

# Experience in Developing Imaginative and Intonational Competencies in Future Music Teachers

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**Abstract:** The content analysis of students’ training shows that the traditional approach does not use the possibilities of the integrity of choral conducting courses and the gradual and eidetic organization of such training. The research aims to develop, scientifically justify and experimentally verify the effectiveness of the methodology for developing imaginative and intonational skills in students while studying choral conducting courses. Empirical methods are pedagogical observation, talks, surveys, interviews, project methods, tests; research and search methods: experimental and creative tasks, reflexive methods, interactive methods, heuristic methods for modelling imaginative and intonational skills (creative imagination, art views), methods of statistical data processing. A relevant methodology for developing imaginative and intonational competencies in students based on the organizational and methodical model has been designed, verified and implemented in practice. The main approaches, principles, functions and teaching methods have been identified. Pedagogical conditions for effective developing imaginative and intonational competencies in students employing choral conducting courses have been outlined. The obtained results have proved the originality, effectiveness and possibility of implementing the designed methodology into the practice, as well as the practical expediency and promptness of the proposed stage-by-stage methodology. Thus, 22% of control group students and 33% of experimental group students have achieved a high level, with the difference of <11%. Respectively, 44% of control group students and 48% of experimental group students have achieved an average level, with the difference of <4%. Finally, 34% of control group students and 19% of experimental group students are at a low level.

**Keywords:** *pedagogical conditions; methodology for developing imaginative and intonational competencies; choral conducting courses.*

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## Introduction

To begin with, there appears to be the acute need to improve professional skills of future music teachers, taking into account that choral conducting training forms the basis of their further teaching activities. This requires providing students with methodological support in the context of their acquiring professional competency, which specifically implies possessing well-developed imaginative and intonational competencies. Indeed, music is the art of “intonational meaning” and the embodiment of the individual’s world view and perception as rightly noted by Asafiev (1980).

Relevant studies of such prominent musicians and theorists as Aronson (1990), Asafiev (1980), Blatt (1983), Boon (1971), Finnegan (1985), Fuchs & Behrendt (1999), Greene & Mathienson (1995), Guntrip (1997), Knapp (1985), Medushevskiy (1980), Nazaykinskiy (1972), Senge (1990), Sokhor (1981) and Yavorskiy (1964) have significantly contributed to the theory of art education in terms of developing imaginative and intonational competencies, in particular, musical intonation as the key concept of intonality. As a result, a new scientific context of understanding the intonational essence of musical thinking has been shaped.

A great number of methodical works have been devoted to the unique expression of musical intonation of such well-known artists as Chaliapin, Chopin, Krushelnytska, Liszt, Paganini, Rachmaninoff, Rubinstein et al. (Kozii, 2014a; 2014b).

The specificity of future music teachers’ professional activities involves acquiring many special skills. Thus, the imaginative intonation of musical works should ensure their artistic and aesthetic relevance, which in turn encourages students to appreciate musical art and comprehend the spiritual content of musical compositions.

Based on the generalization of studies on musicology, it is found that musical intonation is a multifunctional phenomenon, that is, the basis of musical language and musical thinking. Musical intonation is responsible for those psychological functions, which the word performs in speech activity and determines the quality of music reproduction.

In musicology, they also distinguish the concept of “intonity”. However, ambiguous interpretations of these concepts cause the need to analyze their etymology. Thus, the term “intonation” was first introduced by Yavorskiy (1964). The scholar considered intonation as an artistic expression in music and the basis of musical speech. He noticed the individual’s ability

to recognize sounds due to the relations, which connect steady and unsteady sounds of a mode.

Asafiev (1980) interpreted the concept of “intonation” rather widely. He took it to a new level of a philosophical and aesthetic category and considered intonation as an interval and an episode, a melodic phrase and a melodically meaningful harmony, as well as a carrier of an artistic image and a means of its expression. According to Asafiev (1980), the essence of music is revealed through the understanding of intonation, which reflects reality in the unity of imaginative and conceptual, rational and emotional aspects. It contains the information addressed to perception and thinking without clearly defined meanings. The artistic image of music is revealed during direct contact with the musical work, and the acquisition of the reproduced intonation occurs through a special musical activity, that is “intonity”.

Asafiev (1980) also emphasizes on the remarkable role of memory and intonational associations as active factors in the process of acquiring and perceiving music. The scholar believes that the basis of musical thinking is a psychological ability of the individual to reflect intonation in isolation from the real sound in the form of musical and sound representations, the essential nature of which is musical intonation. Still, imaginative and intonational skills cannot be developed without relevant musical and sound representations.

The concept of “intonity”, being a correct (pure) or incorrect (false) reproduction of a tone during singing or playing a musical instrument, is similar and yet not identical to the concept of “intonation”. In the broad sense, it is a musical embodiment of the artistic image, in which intonation serves as a function of emotional and artistic expression (Asafiev, 1980; Marufenko, 2010; Medushevskiy, 1980; Poberezhna, & Shcherytsia, 2004; Spilioti, 2012).

Different aspects of the problem under study are covered in the works of many scholars (Byvalkevych, Yefremova, & Hryshchenko, 2020; Gerasymova et al., 2019; Koziuk, Hayda, Dluhopolskyi, & Kozlovskiy, 2020; Makoviichuk et al., 2020; Melnyk et al., 2019; Sebalo, & Teslenko, 2020; Sheremet, Leniv, Loboda, & Maksymchuk, 2019).

The content analysis of students’ training shows that the traditional approach does not use the possibilities of the integrity of choral conducting courses and the gradual and eidetic organization of such training. There are some contradictions between the need to train such specialists who have the aptitude for creative musical and pedagogical activities and can apply standardized methodologies for teaching choral conducting courses; the

need to develop imaginative and intonational skills and the lack of special methodologies for working on the imaginative intonation of musical works.

The research aims to develop, scientifically justify and experimentally verify the effectiveness of the methodology for developing imaginative and intonational skills in students while studying choral conducting courses.

## **Material & Methods**

The ascertaining experiment aimed to identify the current levels of imaginative and intonational skills in students based on the criteria and indicators defined in its structure.

The authors of the paper have developed the programme of experimental work to identify the level of imaginative and intonational skills in future music teachers and follow the development dynamics of the phenomenon under study. The ascertaining experiment was conducted to determine the initial level of imaginative and intonational skills in future music teachers. It involved 288 third- and fourth-year students of music and pedagogy faculties from Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Kharkiv Humanitarian Pedagogical Academy of Kharkiv Regional Council, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Kamianets-Podilskyi Ivan Ohienko National University, Rivne State University of Humanities, the Institute of Problems on Education of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine.

The following methods were used: questionnaires, interviews, tests, ratings, analysis of students' performances in concerts, expert evaluation of educational attainment. The results of the ascertaining experiment made it possible to single out three levels (high, average and low) of the phenomenon under study.

The obtained results show that most respondents are at average and low levels of imaginative and intonational skills. It has caused the need to develop the methodology for developing imaginative and intonational skills in future music teachers during vocal and choral training and use the pedagogical conditions to increase the level of the phenomenon under study.

The formative stage of experimental work covered three academic years (2015-2019). It was conducted at the premises of Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Kharkiv Humanitarian Pedagogical Academy of Kharkiv Regional Council, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Kamianets-Podilskyi Ivan Ohienko National University, Rivne State University of Humanities, the Institute of Problems on Education of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine. Control and

experimental groups were formed at each university (24 respondents each). The total number of participants in the experiment amounted to 288 respondents. During experimental work, the following factors were taken into account: age characteristics of students, their cultural and educational experience, the specifics of vocal and choral activities.

The authors of the paper have adhered to certain ethical rules. First of all, all ethical requirements were considered before conducting the experiment and the consent of the ethics committees of educational institutions was obtained. After that, all the participants were informed about the goals and objectives of the experiment. They were also informed that their participation in the experiment was voluntary and they were entitled to withdraw from it at any time.

After the formative experiment, the indicators of CG and EG were assessed and comparatively analyzed.

To verify the reliability and statistical validity of the essential changes in the development levels of imaginative and intonational competencies in students, Fisher's Criterion ( $\varphi^*$ -criterion) and the calculation

formula  $\varphi_{\text{crit}}^* = (\varphi_1 - \varphi_2) \cdot \sqrt{\frac{n_1 n_2}{n_1 + n_2}}$ , where  $n_1$  and  $n_2$  being sample volumes were used.

Based on the justification of theoretical framework, relevant *pedagogical conditions* of the research have been determined. They aim to increase the effectiveness of the stage-by-stage methodology for developing imaginative and intonational competencies in the context of choral conducting training. They include 1) creating a comfortable learning environment for vocal and choral training, taking into account psychophysical features of students aged between 18 and 23; 2) studying thoroughly vocal and choral works with the aim to define their artistic images and the nature of reproduction in order to effectively develop imaginative and intonational competencies; 3) enhancing the process of developing imaginative and intonational competencies by means of choral conducting courses and providing relevant pedagogical guidance of this process. It is proved that only a comprehensive provision of these pedagogical conditions can contribute to solving the problem of developing imaginative and intonational competencies employing choral conducting courses.

*The first pedagogical condition of creating a comfortable learning environment, taking into account the psychophysical characteristics*

**of vocal and choral training of students**, is extremely important for the training of students. This pedagogical condition makes it possible to consider the training of future music teachers in the context of their practical orientation, namely, as choirmasters in schools. It must be noted that the training of future choirmasters is considered effective when they are ready to take into account creative individuality of their performers, encourages them to work in teams and carefully monitor their influence on them.

This pedagogical condition mostly manifests itself in the ability to find common ground with performers and achieve full understanding with them. Students are trained for this particular work while studying choral conducting courses, especially in the educational choir team. The educational process of forming and developing imaginative and intonational skills, which allows one not only to accurately reproduce the height of a certain pitch of musical material but also to emotionally and artistically convey the content and nature of music, is more effective in the environment in which creative interaction prevails. This allows one to turn the process of intonation into a creative act in which the creative individuality and creative abilities of the artist are clearly expressed and the versatile personality of the intoning singer and conductor, his/her psychoemotional state and professional qualities are revealed.

*The next pedagogical condition* implies **studying thoroughly vocal and choral works** to define their artistic images and the nature of reproduction to effectively develop imaginative and intonational skills. It is necessary to develop imaginative and intonational thinking in students while perceiving musical works to thoroughly study vocal and choral works.

The importance of considering musical perception and imaginative and intonational thinking in this research consists in the following: firstly, musical information is perceived by hearing organs and acts as a source of acoustic information about the artistic and imaginative content of the music. The process of musical thinking involves forming emotional and auditory images of the outside world, which rely on visual images and visual memory of the individual. Secondly, the process of mastering each type of musical activity (listening to music, singing, playing musical instruments, conducting, etc.) consists of certain stages among which listening and perception (Vetluhina, 1978), as psychophysical processes and types of musical and auditory activities, begin the direct interaction between the listener and a specific type of musical activity. The versatility of listening and perception lies in the fact that it is leading in the musical development of every individual and combines all kinds of musical activities. When learning some vocal and choral or instrumental work, one should first listen to the musical

material demonstrated by the teacher, that is, to hear it, consciously perceive it, including the imaginative and intonational thinking, and only after that study it (Kunenko, 1999).

*The third pedagogical condition of **enhancing the process** of developing imaginative and intonational competencies employing choral conducting courses and providing relevant pedagogical guidance of this process is also important for professional training of future music teachers.*

This research considers the self-improvement of students as a conscious activity in the system of musical and teacher education, which is aimed at ensuring further development of professionally significant qualities, increasing the professional level and effectiveness of educational work on musical art. In the context of personal development, it must be noted that the vocal and technical development of future music teachers implies the comprehensive improvement of the voice and the mastery of relevant singing skills, namely, singing posture and breathing, high and low formant, singing with the support, freedom of the larynx, the correct sound formation, the ability to maintain a single vocal position throughout the range, accuracy of intonation, diction, articulation, different types of sound behaviour, etc.

At the pedagogical and controlling stage of *the adaptation and information accumulation stage (the first stage of the experiment)* of experimental work, the authors of the article have introduced **the method of active perception of data**. The value of this method lies in the effective influence of models of the choir and vocal art on the process of forming a valuable attitude of future music teachers towards choral conducting courses. It was necessary to use multimedia techniques to enable students to demonstrate certain data, which required that the sequence of data submission should be determined. Given that the student acts as a listener interacting with a specific type of musical activity in the process of perceiving the musical material, the teacher encourages him/her to apply intellectual skills to develop acoustic skills, consciously perceive data and further develop the imaginative and intonational thinking. The students evaluated the skills of vocalists who performed a solo party in choral works. The teachers provided them with short messages to extend students' knowledge, focusing their attention on certain fragments. After that, the students filled out "the reminder card".

An important component of imaginative and intonational perception with the further development of artistic imagination to reproduce the composer's idea includes **developing creative thinking** in future music teachers. Proceeding from the fact that the effectiveness of this process is

determined by a steady interest of students in vocal and performing activities, the experimental methodology includes some educational work on a choir piece with the help of a musical instrument. The use of **the practice-oriented method** based on Pityukov's modified methodology (2001) involved encouraging students to work independently to replenish the folder "My favourite musical compositions". During practical classes, the students presented such folders; in particular, they played and sang certain musical works or their fragments (depending on the technical complexity). The authors of the article have taken into account the fact that psychophysiological literature indicates that perception is possible due to the direct influence of the system of interacting stimuli of various analyzers, namely, visual, auditory, touching and motor ones, etc. Other participants in the experiment listened carefully to the student presenting the musical composition since the musical information is perceived by hearing organs and acts as a source of acoustic information about the artistic and imaginative content of the musical work.

The students also analyzed **the lead sheet of a musical work** since musical thinking contributes to forming emotional and auditory images of the external world, which are based on visual images and visual memory of the individual. As a result, one can observe the transformation of knowledge about musicology, the sense of style and genres, the means of musical expression, as well as the reproduction of an artistic image. Thus, the practice-oriented method contributes to developing the imaginative and intonational thinking of students, which indicates an adequate understanding of the musical expression of musical language during choral conducting activities.

**The second stage** of the formative experiment (**the introduction to technologies stage**) ensured the process of forming the operation and technologies component of future music teachers' imaginative intonational skills. At this stage, the experimental work was aimed at enabling students to comprehend the phenomenon of imaginative and intonational skills. It involved familiarizing the students with the technologies and techniques of accumulation and conscious use of imaginative and intonational skills in the process of reproducing various types of vocal and choral activities, as well as during the differential perception of other means of musical expression, the development of the drama in the process of analyzing and interpreting musical works. The main task of the second stage of the formative experiment was **to introduce an organizational and methodical system** for developing imaginative and intonational skills in students, which



accumulated the content of the developed pedagogical technologies in art education aimed at involving the student into a personal reflection.

In this context, **the self-assessment method** for developing educational readiness to stimulate musical thinking based on Elkanov's modified methodology (1989) is relevant for this research. This method was introduced during practical choral classes. When the choir singers of the educational choral group (the participants in the experimental group) were warming up, they were offered to individually control the intonation of vocal and choral exercises prepared by the experimenter. These exercises were selected based on age and psychophysiological characteristics of vocal apparatus of students. The implementation of this method was aimed at encouraging the participants in the experiment to use quizzes. Thus, each student recorded the number of errors found during the self-assessment, which they discovered while doing the offered vocal and choral exercises. During the course, the teacher instructed the students to complete a detailed auditory analysis of their educational activities and also commented on the correction of the choral sound.

**The method of role-playing games** based on Dubaseniuk, Semeniuk, & Antonov's modified methodology (2003) turned out to be rather effective for developing students' ability to combine the accumulated knowledge about choral conducting during the educational work on musical composition and individual choral conducting classes. It was important that the students should undergo several stages of educational work. The initial task was to familiarize future music teachers with the melodic line of a choral part of this choral work. The teacher offers the student to perform the role of "a choir singer", which included the student's singing of some specific musical material. After that, the students filled out the stage-by-stage analysis table, in particular, the intonational difficulties column. They recorded the numbers of bar-lines of this choral work, in which there are some difficulties in vocal performance, namely, the intonation of the melodic line. The next stage required that the students should perform the role of "a musical theoretician". They needed to complete the melodic scale to analyze the melodic line of a certain choral part of the given musical work. Based on this analysis, they recorded the number of the bar-line, which determined the intonational difficulties, as well as the name of the interval next to the corresponding markings for its intonation.

The third stage required that the students should perform the role of "**a choral conductor**", who works on a choir piece independently. Thus, the students determined rhythmic difficulties, recorded the numbers of bar-lines of this choral work in the rhythmic difficulties column and fixed the

type of difficulties found during the singing of this melodic line. The analysis of the literary text involves the student's filling of the articulation difficulties column. This included not only recording the difficulties in the pronunciation of the literary text of this choral work but also expressing views on the correction of articulation errors of choral singers. Analyzing this melodic line regarding vocal and choral performance based on the dynamic marks indicated by the composer in the choral score, the students needed to fill in the dynamic difficulties column. Based on this stage-by-stage analysis, the students needed to fill out the conclusions column with the tasks a choir conductor should deal within the process of presenting the choral part of the given musical work to the singers. It was not so essential to acquire knowledge as to involve the consciousness of future music teachers in cognitive activities. This research also relies on Selevko's study (1998) on the structure of the game, in which the author includes goal-setting, planning, goals achievement and analysis of the results due to which the individual fully realizes himself/herself as the subject. The implementation of this method involves motivating future music teachers to use the acquired choral conducting skills. Therefore, the gradual analysis of the melodic line of the choral work with role-playing enables the student to solve the proposed problematic situation. This contributes to recognizing the features of music teachers' choral conducting activities.

**The method of graphic expression** was involved in the experimental study so that the students could understand the features of the melodic line of each choir party during the educational work on the choir composition based on the curriculum of the choral conducting course with the further development of choral conducting erudition. This involved determining a corresponding choral piece from the educational plan of each student of the experimental group. The introduction of this method was aimed at teaching the students graphic expression of understanding the melodic line based on the conducted musical and theoretical analysis of the corresponding choral work. This research relies on the one on the stage-by-stage educational work on intonation, namely, the initial study of actions, motor correction; the detailed elaboration and stabilization; the consolidation and further improvement of motor activities.

However, it is important for the methodology of the formative experiment to use **the method of intonation and colour replacement**, which involves using colours to express the features of this melodic line. Bondarenko (2011) suggests using Finale, the flagship programme for typing notes, for this educational work. This method also involves using the computer's capabilities for colourizing the notes.

**The fourth stage** of the formative experiment (the creativity enhancement stage) is characterized by the creative expression of the acquired knowledge and skills and ensures the forming of the creative and active component of imaginative and intonational skills of future music teachers. At this stage, the experimental work was aimed at developing the students' ability to creatively present choral works in various effective forms. The experimental work was directed at developing creative skills of future music teachers, motivating them towards creative self-expression in educational activity, which made it possible to develop an appropriate attitude to choral conducting courses, namely, performing educational tasks qualitatively, expressing one's own thoughts, organizing independent educational activities, enhancing the ability to apply the acquired knowledge during educational work on musical composition, nurturing the desire to perform.

This research widely used **the method of modelling** imaginative and intonational views. It involves the following: motivating future music teachers towards reflection; intensifying feelings; enriching the impressions of listening to a musical work. This method also includes the materials of reflexive assessment and self-assessment of achievements by the student about the development of creative imagination, features of fantasizing and the quality of educational attainment, as well as the analysis of working with various sources of information.

The introduction of **the project realization method** in practical choral classes has made it possible to move from the organization of educational activities focused on the practical need to acquire knowledge and skills to the student's educational work at the practical level. The teacher formulates the task which involves the students in independent work on a school song. Thus, each student is provided with a copy of some school song. It was important that the content of the song chosen by the teacher was not limited to any holiday since it was expected to encourage the students to express different views on practical goals of the same school song. In this process, the teacher draws the students' attention to the peculiarities of music teachers' extracurricular work. After that, the students independently, but under the supervision of the teacher, fill out the form, titled "The plan of performance of the school choir". In the first column "Age group", the student, relying on the musical and theoretical analysis of the musical material of the school song, needed to determine the age limitations for the implementation of the school song by pupils, taking into account the peculiarities of their physical development, interests and needs. The next column "Goals" required that the student should determine for

which school event this school song is appropriate. In the third column “Prospects”, the student should think about creating conditions for the creative development of pupils, namely the availability of appropriate audiences for rehearsals, the necessary visibility and the creation of a positive atmosphere. It was also necessary to take into account the musical capabilities of pupils, as well as the requirements of a general education institution for conducting a school event. Filling out the column “Visibility” requires that future music teachers should determine the expediency of using certain musical instruments in this process, as well as multimedia tools for searching data, copying, editing, reproducing, etc. In the column “Appearance of pupils”, the student needed to take into account the fact that the way pupils look during the performance is an important part of the concert performance of any musical work.

**The method of comprehending the composer’s artistic idea** is useful for developing the ability of future music teachers to reproduce the artistic image of the choral work. It is best applied during practical choral classes since an active, creative educational activity develops the students’ interest in choral conducting activities, contributes to developing the skills of vocal and choral work on musical compositions. In this regard, Moskalenko (2012) notes that every performer learning the musical work attempts to disclose the views and feelings presented by the composer following his/her inner sense of the information provided. This method involves organizing a business game with the students, which consists of several stages (preparation, implementation, summarization).

At the preparation stage, the teacher informs about the topic of the game and its goals. The students are informed that if they are not well-prepared for the game, the specified goals will not be achieved.

This stage required that **the business game, titled “The Choral Competition”** should be held. One of the practical choral classes included the rehearsal of the choir competition, in which the students themselves participated. The game aimed to provide the students with a more complete understanding about the preparation of the performing team for a concert performance, as well as the development of their organizational, vocal, choral, conducting skills and critical thinking.

During practical classes, the students became rather interested in the idea of holding a business game. When asked about the desire to participate in the business game, titled “The Choral Competition”, all the students answered positively, while noting that such a game “will be useful and interesting” and “there will be an opportunity to gain practical experience”. As for the musical work that the students would like to perform, school

songs were the most popular choice since they corresponded to the specific goals of the game.

All students were given an invitation letter when preparing to hold the game. Besides, they all received printed requirements for this competition. These papers were given to students two weeks before the game to allow them to prepare for it. The students were also explained the order of the game and were divided into groups: “students”, “the jury”, as well as “the head of the jury”, “choir conductors” and “concertmasters”.

At the same time, the students from the jury group were offered to prepare for the competition, listen to the performance and deliver their verdict, independently make a speech for “the head of the jury”. The students from the same-name group studied the vocal performance of the school song and the students who performed the role of “choir conductors” and “concertmasters” needed to prepare for a concert performance with “pupils”.

Thus, using this method makes it possible to familiarize future music teachers with the idea of vocal, choral and organizational work with the performing team since the game is the simulation of practice. The students’ solving of the real situation facilitates their comprehension of the artistic and imaginative structure of musical works. When the students conduct the musical and theoretical analysis of musical works, they learn to make independent decisions and understand the process of preparing the performing team for a concert performance.

At the formative stage of the experiment, the creative imaginative thinking of future music teachers was facilitated through creating an artistic image of a choral work with the help of **the method of the artistic and emotional reproduction of musical material**, which involved acquiring the skills of working on emotionally expressive sounds of a choral work.

The work is conducted in several stages. At the first stage, the teacher offered the students to analyze the data downloaded from the Internet. These data included the performances of choral works. Such an analysis required that the students should fill in “the assessment letter”, which included expressing both their impressions of the revised data, evaluating these data, as well as making suggestions.

The obtained results were taken into account at the next stage, which was aimed at developing the ability of future music teachers to deliberately express the artistic image of the musical work due to the well-developed valuable attitude toward choral works. In the process of the experiment, it became expedient to involve several various musical compositions into the repertoire of the educational choir. The participants in the experiment were

divided into three groups. The performance of educational tasks included singing one of the choir parties of the chosen choral work.

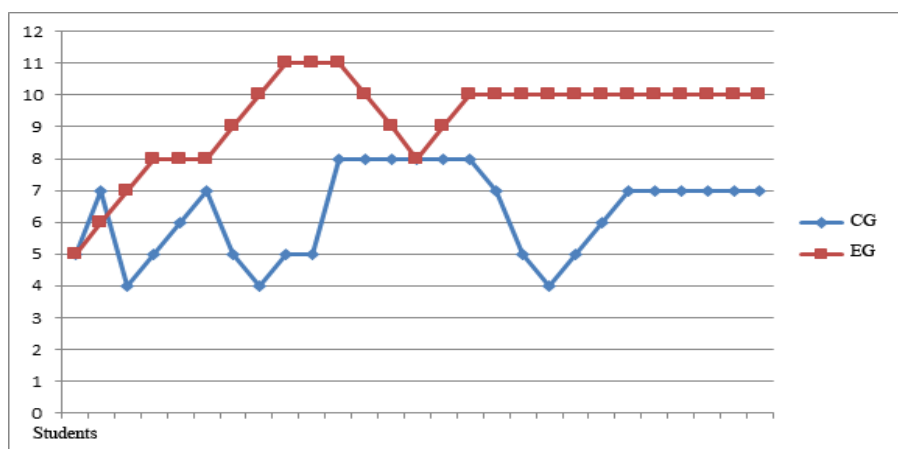
The students needed to independently work on a unified sound during a short time while singing. After that, the students of each group discussed the characteristic features of the artistic image presented by the composer. As a result of this discussion, the participants filled out the form "The adjective field", which included the set of adjectives for the correspondingly created artistic image. Finally, the students needed to sing this choral party emotionally expressing the peculiarities of the artistic image.

This process was characterized by search activities since the students independently selected a style of performance, dynamics, tempo, etc. Thus, the intonity of the melodic line has turned into an artistic performance, with the further emotional enrichment of the musical sound of vocal and choral works. Indeed, this process was similar to a creative act. The results obtained from such educational activity of the students were assessed with the help of all the members of the created groups, who alternately demonstrated the performance of a certain choral piece of the choir's work.

It must be noted that the students more emotionally expressed the presented artistic image during the vocal and choral work during practical choral conducting classes.

## Results

The results of the conducted experiment in experimental and control groups are presented in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1.** *The distribution of EG and CG students based on the levels of the formative experiment*

After the completion of the formative experiment, the average indicators in control (CG) and experimental (EG) groups were finally tested and comparatively analyzed. The results have showed a positive dynamics of effectiveness in the achieved levels of imaginative and intonational competencies development in students. Thus, 22% of CG students and 33% of EG students have achieved a high level, with the difference of <11%. Respectively, 44% of CG students and 48% of EG students have achieved an average level, with the difference of <4%. Finally, 34% of CG students and 19% of EG students are at a low level. So, the difference has decreased >15% due to a qualitative transition of the respondents to higher levels.

Thus, the results obtained from the verification of the determined criterion's value show that there are significant changes in the development levels of students' imaginative and intonational competencies while studying choral conducting courses. They are as follows: 0,9388 – for a high level, 0,8729 – for an average level, 0,9987 – for a low level. Consequently, with probability close to 1 one can assume that the number of EG students whose imaginative and intonational competencies development were at a low level before the experiment significantly decreased and the number of EG students who achieved a high level significantly increased.

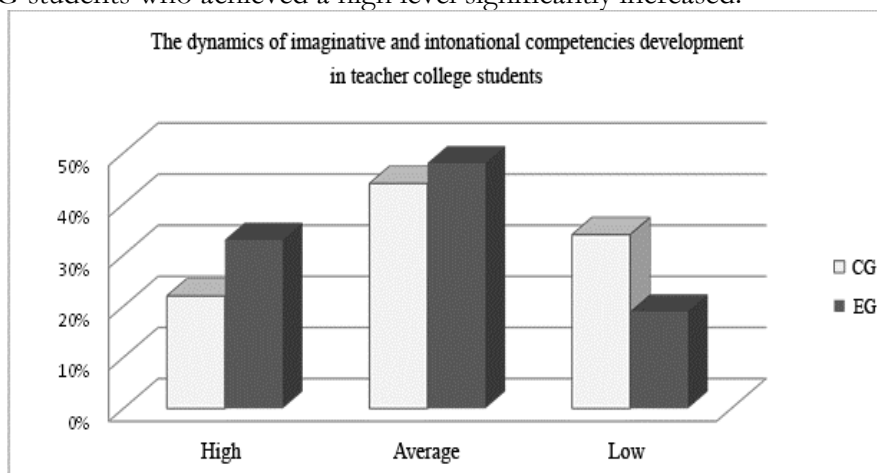


Fig. 2. *The dynamics of imaginative and intonational competencies development in students*

## Discussion

The authors of the article agree that the precise intonity is the main task of developing skills needed to effectively perform a musical work since the author's idea of this work cannot be understood and correctly

reproduced without it. This, in turn, proves the assumption of Grodzenskaya (1961), that “music can strongly influence the child only if the performance is vivid and truthfully conveys the content of the work. The teacher, with his/her sincerity and expressive singing, must bring an emotional atmosphere to the audience. In essence, he/she acts as the co-author of the composer and contributes to expressing his/her main idea. Therefore, performance skills in the field of musical art are very important”. This statement is also confirmed by this research.

This research also confirms the findings of Morozov (1967), who states that “vocal hearing is the first ability required for singing; it is the ability to learn for the student and to teach for the teacher. Vocal hearing is not only hearing but also a complex musical and vocal feeling based on the interaction of auditory, visual, muscular, kinesthetic, vibrational and possibly even some types of sensitivity. The significance of vocal hearing is the ability to understand and reproduce the principle of sound formation”.

It must be noted that the issue of developing vocal and intonational skills has been studied quite controversially and ambiguously. In this regard, some scholars (Poberezhna, & Shcherytsia, 2004) believe that vocal and intonational skills should be developed with the help of musical and theoretical subjects (solfeccio, harmony, elementary theory of music, etc.). The results of this research make it possible to partly agree with the conclusions of these scholars. However, unfortunately, according to the current programmes, this kind of work is allocated the insufficient number of study hours within musical and theoretical subjects for future specialists to be able to master this complex aspect of their practical activity.

Besides, there are some studies which prove that those musicians who have remarkable memory can sometimes have problems with the coordination of hearing and voice. This happens when the individual has not been engaged in singing and has not developed motor memory and, as a result, there is no muscle sensation associated with auditory concepts. In this regard, Morozov (1967) draws attention to the fact that “the individual who knows how to sing knows in advance, before the creation of sound, how he/she needs to use all the muscles, to control the voice in order to reproduce a predetermined musical tone; he/she can even sing any familiar song using only muscles, without the help of the voice. The accuracy of sound reproduction is controlled only by a muscular sensation (without auditory control) and depends on the development level of muscle feeling and memory”. The authors of the article believe that the last statement best explains the obtained research data.

The scientific value of the research is as follows:



- for the first time, the pedagogical conditions have determined and justified and the methodology for developing imaginative and intonational skills through choral conducting courses has been developed;

- the concept of “students’ imaginative and intonational skills during their study of choral conducting courses has been specified, its essence has been revealed; this definition has been theoretically justified, taking into account psycho-pedagogical stances and psychomotor senses of students;

- the structure and the characteristics of imaginative and intonational skills have been clarified, and the criteria and indicators of their assessment have been determined;

- the authors of the paper have proved that it is professionally important that students acquire imaginative and intonational skills since they act as an integral part of vocal-and-choral and conducting skills of future music teachers;

- methodical support of choral conducting courses has been further developed in the aspect of developing students’ imaginative and intonational skills.

The practical value of the research lies in the effective validation of the proposed pedagogical conditions and the developed stage-by-stage methodology for developing students’ imaginative and intonational skills in the process of studying choral conducting courses, which ensures the optimization of this process. The materials of the research can be implemented in the practice of higher education institutions and teacher colleges, into the courses on the methods of musical education and choral studies; teacher placements and in music lessons and extracurricular activities in secondary schools.

## **Conclusions**

The analysis of the results obtained from theoretical and experimental studies has confirmed the validity of certain theoretical and methodological stances, showed the prospects for realizing research aim and effective solving research objectives and the dynamics of experimental training results on the development of imaginative and intonational competencies in students.

Relevant pedagogical conditions (creating a comfortable learning environment for vocal and choral training, taking into account psychophysical features of students aged between 18 and 23; studying thoroughly vocal and choral works with the aim to define their artistic images and the nature of reproduction in order to effectively develop

imaginative and intonational competencies; enhancing the process of developing imaginative and intonational competencies by means of choral conducting courses and providing relevant pedagogical guidance of this process) have been determined. It has been proved that only a comprehensive provision of these pedagogical conditions can contribute to solving the problem of developing imaginative and intonational competencies employing choral conducting courses.

Based on the results obtained from the experiment, it has been found that most respondents (41% and 42% respectively) are at low and average levels of imaginative and intonational competencies development; only 17% of the respondents have achieved a high level that proved the insufficient potential of scientific, methodical and vocal practice.

Comparative analysis of the average indicators in CGs and EGs has showed positive dynamics in the achieved levels of imaginative and intonational competencies development in students. Thus, 22% of CG students and 33% of EG students have achieved a high level, with the difference of <11%. Respectively, 44% of CG students and 48% of EG students have achieved an average level, with the difference of <4%. Finally, 34% of CG students and 19% of EG students are at a low level and the difference has decreased >15%. These data were obtained due to a qualitative transition of the respondents to higher levels.

The results obtained from comparative analysis of CG and EG have recorded the dynamics of the proposed methodology for developing imaginative and intonational competencies in students and determined their special significance for the quality of artistic performance of vocal and choral works while studying choral conducting courses and other presentational forms of musical performance. Besides, they have shown effectiveness, practical value and relevance of the proposed methodology.

The results of the conducted research have confirmed originality, effectiveness and the possibility of implementing the proposed methodology into the practice and defined practical value and expediency of the proposed stage-based methodology.

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