Aug. 2, 1932. P. QUINTINA 1,869,391

INSTRUMENT TO AID IN VOCAL TONE CULTURE

Filed Nov. 28, 1931

Fig. 1.

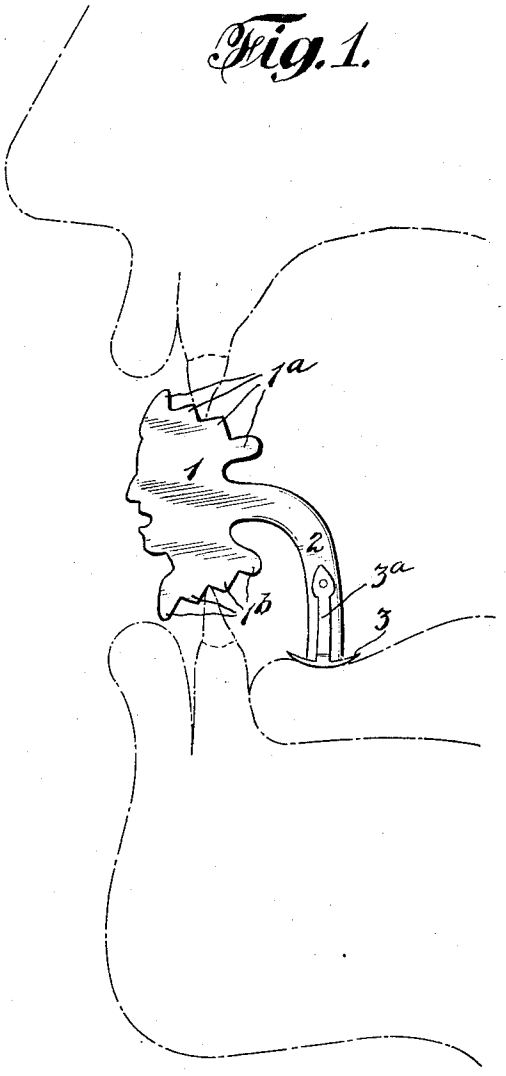


Fig. 2.

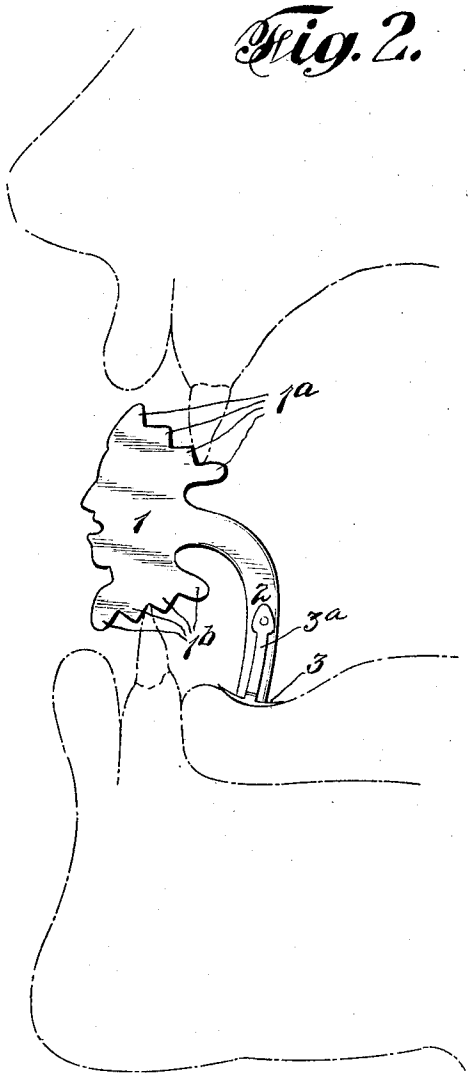
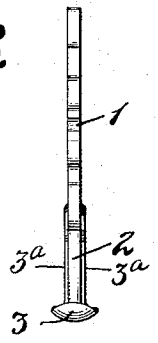


Fig. 3.



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Patented Aug. 2, 1932 1,869,391

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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INSTRUMENT TO AID IN VOCAL TONE CULTURE

Application filed November 28, 1931. Serial No. 577,851.

This invention relates to a new and useful instrument to aid in vocal tone culture. Vocal teachers have great difficulty in making their pupils open their mouths adequately for correct vocalization or tone placement, and similarly great difficulty is encountered in making such pupils correctly position the tongue for such production. My invention comprises an instrument which may be held between the upper and lower teeth of the vocalist and which in its preferred form will hold the mouth open to the proper degree and will also hold the tongue in the proper position. The instrument is not only an aid in teaching but by its use in practice inexperienced students may quickly form the habit of properly opening the mouth and positioning the tongue. It is not only of great assistance to teachers and inexperienced students, but it is also an aid to finished singers as well, since it sometimes happens that even they fall back in their work, eventually to find that the cause is due to the errors that my instrument will not only detect but, by its use for a short time, will correct.

In the accompanying drawing I have illustrated my invention in one preferred form only, being aware that it may be modified in a variety of ways without departing from its spirit or scope.

Fig. 1 is a side view of my instrument as it would appear in use in one position of adjustment;

Fig. 2 is a similar view showing said instrument in another position of adjustment;

Fig. 3 is a front edge elevation of the instrument.

1 represents the main body of the instrument, which is arranged to be placed edgewise between the teeth of the vocalist, as indicated in dotted lines in Figs. 1 and 2. 2 is a downwardly extending arm at the rear of said body which is so shaped at its lower end that, when the body 1 is held between the teeth, it will bear on the tongue preferably near the tip so as to hold it properly depressed for correct vocalization. It will be noted that the lower end of the arm 2 is below the body 1 so that the tip of the tongue may be depressed below the upper edge of the lower teeth as shown. If desired a relatively broad pad 3 may be provided for comfort on that part of the device that is to bear on the tongue. In the drawing I have shown this pad 3 as formed separately from the arm 2 and secured thereto by side pieces 3^a—3^a. It will be noted that the body 1 and extension 2 are comparatively thin, so as not to interfere with the outflowing tone vibrations produced by the vocalist. The upper and lower edges of the body 1 are disposed at an angle to each other and are preferably provided respectively with a series of what I may term "steps", indicated respectively at 1^a—1^a and 1^b—1^b. These steps permit the device to be so adjusted between the teeth at different positions so as to hold the mouth open as required and also so as to compensate for the physical differences between different vocalists as to mouth structure. Again, by providing a series of these steps on the upper and lower edges of the body 1 the angular position of the instrument may be shifted so as to adjust the tongue depresser arm 2 up or down to fit the particular vocalist using the same. In Fig. 1 it will be noted that the user's teeth (indicated in dotted lines) engage certain steps of the upper and lower series, while in Fig. 2 the instrument has been adjusted so that the upper teeth engage a different step in the upper series. These two views merely illustrate two of the many positions of adjustment that the instrument is susceptible of for holding the mouth open more or less or for depressing the tongue more or less.

It will be apparent that any vocalist using the instrument when he or she once finds the proper "steps" upon which to rest the teeth for proper mouth opening and tongue depression may thereafter use the instrument correctly to overcome any bad habit that he or she may have acquired regarding mouth or tongue control.

The instrument may be made of any suitable material, it being of course preferable to select a strong material that is not unfriendly to the teeth or the tongue tissue.

At first the use of the instrument will seem awkward unless the vocalist is performing

correctly. With an inexperienced pupil that is due to the fact that he or she has not as yet learned to properly open the mouth or control the tongue. By continuing its use in practice this feeling of awkwardness will soon disappear and the user will scarcely be conscious of its presence. When this occurs, the user will know that the correct habit has been formed and the use of the instrument may then be discontinued. If thereafter the pupil has occasion to feel that his work is falling back, he may again employ the instrument, and if its presence again produces a feeling of awkwardness he knows at once the cause of his inferior work and may cure it by resuming its use for a time in practice. This not only applies to inexperienced pupils but to experienced singers as well, because even artists by reason of illness, overwork or fatigue may fall back in their work for a time and be at a loss to know the cause. At such a time, if the trouble is due to the causes to which I have referred, the artist may quickly ascertain and remove the trouble by the use of my instrument.

The instrument may also be employed to great advantage by dramatic artists, orators and preachers in aiding them in keeping the mouth open adequately and the tongue depressed properly for free and unstrained speech. It likewise may be used by stutterers to overcome what in a large measure is frequently due to nerve reaction resulting from improper muscular action of the tongue due to misplacement.

I claim:

1. An instrument to aid in vocal tone culture comprising, a thin body designed to be held edgewise between the upper and lower front teeth, an arm at the rear of said body extending downwardly to a point below the same to hold the tongue depressed, the tooth engaging edges of said body being disposed angularly to one another to permit the device to be adjusted to vary the degree of spacing of the teeth and the degree of depression of the tongue.

2. An instrument to aid in vocal tone culture comprising, a thin body designed to be held edgewise between the upper and lower front teeth, an arm projecting rearwardly from the mid-rear portion of said body and extending downwardly therefrom to a point beyond the lower edge of said body, and upper and lower edges of said body being disposed angularly to one another, with steps on the upper and lower edges of said body for engagement by the upper and lower teeth.

3. An instrument to aid in vocal tone culture comprising, a body designed to be held between the upper and lower teeth an arm extending rearwardly from the body and having a downwardly disposed free end portion to engage and depress the tongue, whereby the tongue when depressed is substantially free of said arm except at the free end portion thereof.

4. An instrument to aid in vocal tone culture comprising, a relatively thin body designed to be held between the upper and lower teeth, an arm extending rearwardly from the body and having a downwardly disposed free end portion, and a tongue engaging pad at said free end portion and extending transversely thereof for the purpose described.

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