal balance: there is no ready-made solution or numeric formula for the selection of a choir. The basic guideline ought to be one of balance of volume and tone quality, and not balance of numbers.

- **BALANCE – CHOIR SPACING AND FORMATION**

Choir formation relates to seating arrangements, meaning the formal seating or standing position allocated to each chorister. Choir spacing relates to the actual distance between choristers. Although many authorities have suggestions as to the seating arrangements for choirs, the author’s conclusion on the many suggestions is that there is no standard formation for choirs in either performance or rehearsal situations. Hylton (1995:40) states rightly that the “seating arrangement for a choir, like the tone quality you are striving for, is not static”. Gordon (1989:110) suggests that formations for rehearsing and performing should be based on the following factors:

- Number of singers.
- Balance between vocal parts.
- Ability of singers.
- Contrasts between individual singers.
- Structure of music.
- Appearance of singers and choir in the whole.

In an article in the *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing* the author James F. Daugherty (2003:48:) reported on investigating

three different spacings (closed, lateral, circumambient) and two formations (random, block sectional and synergistic), employing sung excerpts from both SATB and TTBB/SSAA antiphonal choral literature. The purpose of the investigation was to assess preferences of choristers and auditors relative to choral sound of an SATB university chamber choir in three spacings.

Daugherty (2003:49) devised the following four research questions:

- (1) Are there differences in choral sound perceived and preferred by participants (auditors and choristers) when the physical position of choral singers on risers varies from close to spread spacing among singers?
- (2) Are there differences in choral sound perceived and preferred by participants (auditors and choristers) when the physical position of choral singers on risers varies between random block sectional formation and a conductor devised synergistic formation?
- (3) Are there differences in choral sound perceived and preferred by participants (auditors and choristers) when gender specific (SSAA or TTBB) ensembles are employed?
- (4) Do perceptions and preferences of auditors differ according to gender; and do perceptions and preferences of choristers differ according to voice part sung, gender, or acoustic environment (rehearsal room and auditorium)?

From experience the author concurs with the outcome of Daugherty's study showing that choral conductors should "experiment with differing placement assignments and spacing in both rehearsal and performance venues before consigning singers to rigid ensemble configurations that may not enable the choir to realize its best choral sound or healthiest vocal production" (Daugherty 2003:49).

Another study by Daugherty (2005) indicates that choral conductors need to be knowledgeable about the options and influences of choir spacing and formations and how they can have an effect on the sound of the choir, and the influence the placement of singers has on their experience. Daugherty found that "choir spacing, not choir formation, made the greatest contribution to preferred choral sound for both choristers and auditors. Preferences are related to spacing dimensions, not formation per se" (Daugherty 2005:8). There are a number of factors influencing the spacing and formation of individual choirs, and so the results of Daugherty's study cannot be transferred directly to any other choir. However, his research does serve to draw attention to a factor that is often neglected by choral conductors, merely reverting to old fashioned spacing and formations. "Choirs differ, as do the acoustic venues in which they perform and rehearse" (Daugherty 2003:57).

The following remarks by Daugherty (2003) demonstrate the reality that choir spacing and formation are as personal and subjective as every choral conductor's own ideal conceptualised choral sound:

Choral methods textbooks have suggested still other strategies for placing singers, among them: height, sight-reading skill, rhythmic ability, voice timbre ("reed" vs. "flute"), and whether a singer is "strong" or "weak" overall. While such criteria have not been investigated empirically with respect to acoustical contributions, choral directors have commonly reported using various synergistic combinations of these ideas to arrive at pleasing choral sound (Daugherty 2003:48).

Singer-placement may greatly influence blend, intonation as well as balance. The traditional placement of singers in sectional blocks is not always the most effective for good balance. A simplified guideline for the placement of singers is to ensure that the individual chorister's position in the choir will guarantee that he/she can carry his/her part musically and self-assuredly so that optimum music making can take place.

- **BALANCE – RANGE AND VOICING**

Singers tend to sing high notes loudly and low notes softly. The extreme ends of the range can cause problems of balance. Ideally one should be able to sing high tones softly and low tones with fullness. In reality conductors should confront this problem and solve it as best they can. For instance in the following final chord from Ward Swingle's *It was a lover and his lass* (1984:15), which is marked *pp*, the 1st basses (B¹) should rather sing *mp* than *pp*, to ensure balance.

Figure 1: *It was a lover and his lass* (1984:15), final chord

Figure 2: *It was a lover and his lass* (1984:15), final chord reduction

- **BALANCE – TEXTURE OF THE MUSIC**

Treatment of balance depends, to a considerable degree, upon the texture of the music.

“Texture is one of the basic elements of music. When you describe the texture of a piece of music, you are describing how much is going on in the music at any given moment”

(Schmidt-Jones 2013). Through the study of harmony, melody, rhythm and text, one will become aware of the texture of the work. Lamb (2008c:1) poses the following questions to be asked by a choral conductor when dealing with balancing the choir’s sound:

1. What are the demands of the texture? Is it thick? Transparent? Can the choir meet these demands?
2. How often does the texture change?
3. Does the composer utilize texture as a means of achieving variety?
4. Does texture often seem to be the most important aspect of the score?

The answers to these questions will guide the conductor in the interpretation of the music, further taking into consideration that homophonic texture calls for interest in the voice that carries the melody, while polyphonic music demands subtle nuances in the structure of the music, and then taking on positions subservient to other parts.

4.2.3.2 BLEND

Crowther (2003:89) describes blend as “the degree of uniformity of tone quality among the singers”. In a presentation for the American Choral Directors Association, Robert Russell (2003:8) of the University of Southern Maine stated that “a chorus learns to sing together to the extent that members of the chorus have developed unified concepts of pitch, vowel, diction, rhythm, articulation, dynamics, balance, and timbre”. The author agrees with Russell’s techniques of achieving blend by encouraging all singers to

- Sing precisely the same pitch.
 - Sing precisely the same vowel.
 - Sing exactly the same rhythm (with special attention to consonants).
 - Sing a unified articulation: staccato, legato, marcato, or tenuto.
 - Sing a unified dynamic level.
 - Be sensitive to the need to balance all voice parts.
 - Sing with a unified timbre, bright or dark
- (Russell 2003:8).

As Russell rightly stated, a choir learns to sing together and work together on achieving a blended sound. Blend involves an entire section in a choir as it relates, in terms of pitch, vowel, diction, rhythm, articulation, dynamics, balance and timbre, to the other sections, whereas balance refers to the relative levels of volume or strength among the various sec-

tions of a choir. Blend pertains to the relationship of individual voices to those around them and the total sound in terms of especially volume, vowel colour and pitch (intonation). Factors affecting blend are:

- Volume of individual voices
- Intonation
- Vowel colour
- Vibrato
- Dynamics
- Texture of the music.

- **BLEND – VOLUME OF INDIVIDUAL VOICES**

There is a running conflict in the literature going back at least 60 years. Some choral practitioners see the presence of solo-quality voices in a choir as not only an obstacle to a unified sound but a sign of a lack of team spirit. Others see the urge to blend voices together as an attack on the individuality of the singers, as a power-hungry director forcing natural beauty in all its variety into a uniform mould (Garnett 2013).

Some voices in a section out-sing the others and attract attention to themselves. If an individual voice is heard because it is too loud, it is advisable to somehow be calmed down to blend with the other voices. Conductors have to be equipped with listening skills in order to identify such voices and then to deal with the problem on a technical level. According to Quist (2008:15), “some choral directors may lack the pedagogical knowledge of the voice to teach the entire ensemble to sing with more resonance in the tone, or may be afraid to address the issue”. It is the author’s belief that conductors ought to be well equipped to promote blend and not revert to “reducing their singers’ sound to the level of the least resonant voice in the group” (Quist 2008:15) in order to achieve blend.

Not only is the ability to hear such voices and to solve the technical problems arising important, but the conductor has to employ the necessary tact in order not to create negative feelings from the chorister(s) in question. Communication skills (to be discussed in 4.7) have an impact even on dealing with technical issues.

- **BLEND – INTONATION**

Crowther (2003:81) refers to intonation as a “term which denotes the degree of adherence to an established pitch”. Frequently, a problem that a conductor may identify as one of blend is, in reality, one of pitch. If singers are not in tune, blend suffers. This serves to indicate how interrelatedly choral technical factors work upon one another. Joe Miller (acclaimed conduc-

tor and director of Choral Activities at the Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey), as quoted by Quist (2008:44), claims that “great ensemble intonation comes from an acute sense of listening”. Intonation will be dealt with in greater detail under 4.2.4 below.

- **BLEND – VOWEL COLOUR**

Getting singers to “conceive of each vowel in exactly the same manner while singing with their own characteristic sound” (Sheet 2011) is an essential element for good blend. In an internet survey on “Suggestions for better Choral Tone” Heng (1997) posed the following two questions:

- Based on what criteria do you rate a choir's sound as excellent?
- What do you think is the most important aspect that would help achieve an excellent sound?

The majority of respondents answered “blend” to the first question and “unified vowels” to the second question (Heng 1997). Although the author agrees with the outcome of Heng’s survey, blend should not become an end in itself, but should stay subservient to the music, and not the other way around. It is necessary that choral conductors should be made aware of the aspect of uniform vowels, especially in a multi-cultural society such as South Africa. Choristers with different mother tongues pronounce vowels differently, thus creating problems with vowel uniformity. Even within the same language group, dialect influences create inconsistencies in vowel pronunciation. The specific language that is sung must be analysed in order to guide the choristers to sing identical vowels.

- **BLEND – VIBRATO**

In an internet survey published on the website “Talk Classical” (2011) on which tone is most acceptable for choral singing, vibrato or straight tone, the results showed that 87.5% of participants voted for the use of a straight tone whereas the rest, 12.5%, preferred tone with vibrato. The discussion on whether the use of vibrato in choral sound is desirable and how it affects blend is a favourite topic of choir conductors and voice teachers alike. “Put twenty choral practitioners in a room and ask them about vibrato and choral singing, and you will hear twenty different opinions” (Garnett 2012). Bill Weinert (2011) of the Eastman School of Music refers to vibrato in the discussion on *Creating good blend* as a problem element standing in the way of achieving good blend. Lamb (2009a:1) asserts that “a vibrato is quite natural in the singing voice. There are a variety of compositions in which a minimal vibrato is desirable”. The author agrees with Lamb when he advises that “unless prescribed by the

composer a straight tone, one without any vibrato, is not suggested. The straight tone has no life in it and, when brought to a forte or double forte becomes hollow and unattractive” (Lamb 2009a:1). Garretson (1986:137) maintains that

the problem of the tremolo, or excessively wide vibrato, usually occurs when a person endeavors to sing with an overly large, dramatic quality and does so without the proper breath support. To eliminate this condition, the director should emphasize adequate breath support, a somewhat lighter tone quality, and practicing with a fairly straight tone. Through constant attention, the situation can be remedied.

Collins (1999:315) devotes a lengthy discussion to vibrato and asserts that “when vibrato becomes irregular, too wide, too fast, or too slow, it is offensive. Good vocal technique is the only cure for an offensive vibrato”. Schmidt-Gaden (1992:75) summarises the most common beliefs on the use of vibrato: “Für mich ist das Vibrato eine Möglichkeit der Ausdrucksgestaltung, von der nur sparsam Gebrauch gemacht werden sollte, damit die Wirkung erhalten bleibt” (For me vibrato is a means for expressiveness, to be used sparingly, so that the result is effective).

In an interview that Quist (2008:32) conducted with renowned choral conductors for her study *Choral resonance: Re-examining concepts of tone and unification*, Simon Carrington stated:

for two years I taught clear, line singing with minimum wobble vibrato and maximum vibrancy at New England Conservatory where the emphasis is on the burgeoning solo voice! I had no issues with either the students or my voice professor colleagues. I make it clear that I expect singers to use their voices musically and expressively like a violinist, matching the tone and the vibrato to the music rather than imposing the same acquired technique on every note.

In another interview Robert Sund, Swedish conductor of the world famous men’s chorus *Orphei Drängar*, had the following to say about the use of vibrato:

In a choral setting, the amount of vibrato being used impacts the unification of the sound. As in individual performance, if the vibrato is too wide or obscures the pitch, it is unpleasant to hear. The same is true with a choral group. When the vibrato rates and pitch fluctuations of each individual are managed so that the tone and pitch are clear, the sound will be much more unified. This is achieved primarily through good technique and listening (Quist 2008:32).

The importance of conductors being well-informed about the singing voice and how to employ and deal with vibrato in the choral setting is yet again highlighted by the remarks of Carrington and Sund.

- **BLEND – DYNAMICS**

Blending difficulties increase considerably as the dynamic level increases. For most singers it is “difficult to perform tunefully and with a pleasant tone quality, particularly in the extremes of the vocal ranges” (Collins 1999:139). Collins asserts that it is easier to achieve good blend when working in soft passages. Although the author subscribes to achieving good choral blend, the above claim by Collins could be misunderstood, and result in choirs not being able to sing with a healthy forte sound. Dynamics should be approached with alertness to problems of blend if the choir cannot maintain their blend in extreme dynamic passages.

- **BLEND – TEXTURE OF THE MUSIC**

Unison singing is highly advisable for the improvement of blend. Wilhelm Ehmann gave credence to unison singing by saying, “the most basic and vital aspects of the choral art are to be learned from unison singing” (1968:152). A well-blended sound implies that the total group has a homogeneous blend. The conductor can, however, consider other options when singing polyphonic music where this kind of blend may not be suitable. Finn (1944:166) had the following suggestion:

Each vocal color must be readily discernible but only in its proper relationship to other prismatic tints. The choral lines must be distinct enough to assume the independence of rhythm, melody, and dynamics upon which a cappella polyphony is based. And yet they must not be so distinct as to seem disassociated from one another.

4.2.4 MUSICIANSHIP SKILLS FOCUSED ON INTONATION

Intonation can be described as the correctness of pitch, maintenance of tonality and the ability to sing in tune. “Pitch and timbre together define intonation” (Paine 1988:29). Paine continues that to sing in tune, therefore, means to unify the pitch – to bring all voices into similar frequencies and compatible timbres. In an article (*The Relationship of Blend and Intonation in the Choral Art*) dating from 1964, Mayer stated that “the experienced choral director knows that when a group of well blended voices sing precisely in tune, a physical phenomenon occurs that adds to the chord structure overtones or partials that enrich the general quality of the basic sound” (1964:109).

Howard (2006) handles the issue of choirs singing in just intonation versus tuning in equal temperament by stating that

- Singers do seem able to change their tuning, even subconsciously,
- Singers are not completely locked to equal temperament,
- Natural shift is towards just intonation.

Howard cautions choral conductors to be aware of intonation implications, for instance to present an equal tempered chord to start a piece is not as desirable as rather giving only one note. He continues by warning against practising with a piano or other keyboard tuned in equal temperament and the excessive use of such an instrument (Howard and Angus 2006).

Just intonation is a system of natural tuning which allows for efficiency in the choral rehearsal by exploiting the ears' ability to hear the natural overtones of the harmonic series. Armed with a small amount of knowledge and a few basic concepts, just intonation can allow for beautiful and efficient music making (Pierson 2011).

Choral singing poses intonation problems unique to the choral art. Other than in instrumental music, where one instrument or one section may be out of tune from time to time while the tonality remains stationary, the entire choir may go flat or sharp so that the tonality is altered. "Of all the challenges of the choral art, achieving good intonation is probably the most elusive" (Marvin 1991:27). Conductors and directors should have knowledge of and a basis for a proper understanding of the underlying causes for intonation problems "and then they can make their own musical judgement in terms of what to do about pitch drift when it arises" (Howard and Angus 2006).

The basis for fine intonation in choral singing rests to a high degree on the singers' tonal sensitivity and awareness. Collins affirms that conductors have a duty to teach choristers musicianship and proper vocal technique. "Mastering musicianship and vocal technique will solve many of the students' intonation problems" (Collins 1999:310). Authors (e.g. Brinson 1996, Collins 1999 and Hylton 1995) agree that choristers should be trained to hear fine differences in pitches, and should be able to reproduce these differences vocally. Every effort should be made to train choirs to sing with accurate intonation:

The responsibility for maintaining good pitch lies ultimately with the singers. No matter how good the conductor's ear is, if the singers do not know how to recreate the pitch standard required of them, they will not be able to establish a foundation upon which to achieve consistently good pitch (Marvin 1991:28).

Nesse (No date) asserts that, for a singer, intonation is "a complex interaction between such diverse elements as breath support, tension in the vocal mechanism, vowel color, ability to listen and blend, the weather, the quality of the air, and the singer's energy level" and that conductors have to teach their choristers how to sing with care and with a suitable vocal technique. The author agrees with the statement by Crowther (2003:80) that "it is axiomatic

that good intonation goes hand in hand with good voice production”. Lamb (2008a:1) asserts that

there are a number of factors to which poor intonation is attributed including: climate, tessitura of a part or parts, repeated notes, vocal fatigue, room acoustics (affecting one’s ability to hear others), seating arrangement (both within the choir and within the sections themselves), part assignment, but the most likely causes are inattentive minds.

Finn (1944:71) was firmly opposed to careless singing, causing poor intonation:

Flattening or sharpening is the most repugnant slight offered to music. The fact that straying from pitch is always involuntary does not lessen objectively the indignity affront. Units that persist unconcernedly and smugly in offering the affront should be indicted for vandalism, and ostracized from the musical arena.

To follow Finn’s advice would leave most conductors without choirs to work with. However, it is imperative for conductors to be equipped with the necessary knowledge to deal with intonation problems.

Conductors too often use the piano as a rehearsal tool. Per-Gunnar Alldahl (2008) warns against this by saying that the piano’s tuning can influence the choir’s intonation in a way that is not always desirable. “Use the piano effectively but not unnecessarily – never replacing the choir members’ own sense of hearing. Think about the purpose of playing” (2008:6). In addition to Alldahl’s warning Walker (2010:4) states that

there is no research to date that determines the range of what musicians perceive as acceptable intonation. Generally, the accepted standard for intonation is based on intervals in equal temperament. This is not surprising since the pitches in the equal-tempered system are used to build keyboard instruments such as piano and organ, as well as wind and brass instruments.

The topic of intonation can result in a lengthy and unstructured discussion, and therefore the author decided upon the following categorisation of factors affecting intonation after consulting quite a number of sources (Brinson 1996, Collins 1999, Doscher 1991, Hylton 1995 and Marvin 1991):

- technical factors
- factors found in musical compositions, and
- external factors not directly related to either the music or technical skill of the singers.

4.2.4.1 TECHNICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION

Proficiency in the mastering of vocal technique may greatly affect intonation. The following factors pertaining to the mastering of vocal technique will briefly be discussed:

- Sound production
- Voice classification
- Diction
- Precision.

• TECHNICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – SOUND PRODUCTION

A well supported, freely-produced tone is essential for accurate intonation. Poor breath management is one of the main causes for going flat. “Correct posture and alert bodily attitudes are essential to properly supported tones” (Garretson 1986:141). Tension is one of the main reasons for bad intonation, and singers should be made aware of the relaxation of the vocal mechanism. There are different reasons for causing tension, like singers’ frantic efforts to sing accurately, or singers who are vocally tired.

• TECHNICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – VOICE CLASSIFICATION

“Voices are classified based on four factors: range, quality, register changes (‘lifts’), and tessitura” (Thornton 2004:153). It is imperative that choral conductors are equipped with sufficient knowledge pertaining to the four factors Thornton (2004:153) refers to in order to correctly classify a voice. A voice that has been classified incorrectly, or one that has mutated in some way since it was last classified, may create serious problems of production and intonation. A typical situation is to assign a woman’s voice that can sing in the soprano range to the soprano group. Such a voice might not be a real soprano; a factor that can make her an alto rather than a soprano is the voice’s tessitura. Not only will the correct classification diminish the chances for intonation problems caused by wrong placement of voices but it will also enhance “the sound of the chorus and protects singers from potential vocal damage that can be caused by incorrect classification” (Thornton 2004:153).

• TECHNICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – DICTION

Diction involves the precision and clarity of pronunciation, enunciation and articulation in speech or singing. The conductor needs to be well-versed in vowel formation, functions of

consonants and the context of the language which is being sung. Kurt Thomas states in his book *The Choral Conductor* that “another reason for intonation problems may be a dark vowel sound. Brightening up this sound will often suddenly improve the intonation” (1971:141). Vowel colour should be accurate and resonant at all times to contribute to impeccable intonation. Exaggeration in the articulation of consonants will bring about an excessive amount of tension that can either lead to sharpening or flattening of the tone. Quist (2008:19) quotes Eric Ericson (former conductor of the Swedish Radio Choir) who said “the type of consonants produced in a language modifies the sound by the position of the tongue, and in that sense one could talk of some languages being more healthy, so to say, for tone production” .

- **TECHNICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – PRECISION**

“Precision in choral singing requires that every singer perform correct acts at exactly the same moment as they are performed by the rest of the choir. The degree of precision a choir has attained is most evident in its attacks and releases” (Crowther 2003:58). Attacking a note below pitch and sliding or scooping up to the proper pitch can cause unfavourable intonation problems. Careful observance of precise attacks on voiced consonants and vowels is a requirement for precise intonation. Unvoiced consonants might lead to hindering the vocal path, thereby causing tension that can lead to intonation problems.

4.2.4.2 MUSICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION

Garretson (1986:140) asserts that “accurate pitch and intonation are basically dependent on (a) correctly produced tones, properly supported by the breath, and (b) the degree of tonal awareness that each individual singer possesses”. When analysing a musical score, melodic, harmonic and expressive considerations may arise that, if not treated, may result in intonation inaccuracies. Ehret (1959: 17-22) deals in detail with musical factors affecting intonation. The minimum amount of information for the use in proposed curricula for the training of undergraduate choral conducting students is represented here:

- Melodic considerations
- Harmonic considerations
- Expressive considerations
- Emotional considerations.

- **MUSICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – MELODIC CONSIDERATIONS**

Conductors have to be taught that through experience in score analysis, problematic melodies can be identified – problematic in the sense that certain factors in the melody might cause intonation inaccuracies. Collins (1999:311-315) discusses several tonal factors that can result in poor intonation.

Particular attention has to be given to repeated and sustained notes. The problem with sustained notes is similar to that of repeated notes. There is a tendency for the pitch to become lower during the sustaining of notes. The common solution is simply to make singers aware of the problem and to tell them to think the repeated notes upwards. The tone should be raised by conscious placement.

In a melody the pitch direction also influences the intonation. As a rule, singers tend to sing ascending intervals too small and descending intervals too large. A solution is to aid singers to think larger intervals when going up, and smaller intervals when going down.

Scale passages that ascend tend to flatten because the intervals are too small and descending scales flatten because intervals are too large. The bigger problem, however, is the descending scales that tend to become flat. Such passages can be treated by the singers as points of support, and should be sung specifically high.

Choral intonation is affected by certain troublesome intervals. Amateur singers often do not recognise the half tone as an interval and ought to be carefully taught to differentiate between half tones and whole tones. Frequently, ascending whole tones are not spaced widely enough and descending half tones are spaced too wide. Particular attention should be given to descending half tones in scale patterns. Singers should also be taught to differentiate between the major and minor qualities of thirds. It is also necessary to be aware of falling fourths and fifths that tend to flatten. Melodic patterns with intricate chromatics should be avoided until singers have gained experience in diatonic music.

- **MUSICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – HARMONIC CONSIDERATIONS**

In an article about the American composer Eric Whitacre's composition *Lux Aurumque* entitled *Physical properties of sound itself*, James Jordan is quoted as saying that "choral intonation is a function of the relationship of the tone sung to the harmonic context at that mo-

ment” and that “singing in tune is the result of complex aural/acoustic relationships between and among tones” (Chamber Music Today 2009).

When referring to harmonic considerations it is important to mention that harmony addresses mainly the vertical intonation issues, i.e. the harmonic series and actual harmony of the composition. Crowther (2003:333) points out that “choirs have two major intonation challenges: general tuning and specific tuning. General tuning is the maintaining of the correct pitch level throughout a piece. Specific tuning is the adjusting of chords and intervals to proper pitches within the piece”. The tuning of relationships between notes and voice parts is the first step toward improving the specific tuning, for instance tuning unisons and octaves within the harmonic context. Thirds of chords should be treated according to their employment in choral context. Ehmann had this to say on the subject: “Major thirds are easily sung too low. Particularly when the major third functions as the leading tone in an upward direction it must be sung high enough” (1968:67). In addition to tuning thirds, it is a good idea to spend time tuning chords. Choristers have to be taught their function within a specific chord. Basses and sopranos, for instance, singing the tonic in the chords, have to recognize the relationship between the two tonics. The tenors often sing the fifth too strongly, and have to be taught to be aware that the fifth has to be subordinate to the rest of the notes in the chord. The third ought to be tuned in relationship to the root and the fifth in the chord. Conductors need to have the necessary knowledge and coping skills to deal with the horizontal and vertical intonation issues.

- **MUSICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – EXPRESSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

Tempo – Fast tempos tend to sharpen pitch, and slow tempos tend to flatten pitch. Slow tempos and flattening are frequently partners. Choristers should be made aware of this and need to be taught to depend on their breath control and rhythmic instinct to avoid going flat. “Slow tempi will tend to cause flattening particularly when the group is immature and lacking in vocal control” (Ehret 1959:19).

Dynamics – A great problem is flattening during soft singing. A well-supported vocal production should be advocated in soft singing, otherwise the pitch will most often sag. “Soft passages are sung flat because most singers do not intensify and vitalize their soft tones enough” (Ehret 1959:19).

- **MUSICAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION – EMOTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to James Jordan (1999:33) emotional vulnerability “allows another to experience a spirit and to engage a living soul through music. A more important component of an artistic relationship simply does not exist”. Jordan’s words demonstrate that choral singing is a highly emotional activity that cannot be disconnected from human experiences like fatigue, frustration and boredom (Collins 1999:311). A choir may grow tired of working on a particular composition. Sometimes there is not enough musical worth in a piece to warrant a choir’s working on it for an extended period. According to Marvin (1991:28), emotional considerations are factors over which conductors have little control. However, conductors ought to take great care of the emotional climate in a rehearsal and plan carefully when to rehearse specific works.

4.2.4.3 EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING INTONATION

Intonation may be affected by influences which do not involve either the singers or the music being performed. Ehret (1959:19), for example, points out the influence too much heat and poor ventilation can have on a choir’s intonation. Weather (temperature and humidity) can have an influence on intonation. On hot days, music tends to lose pitch. Conductors have to take weather into consideration when experiencing intonation problems. Poor ventilation in the rehearsal or concert space creates a stifling atmosphere that can have a detrimental effect on intonation.

Daugherty (2003:49) makes mention of venue acoustics that could exacerbate intonation problems. Acoustics can affect the intonation of singers. It is better to rehearse in a room that does not have a long reverberation time. If singers become accustomed to a “live” room in rehearsals, they are apt to have difficulty with intonation when they are required to perform in a less “lively” space. When performing in a room with a short reverberation time, choristers have to be encouraged to ensure that their vocal production is especially resonant and well supported.

Daugherty (2003:48) also refers to empirical investigations laying claims to how the placement of singers and singer formations influences intonation. The placement of singers should be such that they can all see the conductor, hear the accompanying instrument(s), hear each other and be seen by the conductor. The singers should be able to hear each other; especially the lower voices should be heard by others, since a failure to hear the root

of the harmony, which is generally in the bass, results in choirs having unstable intonation. Readers are referred to the discussion on choir spacing and formations in paragraph 4.2.3.1.

4.2.5 MUSICIANSHIP SKILLS FOCUSED ON PRECISION

Precision: The solo singer can feel free to determine for him/herself, or even improvise on the spot, where to breathe, where to place final consonants, and even what to wear. The ensemble singer must coordinate these decisions, in advance, with the others in the group (Jacobson 2013).

Precision can be seen as exactness in the treatment of accuracy in attacks, releases, changes of pitch, and matters of diction in choral music as it proceeds in time. Since time is an important aspect of precision, rhythmic treatment and precision are inseparably linked. It is the choral conductor's responsibility to ensure that rhythm and melody, as indicated by the composer, are adhered to.

Precise choral performance is virtually impossible to achieve unless choir members have a healthy loyalty towards the group, and a sense of unity within the chorus. There should be a psychological unity within the group. Technique is combined with psychological responsiveness in the sense that "precision of attack, simultaneity of release, uniformity in consonantal enunciation results from a unanimity of physical reaction among all the members of the group" (Howerton 1957:74). Conductors should, however, not lose sight of the individuality of choir members in striving for feelings of loyalty and unity.

Attacks and releases of phrases are part of the entire interpretation of a composition and help maintain the mood, the style and the dynamic level of the composition. Technique of conducting is of utmost importance for clean attacks and releases. It is the conductor's task to prepare his/her singers for attacks and releases and indicate with clarity the precise moment of execution. Singers should also be taught to breathe correctly and together. The importance of inhalation before an attack is great, and conductors should spend rehearsal time teaching choristers to breathe together and think of the taking of a breath and the attack as a single action. Diction, in the sense of the treatment of consonant sounds, can have an intense influence on the precision of a choir. "Correct articulation of consonants will help rhythmic accuracy and precision" (Pfautsch 1971:79).

It is of prime importance that a conductor builds a feeling of rhythmic security in singers. Singers should be sensitised to rhythmic accuracy and awareness; they should be guided to develop a sense of "inner pulse". Without an inner rhythmic drive, music becomes weighty, lacking a sense of vitality and organic flow. Collins (1999:322) points out "the importance of

rhythmic awareness and the effect of the pulse on the choral performance”. Choir members should feel the flow of eighth notes and sixteenth notes together; even in slow, legato singing this will help promote precision.

Each student should internalize not only the presence and influence of the beat (a quarter note in common time) but also the pulse (subdivision of that beat, the eighth note in common time) and its subdivision (the sixteenth note) (Collins 1999:232).

4.3 EFFICIENT SKILLS IN SCORE STUDY

It has been asserted that the final product of score study is to have become so intimate with and knowledgeable about a work that the conductor not only knows it better than any of the performers, maybe even better than the composer (Collins 2013).

Jordan (1996:163) quotes Julius Herford saying that “some of our greatest and deepest enjoyment as conductors can come not in performance, but the quiet and intense process of learning during which the simple but profound truths of the score reveal themselves”. The author’s own experiences resonate with Herford’s words and it is recognised that conductors have to have the ability to understand the symbols, and their meanings in a printed score – “a conductor’s ability to perceive and interpret these symbols in a language that other musicians can understand is a vital link to their success with an ensemble” (Wine 1994:1).

Score study is the foundation upon which much choral performance is based, and the primary means by which the conductor develops musical expectations for the rehearsal – “its importance is rooted in the inter-relationship of the choral music educator, the composer, the choral singers, and the audience” (Hylton 1995:149). The performance “is a re-creative art, it is incumbent on the performer to come to grips with the driving force behind the creative act” (Paine 1988:49). The conductor has to communicate, and the content of that communication is drawn from a thorough analysis of the score.

The art of communication is one means by which a concerned conductor will make his contribution to the sound of music at the present time. If this sound is to be honest and satisfying and splendid, it will be because he is willing to teach himself much of the technical, the historical, the appreciative and the aesthetic principles which are embodied in every musical score (Fowler 1987:117).

It is essential to teach the student conductor the necessary skills of score preparation. In acquiring knowledge of the score, the conductor will be prepared for the rehearsal and will possess the perspective and security upon which to build his or her vision of the composer’s

intentions. Not only will suitable score preparation help the conductor to understand the music but it will also ensure effective use of valuable rehearsal time as “lack of conductor score preparation is probably the leading contributor to inefficient use of rehearsal time” (Collins 1999:368).

Conductors have the very important responsibility to realize that the performance of the music and the interpretation of the score take place when spending time alone with the score. “We must become comfortable with the myriad details of score analysis so there is, in reality, no ‘analytical thinking’ going on as the music is being made by the singers” (Jordan 2007:82). Conductors too often neglect this aspect of conducting and do not realize that they actually “study scores for a living. Actual conducting is just something you get to do for fun as a reward for the studying” (Woods 2006). Woods continues, stressing the importance of score studying by saying “conductors question scores for a living. Actual conducting is something you just have to do to share the answers you’ve found to the questions you’ve asked”.

Many textbooks on choral conducting (Brinson 1996, Busch 1984, Collins 1999, Decker and Herford 1988, Dickau and Petker 1990, Ehmann 1968, Ehret 1959, Fowler 1987, Garretson 1986, Gjuvela and Janev 1984, Green 1997, Hendrikse 1991, Hylton 1995, Lamb 1979, Marple 1972, Paine 1988, Robinson and Winold 1976) contain a section on score study. However, the approaches to score study differ considerably. Decker and Herford (1988:69) suggested that score study begins by researching pertinent information concerning the composer’s life and the events surrounding the origin of the composition. In a study done by Yarbrough (2002) the iconic American conductor Robert Shaw’s teaching artistry was analysed in terms of Sequencing Musical Tasks. Yarbrough established the following pattern valuable to all conductors for observation: “Shaw outlined the sequence of delivery of the musical elements of the score: first, pitch and rhythm; next, text; finally, dynamics. Only then would he be ready to develop the ability of the ensemble to accurately and sensitively perform the elements of pitch, rhythm, text, and dynamics” (Yarbrough 2002:4).

Most authors recognise the need to examine the score theoretically in order to discover the relationships between large structural features and smaller components. As a result of historical research and score analysis, the conductor forms a personalised interpretation of the work, which leads to the selection of gestures that will best communicate the interpretation to the ensemble and the listener.

The text provides valuable clues to understanding how conductors should interpret and execute it. The source of the text, the mood or meaning it conveys, the presence of word painting and any potential diction and inflection problems are amongst the textual factors to be examined when the conductor starts the process of score analysis (Brinson 1996:114). Corporon (2009:95) stresses the connection of the process of score study to the realisation of conducting gestures: “From the beginning of the study of conducting, students should be taught that score preparation is both an aural and a kinaesthetic exercise”.

Paine (1988:20) advises that score study has structural analysis at its core, “the study of the relationship of the total design to the details that order its architecture”. It is therefore important that the conductor obtains an understanding of the interaction of the basic musical elements. After studying a number of sources (Brinson 1996, Busch 1984, Collins 1999, Decker and Herford 1988, Dickau and Petker 1990, Fowler 1987, Garretson 1986, Hylton 1995, Lamb 1979, Paine 1988 and Wine 1994) it is concluded that the score should be examined in terms of the composer’s treatment of the musical elements – “harmony, melody, rhythm, and texture (and instrumentation) form the building blocks of structure. Duration, pitch, timbre, and intensity articulate the sound-continuum of the form and design” (Paine 1988:20).

The musical elements that the author put forward to be examined are:

- rhythm and duration – a specific rhythm in a specific pattern in time, the length of time a musical sound lasts,
- melody – a musical line, a combination of pitch and rhythm or a series of single tones which add up to a recognizable whole,
- harmony – the way chords are constructed and how they follow each other,
- form – the organization of musical elements in time,
- tempo – the speed of the beat,
- dynamics – loud or soft; the degrees of loudness or softness,
- timbre – character or quality of a musical sound or voice as distinct from its pitch and intensity,
- text – the original words which the composer set to music (Jacobson: 2007).

These elements may or may not be present in every kind of music but are, however, found in most choral music performed in the Western world.

4.3.1 SCORE STUDY – RHYTHM AND DURATION

Music can be described as an art of sound in time. “Rhythm, in music, the placement of sounds in time. In its most general sense rhythm (Greek *rhythmos*, derived from *rhein*, “to

flow”) is an ordered alternation of contrasting elements” (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013). A composition may be of any length, but time is an essential factor in its realisation. Music moves moment by moment through time. Time may be treated in a variety of ways as composers organise sounds into music. In most music genres found in the western canon, time is treated in terms of beat, metre and rhythm as opposed to contemporary music, in which composers are highly individualistic, creative and daring in their treatment of time within the established framework. Conductors have to recognise and grasp the role of beat, metre and rhythm in the composition. Lamb (2008b) advises the conductor to pay attention to the following points regarding rhythm in choral works: “rhythmic structure, sequences, types, meter changes and identifying places in the music where the chorus will have difficulty with the rhythm”. Other factors to consider in the treatment of time are syncopation (shifting accents), multi-rhythms (changing metre signatures), polyrhythms (combining different rhythms), diminution (shortening rhythmic duration) and augmentation (lengthening rhythmic duration).

4.3.2 SCORE STUDY – MELODY

Melody is a horizontal element of music and is “in the broadest sense, a succession of musical tones” (Apel 1986:517). Since each tone has a fixed duration, melody cannot be separated from rhythm. Each melody has motion (referring to the pitch quality, high or low, of a melody) and rhythm (referring to the time quality, long or short). A melody may be based upon a tonal centre or it may be atonal. Conductors have to acknowledge the phrase structure of melodies. Melodies are usually composed in phrases which, in choral music, should complement the phrases of the text. Holvik and Neilson (2013) recommends singing melodies and paying close attention to the melodies of a composition since “melody gives face form to music, depth and perspective to its structure, intelligent meaning to its rhythms, and plausibility to its emotional message”.

4.3.3 SCORE STUDY – HARMONY

Harmony is the “chordal (or vertical) structure of a music composition” (Apel 1986:371). Harmony is the term applied to the simultaneous sounding of two or more tones. Where composers combine melodies to achieve such a result, the texture may be called polyphonic. If a composer supports a melody with chordal harmony, the texture is said to be homophonic. A composer may alternate or combine these two textures. The reason for such a combination might be of textual origin, and it is important for the conductor to understand the use of harmony in close relationship to the text.

4.3.4 SCORE STUDY – FORM

The word form, when related to music, has at least two different associations. Form in music can be found as well as form(s) of music. Apel (1986:327) explains the difference as such:

If we conceive of sound as a somewhat amorphous substance comparable to the flesh and cells of a body, then form might be said to be the support that holds and shapes this substance. This support is of two kinds, one forming a highly complicated inner structure comparable to the bones and muscles (form in a composition), the other determining its outer contour, somewhat like the skin (form of a composition).

Form in music involves the treatment of time, melody and harmony in ways that are identical, similar or different. This is of particular significance to the conductor because it influences the interpretation of the composition.

4.3.5 SCORE STUDY – TEMPO

Tempo refers to the rate or speed of a composition or section thereof. The question of finding a correct tempo for performance of a composition points to subjective interpretation as an important factor in musical expression. Jordan quoted Erich Leinsdorf in his book *Evoking Sound*: “no matter how diverse their views on every topic, most musicians agree that finding the right tempo is at least half the interpretation. Wagner went further, asserting that the right tempo was the interpretation” (1996:162).

Conductors need to strive towards objective analysis of the expressive value of a composition, as a composition may take on a variety of characters when performed at different tempos.

4.3.6 SCORE STUDY – DYNAMICS

The term dynamics refers to gradations of loudness in music. The expressive effect of a composition can be significantly altered if the dynamic levels at which it is performed are not in line with textual and stylistic trends.

The common definition of dynamics as amplitude of sound is remarkably monodimensional compared to the terms in which musicians understand (and perform) dynamics in practice. For both voices and instruments, volume interacts with pitch register and tone colour such that the ‘same’ dynamic level may have very different expressive effects in different contexts (Garnett 2009:144).

Crescendo and diminuendo are amongst the terms that are important expressive effects in many compositions and conductors have to apply them discerningly. “All musical aspects relating to the relative loudness (or quietness) of music fall under the general element of Dynamics” (Jacobson 2007).

4.3.7 SCORE STUDY – TIMBRE

The terms timbre and tone colour may be used interchangeably with reference to the unique quality of an instrument or voice. By the manner in which a composer chooses certain tone colours, he/she creates the individual sound that a given composition represents. A conductor has to recognise and respect the particular musical impression that the composer endeavoured to communicate with the specific composition.

4.3.8 SCORE STUDY – TEXT

The analysis of a score is concerned with dissecting the music and dealing with the intricacies of the inter-relationships of the musical elements of the composition. From logical analysis of the score, further insight into the likely musical and vocal problems in rehearsal will become apparent. In vocal music, all these elements interact with text. Marvin agrees, “the degree to which text inspires or affects the elements of music will be a particularly important question to be addressed” (Paine 1988:20). Jordan (1996:162) shed some valuable light on the importance of the conductor’s understanding the meaning of the text by quoting Robert Shaw on this topic:

Although one can agree that a composer begins with a text, and that it is his inspiration to a certain respect, it is the responsibility of the performer, it seems to me, to satisfy as nearly as he can the composer’s language and then seek what the inside of the composer sought, how he might have felt about the text rather than arriving at a textual, philosophical relationship with the text that is one’s own personal interpretation and forcing that upon the composer. I can remember once that somebody said that Bach was the greatest witness to the crucifixion of Jesus; not that he happened to be present, but because he was a witness to the meaning of the crucifixion.

Not only must the conductor make him/herself aware of the vocal-technical demands of the score, but must also take care of the pronunciation and diction issues that the score poses.

The ultimate truth of a composition is to be discovered through the process of score study. It has to be the conductor’s goal to obtain insight into the score, for “the conductor will be prepared for the rehearsal and will possess the perspective and security upon which to base his

vision of the composer's intentions" (Paine 1988:20). Grimo (2013) offers a checklist to the conductor that encompasses all aspects discussed:

- I Historical and analytical Information
 - a. Composer
 - b. Composition
 - c. Historical
 - d. Stylistic and interpretive aspects of the piece
 - e. Analytical notes
 - 1. Melody
 - 2. Harmony
 - 3. Rhythm
 - 4. Orchestration
 - 5. Dynamics
 - 6. Texture
 - 7. Form
- II Knowledge of Musical Terms
- III Knowledge of compositional Concepts used in the piece.

4.4 KNOWLEDGE ABOUT AUDITIONS

Although a choir conductor does not always have the luxury of auditioning prospective choristers (some choirs being non-audition based), auditions are frequently an important pre-rehearsal activity which should not be neglected, and yet sadly are, frequently due to naivety regarding the matter. The naivety flows from a lack of proper choral conducting education. The following is an attempt to deliver testimony as to the reasons for student conductors to be educated in the audition process.

Often a conductor feels after a concert that there should have been more time to rehearse. One of the reasons for the choir not progressing as fast as it should have, could be the material that the conductor has to work with. There are a number of reasons for auditioning candidates, and the selection of the best singers to obtain optimum results might be one of these reasons. Collins (1999:344) condenses the reasons for auditioning by stating that an audition:

helps (1) to determine for which choir they are best suited, (2) to choose the best singers for the organization, (3) to determine the singers' voice types, (4) to control the quantity of singers in each section of the choirs, (5) to get better acquainted with the singers, and (6) to isolate musical strengths and weaknesses.

The success of the ensemble lies in the audition process. The sound of a choir is dependent upon the careful selection of the singers. Choir conductors have to take time to audition and classify their prospective choir members.

Conductors should know how to conduct auditions according to the type of choir. Each choir dictates its requirements and the audition's thoroughness. The components of an audition will also vary from choir to choir. Hylton (1995:37) proposes a basic list that each audition has to contain: range test, test of tonal memory, test of sight-reading ability, the candidate's tonal stability (intonation) and the assignment to a voice part.

4.5 SUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT INTO CHORAL LITERATURE

A choral conductor is supposed to have sufficient "knowledge of the choral repertoire in order to be able to choose music that is appropriate for the particular choral group" (Durrant 2003: 120). Present-day conductors have the great fortune of being able to select from a virtually limitless repertoire of music from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century. The major genres – mass, motet, cantata, oratorio, passion, magnificat, requiem, chorale, anthem, chanson, lied, madrigal and folksong – are contained in anthologies, collections and collected works in music libraries, including at many colleges and universities. In addition to what can be found on the Internet, many publishers make available an enormous quantity of significant choral literature, and most offer a wide range of repertoire. One of the most important obligations of conductors/educators is to provide opportunities for choristers/students to engage their minds with the very best culture that human beings have been able to develop. "When we challenge our students to learn music of excellence, we give them the opportunity to gain meaningful insights into themselves as developing musicians, as well as a meaningful understanding of music as an expressive art" (Persellin 2000:17).

It is an area of concern for the researcher when adjudicating competitions and festivals to observe the quality of repertoire chosen by conductors. It is for this reason that he feels that student conductors have to be exposed to a variety of literature and be taught the basic principles of selecting repertoire of quality. It is also necessary to implant in student conductors a feeling of responsibility in being answerable for the development of choral singing as a true art form. If this responsibility is to be taken seriously, the conductor should have the discipline and the vision to focus on literature that is worth studying. Conductors have only a short time during which a chorister's commitment to excellence might be nurtured. In order to do that, only "excellent material ought to be worked with, for it is in the pursuit of achieving perfection that conductors deal with the necessary constancy of quality and goodness" (van der Sandt 1999). The author does, however, recognise the fact that choirs are at times commissioned/required to perform certain repertoire that might fall outside the boundaries of what might be perceived as repertoire of quality.

It is advocated that conductors as instruments in service of choral music cannot bow to public taste, commercialism and some sort of popular public relations approach to attracting choristers, based upon shallowness of subject matter. Music of distinction, performed well, is an experience of lasting significance. Quist states (2008:25):

The repertoire selected for the ensemble is paramount to their success. Pieces that encourage good vocalism should contain appropriate ranges for each voice part, a variety of vocal styles, and works that allow the singers to explore dynamic range and harmonic complexity.

Conductors have a great responsibility to choose quality repertoire, for the quality of the repertoire defines not only the quality of the programmes, but the repertoire selection “will profoundly affect the attitudes and aesthetic feelings of the singers and audiences” (Boudreaux 1998:35). The importance of repertoire selection is imperative in accomplishing the mission of a choir, in developing the artistry of the ensemble, in deepening the choristers’ skills and involvement, in capturing and fulfilling audience interest and in cultivating favourable peer judgement.

Cooper (2004:87) is of the opinion that “good music has the qualities of excellent construction and genuine expressiveness. In addition, good music may have stood the test of time, but much new music will also possess these qualities”. James Neilson (1960) in his article *What is Quality in Music* cited the qualities of good music as:

- rhythmic vitality
- genuine originality
- melody
- harmony
- craftsmanship
- a sense of values
- emotion justified
- quality as defined by personal taste
- having withstood the test of time.

Cooper (2004:88) indicates the danger of using “only a subjective process” to choose music for your ensemble that “may lead you nowhere”. She suggests using Neilson’s criteria for good music as a guideline (2004:88).

Ormandy (1966), as quoted by Bellinger close on 40 years later (2002), offered five criteria for good music, the first of which corresponds with the last of Neilson’s list:

- Good music must withstand the test of time.
- The genius of the composer shines through the music.
- The opinion of other musicians and critics will assist in identifying good music.

- A musician's personal taste must come into play.
- A measure of the "adorable bad music ... represents not only the negative test for the great music; but also maintains the necessary equilibrium for a healthy musical life."

Bellinger's 2002 dissertation *A model for evaluation of selected compositions for unaccompanied solo trumpet according to criteria of serious artistic merit* offers a valuable formulation of criteria of what good/quality music is and can be applied to all musical genres and instruments, not only to the trumpet. However, the criteria of both Neilson and Ormandy as used by Bellinger (2002:18), although valuable in assisting conductors in their choice of music for their ensembles, "should not lead evaluator, performer or consumer away from the implicit nature each piece represents. In the end, the music is sound organized to be expressive".

Music is best chosen after development goals for a choir have been determined and performance requirements established. The researcher agrees with Lamb (1979:95) that "the selection of repertoire is probably the most demanding and time consuming task facing a choral director." Boudreaux (1998:36) adds that "effective programming and repertoire selection requires patience, sensitivity, a willingness to maintain enough humility to have an accurate sense of one's own place in the community, and a good sense of humor". In a sense, repertoire selection is a juggling act in which several ingredients for success are balanced. Collins (1999:359) urges conductors to choose literature in which the needs of the singers' voices are considered and the best vocal attributes of each member are presented to the listener.

4.6 DISCIPLINED AND WELL-ORDERED REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE SKILLS

The rehearsal is as important as the performance and ideally should not be treated just as the preparation for a concert performance, but as a musical and social event in its own right with its own integrity (Durrant 2003: 107)

The choral conductor is primarily responsible for structuring rehearsals that lead singers to greater performance proficiency and deeper understanding of music. "Without the knowledge and know-how of preparing for and running a rehearsal, the physical part of conducting is at best based on a foundation of quicksand" (Topilow 2013:1). The effective conductor always works towards a goal. The student conductor has to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge for determining rehearsal goals. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the performance is the motivating goal for the rehearsal, but it is not the goal of the process. Prior to the performance, rehearsal takes place. Prior to the rehearsal, the conductor has to choose the literature, the score should be studied and subsequently questions concerning style and performance practices have to be addressed. Through stylistic and

structural analysis, the conductor develops a mental/aural image that prepares him/her for the rehearsals. In the process of rehearsing, the conductor uses his/her ears, conducting technique and communication skills. Rehearsal skills of the conductor lead the choir toward a unified musical concept of the composition.

One of the most difficult problems for choral directors is the effective use of rehearsal time, specifically determining the proportion of time that should be spent in talking about music, and in actual singing. Conductors have the responsibility to teach not only singing skills, but also to develop a basic understanding of the structure and expressive content of the music. According to Watkins (1986:2), “the goal of choral conductors should include not only improving singing skills but also shaping the total range of behaviours necessary for realising the expressive content in vocal music“. Conductors should therefore discerningly spend time talking about music, and work towards fulfilling a deeper understanding of the music “primarily through the actual making of sounds, to perceive and react to the expressiveness of the tonal events being brought to life” (Reimer 1970:136).

Choral conductors should maximise the effectiveness of verbal input, and accept the challenge that requires appropriate language to be used by music educators to help singers “become progressively more sensitive to the elements of music which contain the conditions which can yield insights into human feeling” (Reimer 1970:40). All choirs need to learn and perform correct notes and rhythms, use good breath support, strive for good diction, and use correct vocal technique to produce a beautiful sound. However, emphasis on perfecting the technical aspects of the music is simply not enough. “To be truly successful, choral ensembles must be led beyond the technical aspects to experience the aesthetic qualities, for this is when music can make the most lasting and pervasive impact” (Brinson 1996:172). It is in the rehearsal that the chorister should be led towards an aesthetic understanding of the music making process. However, the conductor has to be careful not to talk too much during a rehearsal, as discussed in Chapter 2.7 (The Conductor as Communicator). When a conductor does have to talk, Parker (1990:4) quotes Hicks’s suggestion to vary the tone of voice and utilise “four types of rehearsal language for better communication: evaluating, informing, correcting, and perfecting”. In using time effectively Petty (1987:63) determined skills essential for a well-paced rehearsal:

- variety of facial expressions,
- high frequency of eye contact,
- humor,
- positive reinforcement,
- efficient time management,

- precise verbal instructions,
- gestures instead of words,
- satisfaction at the outset,
- piano skills,
- move toward and away from students,
- vocal pedagogy, within the rehearsal, and
- instruct verbally while group sings.

The conductor's behaviours during a rehearsal are cited by Watkins (1986:7) as being in three categories:

1. Verbal (singing, directions, academic and social task presentations, approval and disapproval comments);
2. Non-verbal (eye contact, conducting, facial expressions);
3. Temporal (duration of behaviours, rehearsal pace).

Many authors (Brinson 1996, Busch 1984, Collins 1999, Decker and Herford 1988, Dickau and Petker 1990, Fowler 1987, Garretson 1986, Hylton 1995, Lamb 1979, Paine 1988 and Wine 1994) who write about rehearsal procedures recognise the need for effective and stimulating rehearsal techniques that enable choral ensembles to achieve the objective of accurate and expressive performances. Conductors should be taught how to plan the rehearsal and how their own contribution can be made as effective as possible. Parker (1990:18) observed some characteristic rehearsal techniques common to effective conductors. These techniques included:

- The use of descriptive language;
- strict adherence to the rehearsal schedule;
- a positive, encouraging approach when working with the ensemble;
- a serious attitude towards the music and rehearsal; and
- excellent score and rehearsal preparation.

The author's view coincides with Parker's observations and he is in agreement with Collins's (1999:343) statement: "time is success", because effective use of time results in more productive rehearsals and better performances. All of the above cannot be fully accomplished if the conductor neglects the principles of preparing the score for a rehearsal, whereas if the score is well prepared and internalised, he or she is free to focus on employing a full spectrum of rehearsal technique skills. Jordan rightly states that "while it is important for the conductor to focus on the *what*, *why*, and *how* of rehearsing, it is even more important while conducting (rehearsing) to develop the skill of total listening without concurrent analysis" (Jordan 1996:270).

4.7 THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE SUCCESSFULLY

“A musical imagination, passion, and great communication skills (both verbal and physical!) are necessary for conductors” (Weiss and Kahn 2004:192). Knowledge of choral conducting and conducting skills seems to form the essence of a conductor. But the ability to transfer the acquired knowledge through effective communication is also very important and it is this communication skill that is sometimes neglected in training courses. What follows is an attempt to convince the reader that communication is a teachable attribute. A conductor’s effectiveness and success rate will partly be influenced by his/her communication skills and so communication is an essential part of any choral conducting curriculum.

The sounds of his chorus will be a commentary on his ability to transfer his knowledge, to enlarge and refine his pedagogical techniques, to arouse and maintain dedication to vocal and musical disciplines on the part of the singers, to shape the syllabic and melodic nuances, to expand the knowledge and technical proficiency of the chorus, and to lead the group to artistic performance (Decker and Herford 1988:91).

Howard Swan has stated that “the successful teacher of music must be educator, planner, interpreter, listener and communicator” (Fowler 1987:115). Durrant (1994:59) refers to “human compatible communication” in his attempt to determine attributes of an effective choral conductor. He argues that a conductor’s role is to dictate the music’s requirements to the performers in an uncompromising way. However, the author agrees that this might contribute to the image of conductors being mini-dictators. Durrant (1994) makes further reference to rehearsal atmospheres not contributing to positive music-making or developing aesthetic sensitivities.

The atmosphere that is present whenever the conductor interacts with his/her choir is supposed to enhance the effectiveness of the activity. The conductor’s behaviour is thus of prime importance in establishing this atmosphere. Parker (1990:25-26) reports on Flanders’s description of two types of conductor behaviour, integrative and dominating.

The integrative teacher accepts and supports the feelings and ideas of pupils; praises and encourages the students; and attempts to stimulate student participation by asking questions. In contrast, the dominating teacher lectures about his or her own ideas or knowledge; gives directions and orders to the students; criticizes student behavior and attempts to change behavior; and frequently justifies his or her own authority.

Green and Gallwey (1987:39) support the idea that integrative behaviour and sensitivity to received feedback is heightened by focusing more closely on feelings while engaged in a learning situation. The heightened sensitivity in turn motivates and quickens the learning

rate, performance goals are achieved and consequently the enjoyment is enhanced. The responsibility of a choral conductor is immeasurable:

as the leader of a communicative-educational experience, the choral conductor must be trained as a facilitator – one who is able to create and control a special kind of learning environment and evoke an emphatic response from the participants in the choral experience (Robinson and Winold 1976:44).

The importance of a conductor to produce a pleasurable environment for singers is heightened by Durrant (2003:20) in saying that

part of the communication skill of the conductor, particularly when dealing with the amateur and perhaps tentative singer, is then to provide an encouraging, positive and constructive atmosphere rather than a critical, negative and destructive one.

Watkins (1986:52) remarks on the lack of communication skills in the training of choral conductors. Communication is not solely dependent on verbal means, but the use of eyes, facial expression, gesture, movement and general body language can also contribute to the ways in which the sense of music is transmitted.

From the preceding discussion, it can be seen that the conductor has the responsibility to make it possible for singers to overcome their own obstacles by communicating a sense of appropriate feelings in the rehearsal situation. Choral music educators have to strive to improve choristers' musicianship, musical knowledge, vocal and social skills. It has to be a goal of conductors to be concerned with more than technically proficient performances, leading to meaningful learning experiences in singing. Motivated singers will always perform better; how to effectively motivate people to this end is also an important part of communication skills. According to Fucci Amato and Amato Neto (2008:21) "the motivation in the choir is configured as a process that can only reach its effectiveness" if a conductor applies a leadership style that makes use of the management skills of the people he is working with, thereby developing "a favorable human atmosphere to the collective artistic (re)creation".

Communication is a multi-sided phenomenon, and to motivate a group of people is one of the important by-products of successful communication. In a paper delivered by Fucci Amato and Amato Neto at the Production and Operations Management Society (POMS) World Conference 2008 entitled *The role of the choir conductor in motivating his group: conceptual revision, suggestions, and a perspective of music undergraduate students*, they listed the following as important factors for conductors to considerate in their communication with/motivation of their choirs:

- Value the knowledge and musical experiences of the choristers
- Hear the choristers' opinions
- Recognize the defects and qualities of each
- Choose in a democratic way a varied repertoire
- Stimulate the choristers' creativity
- Apply a system of punishments and compensations (Fucci Amato and Amato Neto 2008:17).

Choir conductors not only use printed scores or other representations like recordings of compositions, but are dependent on people with souls and feelings to reproduce what they conceive after a process of internalising the printed score or representation of the composition intended for performance. In this regard Fucci Amato and Amato Neto say that “to motivate someone it is necessary to cultivate the individual self-esteem, to integrate the person to its work group and to make the person feel important for the collective success” (2008:5). Fucci Amato and Amato Neto refer to three interpersonal needs of an individual: the need for “inclusion, control and affection”. The author agrees with these authors that conductors have to work towards meeting those needs of individuals so that the choristers' self-esteem can be built, thereby contributing to the success of the music making process.

It is the author's belief that the student choral conductor should be trained in communication skills, and that this has to be an important and sizeable component in choral training and conducting.

4.8 KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ACCOMPANIMENT

The accompanist works in collaboration with both conductor and singers. When synergy occurs between conductor and accompanist, extraordinary musical moments may be created with the choir. The relationship between accompanist and conductor is most unique. As with great soloists and their accompanists who completely understand the singer's body language, mood, expression, style of interpretation, and innuendo, a fine accompanist may greatly contribute to the educational and musical journey of the young artist (Tagg 2013:143).

In many instances a choir conductor has to rely a great deal on the input and cooperation of an accompanist. He or she should, therefore, in leading the music making process, be knowledgeable about the expectations and duties of an accompanist. The role of an accompanist may, however, differ from choir to choir, depending on the type of choir. To heighten the necessity of finding a suitable person for the job, the following essential qualities of a good accompanist, all original input from practising choral conductors, are listed as a result of a web discussion on the topic on Choralnet (2008):

- Flexibility.
- Listens for ensemble with the choir.

- Breathe, phrase, and play like a singer.
- Knowing when to come out and when to hold back.
- Feeling of fusion with the singers, conductor to become a part of the ensemble.
- Suppress own interpretation.
- Follow conductor's wishes.
- Knowledge of the scoring of the original accompaniment, if it is not for keyboard.
- Ability to reduce full instrumental accompaniment.
- Ability to transpose (within reason).
- Skills in foreign languages and in vocal coaching, if necessary.
- Knowing how to lead a sectional rehearsal.
- Experience playing organ and harpsichord well.
- Precise sight reading is first in importance.
- Patience and helpful attitude with choristers.
- An understanding of the vocal instrument.
- Dependability in prompt attendance.
- A good musician, not just a pianist.
- Be able to anticipate what the conductor will do.
- Listen to the choir while playing to understand why the conductor stopped.
- Listen to what's being sung – to adjust to changes in tempo, balance, acoustics, etc.
- Good taste knowledge of various styles.

On the website Piano Careers (2009), the necessities for a good choir accompanist are amongst other aspects: “technical competence on the keyboard instrument, knowledge of both the accompaniment and choral parts, should be alert at all times to choristers' needs, an ability to play all combinations of vocal parts together and accuracy in playing”. A good accompanist “needs a highly developed piano technique, similar to that of a soloist, in order to be able to cope with often extremely difficult piano parts” that can be found in choral compositions (Hannan, 2003:76).

4.9 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

A leader is not necessarily a manager as well, and “good managers may not necessarily be good leaders” (Weber 2004). A choral conductor is many times not a natural leader, and nor may he/she possess management skills. In his book *The dynamic choral conductor*, Richard Stanton (1971:110) indicates the multi-sided profile of a choral conductor's job: “The idea of Renaissance man as it evolved during the 15th and 16th century is relevant in many ways to the ideal image of today's dynamic conductor. The Renaissance man was seen as the epitome of the intellectual, social, economic, and cultural ferment of the times”. He continues by discussing the conductor as musician, as leader, as teacher, as interpreter, as counsellor and as organisation manager. It is once again clear that if the conductor wants to succeed in

(re)-creating music and performing on a level that is more than just a mechanical reproduction of printed notes, he or she has to be equipped with skills in leadership and management. If they follow a disciplined, well ordered, prepared conductor, “singers will inevitably be aware that the conductor is the creator of this structuring, [and] confidence in his leadership is automatic” (Stanton 1971:113).

Richard J. Staron delivered an ode to choral conductors on a web discussion on Leadership and Management (Staron 2004). Staron started off by sketching the following situation:

Put yourself in this position: You and your team are responsible for a weekly, public presentation in front of an educated, discerning audience. Your work must be of high quality - well-done and inspiring. You have only 3 hours a week to get your group prepared. Your group comprises volunteers who can walk out on you at any time - and you don't get to pick the volunteers! Oh, and your pay for the entire year would cover about one seventh of the cost of an SUV (Staron 2004).

Staron continues by asserting that such people do exist by referring to research done by Elizabeth Scott of the Eastern Connecticut State University on choir dynamics:

Scott says the leader's role is to get the group into harmony while attending to the needs of each member. Some members have more status than others, some need more attention, some are simply better vocalists. Some members may be the director's superior, and some may be related or have a long history with the organization.

Staron also highlights successful directors as being individuals with

- power – “a successful director is a great example of getting, using and retaining power without appearing to have any”
- expertise in their fields,
- a love for their profession,
- a sense of humour,
- the capability of always “raising the bar: the director selects a challenging work, endures the disastrous practices and congratulates everyone when the final performance goes well (Staron 2004).

The choral conductor is in many cases not only responsible for the product that audiences see and hear on stage but also has responsibilities as administrator and manager. The responsibilities of a conductor involve a wide range of interconnected actions. In this sense Maximiano, as quoted by Fucci Amato and Amato Neto (2009:7), accentuated the fact that a “high level of communication capacity is key to their leadership tasks: motivation, delegation, and assessment”.

The following abilities are listed as key elements to the organizational-managerial capability of leaders:

- To know how to communicate.
- To know how to act (the ability to learn to act involves the full understanding of the leader's function and of tasks related to this function).
- To know how to motivate.
- To have strategic vision.
- To know how to assume responsibilities (the ability to face responsibility is closely linked to the leadership and delegation).
- To know how to learn with the led (it is essential that a leader is able to explore the human and intellectual potential that exists in the group).
- To know how to improve yourself (Seeking the best professional development, a leader must be able to identify weaknesses in her/his training and constantly seek to acquire new knowledge).
- To know how to stimulate the creativity of the group.
- To know how to mobilize material resources (besides learning to communicate and to defend the group's interests and goals, the leader is often required to have a high level of social capital, i.e. the establishment of a dense network of contacts to enable the mobilization of material support to the group) (Fucci Amato and Amato Neto 2009).

Different types of choirs dictate different types of leadership, management and motivational styles. Each individual will adopt a different leadership style based on his/her own personality traits – it is important that the student conductor explore and be exposed to different types of leadership and management styles in order to develop a personal style.

4.10 INSIGHT INTO THE ACT OF PERFORMANCE

Singing is an active process. Madsen (1987:12) defines performance as being “an active endeavor, which for the most part consists of perfecting neuro-muscular responses in relationship to judgmental aural discriminations”. The performance is thus the goal to perfecting these responses. According to Taddie (2001:41), the “ultimate goal of the rehearsal regimen is to achieve the highest possible level of choral performance, thereby raising performers and listeners to a transforming aesthetic experience”. The author agrees with Taddie when he states that “rehearsals should lead to technical perfection and musical spirit” (2001:41).

During a rehearsal the conductor has as one of his/her responsibilities to actively listen to the singing. The singers, the conductor and maybe the accompanist are the role-players during a rehearsal. In a performance another party is added to the music-making process – the audience. Music is brought alive through the performance in the sense that the cycle of communication is completed, the cycle being composer (composition) to the performer to the listener. In the performance the choir and conductor together engage in the creative activity of projecting their mutual conception of the score to the audience. The importance of the stimulus that a performance provides to the choral group should be emphasised to the student conductor, as the concert performances “report on the status of choral artistry by both

the chorus and its conductor” (Decker and Herford 1988:92). The concert is not an end in itself, but according to Pfautsch in Decker and Herford (1988:92), “the concert is a fine tool from which both the choir members and conductor can benefit as they analyse the performance and continue to learn together about the choral art. The performance can thus be seen as one of a series of events in the total choral experience”. Achieving technical mastery is important, but should be seen as only one of the tools in experiencing aesthetic qualities. It is this aesthetic experience that impacts on singers and listeners, helping people to make music part of their lives:

The power of such experience is so great and its satisfactions so deep that those who have shared it are likely to be changed fundamentally in their relation to music. For such people music inevitably becomes a source of some of life’s deepest rewards. This is no small matter, given the universal need for such satisfaction and its rarity in human life (Reimer 1970:131).

Occasionally conductors lose sight of the real essence of performance. It is a danger that the conductor’s self-esteem and sense of self get in the way of the full scope of performing: communicating the meaning of the music. It is important that the student conductor is exposed to a variety of philosophies of music education in order to develop his/her own philosophy. As previously discussed in Chapter 2.4 (The Conductor as Rehearsal Technician) to have a personal philosophy on choral music education is necessary, and it provides options for when the choral conductor as educator constantly makes decisions and takes actions based on those decisions. Performances, as one of the goals of choral singing, can be influenced by the conductor’s philosophy towards choral music education.

4.11 KNOWLEDGE OF PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

All choral music is a product of the environment and historical period in which it was created. Many authors agree with Hylton (1995:159) when he argues that it should be the conductor’s “objective to help students perform choral music in as authentic a manner as possible”. No living person heard Bach perform one of his cantatas, or knows how the ideal choir from Handel’s point of view sounded, nor do we know Brahms’s preference for tempo relationships in his “Ein Deutsches Requiem”. But, seeing that the prime role of the conductor is that of re-creator of music,

he must interpret it in such a way that the intentions of the composer are “brought to life” and projected to the audience. To do this properly, the conductor must have, among other qualities, a clear concept of the music’s basic style (Garretson 1986:120).

It is necessary for a choral conductor to enlighten him/herself with historically informed performance practises in order to perform as close as possible a true representation of the intentions of the composer - “to perform his music according to his intentions we ought to restore the conditions of performance of that time” (Butt 2002:3). The particular characteristics that make a work different from others, and the mode in which it is expressed, represent musical style. The characteristics correspond to tempo, phrasing, articulation, pitch, temperament, tuning, dynamics, instrumentation, timbre, ornamentation, improvisation, *musica ficta* (“In the music of the 10th to 16th century, the theory of the chromatic or, more properly, non-diatonic tones, i.e., tones other than those in the diatonic scale” (Apel 1986:549)), basso continuo realisation, balance, notational systems and the size and make-up of performing forces.

A conductor’s aim has to be “to create the ambience or aura of different stylistic periods without superimposing personal attitudes, limitations, and prejudices” (Glenn 1991:72). The question all conductors have to ask themselves before attempting any composition is what priorities should be chosen from the aesthetic principles of both the past and present to make the performance meaningful?

Conductors might have a conducting technique that is clear, yet expressive, have knowledge of several languages, reasonable keyboard skills, and outstanding musicianship, but without the knowledge to come to an understanding of the aesthetic values upon which music from past eras is based, the performance will lack the intrinsic expressiveness (Paine 1988:22).

It is the responsibility of conductors to inform singers about all aspects of the compositions being rehearsed and performed. Student choral conductors have to be equipped with the necessary knowledge to understand choral style. “Knowledge of style in choral singing requires a synthesis of diverse information related not only to various musical elements but also to the historical context of a choral composition” (Hylton 1995:202). Collins (1999:331) supports the importance of being knowledgeable about authentic performance practices by maintaining that “it is difficult to accept, however, that because you may not have the time to train students in several different styles, you have the right to remain ignorant about those styles”.

4.12 RELIABLE CONDUCTING TECHNIQUE

Fuelberth (2003:14) quotes Edward Sapir’s words when attempting a definition for conducting as “an elaborate code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all”. There are very important relationships between the physical gestures a conductor makes

and the sound the choir produces. Standing in front of a group of people, waving hands and arms, can have damaging effects on the music. Jordan (1996:113) warned against

the mere application of a time-beating technique ... it can metaphorically and musically speaking, *beat the music to pieces*. With all the need for a sound conducting technique, we must do our best to free the choir and the music from a straight-jacketed conducting format and to allow the free unfolding of the essence and life of the music.

The need for developing a reliable conducting technique is very important if your belief of conducting coincides with that of Jordan's "...that conducting patterns are a reflection of sound, then it follows that conducting gesture should be both a reflection of the sound and provide a certain gestural evoking of sound from the singers" (Jordan 1996:115). The skill of conducting and evoking sound from a choir can be learned by anyone – "good conducting technique can be developed to a high degree by anyone who is willing to concentrate and practice" (Ehmann 1968:117).

It is the ideal that most of the instructional time in a choral rehearsal should be spent in non-verbal activity (as previously discussed in chapter 2.7 The Conductor as Communicator and chapter 2.9 The Choral Conductor as "Conductor"). For the most part this non-verbal "communication" consists of conducting. "Clear and expressive conducting is one of the most important attributes of effective rehearsal technique" (Hylton 1995:93). The director with good conducting skills will benefit in confidence and authority. It is also important to remember that not only will the choral conductor benefit from possessing good conducting skills but also the singers, because they will feel at home in not only the specific conductor's choir, but also under the guidance of any other good conductors.

Boult's statement, made over sixty years ago, still rings true today: "The object of technique in all art is the achievement of the desired end with the greatest simplicity and economy of means" (Boult 1936:7). Conducting gestures ought to be functional, a sign language that conveys to the group what the conductor expects from them. Hylton's (1995:93) remark "clarity and expressiveness are the two critical attributes of effective conducting" is supported by most authors' writings concerning conducting technique. Jordan (1996:114) goes further to remind us that "the gesture of the vocal conductor must at all times reflect the movement of air through the vocal mechanism".

"Gesture" is defined as "an observable movement of the hands or hands and arms, or a change in visual direction, in addition to or outside of, an ongoing beat pattern which results in an observable musical response in performance context" (Karpicke 1987:3). An expres-

sive conducting technique should be developed so that stopping to discuss interpretative concepts like dynamic and tempo changes should be minimised. Mastering conducting gestures present certain difficulties, however.

The conductor is unique in that his efforts do not directly produce the sounds of the music, but rather, strive to evoke in others that kind of collective performance that is artistically musical. This lack of directness complicates the learning of conducting skill (Lewis 1977:5).

One of the main complications in learning how to conduct is receiving sufficient feedback on one's progress. The different alternatives for feedback are the student conductor observing him/herself in the mirror, observing or feeling his/her own actions. The other alternative is external feedback: the conductor's teacher can best evaluate and explain certain gestures and their functions. A more realistic form of feedback is for the student conductor to lead a small ensemble, since his/her conducting provides aural feedback. This is supported by Jordan (1996:114):

the biggest dilemma concerning conducting patterns is that they are most often taught devoid of sound, they are taught as geometric exercises of sketching patterns in the air without sound being present. Therefore it is necessary for student conductors to learn how to conduct on an actual instrument – a choir.

Only with a secure foundation in the basic gestures, can the student progress with confidence to more difficult non-verbal communication gestures. It is sensible to observe the essential language of conducting that follows. Karpicke (1987:20) classified the basic gestures in ten general categories. In response to conductor gesture, ensemble musicians are expected to:

1. Start
2. Stop
3. Produce more
4. Produce less
5. Articulate
6. Enter
7. Exit
8. Slow down
9. Get faster
10. Hold.

In Litman's (2006:7) study of *The relationship between gesture and sound: A pilot study of choral conducting behaviour in two related settings* he suggests a framework in which choral gestures could be coded into families. He proposes five "families" within which individual choral conducting gestures could be allocated, these being:

- connotative gestures, those which suggest the expressive character and nuance of the music;
- literal gestures, these are gestures which give an indication of the pulse and sense of where the performers are in the music;
- helpful gestures, these are gestures which are helpful in some musical, technical or vocal way;
- inappropriate gestures are those gestures which contradict either a musical, technical or vocal related expectation;
- gestures shared with the singers themselves; these are gestures which enable the singers better to understand a musical, technical or vocal issue, and they are often done by the whole choir.

If the conductor is a functional leader, his or her gestures can benefit by being developed to have a big enough vocabulary to incorporate the above mentioned five families. The author subscribes to Litman's proposed five "gestural families" and recognises the fact that gestures have to be adapted to the demands of the immediate performance, and have to demonstrate the singers' "impulse of will" (Green 1997:31).

The importance of developing a firm conducting technique is further reinforced by Hylton (1995:94) who writes that "the director with good musicianship and vocal knowledge who also has acquired conducting skills will obtain finer results than is possible without the possession of those skills". He further notes that rushing through the basic conducting gestures can result in "insecurity, a tendency to lose the beat, and the presence of idiosyncratic, unproductive mannerisms in the individual's conducting technique".

Teaching conducting needs to concentrate on gesture and the development of natural and efficient movement. Conducting must ideally be taught by concentrating on clarity, functionality, position, direction, and appropriateness of gesture, together with sound. Consultation of authorities on teaching conducting techniques revealed the following:

- "Ideally, conducting students should be in a choral ensemble to be used for practical experience" (Decker and Herford 1988:187).
- "Students would ideally explore movement in an holistic way before learning and absorbing the traditional conducting patterns, thus gaining confidence in using their body expressively" (Durrant 1996:218).
- Courses for teaching conducting need a structured progression in the use of music with increasing technical complexity. It is "important that practice of patterns be related to music itself as soon as possible" (Decker and Herford 1988:6).

4.13 CONCLUSION

It is clear that the knowledge and skills that ought to be part of a choral conductor's make-up are extensive. It is very important that student choral conductors be equipped with compre-

hensive musicianship skills, efficient skills in score study, knowledge about auditions, sufficient knowledge and insight into choral literature, disciplined and well-ordered rehearsal techniques, the ability to communicate successfully, knowledge about accompaniment, leadership and management skills, informed insight into the art of performance, satisfactory awareness of performance practices and a reliable conducting technique.

In the rehearsal situation, the choral conductor will call upon a repertoire of means to attain the performance goal, and it is his/her mastery of the various technical skills and understanding of what is required in order to achieve goals that will make the conductor a craftsman/craftswoman. Collingwood (1938:27) referred to technique as an essential tool of the craftsman, though technique is not enough to make the craftsman an artist.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to search nationally and internationally for information, in order to enable the planning and development of choral conducting curriculum for use in South African tertiary institutions. Aspects of the conducting phenomenon were explored in order to form a knowledge base for the development of such curriculum for beginner learners to train them as effective choral conductors.

5.2 THE EFFECTIVE CHORAL CONDUCTOR

The effective conductor is one not only possessing the necessary technical and musicianship skills to be labelled as effective. Writings concerning the personality and behavioural traits of effective conductors revealed conducting as a many-sided art. To the average concertgoer, the time-beating function of conducting is the most apparent. The competence and effectiveness of the conductor are often judged on the basis of physical appearance and gestures and his or her skills as a rehearsal technician. However, persona, role as effective teacher, motivator, communicator, leader, and the ability to inspire, influences effectiveness as conductor, apart from the obvious ability to communicate music meaning through gesture. Effective choral conducting will also depend on skills in aural perception in order to be able to identify and, through knowledge, deal efficiently and effectively with musical and vocal problems.

5.3 INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CHORAL CONDUCTING CURRICULA

The majority of international universities' programmes which were consulted offer students the opportunity to sing in a choir and to conduct that choir for projects. This is very valuable because of the practical application of theoretical knowledge gained. A number of institutions such as the University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, Austria and the Westminster Choir College, Princeton, USA, offer study programmes with specialisation in choral conducting with emphasis on preparing students for careers in the performance and teaching of choral music. The situation in South Africa contrasts vividly with the above mentioned institutions, where a large number of systematic and structured programmes allow students to

'major' in the field of choral conducting. Universities in this category include a wide variety of music subject areas preparing the conductor to become a well-balanced musician.

In order to evaluate the belief that little systematic training of choral conductors takes place within higher education in South Africa, information was gathered through prospectuses and Music Departments' websites and brochures of subject provisions. Through personally observing choral training at tertiary institutions in South Africa, the researcher came to the conclusion that too little emphasis is placed on choral conducting as a significant part of a whole undergraduate music programme. It does happen, however, that students gain opportunities to conduct ad hoc groups, choirs and orchestras outside the official, accredited music programme, and such activities are to be commended, as they encourage enterprise on the part of the students. There is, however, usually little opportunity for analysis and discussion of the students' conducting technique and effectiveness, or actual instruction.

It is the opinion of the researcher that the mentioned South African tertiary institutions still have to develop their choral conducting training programmes by applying qualitative validation through research investigations. Opportunities for analysis and discussion of the student's conducting technique and effectiveness should be encouraged in choral conducting training programmes. It would be a constructive development to include choral conducting as a generic activity within undergraduate programmes where students are enrolled in either music programmes or teacher training in South Africa.

5.4 CHORAL CONDUCTING SKILLS

This study was based on the following main question:

What should the fundamental components for choral conducting curriculum for beginner choral conducting students in South Africa be?

In order to teach choral conducting successfully, it is necessary to identify the skills and techniques of the effective conductor. If choral conducting is to gain a place in teaching in the universities in South Africa, it must be clear in an assessment context exactly what skills are being developed and what learning outcomes are planned. "A competence is a skill or knowledge that is conspicuously operating in the relevant activity" (Durrant 1996:213). This statement of Durrant forms the basis on which teaching curricula should be constructed, aiming to produce an effective choral conductor. The competencies are set out below ac-

ording to the factors discussed in Chapter 4.

- Musicianship skills focused on five areas of technical importance
 - Musicianship skills focused on Tone quality
 - Musicianship skills focused on Diction
 - Musicianship skills focused on Balance and Blend
 - Musicianship skills focused on Intonation
 - Musicianship skills focused on Precision
- Efficient skills in Score Study
- Knowledge about Auditions
- Sufficient knowledge and insight into Choral Literature
- Disciplined and well-ordered rehearsal technique skills
- The ability to communicate successfully
- Knowledge about Accompaniment
- Leadership and Management
- Insight into the act of Performance
- Knowledge of Performance Practices
- A reliable Conducting Technique.

As a result of this study, suggested choral conducting curriculum can be developed, designed for an initial level of study. The initial level subjects are for those with little experience in choral conducting yet who have an interest in and intention to conduct a choir and the musical skills and knowledge expected of beginner students. Tertiary institutions' prerequisites for accepting students differ vastly, as is evident in Chapter 3 Current choral conducting curricula. The author's deduction from the different tertiary institutions' admission requirements and their application to the South African situation of the training of choral conductors is that prospective students should have

- a basic keyboard proficiency with the ability to sight read a score, a minimum practical standard equivalent to UNISA (UNISA 2012), ABRSM (ABRSM 2013) or Trinity Guildhall (Trinity Guildhall 2009) Grade 5,
- an adequate singing voice,
- music theory knowledge and skills, a minimum of UNISA (UNISA 2012), ABRSM (ABRSM 2013) or Trinity Guildhall (Trinity Guildhall 2009) Grade 5 music theory,
- aural skills, comparable to the aural tests prescribed for UNISA (UNISA 2012), ABRSM (ABRSM 2013) or Trinity Guildhall (Trinity Guildhall 2009) Grade 5 practical examinations,
- basic conducting abilities, indicating potential to develop.

There is a perceived need for the training of teachers, community leaders as choral conductors. This has become apparent from the researcher's own teaching experience of undergraduate students, as well as from discussions with school teachers and choral conductors in general. The study is also necessitated by the researcher's own work and experience as a choral conductor in school, church and the community. Proposed choral conducting curriculum should ideally focus on the practical reality conductors are confronted with.

The rationale for proposed curriculum is to develop understanding and awareness of the issues surrounding choral activity, and also to increase knowledge and skills in the areas as deduced from the content of universities that offer specialised training in choral conducting (paragraph 3.4.2):

- good choral conducting and baton techniques,
- effective keyboard skills,
- an ability to conduct choir compositions with orchestral accompaniment,
- first-rate skills in harmony and counterpoint,
- first rate knowledge in instruments and acoustics,
- excellent aural skills,
- a concentration on score studying skills where notation practices in contemporary music is necessary,
- a good knowledge of form in music,
- skills in the analysis of music,
- excellent knowledge of music history,
- the ability to do voice building,
- a well-developed singing voice,
- knowledge and exposure to opera and choral practices,
- a good working knowledge of foreign languages like Italian, German and French,
- knowledge and insight into performance practices of the different musical periods with insight into and knowledge of historical style practices,
- the ability to play scores and skills in successful score studying,
- a set of well-developed choir rehearsal methods,
- healthy knowledge of choir repertoire and literature studies,
- Philosophy and aesthetics of choral music education. "Conducting courses should include some understanding of the nature of aesthetic education" (Durrant 1996:221).

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Research in choral related topics in South Africa is definitely in the beginning stages, as compared with, for instance, the United States of America which has already delivered an extensive body of choral related research. It is for that reason that the author recommends research on any choral related issues pertaining to the South African environment. In the field of multi-cultural choirs, South Africa offers a variety of topics ready to be explored: for example, to examine the role of music education and more specifically choral singing in the development and modelling of cultural identity. For further research, the following are specifically recommended for consideration, although not listed in any specific priority order.

- The present study could be expanded both in breadth and depth by reproducing it with the actual development of the intended curriculum for beginner choral conducting students. Further qualitative validation of the above intended curriculum could be done through various investigations, commencing with research into the newest developments on the elements presented in this study.
- The question was raised in Chapter 3.2 as to whether there are enough adequately trained conductors in South Africa, sufficiently skilled to lead a choir to obtain good results in international choral competitions. It could prove worthwhile to investigate whether the results of South African choirs in international choral competitions is indicative of the level and/or quality of training the choral conductors had.
- Dzorkpey (2011:152) recommended in his research (*Realising the objectives of the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod: a case study*) that the “competitive drive of the SASCE can be scaled down to a choral festival, where no school will feel it has been poorly treated by the adjudicators to boost the interest of the schools in support of the programme”. An investigation into the effects of national choral competitions on the relationships between music educators (conductors), administrators and parents, working towards the development and administration of surveys to measure attitudes toward choral competitions, could have beneficial results.
- A Study done by Nzimande (1993:iv): *Choral Competitions: a Critical Appraisal of their relevance to Music Education in Kwazulu*, had as main research aim “whether the current school choir competitions have positive or negative effects on the choristers and the rest of the community”. The study showed that “it definitely is a significant factor that school choral competitions have had a positive effect on the KwaZulu society” (Nzimande 1993:84). This study was conducted mainly amongst black schools in Kwazulu-Natal in 1993 and could now be repeated and expanded by investigating schools in all cultural societies of South Africa to determine the effects

of competition on the development of musical skills of learners and to test the validity of Nzimande's contentions. An interesting recommendation by Dzorkpey (2011:154) is echoed by the author as an aspect to include in this research: how music competitions and/or festivals can be used "as a vehicle to restore a value system based on the principles enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa" (2011:154).

- The statement by Balandras (2004:9) "The very good results some countries have achieved are often due to outstanding musical personalities, to such an extent that if one of them were not to appear, the countries' results would be dramatically altered" was quoted in Chapter 3. The validity of the above statement in the South African context could be examined: included in such a study could be a historical examination of successful South African choirs, including their conductors, teaching procedures, repertoire, and critics' evaluation of performances.
- Biographical studies of influential choir conductors and important figures in the development of South African choral music like Mzilikazi Khumalo and Philip McLachlan are needed.
- An investigation into the development of South African choral repertoire, culminating in the compilation of an anthology of South African choral music, would be of great value not only within the country, but among the many devotees of such music, internationally.
- The examination of choral literature from the standpoint of musical demands for choirs' technical growth. A part of such research could be devoted to determining the influences contemporary compositions have on growth in choirs' capabilities.
- Although often raised as a problem area, there is little research-based data dealing with difficulties with choral intonation in the South African multi-cultural choir landscape. Accurate information, based on research, on how to deal with, and overcome, intonation problems in multi-cultural choirs should be extremely valuable to choral conductors and choir members.
- A process-oriented curriculum encourages all students to participate actively by providing appropriate challenges involving singing, conducting, playing, composing, and listening. It is possible that students' self-concepts of music ability will be affected positively by this type of curriculum. However, in order to make that claim convincingly, further research is required.
- The researcher is of the opinion that choral music should be an integral part of the South African school curriculum. To overcome the practical problem of not being able to instruct large groups of learners in individual instruments, choral singing is proposed as a vehicle for the teaching of music to meet the educational goals of a suc-

successful school music programme. This can lead to students later choosing music as an elective subject with choral singing as their instrument. The point is stressed that choral singing is an excellent educational means of expression to arrive at the goals of music education. The South African music education landscape has changed quite dramatically over the past decade and it has also changed the role of the music educator in South Africa, who needs to be someone who no longer works in isolation from other subject areas, pursuing specifically musical goals, but collaborates toward the achievement of broad, interdisciplinary 'outcomes', someone who is a music specialist while at the same time an innovative, widely knowledgeable, multi-disciplinary educator with sociological, ethnomusicological and psychological insight (Robinson 2009). Research as to how such a choral curriculum would meet the requirements of the South African National Educational Policy, and the actual construction of such a curriculum, is warranted.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The research has focussed on the choral conductor or teacher who conducts choirs and has put forward the argument that the choral conductor must have appropriate knowledge, skill and understanding in order to be effective in the role. This research has demonstrated that effective conducting is definable and that provision for teaching choral conducting in greater depth is necessary.

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