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Lessons from Vocal Instruction

In teaching violin, generally one does not give pupils specific exercises for beautiful tone similar to the daily vocalization exercises given to singers. I do not understand why. I maintain that the method of vocal instruction suggests a guide for violin instruction.

It might be said that those who play difficult violin concertos without beautiful tone are like those who sing difficult music without emphasis on *beauty* of tone.

There is a common belief that good tone will be acquired naturally in due course and that teaching should stress techniques of violin playing. I believe it is necessary to give pupils special instruction in how to produce good tone.

I believe that tone exercises must be added to the study of the violin. I know that the most excellent teachers always devote time to tone study in their teaching.

The establishment of such a system of tone production to guide the beginner—similar to systems used in voice production—is the object of my book *Tonalization*.

Shinichi Suzuki

Various Tone Colors



Exercises for Positioning of the Bow

The nearer the bow to the bridge, the more the overtones increase, causing greater volume.

The author of *Kreisler* says in his book that Mr. Kreisler often played near the bridge.

The following facts can be observed about the various positions of bowing indicated in the picture above:

1. The nearer the bridge, the greater the resistance of tension.
2. The nearer the bridge, the greater the overtone presence.
3. The nearer the fingerboard, the softer the tone.
4. Thus, if the bow is away from the bridge, a soft tone results.