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TYPE: Article CC:CCG

JOURNAL TITLE: Kodaly envoy

USER JOURNAL TITLE: Kodály envoy

ARTICLE TITLE: Variations of Place: A Comparison of Two Kodály-Inspired Curricular Texts

ARTICLE AUTHOR: Box, Corrie

VOLUME: 41

ISSUE: 3

MONTH:

YEAR: 2015-04-01

PAGES: 10-

ISSN: 1084-1776

OCLC #:

Processed by RapidX: 12/30/2015 11:38:35 AM

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Author's Note: In this article, there were two minor issues that did not pertain to the purpose of the article.

First, I provided erroneous information about Lois Choksy's involvement in KMTI. In my original thesis I do not make that assertion (<http://www.corriebox.com/writing.html>). I apologize for the confusion. Choksy did provide advice to Philip Tacka and both were teachers in the same school district.

Second, regarding the connection between KMTI and KCA, evidently multiple opinions exist. For example, a Historical Note for the KCA archives at the University of Maryland says, "The Kodály Center of America was founded by Denise Bacon in April 1977 as a continuation of the Kodály Musical Training Institute, founded in 1969" (<http://digital.lib.umd.edu/archivesum/actions.DisplayEADDoc.do?source=/MdU.ead.scpa.0163.xml&style=ead>). More research needs to be conducted to provide accurate documentation of the history of the Kodály movement from all points of view.

Variations of Place: Kodály-Inspired



In the middle of the 20th century, Zoltán Kodály wanted to improve the musicianship of his fellow Hungarians. Kodály and his colleagues collected best practices from Europe and folk music from his native Hungary to fulfill both practical and philosophical goals (Kodály, 1974). Kodály recruited teachers to develop his ideas and established a Hungarian approach to music education. Jean Sinor (1986) elaborated: “Among his [Kodály’s] many gifts were the abilities to recognize a problem, to identify the path toward a solution, and to inspire the appropriate persons to work for it” (p. 37).

In subsequent decades, North American teachers adapted their philosophy and approach from Kodály and his colleagues for the North American context, beginning with Mary Helen Richards. While the following is not an exhaustive list, examples of publications that represent North American efforts to develop curricular resources include *Threshold to Music* (Richards, 1964), *Kodály: 35 Lesson Plans and Folk Song Supplement* (Zemke, 1976), *Conversational Solfege* (Feierabend, 2001), *An American Methodology* (Eisen & Robertson, 2002), *The Kodály Method*, 3rd edition, by Lois Choksy (1999) and *Kodály Today* by Mícheál Houlahan and Philip Tacka (2008), the two texts discussed in this article.

The books listed above are curricular texts the authors developed from particular perspectives for specific purposes. All educators interact with their past and present and,

ideally, strive for future growth, evolving from their beliefs and the needs of the moment (Eyre, 2009). To better understand authors’ rationale for and use of curricular resources, I will compare *The Kodály Method*, 3rd edition, by Lois Choksy (1999) and *Kodály Today* by Mícheál Houlahan and Philip Tacka (2008) to explore how place influenced their respective works.

Meaning and Usage of Terms

In this article, some of the terms are used in somewhat different ways than might be expected.

Curriculum

The term *curriculum* in this article refers not only to a written framework but also a plan for implementation. My broader definition of curriculum is based on Walker and Soltis’s idea that a curriculum encompasses “the purposes, content, activities, and organization inherent in the educational program of that school and in what teachers offer in their classrooms” (2009, p. 1). Because I use a broader definition for curriculum, I refer to specific publications that assist teachers with curriculum development, such as the books analyzed in this article, as curricular texts.

Place and Space

Agnew (2011, p. 18) states that *space* refers to a location. That location can include

a geographical region, state, or even a particular room. Space can also refer to virtual locations, such as Facebook or Twitter. Other examples of space in education include a classroom, a curricular text, a professional development workshop, or an organization. In contrast, Cresswell gives *place* a philosophical meaning: the meaning ascribed by an individual to a space (2008, p. 134).

In this article, I use the term space to refer to generic aspects of the authors’ backgrounds and the selected curricular texts. For example, Choksy, Houlahan, and Tacka were all university professors who engaged in teacher education for both preservice and in-service teachers. All authors also continued to teach children to varying degrees. The authors developed curricular texts in the context of an era of school music education provided for children in which books and other materials were used to inform classroom practices.

There are several perspectives on the philosophical meaning of place. According to Malpas, “Humans make places to suit themselves, and often to suit others like themselves . . . This is why the making of places is ultimately part of the shaping of people” (1998, p. 5). A space might exist as a different place for each individual, depending on who the individual is and the functional meaning the space holds for that individual. Jung and Jung suggest that “space is to place what house is to home” (1989, p. 88). Individuals hold unique

A Comparison of Two



Curricular Texts

By Corrie Box

beliefs and assumptions about a space that arise from a particular background or place.

Because of the static nature of publication, a curricular text cements the ideas and beliefs of the author in time, creating a map of a particular place in their thinking. Stauffer (2009) suggests that daily music teaching in the classroom is a lived place, fluid and dynamic, which changes according to each unique context. A curricular text or document, on the other hand, is a fixed place, reflecting an author's thinking at a particular place in time. Stauffer advises that "a curriculum document might inform practice, but cannot *be* practice of either curriculum or pedagogy" (2009, p. 184).

Place refers to the beliefs, experiences, and context at a given point in time that infuse meaning into the authors' published work. I explore the influence of place through the lived places of the authors of both texts, as well as the fixed places of their respective curricular texts, exploring particular similarities and differences.

Method

Data for my comparison largely originates from my master's thesis (Box, 2010) in which I conducted content analysis of both curricular texts. I labeled every page in each curricular text with a category and statistically analyzed the results to determine

the mode of frequency for each category. I reported results in a percentage format to indicate the amount of pages labeled for each category in comparison to the entire document, so I use "frequency" instead of "volume" throughout the document. I then compared the results that delineated the frequency of the pages authors used for each category. Data from overall themes and discrete categories are compared in table 1.

For triangulation, I supported content analysis with interviews and personal communication with each author, as well as Jerry Jaccard, who is a student and colleague of Choksy, and Patricia Moreno, who is a student and colleague of Houlahan and Tacka. I did not equate quantity with quality of content; greater frequency does not necessarily mean greater value. However, a quantitative comparison provided a more objective place from which to conduct analysis. For this article, I selected only aspects of the findings most essential for our understanding of the place of the two curricular texts.¹

Comparison of Lived Places: Beliefs, Backgrounds, and Goals

In this section, I compare aspects of place between Choksy and Houlahan and Tacka and consider commonalities and differences in beliefs, backgrounds, and goals.

Data were gathered from literature and personal communication with the authors and other individuals closely acquainted with the authors' lives and work.

Common Place: Philosophical Beliefs

All three authors have been or currently are professors in higher academic institutions. Choksy, Houlahan, and Tacka also studied the Hungarian system for teaching music (also known as the Kodály approach) in Hungary for an extended period of time. Tacka was a student of Choksy at the Kodály Musical Training Institute and the Kodály Center of America. All three individuals have published and presented extensively about the Kodály approach.

Choksy, Houlahan, and Tacka all concurred about specific elements in their philosophy of Kodály pedagogy and teacher education. First, both author groups wanted to make the "masterpieces of world (music) literature public property" (Kodály, 1974, p. 160), following the initiative from Kodály frequently cited in publications. According to Choksy, "There is a world of great music to be lost if we do not bring it to our children and our children to it!" (2003, p. 6). Houlahan and Tacka surmised that selection of high-quality repertoire is even more critical in contemporary school

Table 1. Category Frequency in The Kodály Method (N = 543) and Kodály Today (N = 629)

| Category | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| | Curriculum | |
| | % | % |
| Curriculum Development | 6.1% | 1.6% |
| Curriculum Implementation | 2.9% | 24.7% |
| Evaluation | 0.0% | 2.4% |
| Lesson Plans | 8.5% | 4.8% |
| Pedagogical Tools | 7.2% | 24.3% |
| Song Material Development | 0.7% | 2.7% |
| <i>Curriculum Total</i> | 25.4% | 60.5% |
| | Music Concepts | |
| Harmony | 3.3% | 1.4% |
| Melody | 8.5% | 1.4% |
| Rhythm | 7.7% | 1.4% |
| Sound Characteristics | 1.3% | 0.0% |
| <i>Music Concepts Total</i> | 20.8% | 4.2% |
| | Music Skills | |
| Creative Expression | 2.2% | 1.4% |
| Instrument Performance | 0.0% | 0.2% |
| Listening | 7.6% | 0.6% |
| Memory | 0.0% | 0.5% |
| Movement | 0.2% | 1.9% |
| Part-work | 1.3% | 1.3% |
| Singing | 0.2% | 2.9% |
| <i>Music Skills Total</i> | 11.5% | 8.8% |
| | Organization | |
| Book Organization | 2.2% | 1.6% |
| Front Matter | 3.3% | 1.9% |
| Index | 3.5% | 3.5% |
| <i>Organization Total</i> | 9.0% | 7.0% |
| | Personal Perspectives | |
| Historical Background | 5.3% | 0.3% |
| Philosophy | 3.1% | 4.6% |
| <i>Personal Perspectives Total</i> | 8.4% | 4.9% |
| | Resources | |
| Choral Literature | 0.0% | 0.5% |
| Suggested Resources | 0.0% | 5.9% |
| Song Material | 20.6% | 7.5% |
| <i>Resources Total</i> | 20.6% | 13.9% |
| Total for Curricular Text | 100% | 100% |

Note: Overall emerging themes included curriculum, music concepts, music skills, organization, personal perspectives, and resources. More detailed analysis of frequencies can be found in thesis (Box, 2010).

settings in which music educators only meet with their students once or twice a week (2008, p. 217). Both author groups provided examples of their ideas of high-quality repertoire throughout both texts. Song material in both curricular texts includes children's songs from indigenous people, folk music, and Western art music. *Kodály Today* also includes selections of jazz, blues, and other music genres as additional pedagogical options.

Both author groups emphasized that effective music education requires a well-trained musician and hard work on the part of the teacher. Choksy advocated, "We should have the best musicians teaching the youngest children" (2003, p. 9). Houlahan and Tacka also emphasized that music students learn the best from teachers who are also excellent musicians (2008, p. 20). While both texts say that all types of instruments can be used in the classroom, singing should form the foundation of students' work. Singing uses the instrument we are all born with, the human voice (Choksy, 2003).

While both author groups advocated use of a sequence for teaching concepts of traditional notation, both author groups stressed that their sequence was not the most important thing. First, Choksy, Houlahan, and Tacka emphasized that the primary goal should be engagement with music. Choksy emphasized that "pedagogy was only the vehicle. The destination was music" (2003, p. 8). Patricia Moreno, a former student and current colleague of Houlahan and Tacka, concurred that the authors' main goal in *Kodály Today* was to foster more music making without a reliance on drills for classroom learning (personal communication, July 14, 2010). Second, both author groups stated that each teacher should consider the curricular texts only a guide or a tool for planning a classroom curriculum for a specific context or place. Tacka emphasized that teachers needed to find their own patterns: "You follow a basic recipe when you're cooking but you make the end product really distinctive and your own by adding your own creativity to it" (personal communication, March 20, 2010). Houlahan added "The goal was never to say 'this is the way to do it.' The goal was 'try and understand the

process” (personal communication, March 20, 2010).

Differences in Background

Differences between both author groups emerged in areas of personal experience, historical time and place, geographical location, and integration of other cognitive theorists in the pedagogical process. Choksy was part of the first generation of North American teachers who studied for an extended period in Hungary and helped found the Organization of American Kodály Educators (Ries, 2010). She was a professor at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada, and the University of Texas for many years. Choksy gathered the best strategies from her continued experiences with the Hungarian system of music education, also known as the Kodály approach. In my interview with Jerry Jaccard, he shared how Choksy found students of Zoltán Kodály, learned their techniques, and then adapted Hungarian techniques for students in the classroom with whom she continually taught throughout her career (personal communication, June 25, 2010).

Tacka was part of the second generation of Kodály educators who attended the Kodály Music Training Institute (which later became the Kodály Center of America). While a professor at Georgetown University, Tacka cotaught a course in educational psychology and delved deeper into aspects of cognition. Houlahan started as a piano major and procured a grant from his music department in Ireland to study in Hungary, where he met Denise Bacon. He later came to study at the Kodály Center of America (KCA) as a Fulbright scholar. Eventually, both Houlahan and Tacka graduated with doctorates from the Catholic University of America, in Washington DC, in connection with the Kodály Center of America. Both pedagogues became profes-

sors at Millersville College (now University) in Millersville, Pennsylvania, and continued their collaboration, integrating research on cognition with what they knew about effective practices in the classroom.

Differences in Goals for Each Curricular Text

Each author group attempted to either clarify or envision a particular evolution of the Kodály approach and meet perceived needs through their respective texts. Although Choksy authored the first edition of *The Kodály Method* in 1974, she stressed that the third edition, published in 1999, represented her best work and most recent thinking (personal communication, May 21, 2010). Choksy expanded her 1974 curricular text to two volumes: the first focused on strategies for teaching younger children and the second contained suggestions for students through the high school level. Choksy strongly believed that the discipline of music needed to be on a par with other subject disciplines. Secondary classroom music needed to include objectives for learning music concepts along with performance goals (Choksy, 1999, p. 190).

Houlahan and Tacka created a curricular text woven from three different strands: pedagogical training and experience, research in cognition and perception, and philosophical discussions concerning aspects of musicianship. Initially, the first strand of pedagogical training and experience evolved from their roles as Kodály course instructors working with teachers in Texas. Houlahan and Tacka faced extensive questions from teachers who wanted more specificity on the Kodály approach. Tacka explains, “they wanted a kind of recipe for teaching” (personal communication, March 20, 2010). Patricia Moreno (a student and colleague of Houlahan and Tacka) noted that *Kodály Today* helped teachers reduce talking in the

classroom and increase opportunities for making more music (personal communication, July 14, 2010). Houlahan and Tacka perceived a need to develop a publication that would outline the entire Kodály sequence in detail for teachers to use in a variety of contexts.

Second, in *Kodály Today*, Houlahan and Tacka incorporated theories by Jerome Bruner and Edwin Gordon to enhance their thinking about the relationship between sound and cognition. Last, Houlahan attended the Tanglewood II Symposium in 2007² and participated in roundtable discussions with musicians in other fields of music and developed the concept of the five dimensions of musicianship that provide the organizational structure for *Kodály Today*. In my interview with him, Tacka elucidated their overall vision for their work. “If we have an *idée fixe*, it’s the notion of getting students to access sound . . . The music curriculum is a process to get students to really think about sound” (personal communication, March 20, 2010).

Fixed Places: A Content Comparison of Two Curricular Texts

Overall, both curricular texts were similar in length, over 500 pages. Both author groups provided assistance in teachers’ development and implementation of a curriculum through the use of tools such as lesson plans, evaluation ideas, song-materials analysis, and other pedagogical tools. Both author groups outlined an overall sequence for elements in traditional notation, such as rhythm notation and solfège pitches, as well as understanding harmony and other characteristics of sound. Both author groups provide a background on the foundation of the Kodály approach as well their own philosophies on teaching. Both author groups also included song material in their publications. Part-work (1.3%), a main tenant of teachers influenced by the Kodály approach, occurred with a similar frequency

While both author groups focus largely on similar aspects of teaching, the percentage of space each author group devoted to specific categories indicated that they grew out of distinct places. The differences do not necessarily indicate the value each

Table 2. Comparison of Monthly Plan for Rhythmic Notation for First Grade

| Month | <i>The Kodály Method</i> | <i>Kodály Today</i> |
|----------|--|------------------------------------|
| October | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ | Present: quarter and eighth notes |
| November | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ | Practice: quarter and eighth notes |

author group placed on various areas. However, one can perceive some connections between variations in the percentages and each author groups' particular place at the moment of publication. Below are a few selected differences to illustrate the connections between place. A detailed comparative analysis of discrete categories can be found in table 1.

Curriculum

Choksy focused slightly more on *curriculum development* (i.e., an overall plan for teaching) than Houlahan and Tacka (*The Kodály Method*: 6.1%; *Kodály Today*: 1.6%). In contrast, in Houlahan and Tacka I noticed more frequent occurrence of the category of *curriculum implementation* (i.e., tools and strategies for everyday classroom use; *The Kodály Method*: 2.9%; *Kodály Today*: 24.7%) and *pedagogical tools* (i.e., charts and graphs that assist with lesson planning; *The Kodály Method*: 7.2%; *Kodály Today*: 24.3%). Results indicated that almost half of *Kodály Today* contained strategies, charts, scripts, and other tools to assist with implementation of the Kodály approach. Choksy, in contrast, spent a little over 10% of her materials on specific strategies and tools for applying Kodály principles.

Differences in the number of pages devoted to aspects of curriculum may partly have occurred due to differences in approach to teacher education. Jerry Jaccard suggested that Choksy focused on teaching the foundational principles and left the details of implementation to the individual teacher so the teacher would develop his or her own methodology (personal communication, June 25, 2010). In contrast, Houlahan and Tacka developed a curricular text to respond to teachers' queries for greater specificity in the implementation of the Kodály approach. However, when advising on concept sequence, the reverse was true. Choksy suggested a specific rhythm pattern students needed to know in a particular month. Houlahan and Tacka only advised teachers to practice certain elements with any pattern (see table 2).

Music Concepts and Skills

Choksy focused more than Houlahan and Tacka on topics related to teaching

music concepts, such as harmony (*The Kodály Method*: 3.3%; *Kodály Today*: 1.4%), melody (*The Kodály Method*: 8.5%; *Kodály Today*: 1.4%), and rhythm (*The Kodály Method*: 7.7%; *Kodály Today*: 1.4%). One reason for the difference is that Houlahan and Tacka discussed teaching music concepts to a greater degree in other sections on the book. For example, in chapter 5 of *Kodály Today*, the authors provide numerous suggestions and examples to develop knowledge and skills in areas of melody, rhythm, composition, and so forth. However, chapter 5 is only 27 pages long. More detailed suggestions occur later in chapter 8, the section focused on teaching strategies for various elements and concepts. I labeled all of chapter 8 as the category curriculum implementation. Also, Tacka and Houlahan addressed teaching specific elements in other publications such as *Sound Thinking: Developing Music Literacy* (1995) and *From Sound to Symbol: Fundamentals of Music* (Houlahan & Tacka, 2009).

In the area of music skills, Houlahan and Tacka focused slightly more on instrument performance, memory, movement and singing. In comparison, Choksy devoted a larger quantity of her work to creative expression and listening. *Kodály Today* contains some tools for listening also suggested by Choksy (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008, p. 227–228). Choksy likely did not include extensive suggestions for movement due to the availability of other publications, such as *120 Singing Games for Elementary Schools* (Choksy & Brummitt, 1987).

Historical Background

Choksy referred to topics related to historical background with a greater frequency (*The Kodály Method*: 5.3%; *Kodály Today*: 0.3%), including the origins of the Kodály approach, the history of selected composers, and the development of instruments. The difference can be partly attributed to the evolution of technologies in the early part of the 21st century. While the Internet existed in 1999 when *The Kodály Method* was published, widespread use did not become prevalent until a few years later. Furthermore, Tacka and Houlahan contributed to the biographical entry on Zoltán Kodály in *Groves Music Online* (Eösze, Houlahan,

& Tacka, n.d.) and may have felt that their other resources could support historical background. Houlahan and Tacka focus more of *Kodály Today* on the origins of the Kodály approach and the development of their own philosophy.

Resources

Choksy included extensive song material in *The Kodály Method* (*The Kodály Method*: 20.6%; *Kodály Today*: 7.5%). Inclusion of song material was likely influenced by two factors. One was the evolution of technologies and the development of databases that provided teachers access to song material such as the American Folk Song Collection at Holy Names University (<http://Kodaly.hnu.edu/>). Also, in their interview, Houlahan and Tacka were concerned about copyright issues, so they elected to use *Sail Away* (Locke & Goodfellow, 1988) and *150 Folk Songs* (Erdei & Komlos, 1974) for the majority of their folk-song examples.

Implications for Music Educators

While interesting, what value does this comparison of curricular texts have for the individual educator? While they are music educators, the authors of each curricular text are also influenced by their past experiences, present needs, and future goals. Comparison of two curricular texts provides a concrete example of how an educator's experience and thinking emerges in what he or she does, whether teaching in a classroom or authoring a publication. In addition, while both curricular texts provide valuable tools, no particular curricular text can dictate the entire curriculum of any classroom. Neither Choksy nor Houlahan and Tacka ever articulated—in any manner—that their ideas must be implemented word for word in every setting. Author recommendations merely provide tools to assist teachers in their own efforts to develop classroom curriculum. Both author groups emphasized that educators needed to change and adapt curricular suggestions to find what worked for their students in their own lived place.

This comparison can affect our classroom practices in several ways. First, as music educators, we peruse various curricular materials (e.g., lesson plans, curricular guides,

sequences, activity suggestions) at conferences, workshops, and summer courses and in published texts. We must be cognizant of the place from which the materials were developed as we evaluate them for our classroom use and follow the adage, "Take it with a grain of salt." Consider the source of what you read, listen to, and experience to evaluate the value for your classroom context. Second, in both adaptations of the Kodály approach, the authors provided tools for teachers to use in the classroom to assist in teaching music in a variety of contexts, or lived places.

Both author groups conducted extensive analysis of the content and process of teaching music informed by their knowledge of teaching and music literature. However, each author groups' adaptation is their adaptation. It is their analysis. Any good teacher borrows ideas from other teachers. A great teacher critically evaluates those ideas in the context of his or her own place, created from beliefs, context, and experiences. Use all of your available tools and your personal experience to find your own meaning from their works. Take ownership, conduct your own analysis, and create your own curriculum that embodies the intersection of your school community, student needs, and your personal experience.

Endnotes

1. A more detailed analysis can be found in my master's thesis. The full text can be found on my website: www.corriebox.com.
2. Tanglewood II: Charting the Future Symposium in 2007 was a duplication of the original Tanglewood Symposium in 1967 where members discussed "music in American society." More information on Tanglewood II can be found at www.bu.edu/tanglewoodtwo/.

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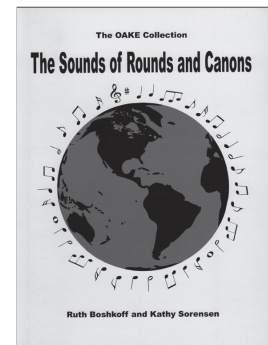
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