

# BEST PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES FOR VOCAL EDUCATION AND CHILDHOOD SINGING: CASE STUDIES OF TWO INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED PROGRAMS

## Thesis summary in English

**PhD thesis title:**

Best psychopedagogical practices for vocal education and childhood singing: case studies of two internationally renowned programs

**Dissertation directors:**

PhD Miguel Ángel Zabalza Beraza and PhD Carol Jean Gillanders

**PhD student:** Lucía Casal de la Fuente (luciadafonte@gmail.com)

Faculty of Educational Sciences - University of Santiago de Compostela

**Direct access to the original PhD thesis, written in Galician language:**

Casal de la Fuente, Lucía (2019). *Boas prácticas psicopedagógicas para a educación vocal e do canto na infancia: estudo de casos en dous programas de referencia internacional* (doctoral dissertation). Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.

<https://www.educacion.gob.es/teseo/mostrarRef.do?ref=1824960>

<http://hdl.handle.net/10347/23285>

### Introduction

Different studies undertaken in Galicia point out that preschool and primary teachers in this region are not prepared to deal with curriculum contents concerning voice and singing. The provision in both formal and non-formal settings in towns like Santiago de Compostela does not include spaces or time for vocal education from the dual perspective of innovation and equity. On the one hand, educating children's voices and singing demands finding innovative approaches that connect with the children's interests as vocal technique is marked by its abstraction. As well, for developmental reasons, it should not be addressed in the same way as with adults. On the other hand, music as a distinctive art and intrinsic human feature part of the "right to education" that everybody is entitled to. Herein lies the equity in education as well as in avoiding turning those musical abilities that should belong to everyone into just the patrimony of a few (even if they are the best); because it will make our lives a richer and pleasant experience. Within the framework of health education, vocal education is part of people's qualities that deserve to be preserved.

For improving the state-of-the art related to vocal and singing education in childhood, I decided to study best educational practices undertaken in national singing programs to transfer them to my region. This research aim goes in line with claims pointed out by prestigious institutions such as UNESCO, BIE, BIDDH, or the Council of Europe, which

declare that the visibility of examples of the best educational practices are needed so as to inspire educational policies.

The **theoretical framework** is divided into three different chapters.

The first one is called **“Best educational practices in childhood”**. It deals with the epistemological concept of “practice” and its conception in education and in teaching. A review of the teaching conceptions throughout history is undertaken (from the model of transmission to learning ecologies), with a special focus on the relationship between conceptions and beliefs. I also offer an overview of the concept “best practices”, studying its definition including Paulo Freire’s conceptualisation of “praxis”, and examine research interests (or research lines) in childhood and education. I pay direct attention to the research on best educational practices and on some research proposals to identify, make visible, and transfer best practices.

The second chapter is called **“The value of vocal and singing education on human development”** and discusses the vocal development in human beings (particularly focused on childhood), some historical notes on vocal education, the importance of singing and song in childhood education, and the challenges teachers may face when teaching vocal education and singing to children. Additionally, I point out that vocal education and singing is a cross-curricular topic: I refer to health education and the role schools play in prevention for the wellbeing of children, where the Arts also take a central place, especially related to emotional education. Teachers’ initial and continuing training, the role that singing assumed in the different historical stages, and the psychopedagogical approaches on teaching singing are examined. The possibilities for voice and singing education other than in schools are also detailed, to finally finish this chapter insisting on the benefits of educating our voices and exercising singing.

In the third chapter, **“Best practices in vocal and singing education in childhood”**, I delve into the particularities of the best practices in this field, highlighting the relevance of creating rich learning environments, and taking into account some approaches that research confirmed as helpful to overcome some challenges teachers need to face. I also look at the best practices to success in group singing, and at the distinction of two elements that, in my opinion, must be intrinsic to vocal and singing education: innovation and equity. In the first place, I analyse innovation (as an educational factor) exploring concepts such as creativity and didactic research as well as different innovative initiatives that promote singing in Europe. Afterwards, I examine equity (as a social factor) from the inspection of concepts like “opportunity diversification” and “inclusive education” to some initiatives that promote music education and singing with equity as the touchstone. To finish, I establish a relation of characteristics that embrace both innovation and equity in the promotion of singing, their educational considerations, and some final reflections on the meaning of doing research on the best vocal and singing educational practices.

This thesis is articulated in **three dimensions**, from which the seven research questions are established.

### **Dimension 1: Voice education as a key factor in health education in childhood**

Today we know that there is a high probability that half of the population in the world will suffer from dysphonia or vocal disorders at least once in life. For professionals who use their voice in their daily work (like teachers) the risk is much higher. Traditionally, vocal education was neither one of the priorities of teachers’ initial nor continuing training (a reality that seems not to have changed) and was only linked to music education. However, it has been demonstrated that singing and song can be very useful resources for cross-cutting

teaching, regardless of teaching music or other curricular subjects. Also, the exercise of singing proved to be able to generate a series of valuable benefits, especially for human beings' health. But we should take into consideration that the way teachers speak and sing acts as a model for their students. That is why we should look at their practices and examine the training possibilities they have at their disposal since research warns us that both teachers and children suffer more and more from vocal dysphonia. And the consequences of vocal problems point out not only to physical problems but to psychological and emotional ones too, such as unbalanced self-esteem and limitations to participation. Framing vocal education into health education, a cross-curricular theme to work in the schools, we asked ourselves:

*1a. What is the connection between vocal education and health education?*

*1b. How can we move from vocal education to singing education in order to contribute to health education?*

To answer these questions we drew upon the existing literature, through reflexivity, to suggest an approach to frame vocal and singing education into one of the cross-curricular topics that school should address: health education.

## **Dimension 2: Best practices as a model to design activities that guarantee quality, innovation, equity, and effectiveness**

Schools must boost active music practices through the use of voice and the sound possibilities and movement of the body, but research informs us that there is a lack of studies about how vocal and singing education is being taught. Herein lies the need to undertake research on best practices so that we can count on examples that enlighten the characteristics of the training teachers really need. Nevertheless, this training should not only be focused on vocal technique, but also in ways to make it accessible to all children, no matter what their capabilities and backgrounds are. Accordingly, schools are the ideal setting in which to offer and guarantee opportunities to access certain activities, since all children are bound to attend school. That is why a national singing program based in schools may benefit more children than in any other setting.

To define examples of the best teaching practices about this topic the data collection has been undertaken in two countries with national singing programs: Argentina and England, so I opted for a multiple and transversal case study. These countries were also chosen since the singing programs were school-based, freely accessible for children, supported by governments, planned under a strong pedagogical corpus of knowledge, and had demonstrated a wide repertoire of benefits for participants. Using the snowball technique and the expert judgement, I got a non-probabilistic sample of 15 informants.

- The first case study was carried out in 2015 in Buenos Aires. The expert that informed me on examples of best practices was the teacher Analía Bas, former president of the Argentinian section of FLADEM. The practices were observed in choruses of the *National Programme of Orchestras and Chorus for the Bicentenary*, which is active since 2010. I observed the practice of 5 teachers in 11 sessions, and deeply interviewed one of them. I also captured an example of best practices in an intensive weekend training for both teachers and children in the region of Río Negro, based on the use of a children's pilot choir.

- The second case study was undertaken in 2016 in London. My main informant was Prof. Graham Welch, expert on vocal pedagogy. He passed me on to personnel of the *Sing Up Programme*, of which he had been an evaluator, to select outstanding teachers that had participated in the program. *Sing Up* was active from 2007 to 2012, now existing as an organization that offers didactic resources for vocal education and singing. I observed the practice of 3 teachers again in 11 sessions, and interviewed one of them. Additionally, I

interviewed the project manager and the music advisor (who had also worked for the *Sing Up Programme*) of the *World Voice Programme*, an initiative of the British Council.

Research on teaching reports that practice is built upon teachers' beliefs and experiences, where training acquires a relevant weight. The first three research questions linked to the second dimension are all related to teachers who, under expert judgement, are considered as "an example of best practices" in vocal and singing education, and the last one is related to the management of national singing programs.

*2a. What are the most singular characteristics of these teachers' trajectories and beliefs about teaching practices?*

To answer this question I used the data driven from the in-depth transcriptions of the interviews done to two of the teachers (one per case study) indicated as being an example of "best practices" by the experts.

*2b. What are the features of the best practices in teachers' vocal and singing training, both for preschool and primary levels?*

To respond to this question I used the data derived from the thorough transcriptions of all the activities carried out in the intensive weekend training for teachers and children of the Argentinian program. The instructors of these workdays were also indicated as being example of "best practices" in vocal and singing education with children.

*2c. What are the hallmarks of best practices in the didactics of vocal and singing education in childhood?*

To reply to this question I used the data derived from the in-depth transcriptions of four sessions in schools (two per case study, chosen on purpose so that they illustrate the widest variety of exercises possible) led by teachers indicated as being example of "best practices" by the experts.

For this specific question I used mixed methods, an embedded QUALquan design. After doing the observations in the schools (participant where I was allowed to film, and non-participant where I was only allowed to audio record the sessions), filming and recording the sessions, I transcribed them and registered the duration of each exercise. Each of the exercises was then labelled with a name and classified into different kinds of activities<sup>1</sup>. For this categorisation I previously established *etic* or theory-driven categories (such as exercises of relaxation and breathing), while the others that later on will be specified arose from the data (these are the *emic* or data-driven categories). In the logic of grounded theory, all the new emerging categories were determined through the constant comparative method, which means that the categories had been subjected to a process of continuous improvement during the whole research. The categories went also through processes of subtraction and reduction for their classification and hierarchical organization. Meanwhile, the numbers arisen from the quantification of the time dedicated to each exercise complemented the categories in which the exercises were classified, and were processed with the spreadsheet program Excel.

---

<sup>1</sup> For instance, an exercise that consisted on telling a story with body language and voice (but not using words, just onomatopoeic sounds and gestures) was named as "Telling stories with onomatopoeias", and was classified into the vocal warm-up activities, which in turn were allocated under the "area of vocal work" identified as "Phonation".

*2d. What are the peculiarities of the planning of best practices for an efficient organization and management of national singing programs?*

To answer this question I used the data derived from the transcription of the interview carried out in the British Council with the project manager and the music advisor of the World Voice Programme.

With regard to the interviews, I must underline that, after the transcription, the texts went through a process of codification with the qualitative software program MAXQDA. By doing so I was able to identify the pedagogical rules and beliefs of each of the teachers, and the key elements to organize and manage a national singing program. All these ideas were supported with the verbatim taken directly from the transcripts, which added validity to the study. It is important to highlight that although the gross results are exposed firstly in each case study (Chapter 6 for Argentina, and Chapter 7 for England), the answer to the questions and the conclusions are founded as a conglomerate that gathers the characteristics of the practices and beliefs examined in both case studies.

### **Dimension 3: The creation of an inclusive, innovative, and equitable psychopedagogical project on vocal and singing education**

Once the opportunities for vocal and singing education in Santiago de Compostela were studied, I found that the educational provision is neither equitable nor innovative. As it is more effective to intervene in childhood to reduce inequalities than in any other stage, I started a pilot project called “Voces Ledas” based in a state pre- and primary school to be able to study the processes of transference and adaptation of the best practices studied to a diverse context, as well as to innovate in some of their elements. The activity was free for all the children who desired to join, and we did not do any admission tests. Considering that singing ability develops in rich contexts, we did not want any children out of the project if not passing the test. Actually, for me the test itself is the day-to-day pathway, and the filter is actually natural, since generally only the ones with great interest in singing will remain, both skilled and not so skilled. The research question for this third dimension was as follows, and will help us to define a set of principles around which to establish the philosophy of a vocal and singing education project from the innovation and equity perspective:

*3. What could the psychopedagogical bases of an inclusive, innovative and equitable vocal and singing education be?*

To answer this question I undertook an action research to experience the process of transferability of practices and to make an intervention for improving teaching practices. The main goal was to design, implement, and evaluate an action research model to make more innovative and inclusive the access to vocal and singing education from a health education perspective, where vocal hygiene and care habits played a central role, for which a digital didactic tale was created. Four adults were involved: the music teacher of the school (whose specialization is the piano, not the voice), a vocal and singing advisor (the singing and ear training specialist of the University of Santiago de Compostela), a singing teacher (whose main role was to individualize the teaching-learning processes), and me (as the group teacher). This experience consisted on a 1-hour a week extracurricular vocal and singing workshop for children of primary education. All the sessions were firstly planned, validated by the advisor, implemented, evaluated, and redesigned by me after the evaluation, with the inclusion of proposals for improvement. In this process reflexivity and reflection on professional practice were the main components. The contents and methodology followed the logic of vocal technique, which means: bodymind work (with a special focus on relaxation and breathing exercises), phonation work (with vocalizations and the encouragement of vocal

exploration), and repertoire (which was democratically chosen between the advisor and the children). The workshop was developed in the music room of the school, with my presence and the music teacher's presence, who was taking advantage of this *in situ* training, and who also had opportunities to put into practice what she was learning in real time. While the session developed, the children received individualized feedback and feedforward in a room next to the music room in groups of three and for about 10 minutes. This work was done by the singing teacher, who guided the children mainly in their body posture, breathing, vocal emission, and ear training.

With the aim of offering guidelines to teacher training, and making examples of best practice visible and accessible, the **general objectives** of this thesis are:

- To find, document, analyse, and make visible practices of teachers that are “an example of best practices” in the didactics of vocal education and singing in childhood in countries with national singing programs.
- To establish the psychopedagogical bases of an inclusive, innovative, and equitable vocal education and singing project for children.

These goals were attained classifying and defining the beliefs, structure, methodology, and contents followed by the teachers which we observed in their classes; analysing the management of the national singing programs; studying the processes of transferability of good practices, and writing a protocol-guide of best practices for the didactics of the singing voice and vocal education in childhood from the perspective of innovation, equity and inclusion, to encompass all children. Thus the main goals settle on the **specific objectives**:

- To know, classify, and define the structure, methodology, and contents followed by teachers who are “an example of best practices” in their lessons, and the singularities of their trajectories and beliefs.
- To develop a protocol-guide of best practices for the didactics of vocal and singing education in childhood.
  - To analyse the grounds of the national singing programs in Argentina and England.
  - To study the processes of transferability of best practices.
  - To design, implement, and evaluate a pilot project about voice and singing education in a pre- and primary school based in Santiago de Compostela, as an example of transfer and adaptation of best practices.

Due to the singularities of this study, and in harmony with the theoretical framework, we opted for an **emergent qualitative design** with no initial hypothesis. This research can be situated between the interpretative paradigm (through a case study), and the socio-critical paradigm (through action research), since the pilot project proved its operability, which means that the absence of more experiences like this is due to a lack of political will. The whole research was a knowledge capturing process, starting from the identification and the capture of the practices, to later being shared and applied. These last two steps find their real function in the action research.

The **data collection techniques** for the whole study were: observation, interview, and document review; and the instruments used were: me (as a researcher who interprets the data gathered); field diary and notes, video, audio, and photography records; two semi-structured interviews (one for the teachers and one for the staff of the British Council), and two report templates to analyse the practices. It is worth noting that the general model of the interviews and the report templates were taken from a research project in which I worked called: “Curriculum design and good practices in early childhood education: an international,

multicultural and interdisciplinary approach”, financed by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness.

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the research was organized in six **phases**:

1. January-August 2014: I started with the literature review, and delimited the research stays and the first draft of the research phases. I also did a research stay in Brno (Czech Republic) to get familiarized with the instruments of the research project above-mentioned, as a pilot phase for my research, and finished the bachelor thesis.
2. September 2014-June 2016: the working plan was established, the theoretical grounding was organized, and the two research stays in Argentina and England were carried out to do the data gathering, concluding the capture of the best practices. Besides, I started to transcribe the data and to write up the theoretical framework.
3. July-November 2016: I continued doing the transcriptions of both the observations and the interviews, and travelled to Brazil to study some music education initiatives from the equity point of view.
4. December 2016-June 2017: I designed and implemented the pilot project of “[Voces Ledas](#)”, continued with the transcriptions, and started the data analysis.
5. July 2017-June 2018: I finished the transcriptions and the analyses, the case studies were written up, and the psychopedagogical bases of “[Voces Ledas](#)” were set up.
6. July 2018-September 2019: I wrote the interpretation of the results and the conclusions. I also prepared and edited the final report of the research.

### **Conclusions**

I have organized the conclusions according to the order of the research questions displayed above. The conclusions number 1 to 6 summarize the answers to the research questions, and the last ones are more general conclusions.

1. Vocal and singing education has always been present throughout the history of education, but it was traditionally framed into music education. However, vocal and singing education transcends the musical contents and the hours devoted to music in the school curriculum. That is why we can say that vocal and singing education is a young field into health education as a generalist and cross-cutting area that is possible to address from educational settings as pre- and primary schools. On the basis of the current Galician curriculums for preschool and primary education, in preschool it can be implemented especially from both the curricular areas of “Languages: communication and representation”, and “Self-knowledge and personal autonomy”; and in primary, from the linguistic areas, artistic education, and natural sciences.
2. As long as the scientific logic of vocal technique is the main axis of both the structural planning and the educational training in this field, vocal and singing education will contribute to benefit the health of people who exercise it at different levels such as physical, psychoemotional, social, musical, and educational.
3. Best practices in vocal and singing education tend to appear in cultural and institutional contexts that promote, finance, and appreciate them, which helps to reinforce the bonds with the social and cultural context of the institution where they come from. In broad terms, the characteristics of the best teaching practices studied focus on vocal health care, on the regular attendance of the students to the lessons, on the creation of learning environments where the logic of vocal technique and the group cohesion prevail, on the establishment of a dynamic of work that facilitates the progress, and on the creation of inter- and intra-institutional relations for the enhancement of the educational experiences. The strong points of the practices analysed mainly point out to the simultaneously ease in the development of different skills both in teachers and children, the innovation in the approaches for vocal and

singing education in childhood, and the quality of the musical experiences; whereas the weak points are the little external control exercised over the teachers' daily practice, and the scarce visibility of the practices, which implies a low potential of transferability to other contexts.

4. Best practices on vocal and singing education in childhood are defined at least around three elements: the teachers' conceptions and beliefs on the meaning of vocal and singing education in this vital stage, the teachers' training on this topic, and the teachers' practical performance in the classrooms.

4.1. The didactics of vocal and singing education in childhood is conditioned and regulated by the teachers' ideas and beliefs on childhood, education, and singing; and by the training they had done.

4.1.1. In this study we conclude that the teachers who are "an example of best practices" have a thorough repertoire on beliefs and ideas about teaching and on the meaning of vocal and singing education in childhood. The repertoire is adjusted, coherent, and consistent with the realities in which they practice; that is why it is possible to represent it through the relationships between the beliefs and the practices, and the beliefs with the beliefs themselves and the ideas. The analyses of teachers' beliefs lead us to show that it is urgent to create plans to develop a greater social and educational commitment with the Arts. These plans should include experiences of higher quality, expressly group singing practices that respond to the factors of innovation and equity, for which purpose teachers must count on psychopedagogical and music-vocal training.

4.1.2. The training and professional pathways of the teachers "example of best practices" do not follow a similar pattern. This denotes that it is possible to find good teaching examples in practitioners with diverse professional profiles. Notwithstanding, and taking into account that the two teachers in-depth examined studied in different vital times, they agree that the initial training in the different official degrees that lead to teaching is not enough to practice teaching. This is the reason why they emphasize the need to do complementary training during the whole life and ask for support in communities of practice or music and/or teaching hubs.

4.2. Best practices in vocal and singing training for preschool and primary teachers can be described in three areas of work, which are in turn divided into two phases since the training is grounded on the logic of vocal technique: Phase 1 (in which the areas Body and Mind and Phonation are comprised), and Phase 2 (which corresponds to the area Repertoire). Teachers' training should offer training time with and without children. Firstly, this means that teachers should go through training with children, as if they were children, and becoming part of the general group. And secondly, this implies that teachers should have training moments without the presence of children and only with instructors of a minimum of three basic specialities for the dynamization of group vocal and singing education: choral conducting, vocal technique, and music theory. It is optimum if in this training the teachers can directly work with a real children's choir (what is called a pilot choir) for practicing *in situ* under the guidance of the instructors. The teaching issues are the more common activities in the exclusive training with the instructors and without the children, the theoretical or the theoretical-practical reflections being the most recurrent type of activities.

4.3. Beyond the beliefs and the teachers' training, the teachers' practical performance into the classrooms also defines the best practices in the didactics of the vocal and singing education in childhood. This practical performance can be described in terms of the activities planned and implemented. These activities -all of them based on the logic of vocal technique- can be grouped in different areas of work and belong to one of the two phases. The weight of the areas can differ from one session to another according to the



planning and the needs that emerge at the moment while the session is developing. The preparatory or warming-up phase is the Phase 1, to which between 13 and 34% of the overall length of the class is dedicated. Within this phase two areas of work can be differentiated. The first one is the area Body and Mind, in which we can distinguish activities on body stretching, body disposition, relaxation, and breathing. These exercises take on average between 1 and 10% of the total of the session. The second one is the area Phonation, in which we can basically encompass activities of vocal-ear training and general vocal warm-up, within which it is possible to differentiate between vocal exploration, vocal interaction, and *vocalizzo*. The exercises of this area usually cover between 6 and 24% of the general duration of the class. The Phase 2 is addressed to the work on concrete musical pieces and matches up to the area of work called Repertoire, in which song is the most common activity. To both this phase (Phase 2) and area (Repertoire) between 37 and 63% of the total of the session is dedicated. But in the vocal and singing education classes that are “an example of best practices” there are also another two areas of work not directly linked to singing or vocal exercise. These are the area Other Activities and the area Other Moments. In the first one, educational and/or learning activities are put into practice, whose main goal is not related to vocal work. Some examples are: issues related to the organization of the session, the realization of group dynamics, time for the development of the “to know how to be” skill -what I labelled as “choral discipline”-, and musical and body language activities. An average of 4 to 9% of the complete duration of the class is dedicated to this area. And in second place, all the non-structured and non-openly-linked to intentional training activities are included. This is the case of the beginning of the sessions, and the rests and micro-rests done during the sessions. This last area tends to take between 9 and 30% of the total length of the sessions, a high disparity that can be explained in terms of the duration of the session. This way, the duration of a session is directly proportional to the weight given to the area Other Moments, which means that the longest is a class, the highest proportion of the global length of it will be taken by this area. In any case, the joint addition of Phase 1 and Phase 2 (phases that bring together the areas of direct work of the logic of vocal technique and singing voice) is between 65 and 82% of the absolute time of each class, logically enough with the typology of practices we are studying.

5. The psychopedagogical and organizational peculiarities that should prevail in an effective management of national singing programs come together around three phases: the analysis of the context (in which the characteristics of the place where we intend to start up a program are studied); the design of the program (in which the goals, the coordination plan, the staff's training, and the strategies that will let us to maintain the principles are -among others-fixed), and the concretion of the practices (in which the design of the program is tested out). It is recommendable for this last phase to start with a pilot experience that will let the coordinating group detect the strengths and weaknesses of the original proposal in order to improve it. In all this process the contextualization looms very large, so that the joint actions (such as the elaboration of didactic materials or the development of evaluation plans) are as realistic as possible, with the aim of satisfying the needs previously detected.

6. The psychopedagogical bases of a vocal and singing education project situated in Galicia that supports the principles of innovation and equity (like “Voces Ledas”) may be assembled over two cross-cutting and educational factors that, in my opinion, should not be missing: the use of Galician language as the main communicative vehicle, and the feminist foundations as the framework of the actions. The educational principles of this project, which are extensible to any proposal that shares our ideals, have to do with the focus on the teaching-learning processes -which should tend to autotelism-, with the healthy and innovative exploration of the logic of vocal technique, with the open nature of the experience

and without admission tests, with the presence of two teachers working simultaneously so that the individualized attention to children can be done at the same time whilst the whole class is being implemented, and with the creation of teachers' *in situ* training and follow-up opportunities, and communities of practice for the lifelong learning.

7. The creation of joints and structures that lead to the access to vocal and singing education from the double innovative (satisfying the educational factors) and equitable (meeting the social factors) perspective as an innovative way to promote health education in childhood is necessary. The arguments that support this conclusion find their pillars on the existing inequality in the provision of music education and in the access to an innovative and equitable vocal and singing education, and also in the fact that all children -regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds to which they belong- must count on opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument, to make music with other people, and to learn to sing in high-quality educational environments, seeking to impact positively in their communities.

8. In view of the status quo of the teachers' and children's training and health problems related to voice, we must thoroughly review:

8.1. The initial teachers' training, in which the consideration of a basic vocal education to teach -regardless the curricular speciality- is immanently imperative. Preschool and primary teachers in Galicia lack expertise to deal with contents concerning voice and singing. This structural problem should be addressed in initial teacher training.

8.2. The diversification of continuous training. Given the potential for the professional development, it is absolutely indispensable to have the creation and the impulse of communities of practice as a supporting element in the development of leadership and other skills amongst practitioners devoted to general education and/or specifically to musical/vocal education. It is also important to reinforce the idea to network for local innovation, inside a framework of central and extension roles that allow the consistency of the provision and the equality of opportunities for all children. Even though we should start from schools, for this scenario being normally the first contact with music that children experiment, we must admit that the educational centres cannot do everything concerning music education. That is why we suggest the need to construct an educational and musical infrastructure with the creation of local communities, where such networks are strengthened and where more opportunities are forged for the access to vocal and singing education on the part of society.