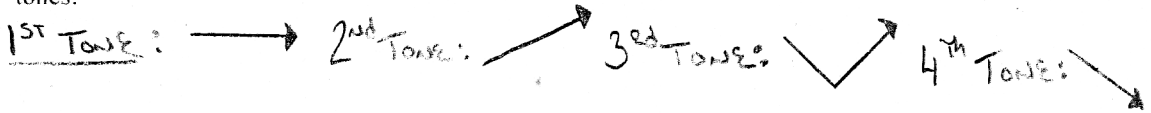


# Learning Aid: Pronunciation of Taiwanese and Mandarin texts for Orchid Ensemble's choir collaboration repertoire:

Below is an original system of teaching vowel sounds for the purpose of learning texts associated with the Orchid Ensemble's choir repertoire. This system does not imitate, reference or attempt to be true to any existing system. It is merely a tool to pronounce the Mandarin and Taiwanese texts **as accurately as possible**.

Orchid Ensemble has also provided a CD with the texts being properly spoken. Always refer to this aural aid and **do your best to be true to what you hear**, as in some instances the accurate transliteration of a sound or word is very difficult or impossible.

Naturally, when speaking we must be true to the tones associated with specific words and their meanings. However, since the words are sung rather than spoken, the tones do not apply as we follow the shape of the melody rather than the proper tones designated to specific words. Although Taiwanese has 8 separate tones we have chosen to introduce only the 4 used in Mandarin. When listening to the spoken text on the CD you may be interested in listening for and distinguishing the following distinct tones:



## Vowel pronunciation key:

— —  
A or a as in 'say'

∪ ∪  
A or a as in 'father'

^ ^  
A or a as in 'ran'

— —  
E or e as in 'see'

∪ ∪  
E or e as in 'bed'

— —  
O or o as in 'row'

∪ ∪  
O or o as in 'song'

— —  
OW or ow as in 'how'

— —  
I or i as in 'tie'

∪ ∪  
I or i as in 'win'

— —  
U or u as in 'you'

∪ ∪  
U or u as in 'sung'

¨ ¨  
Ü or ü as in 'put'

When encountering 2 vowel sounds next to each other (eg.  $\bar{E}\bar{O}$  or  $\bar{E}\bar{U}$ ), move through the vowel sounds as smoothly as possible, trying to make it sound like just 1 vowel.

When encountering the consonant (B)M start the sound with the mouth closed. This is a very light consonant sound.

Many of the consonant sounds are very light, especially at the end of words. Try to listen to the spoken words to distinguish which consonant sounds are harder and which are lighter.