

Singing is Elementary:
Teachers' Use of Singing in Three Kodály-Based Elementary General Music Classrooms

Dissertation

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By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classrooms. The Kodály philosophy upholds the tenet that singing should be a central component of elementary general music classes, and that it should be utilized as the primary vehicle for both music making and musical skill study. Four themes emerged in the course of the study: singing, Kodály philosophy, standards and curriculum, and the purpose of music education.

Data were gathered and generated through field observations and semi-structured interviews with each participant ($N=3$). Each participant was observed teaching a third or fourth grade general music lesson on three successive occasions. A semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant following the observations. The semi-structured interviews were grounded in the data gathered during the field observations and served as an opportunity to member check and triangulate the observation data. Additional member checks were completed throughout the data analysis and writing process.

Findings indicated that singing played a significant role in the classes taught by the participants; however, the amount of time dedicated to singing activities in the observed classes varied among the participants. Two of the participants consistently used singing in a purposeful manner, which gave the students opportunities to sing for the sole purpose of singing. All of the participants used singing in a secondary capacity to aid in

the acquisition of music skills. The participants described and demonstrated individualized interpretations of the Kodály philosophy, which influenced the ways that they used singing in their classes. The findings indicated that having a well-grounded personal philosophy of music teaching, similar to the participants' interpretation of the Kodály philosophy, may help music teachers to navigate changes in national, state, and district standards and curricula while continuing to focus on the vocal and musical development of their students. The participants expressed the belief that the ultimate purpose of music education is to give students the necessary tools to be able to understand music when they see and hear it. They believed that understanding is achieved through music literacy, and music literacy is achieved through singing.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandparents:

John and Martha Balfour

Ann Sheridan

Thomas Sheridan

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and thank the three teachers who opened their classrooms and shared their thoughts and experiences with me. You made this study possible. I have learned so much from you, and hope that by sharing your stories, other music teachers will be inspired and energized to include more singing and active music making in their teaching.

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Fields of Study

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Singing has long been a key component of music education in the United States of America; however, the role of singing in the music education of children has changed and evolved as trends have emerged and influenced the focus of music instruction in the public schools (Mark & Gary, 2007). Historically, music educators have used singing as a tool for teaching children to read music, as a means of expression, and an as avenue for understanding their own and different cultures (Birge, 1937; Mark & Gary, 2007; Rutkowski, 1985; Vikár, 2014). At present, singing is commonly used for all of the previously named purposes ("Florida Music Standards," 2010; "Ohio Music Standards," 2014; "TMEA/TMAC Music Curriculum," 2010); however, new state and national standards might impact the role and amount of singing in elementary general music classes because they do not directly name singing as a skill ("National Core Arts Standards," n.d.).

Researchers agree that singing is an important component of instruction in the elementary general music classroom (Atterbury & Silcox, 1993; Cooper, 1995; Goetze, Cooper, & Brown, 1990; Levinowitz et al., 1998; Rutkowski, 1996). Teachers commonly utilize singing and sung material to teach musical concepts such as rhythm, dynamics, and melodic skills (Froehlich, 1979). Although music educators in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries typically focused on the voice as the primary instrument of instruction (Mark & Gary, 2007), music educators now engage children in

activities that may include creating, listening, reading, describing, playing, singing, and/or moving (Wang & Sogin, 1997).

Currently, many state standards, as well as the National Core Music Standards, require teachers to implement a wide variety of musical experiences in their classes. As a result, music educators must divide class time among numerous activities and assessments. Several researchers have examined music teachers' use of class time over the last few decades including the time spent in teacher talk and music instruction (Brendell, 1996; Forsythe, 1977; Goolsby, 1997; Nápoles & Vázquez-Ramos, 2013; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997; Yarbrough & Price, 1981). Some researchers have noted the amount of time teachers spent engaging students in a wide variety of activities in a general sense, e.g., singing, playing, or moving; however, they did not describe the specifics of each musical activity led by the teachers.

There is a paucity of studies where researchers acknowledge participants' preferred approach to teaching and discuss how a preferred approach might impact a participant's pedagogical choices. At present, only one such study has been identified. Wang and Sogin (1997) found that elementary music teachers spend a larger portion of class time engaging students in movement activities than in other types of music activities. To recruit participants for their study, the researchers visited an Orff-Schulwerk workshop. As a result, the majority of the participants in the study were found to favor the Orff-Schulwerk approach to music teaching. While the researchers did acknowledge this fact, they did not take it into account when reporting the results of the study. Therefore, the results may have been skewed because the Orff-Schulwerk approach emphasizes the use of movement in teaching music to children.

Background

Elementary general music teachers often seek out additional training and certification in one or more approaches to music teaching, which may include Kodály, Orff-Schulwerk, or Dalcroze. Each of these three approaches stress different teaching strategies for building musical literacy and musical skills in children. For example, Dalcroze is known for incorporating movement, solfège, and improvisation, Orff-Schulwerk is recognized by the use of barred instruments, movement, and speech, and Kodály is most often noted for utilizing singing, folk songs, and solfège (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014).

Dalcroze

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) developed the Dalcroze approach to teaching music in the early part of the twentieth century while he was a professor of harmony, solfège, and composition at the Geneva Conservatory (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014; Mead, 1994). Dalcroze developed the approach after growing frustrated at his conservatory students' inability to expressively perform in his solfège classes (Mead, 1994). The approach consisted of three components: ear training and solfège, eurhythmics, and improvisation.

Dalcroze stressed the importance of building inner hearing through fixed *do* solfège exercises. Additionally, he “believed that rhythm is the fundamental, motivating force” in music and is best internalized through rhythmic movement, otherwise referred to as eurhythmics (Landis & Carder, 1972, p. 12). Dalcroze included improvisation as a third component of the approach to synthesize the theoretical knowledge and skills gained through solfège and eurhythmic experiences. Students improvise through

movements, on instruments, or with their voices (Mead, 1994). Dalcroze (1921) wrote, “To be a complete musician, one requires a good ear, imagination, intelligence, and temperament – that is, the faculty of experiencing and communicating emotion” (as cited in Campbell & Scott-Kasner, 2014).

Orff-Schulwerk

Carl Orff (1895-1982), a German composer, based his approach to music education on the idea that “music, movement, and speech are inseparable” (Landis & Carder, 1972, p. 71). In the Orff approach, children experience music through singing, speaking, playing instruments, and moving before notation is presented (Shamrock, 1986). Orff was influenced by the work of Dalcroze, and agreed that rhythm was the most fundamental and important element in music. Moreover, Orff also agreed with Dalcroze regarding the importance of improvisation and personal expression (Landis & Carder, 1972).

The Orff-Schulwerk approach to music education uses the pentatonic scale, folk songs, composed songs that have folk song-like qualities, spoken chants, and barred and unpitched percussion instruments as tools to teach the elements of music to children (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014). Musical “independence and interdependence” is promoted through the use of ostinato patterns (often played on various percussion instruments) over which a song might be layered (Landis & Carder, 1972, p. 77).

Orff stressed the importance of moving from the most basic of elements to the more complicated. In the approach, speech precedes singing, because speech only contains the element of rhythm whereas singing contains both rhythm and melody. Additionally, the Orff approach employs a process of teaching musical components in

four stages: imitation, exploration, literacy, and improvisation (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014).

Kodály

Zoltan Kodály developed his philosophy and approach to teaching music after observing a decline in the quality of music education in Hungary during the first half of the twentieth century (Baumann, 2010). He recognized that children not only were unfamiliar with music from their own culture, but they lacked music literacy skills and sang poorly. Kodály developed a philosophy and approach to music teaching that incorporated music from the child's mother tongue, and that taught music literacy skills through singing. Kodály's goal was to give the music of Hungary back to the Hungarian people (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

Kodály believed that singing was "the most direct means to a musical education" (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008, p. 21). Therefore, teachers who identify with the Kodály approach to music teaching often stress the importance of singing. According to the Kodály approach, singing should be placed at the core of music instruction and used as the primary means for developing all musical skills (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Williams, 1975; Zemke, 1977). Other key tenets of the Kodály philosophy include the belief that music is the birthright of all people, music should be learned through a sound to symbol process, and music education should begin with the music of the child's home culture (Williams, 1975).

Summary

Each of the above approaches to music teaching gives music teachers, particularly those at the elementary level, an organizational structure through which to view their

teaching (Abril, in press). The philosophical frameworks of Dalcroze, Orff, and Kodály can “guide and provide a frame of mind for planning and decision-making in the classroom” (Abril, in press, p. 20), especially when required to attend to broad standards put in place by state and national legislation. Additionally, these approaches to music teaching provide music teachers with methodological techniques that can be applied in the classroom to build children’s music literacy and understanding.

Dalcroze, Orff-Schulwerk, and Kodály share similarities and differences. For example, Dalcroze and Orff-Schulwerk focus on rhythm as a fundamental component of music, but Kodály places less emphasis in this area. Kodály and Dalcroze emphasize the development of aural skills through singing with solfège, while Orff-Schulwerk does not. Kodály is unique among the three approaches because of the emphasis on singing. Although singing is used in both the Dalcroze and Orff-Schulwerk approaches, singing does not play as central a role as it does in the Kodály approach. Because singing is a fundamental component to the Kodály approach to teaching music, it is possible that Kodály-influenced teachers include more singing activities in their classes. Additionally, the Kodály approach stresses the importance of using sung material to promote music literacy skills in children.

State standards and district curricula often include singing as a primary means of music learning. The 1994 National Standards for Music Education included singing as one of the nine components of music education. Moreover, the National Core Music Standards include many standards that are best fulfilled through singing activities.

Statement of the Problem/Need for the Study

There is a significant body of research on singing and its presence in elementary music education. Researchers have documented the amount of singing in elementary music classes, and have compared it to other music and non-music activities (Forsythe, 1977; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997). Several researchers have found that singing, by both teachers and students, occurs regularly in elementary general music classes (Forsythe, 1977; Moore, Brotons, & Jacobi-Kama, 2002; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997). Presently, researchers have examined only the occurrence of singing, and have not studied the types and quality of the singing activities that are occurring in music classes.

Although researchers might note the approaches to music teaching that their participants utilize, few studies use a specific philosophy or music teaching approach within the study's framework or participant selection criteria. For example, Wang and Sogin (1997) indicated that their participant pool was drawn from a group of music teachers who attended an Orff-Schulwerk workshop, but the researchers did not explain whether or not a participant's interest or identification as an Orff-influenced teacher affected the amount of singing in the observed classes.

Further research is needed to examine ways that teachers use singing within the course of a music class, the specific types of singing activities in which students are engaged, and whether a teacher's preferred approach to teaching music affects the amount and use of singing. Many elementary general music teachers identify with at least one of the three common philosophies of teaching music. Because each philosophy stresses the use of singing in different ways, research is needed on the effect of a

philosophy on the use of singing in elementary general music education. Unlike the Orff and Dalcroze philosophies, the Kodály philosophy emphasizes that placement of singing at the center of elementary music classes; therefore, it is logical to begin with the Kodály philosophy when investigating the interaction of philosophical approach and the role of singing in elementary general music classes. Although there is an extensive body of research relating to the child voice and its development (e.g., Bentley, 1968; Gaiser, 1961; Joyner, 1969; Rutkowski, 1986, 1990, 1996, 2015; Welch, Howard, & Rush, 1989), very little extant research has specifically investigated the Kodály approach to teaching music at the elementary level (Phillips & Doneski, 2011).

Singing is a central component of music education across all grade levels, and can be used in a variety of ways. Additionally, teachers who identify as Kodály-influenced teachers likely place singing at the core of their music teaching. Therefore, understanding the effect of Kodály-influenced teachers' philosophies on the use of singing in their classrooms will help teachers, teacher educators, and researchers to have a clearer picture of current teaching practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classrooms. Using a qualitative design situated in the interpretivist paradigm, I examined the role of singing in three elementary general music teachers' classroom teaching. The music teachers included in the study had taught a minimum of 10 years and received Kodály certification from an Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) endorsed program. The Kodály philosophy upholds the tenet that singing should be a central component of elementary general music classes,

and that it should be utilized as the primary vehicle for both music making and musical skill study. According to Wagner and Strul (1979), singing is a music activity where students are engaged in vocal music performance, with or without the teacher. Based on this definition, I defined singing activities as any activity in the course of a music lesson where students were engaged in teacher-led singing for either the purpose of making music or for developing other musical skills. Questions that guided the research were:

1. How much time do elementary Kodály-trained music teachers spend engaging students in singing activities?
2. What types of singing activities do teachers use to engage students?
 - a. Do the music teachers lead students in singing activities for the purpose of making music?
 - b. Do the music teachers use singing activities to teach or reinforce other musical skills?

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations are present in this study. Patton (2002) notes three types of limitations often present in qualitative studies: situational limitations, time limitations, and sample limitations. This study was limited by the observations that I conducted and by the information the participants chose to share with me during the observations. I conducted three observations of each participant teaching a class of his or her own choosing. I was limited to observing the participants teaching only the selected classes and was not able to observe them teaching different grade levels or at a different time of year. Moreover, the participants were in full control of what they chose to teach in each

lesson. Although each participant stated that I observed typical classes, there is no way for me to fully know that this was the case.

The interview data were limited by the information that the participants chose to share with me. Time of day, location, participant health, and other outside factors may have affected the information the participants chose to share with me (Glesne, 2011). Given these and other uncontrollable variables, the information shared by the participants is believed to be true and accurate.

I sought to deeply examine my research questions; therefore, a small sample size was desirable. This small sample size limits the study because only those who met specific criteria were considered for participation (Patton, 2002). The inclusion of different participants who met the criteria or additional participants could have affected the findings.

Transferability

The purpose of qualitative research designs is not to generalize to a broad population, but rather to serve as a means for examining and telling the stories of the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Readers should consider this study a presentation of three different teachers' experiences with and implementation of the Kodály philosophy in their own teaching. As such, findings are presented in such a way that readers are able to apply, or transfer, the findings to their own professional lives as they see fit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, the data presented will inform future studies.

Definition of Terms

Composed songs: Composed songs are musical works that may resemble folk songs in structure and/or content; however, they do not have roots in the aural/oral tradition. The composer of such a song is identifiable. For example, “Oh! Susanna” is considered a composed song because the composer is known (Stephen Foster).

Folk songs: Folk songs are musical works that have roots within a specific culture. Typically, they are songs that have been passed down through an aural/oral tradition by people of a specific region (Randel, 2003).

International Kodály Society: The International Kodály Society (IKS) was founded in 1975 with the purpose of supporting musicians and music educators who follow the legacy of Zoltan Kodály. IKS is headquartered in Kecskemét, Hungary (“International Kodály Society,” n.d.).

Known song: A song that students have learned in a previous music class. Typically, the students are familiar enough with the song that they can independently sing it with correct pitch, rhythm, and text.

Kodály approach: Teaching according to the Kodály philosophy is considered an approach. The philosophy is used to guide teachers in making pedagogical choices. Kodály did not develop a step-by-step method and likely did not view it as such. Most

Kodály pedagogues agree, “there is no method” (Williams, 1975, p. 7); however, some use the terms approach and concept interchangeably.

Kodály philosophy: Zoltan Kodály developed a philosophy of music education based on the belief that music was for all, and not for only the elite. His philosophy is rooted in developmentally appropriate practices that support and enable children to become musically literate members of society (Choksy, 1981; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Williams, 1975).

Music literacy: For the purposes of this study, music literacy refers to the ability to read and write traditional western music notation. Zoltan Kodály believed that children needed to be able to read and write traditional western music notation in order to be independent musicians (Choksy, 1981; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

Non-singing music activity: This is a music activity that does not include singing. Students might be playing instruments, listening to recorded music, practicing rhythms, moving to music, or writing musical notation (Wagner & Strul, 1979).

Organization of American Kodály Educators: The Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) was founded in 1975 and is headquartered in Los Angeles, California. “Its purpose is to promote Zoltan Kodály’s concept of “Music for Everyone” through the improvement of music education in schools” (“Organization of American Kodály Educators,” n.d.).

Purposeful singing: Vocal performance that is teacher-led and for the sole purpose of singing. These are moments where the focus is primarily on singing, vocal production, and musicality.

Secondary singing: Vocal performance that is teacher-led and is done for another purpose, such as rhythmic drills, melodic drills, games, and dances. These are moments where there is less focus on vocal production, and more focus on something else.

Semi-structured interview: The semi-structured interview is an approach to interviewing that incorporates “both open-ended and theoretically driven questions, eliciting data grounded in the experience of the participant as well as data guided by existing constructs in the particular discipline within which one is conducting research” (Galletta, 2013, p. 45). This interview format allows for flexibility in the interview process, giving the both the participant and researcher opportunities to contribute the generation of data (Galletta, 2013; Patton, 2002).

Zoltán Kodály: Hungarian music educator, composer, and ethnomusicologist who developed a philosophy and approach to teaching during the 1940’s and 1950’s in communist Hungary (Choksy, 1981; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Zemke, 1977). Teachers around the world use Kodály’s philosophy and approach to teaching music (Choksy, 1999).

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Singing is a multifaceted activity with a rich history that warrants examination from several angles in order to fully understand its role in today's music classrooms. Consequently, this chapter will address the historical role of singing in music education, developments of the twentieth century that impacted singing, and singing in modern music education. These sections will be followed by an examination of Zoltán Kodály and his philosophy of music education.

A History of Singing in Music Education

Singing has been a part of music education throughout recorded Western history, beginning with the Hebrew people (according to the Old Testament of the Bible), moving into the time of the Greeks and Romans, and onward into the Middle Ages (Mark & Gary, 2007). Historians argue that Moses, the Old Testament's leader of the Jewish people, was perhaps the first true music educator. Accordingly, some writers believe that Moses was a well-trained musician who likely composed music and encouraged people to study and practice music for worship purposes (Mark & Gary, 2007; Sendrey, 1969).

Western societies continued to use music and singing in worship as time moved forward. During the Middle Ages, the Christian church controlled the majority of formal musical studies, and limited the general public's access to music education (Mark & Gary, 2007). While the Renaissance and Colonial periods brought about expanded access to music, music continued to be primarily associated with worship. Additionally,

religious groups including the Shakers, Pilgrims, and Puritans immigrated to North America and brought with them rich musical traditions (Klein, 1990; Mark & Gary, 2007).

In colonial America, singing and music making were most commonly found within the local community churches, where the congregation sang psalm-tunes in one of two ways: the *regular way* or the *old way* (Mark & Gary, 2007). When singing in the *regular way*, congregants read the music, singing by note (Mark & Gary, 2007). The *old way*, which originally developed in Europe, was initially implemented in churches where a majority of parishioners could not read music. In the *old way*, a deacon would read the psalm line by line and provide the pitch for the psalm-tune, after which the congregation would sing the psalm to prescribed tune (Temperley, 1981). This practice was referred to as “lining out” (Mark & Gary, 2007). Communities that sang in the *old way* progressively developed unique characteristics in their singing, slowed the tempo of the tunes, and added their own embellishments which may or may not have fit the original tune (Temperley, 1981). Eventually, the tunes became varied from church to church, and even, person to person.

The progressive degradation of early American church music became glaringly obvious in the early years of the eighteenth century. Reverend Cotton Mather, a Puritan, wrote,

“It has been found accordingly in some of our congregations, that in length of time, their singing has denigrated, into an odd noise, that has had more of what we want a name for, than any regular singing in it; whereby the celestial exercise is

dishonored; and indeed the third commandment is trespassed on” (Mather, 1721, p. 22).

Mather’s strong words about the dismal quality of singing and music reading in colonial America helped to spurn the development of singing schools in America (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Singing Schools

Around the time that Reverend Cotton Mather wrote *The Accomplished Singer*, Reverend John Tufts published what may have been the first music text in America. *An Introduction to the Singing of Psalm Tunes* was published with goal of improving musical literacy among the people of America. Lowens (1954) credits the publication of Tufts’ text as being the beginning of organized music education in America. Tufts was a “pioneer” in the movement to improve congregational singing (Lowens, 1954, p. 89). Gatherings and societies where people could learn to sing and read music began to develop.

The singing school, led by singing school masters, served as the primary source of music education for the majority of American people (Birge, 1937). The singing school masters were charged with teaching their students to read music and to sing in a acceptable manner (Davenport, 1992). These singing school masters, part music teacher and part entrepreneur, often traveled from town to town in the cold of winter convincing townspeople to pay a small fee and attend their schools (Birge, 1937; Mark & Gary, 2007). The singing school grew so popular that William Billings, a well-known American composer and singing school master, set forth a set of formal “Rules for regulating a Singing School” that included processes for establishing the society,

attendance policies for both students and the master, and conduct rules for the students (Billings, 1778).

Singing schools were open to any members of the community who chose to take part, including entire families (Birge, 1937; Davenport, 1992). Over time, it became obvious that the children had the capacity to learn to sing and read music (Birge, 1937), despite singing school meetings often lasting for two or more hours and taking place during the winter (Davenport, 1992). Not only did the singing schools lay the groundwork for the development of public school music education, they also provided the public schools with some of the first music teachers and methods for teaching music to children (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Early Public School Music Education

Lowell Mason is credited with being the father of American music education. As the grandson of a singing school teacher, Mason grew up immersed in the New England music heritage, attending singing school and studying a variety of instruments (Mark & Gary, 2007). Mason's musical upbringing laid the foundation for his musical ambitions.

The entrepreneurial Mason moved to Savannah, Georgia in 1812, initially finding work in a store selling a variety of merchandise. Eventually, Mason became the organist and choirmaster at the Independent Presbyterian Church where he also offered singing schools and began to compose anthems and hymns (Keating, 1989; Mark & Gary, 2007). While in Savannah, Mason continued to sharpen his own music skills and compiled his first collection of sacred music (Keating, 1989; Mark & Gary, 2007).

Mason eventually returned to Boston where he continued to work as musician, serving as president of the Handel and Haydn Society from 1827-1832 and as a church

musician. Teaching music and singing to children had become extremely important to Mason during this time. As a result, Mason left his position as president of the Handel and Haydn Society in 1832, and began to focus his work on publishing children's music books and promoting the notion that music was for all and not only the talented few (Birge, 1937; Mark & Gary, 2007).

The singing schools of the eighteenth century had taught singing by note, the *regular way*. Signs and symbols were precursors to learning to sing. Recognizing that this was likely not the best approach to teaching children, Mason incorporated educational principles that he attributed to Pestalozzi into his teaching of singing to children (Gruhn, 1993). Mason believed that the sound must come before the symbol, and he maintained that children must be taught to sing, and to hear and imitate sounds. Additionally, principles and theory should be informed by practice (Birge, 1937).

Mason advocated for the inclusion of music in the public schools for many years, eventually finding success in 1838 when music was finally included in the curriculum by public authority in Boston, Massachusetts (Birge, 1937). With singing at its core, music education was incorporated into the public education of children for the first time in American history. While organized music education was initially limited to the grammar schools, by 1864 Luther Whiting Mason had organized music in the primary grades. By 1872, music education was established in all grades (Birge, 1937).

Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, music education for children continued to use singing as the primary instrument; however, learning to sing was not always the primary goal (Rutkowski, 1985). Two distinct factors influenced the music education goals of the era. First, music educators

were looking to Europe for guidance. In Europe, knowledge of the technical aspects of music and the ability to read music were valued; therefore, American music education set its values accordingly (Rutkowski, 1985). Luther Whiting Mason taught students a body of songs by rote that conveyed elements of music. From these songs and other small musical motives, Luther Whiting Mason taught children to read music (Mark & Gary, 2007). Second, the spread of music education in the United States created a shortage of music teachers. With a lack of trained music teachers, the task of teaching music fell on the classroom teachers. These teachers did not have the expertise of teaching children to sing, and relied heavily on music series books to provide music instruction to the students. The music series books focused on music literacy, giving classroom teachers step-by-step processes to provide music instruction to children (Birge, 1937; Rutkowski, 1985).

The beginning of the twentieth century brought about two additional factors that impacted the use of singing in music education: the music appreciation movement and the growth of instrumental music in public schools. Francis Elliott Clark, recognizing the educational potential of the phonograph, urged teachers to include listening and music appreciation in their music lessons (Clark, 1920; Mark & Gary, 2007). Because there were not enough trained music teachers available, classroom teachers turned to music appreciation lessons as a means of including music in the regular classroom. Around the same time, school instrumental programs began to develop as the result of a push from musical instrument manufacturers who depended on the existence of bands and orchestras (Mark & Gary, 2007). The broadening musical options for students gradually shifted singing from its status as the main instrument of music education. However, these

developments did not fully remove singing from its role, especially at the elementary level.

General Music Education

By today's terms, early American music education could be categorized as general music education; however, at the time, no such term was used. The expansion of instrumental music education and performing groups necessitated the creation of the moniker "general music." Music educators began using "general music" in the 1920's to differentiate certain music classes from the performance-based classes (Abril, in press; Gray, 1923; Rodgers, 1926).

Although general music now had a name, it did not unite teachers under a common philosophy. Abril (in press) defines general music as "a type of music education designed for *all* students, to develop basic musical skills, knowledge, and understanding" (p. 1). To this day, educators continue to approach the teaching of general music in a variety of ways, which Reimer (2003) identifies as problematic. Reimer (2003) writes, "The doings in general music evolved into a great diversity of approaches, each claiming to do what good music education should do and each logically convincing because each could demonstrate that it required musical action" (p. 246). Although is it not detrimental for an individual teacher to identify with a particular approach to teaching, the discord that arises between the various camps may prevent general music teachers from being fully unified for one goal: music education for all children.

Presently, general music teachers teach according to a variety of approaches and methods. It is important to note that the terms "approach" and "method" are not

interchangeable. Abril (in press) defines “approach” as a “broad framework— theoretical and practical—that organizes knowledge, beliefs, values and experiences, for the purpose of guiding practice”; whereas a “method” is a “step-by-step” guide “firmly situated in the classroom practice, focusing what to teach, how to teach, and when to teach it” (p. 20). For example, teachers who are influenced by the philosophy of Zoltán Kodály describe their teaching as both an approach and a method. Kodály-based teachers use the term approach when referencing the tenets of the philosophy that guide their teaching, e.g., the belief that music learning must begin with the voice guides Kodály-based teachers in their teaching. The approach does not provide them with any specific processes (Choksy, 1981). The specific processes that Kodály-influenced teachers use to teach individual concepts can be categorized as a method; however, not all Kodály-influenced teachers use the same methods.

Purpose. Regardless of the preferred approach or method, the ultimate goal of general music education is to impart to students the knowledge and skills necessary to understand music, and hopefully, take part in music throughout their lives. Reimer (2003) states “the purpose of music education is that it exists to make musical experiences, in all their various manifestations, as widely available to all people, and as deeply cultivated by each individual, as possible” (p. 38). Therefore, music education, particularly general music, should be “achievable, accessible, and applicable to all students” (Elliott, 1995, p. 306).

Music educators who teach general music classes, especially at the elementary level, typically include a variety of musical activities in one class period. These activities often include singing, playing, moving, and listening (Orman, 2002; Wang & Sogin,

1997), and allow students to experience musical concepts and ideas from a variety of angles. Through these musical activities, music educators impart on students the skills necessary “to be *able* to and to *want* to” make music a part of their lives (Regelski, 1998, p. 44).

Developments in Music Education

Music Education and Education Reform

The launch of Sputnik I in October 1957 by the former Soviet Union is often identified as a turning point in American education, sparking a movement of education reform that has yet to cease. The Woods Hole Conference, held in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, marked the beginning a trend where “distinguished people from related fields” worked together to improve education (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 386). In the years following the conference, the federal government became more involved in education through the funding of research, teacher training, and education improvements. This surge in education funding did not directly support the arts; however, the arts were indirectly improved.

The Yale Seminar, held in 1963, was organized in response to concerns regarding the heavy emphasis on sciences in the school curriculum. National Science Foundation panel members believed that the study of the arts and humanities would enhance excellence in the sciences (Mark & Gary, 2007). Panel members indicated a need to examine the public school music curriculum to determine why public school music programs were failing to produce a musically literate society. Participants in the Yale Seminar, who were primarily musicologists and educators who were not public school music educators, were highly critical of the quality of music used in public school music

programs and believed that public school music education was not keeping pace with twentieth century musical developments. In the end, the Yale Seminar had little impact on public music education; however, the seminar was successful in creating a “climate conducive to change” (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 400).

Music educators did not readily accept the findings of the Yale Seminar because the participants of the seminar were not music educators. Members of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) from around the country gathered at the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts to respond to the findings of the Yale Seminar. After numerous meetings in the spring of 1967, music educators at the Tanglewood Symposium issued a declaration that called for the inclusion of music as a core subject in public education and provided numerous recommendations for public music education (“The Tanglewood Symposium,” 1967). The Goals and Objectives (GO) project was instituted in 1969 to implement the recommendations of the Tanglewood Symposium (Mark & Gary, 2007). It was not until President Clinton signed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act in 1994 into law that music was officially included as a core subject.

The new century brought a significant shift in education policy with the signing of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in January 2002. NCLB placed a heavy emphasis on the testing of reading and mathematics and required teachers of other subjects to relate their material back to reading and mathematics (Mark & Gary, 2007). Administrators indicated that high stakes testing and the implementation NCLB forced them to allocate more teaching time to the subjects being tested, which negatively impacted time in other subject areas, including music (Abril & Gault, 2007; Branscome, 2012; Mark & Gary,

2007), despite the fact that NCLB actually allocated a significant amount of funding for arts education (NAfME, 2002). The educational reforms that NCLB attempted to put in place ultimately failed, doing nothing more than establishing a culture of testing without providing the necessary funds to actually improve education (Lehman, 2015). Lehman (2015) suggested that the testing culture created by NCLB, and perpetuated by *Race to the Top* (Wesolowski, 2014), has essentially removed the joy and excitement from school and learning. He charged music educators to embrace the beauty and joy that music can bring to the lives of children, and to use music as means of reframing the nation's view of education as a means of true educational reform.

Standards: National and State

National standards. The National Standards for Music Education, released in 1994 as a result of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, was the first attempt by the profession to uniformly state the behaviors that were to be included in music education (Abril, in press; Mark & Gary, 2007). These standards, rooted in the GO project's emphasis on performing, creating, listening and Jerome Bruner's work related to conceptual learning, gave the profession a framework to work within and shed light on the broad nature of general music education (Mark & Gary, 2007). Although the 1994 Standards for Music Education placed singing in the first position, they also identified specific music behaviors that included playing instruments, "improvising music, composing and arranging music, reading and notating music, listening and analyzing music, evaluating music, and understanding music's relationship to culture, history, and other disciplines" (Abril, in press, p. 11).

Twenty years later, the National Standards for Music Education were re-envisioned as part of the National Core Arts Standards. The new 2014 Core Music Standards group musical behaviors into three artistic processes: performing, creating, and responding to music (Shuler, Norgaard, & Blakeslee, 2014). Connecting to music is included at the end of the standards; however, Shuler et al. (2014) did not regard it as one of the artistic processes. Additionally, the new Core Music Standards do not directly list specific skills or behaviors (e.g., singing or playing) in the same manner that the earlier 1994 National Standards listed them. Shuler et al. (2014) argued that some teachers “more narrowly focused on technical skills and notation” as a result of the 1994 National Standards in Music Education (p. 41). With the Core Music Standards, music educators are encouraged to refocus their teaching toward conceptual learning. At the moment, it is not known how the reconceptualization of the National Standards will impact teaching and learning in music education.

State standards. Each state in the country has the freedom to establish its own set of music standards to serve as guidelines for music educators within that state. By 2006, in response to NCLB, every state except for Iowa had established state-level standards in the arts, with 44 states requiring instruction in the arts for all children (Mark & Gary, 2007). Currently, each state’s standards are influenced in some way by the National Core Arts Standards and/or the 1994 National Standards in Music Education, but are not direct copies of either set of national standards. For example, the state of Ohio recently revised the state music standards. The most of recent version uses some organizational terminology that is similar to what is found in the National Core Arts Standards. The Ohio Music Standards are organized according to three artistic processes:

perceiving/creating, producing/performing, and responding/reflecting ("Ohio Music Standards," 2014). However, beneath each process are six to eight skill-specific standards that incorporate terminology from the 1994 National Standards in Music Education, including singing and playing.

Singing in Modern Music Education

Teachers' Use of Class Time

Music teaching is a multifaceted event where a number of variables interact to create a musical and educational experience for students. Teachers make choices, both consciously and subconsciously, about how to organize and divide class time, how to interact with their students, and how to deliver content. Teacher's use of time within the context of a music class has been examined by a number of researchers, including the use of time in relation to musical content (Forsythe, 1977; Martin, 1992; Moore, 1981; Moore et al., 2002; Munsen, 1986; Orman, 2002; Wang & Sogin, 1997), teacher behaviors (Colwell, 2011; Goolsby, 1997; Nápoles & Vázquez-Ramos, 2013), and student attention and attitude (Brendell, 1996; Forsythe, 1977; Spradling, 1985; Witt, 1986).

Teacher behaviors. Teacher behaviors play a significant role in the function and flow of a music class. Students are more likely to demonstrate off-task behavior during periods of teacher talk or non-performance, whereas students are more attentive and more likely to remain on task during activities that require active participation (Brendell, 1996; Forsythe, 1977; Spradling, 1985; Witt, 1986; Yarbrough & Price, 1981). Brendell (1996) found that in the initial minutes of a choral rehearsal students remained on task during sight-reading activities, and suggested transferring processes used in these activities to

portions of the rehearsal that resulted in higher amounts of off task behavior (e.g., vocal warm-ups).

Although inexperienced teachers tend to engage in more teacher talk than experienced teachers (Goolsby, 1997; Wagner & Strul, 1979), teachers with all levels of experience tended to underestimate the amount of time they spend talking (Nápoles & Vázquez-Ramos, 2013; Wang & Sogin, 1997). Removing teacher talk and increasing the amount of student on task behavior does not guarantee an improvement in student learning. Brophy (1988) suggested that use of time has a greater effect on student performance than spending more time on task. The research suggests that awareness of teacher talk may allow teachers to make better use of their teaching time, therefore, positively impacting student learning and performance.

Music curriculum and content. Music curriculum content varies widely throughout the United States, and frequently varies between communities. Often, curricula are developed based on the expressed desires and expectations of “local stakeholders” (Colwell, 2011, p. 85). These “stakeholders” may include administrators, community members, and students. Curricula should be, and are, designed to meet the needs and reflect the culture and traditional practices of the community (Colwell, 2011; Shaw, 2012). This leaves music educators with a significant amount of freedom to make decisions regarding content and the use of time in music lessons.

Several researchers have investigated general music class content and the division of time among varying general music activities (Forsythe, 1977; Moore, 1981; Moore et al., 2002; Wagner & Strul, 1979). Activities examined in these studies included singing, playing instruments, moving, and teacher-centered activities (sometimes divided between

instruction, preparation, and talk). For example, Forsythe (1977) and Wagner and Strul (1979) found that elementary general music teachers spent a large amount of class time engaged in a teacher-centered activity. The results of the study conducted by Forsythe (1977) indicated that elementary general music teachers spent 41.6% of class time in teacher-centered activities. Wagner and Strul (1979) found that in classes taught by experienced elementary general music teachers, only 30.49% of class time was devoted to music activities.

The amount of time spent in music activities has not varied or changed much since the 1970's when Forsythe (1977) and Wagner and Strul (1979) conducted their studies. Moore et al. (2002), for example, found that teachers in the United States spent 49.71% of class time engaging children in music activities. The remaining class time was devoted to discussion, preparation, instruction, and talk.

Findings from these studies have indicated that when elementary general music teachers are engaging students in music activities, singing is one of most frequently occurring activities (Forsythe, 1977; Moore et al., 2002; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997). Forsythe (1977) found that elementary general music teachers spent an average of 21.7% of class time engaging students in some type of singing activity, including singing and moving, and singing and playing instruments. Moore (1981) had similar results, finding that singing activities constituted an average of 23% of the class time. Wagner and Strul (1979), however, found that singing activities constituted only 11.91% of the time in general music classes. In a more contemporary study, Wang and Sogin (1997) found that, of the time spent in student-centered activities, 18.75% of that time was devoted to singing.

Orman (2002), using Forsythe (1977) as a model, investigated elementary general music teachers' use of class time in relation to the National Standards for Music Education (1994). Both the time use of elementary general music teachers and the time use of students were examined. Results indicated that students spent only 8.86% of class time participating in some type of singing activity. In comparison, students spent an average of 57.07% of class time listening to the teacher.

According to the literature, singing ranks consistently as one of the most frequently utilized music activities. Singing, by both teachers and students, occurs regularly in music classes. Presently, researchers have examined only the occurrence of singing, and have not studied the types and quality of the singing activities that are occurring in music classes. Further research is needed to examine ways that teachers use singing within the course of a music class and the specific types of singing activities in which students are be engaged.

Music activities other than singing also play a role in general music classes. Children are engaged in playing instruments, listening, creating, and moving in varying proportions. In addition to singing, playing instruments and listening usually rank as the most frequent activities utilized by teachers (Forsythe, 1977; Moore, 1981; Moore et al., 2002; Orman, 2002; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997).

Vocal Development

The attitude that singing is a talent that cannot be taught has dominated popular culture since the early days of music education (Rutkowski, 1985). However, the first music educators, including Lowell Mason, believed that all children had the capacity to sing if given the proper training. This position is supported by research that suggests that

singing is a learned behavior that can be taught (Kemp, 1985; Rutkowski, 1996) and if not used, it can be lost (Demorest & Pfordresher, 2015). Additionally, children who are not exposed to singing in their home environments may have more difficulty learning to sing than those who hear their parents and other family members singing on a regular basis (Kemp, Tagg, & Shrock, 1989)

Early studies on the child voice initially focused on determining the most appropriate range and tessitura for children's singing. Many of these early studies reflected the findings published by Howard (1898) who suggested that it was best for children to use a high tessitura. It was not until the 1930's that appropriate vocal ranges and tessitura were reexamined in addition to the examination of methods for teaching children to sing in tune (Rutkowski, 1985).

Studies conducted in the mid-twentieth century were focused on the various stages of children's vocal development; however, they failed to establish consistent terminology (Rutkowski, 1990). Children who struggled to match pitch or sing in tune were labeled as "inaccurate singers" (Anderson as cited in Welch, 1979; Reuter as cited in Rutkowski, 1990), "backward singers" (Fieldhouse as cited in Welch, 1979), "nonsinger" (McKenzie as cited in Rutkowski, 1990). Eventually, "nonsinger" became the most common label; however, definitions of the term varied. Definitions included: a child who habitually sings several tones away from the group (Gaiser, 1961), a child who cannot establish and maintain tonality (Kirkpatrick, 1962), or a child who either attempts to sing in the speaking-voice range or above the singing range (Gordon, 1971). Additionally, some researchers used the term "monotone" to label problematic children's voices (Bentley, 1968; Gaiser, 1961; Joyner, 1969).

Rutkowski (1990) made note of the inconsistencies in the terminology used to describe the stages of development of children's singing voices, which made it difficult for researchers and teachers to accurately measure and describe children's vocal development. At the same time, Rutkowski (1990) also hypothesized that a child's ability to use his or her voice was a construct separate from vocal accuracy.

Use of voice. Children must be taught how to use their voices for singing (Phillips, 1992; Runfola & Rutkowski, 2010). Kemp (1985) wrote, "Singing is a learned behavior" (p. 86), therefore, children cannot be expected to sing in tune without first being able to use, manipulate, and understand how their singing voices work (Rutkowski, 1990). Because singing is a complex process that requires the coordination of several psychomotor processes, Phillips (1992) recommends including exercises for respiration, phonation, resonant tone production, diction, and expression in elementary music classes. Elementary music teachers often incorporate vocal exploration into Kindergarten and first grade classes to allow students to discover how they can control and use their voices; however, Phillips (1992) maintains that teachers must continue to teach vocal technique throughout the grade levels. Additionally, music teachers must include many opportunities for children to sing, both alone and with others, and to hear good vocal models (Runfola & Rutkowski, 2010).

Rutkowski (1990, 1996) developed the Singing Voice Development Measure (SVDM) as a tool for music educators and researchers to use as means of describing the vocal development of children. The SVDM includes the following categories:

- 1 - “Presinger” does not sing, but chants the song text.
- 1.5 - “Inconsistent Speaking-Range Singer” sometimes chants, sometimes sustains tones and exhibits some sensitivity to pitch but remains in the speaking voice range (usually A2 to C3).
- 2 - “Speaking-Range Singer” sustains tones and exhibit some sensitivity to pitch but remains in the speaking-voice range (usually A2 to C3).
- 2.5 - “Inconsistent Limited-Range Singer” wavers between speaking and singing voice and uses a limited ranges when in singing voices (usually up to F3).
- 3 - “Limited-Range Singer” exhibits use of limited singing range (usually D3 to F3).
- 3.5 - “Inconsistent Initial Range Singer” sometimes only exhibits use of limited singing range, but other times exhibits use of initial singing range (usually D3 to A3).
- 4 - “Initial Range Singer” exhibits use of initial singing range (usually D3 to A3).
- 4.5 - “Inconsistent Singer” sometimes only exhibits use of initial singing range, but other times exhibits use of extended singing range (sings beyond the register lift: B3-flat and above).
- 5 - “Singer” exhibits use of extended singing range (sings beyond the register lift: B3-flat and above) (Rutkowski, 1996, p. 365).

The SVDM does not measure the accuracy of the pitches sung by a child, rather, it describes a child’s ability to use his or her voice while singing specific melodic patterns

developed specifically for the measure. The SVDM has enabled teachers to be able to concretely track the vocal development of their students.

Accuracy. Accuracy, or the ability to match pitch, is a component in teaching children to sing that is often confused or conflated with use of voice. Welch (1986) identified singing as a developmental skill that has little to do with innate ability. Therefore, like use of voice, singing accuracy also must be taught and developed in children.

Use of voice has been found to influence singing accuracy. Three distinct vocal registers, or ranges, have been identified in children. The lower register is in the speaking voice range, the middle register includes pitches in the range of D3 to A3, and the upper register includes pitches at B3-flat and above (Rutkowski, 1996). Rutkowski (2015) found that when children have use of more vocal registers – a higher score on the SVDM – they are more likely to sing accurately. Children who had a low SVDM score tended to struggle to access the pitches being assessed. The results suggested that developing children's use of their singing voice might positively influence their ability to sing accurately.

Singing and Gender Stereotyping

Gender has been a long-standing issue in singing and music education. Current culture often identifies singing as a feminine activity and ascribes negative connotations for males who might choose to participate (Ashley, 2002). However, this has not always been the case. In colonial America, singing was viewed as a masculine activity with men fulfilling leadership positions (Gates, 1989). Gates (1989) explained that men frequently

had to encourage women to participate in public singing stating “women were to make themselves obedient to God through psalm-singing and public worship” (p. 35).

Over time, the roles of men and women in singing reversed and singing became associated with feminine qualities (Gates, 1989). Studies have indicated that the overall number of males teaching in K-12 education is significantly lower than the number of females (Fratt, 2004). A 2014 survey of household data conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 97.2% of preschool and kindergarten teachers were female and 80.9% of elementary and middle school teachers were female ("Household data annual averages," 2014). These points may partially explain the imbalance in female and male elementary music teachers. Additionally, boys who choose to participate in a ‘feminine’ activity such as singing, are often subjected to name-calling, teasing, and ridicule by other boys and adults (Ashley, 2002).

While gender in music education has been a widely studied topic (e.g., Abeles, 2009; Cramer, Million, & Perreault, 2002; Delzell & Leppla, 1992), studies on the role of gender in elementary music education have been very limited. Roulston and Misawa (2011), who sought to describe music teachers’ gender constructions, conducted one such study. The researchers found that half the participants claimed to not ‘see’ gender, yet all of the participants referenced teaching practices that reinforced gender stereotypes. The results pointed to the need for teacher preparation programs to prepare future teachers to “resist dominant constructions of gender” so that all students will feel comfortable participating in music and singing (Roulston & Misawa, 2011, p. 20). Creating an environment where children are comfortable and free to express themselves without the

cultural stereotypes of gender may enable all children to actively participate in singing activities and to flourish in elementary general music classes.

Zoltán Kodály and his Philosophy

Zoltán Kodály, born on December 16, 1882 in Kecskemét, was a composer, ethnomusicologist, and music educator who was and continues to be widely known for his philosophical and pedagogical contributions to music education (Choksy, 1981; Eosze, Houlahan, & Tacka, n.d.). Kodály focused his early work on the collection and study of Hungarian folk songs, which eventually resulted in his thesis, *A Magyar népdal strofászerkezete* (The Stanzaic Structure of Hungarian Folk Song) (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Zemke, 1977). After receiving his PhD in 1906, Kodály relocated to Buda (part of Budapest, Hungary) where he expanded his research of Hungarian folk music, composed a number of works, and began writing and publishing many scholarly works (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

Kodály began to shift his attention toward music education in Hungarian schools after the first World War (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008), when he observed an “erosion” of the Hungarian national identity and noted that the music being used in the schools was of poor quality (Baumann, 2010). Historically, Hungary held close political and economical ties to Austria for decades prior to the start of the first World War (Choksy, 1981). These ties to Austria deeply affected Hungarian culture and music, often relegating anything traditionally Hungarian to the peasant class. Educated members of the upper class spoke German and adopted the music of their Viennese counterparts as their own (Choksy, 1981). Therefore, Hungarian music was frequently ignored by those with professional music training and was viewed in a negative light by the people of Hungary. Kodály

ultimately blamed kindergartens and primary schools for perpetuating the negative attitudes held by Hungarian people toward the music of their own culture and for failing to correct the problem (Kraus, 1972).

With the onset of World War II, Hungary was occupied by the Nazis, who decimated the Hungarian government (Braham, 1970). At the end of World War II the Soviet Union took control of the Hungarian government under the premise that it would rebuild what the German Nazis had destroyed (Braham, 1970). However, the Soviet Union did not successfully rebuild Hungarian culture. The political turmoil of the first half the twentieth century had severely diluted the Hungarian culture and, thus, the quality of music education in the schools severely suffered. In response, Kodály dedicated himself to improving the quality of music education in Hungary over the next two decades.

Kodály found that the Hungarian people needed to be reintroduced to their own musical history and to be given the tools to perform and understand that music. Therefore, Kodály set forth on a “mission to give back to the people of Hungary their own musical heritage and to raise the level of musical literacy, not only in academy students but also in the population as a whole” (Choksy, 1999, p. 1). Kodály, along with fellow Hungarian Jenő Ádám, published song collections, instructional books, and handbooks that were intended for use in schools by students and teachers (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). These publications contained the materials and guidance needed to provide Hungarian children with a high quality music education.

Although Kodály and Ádám had published numerous texts, Kodály recognized that improvements in the delivery of music education to students needed to be made

(Zemke, 1977). In 1950, Kodály was granted access by the Ministry of Education to one class in Kecskemét. He and his colleague, Márta Nemesszghy, provided the children of that class with daily music lessons using Kodály's own material and sequence (Choksy, 1999). The experiment of daily music lessons was extremely successful and resulted in the establishment of over 160 music primary schools (sometimes referred to as singing schools) (Choksy, 1999; "International Kodály Society", n.d.). These schools, which still exist today, treat music as a core subject (Bacon, 1993; "International Kodály Society," n.d.).

Despite being widely known as the Kodály "method" around the world, it's unlikely that Kodály viewed his approach as a method (Choksy, 1999). Erzébet Szönyi, a student and long-time collaborator of Kodály's, clarified that it was foreigners who labeled it a method, and that Hungarians did not refer to their way of teaching as the Kodály method (as cited in Zemke, 1977). Williams (1975) simply states, "There is no Kodály method" (p. 7). Bacon (1993), in a speech given in 1982, describes it not as a method, but as a philosophy of teaching and living. Some Kodály scholars have adopted the term "concept"¹ as a more accurate description of the implementation of the approach (Bacon, 1993; Eisen & Robertson, 2002; Kokas, 1970; Tacka & Houlahan, 1995; Zemke, 1977). Houlahan and Tacka (2008) stress that the approach is a philosophy, and note that the "method" many refer to is a collection of tools used to "facilitate instruction and learning," including moveable *do* solmization, hand signs (attributed to John Curwen), rhythmic syllables, and stick notation (p. 116; see also Bacon, 1993; Choksy, 1999).

¹ The term "concept" in this context bears the same definition that Abril (in press) gives to "approach" as discussed in a previous section of this document.

The Kodály approach is deeply rooted in several specific philosophical components:

- Music literacy, which leads to musical independence, is the right of every human being
- Music learning must begin with the child's voice
- Aural skills must be developed early in a child's life through a cappella singing in a sound to symbol approach
- Music education must be founded on music from the mother tongue
- Only music of high quality should be used in the education of the children
- Music concepts should be presented in a developmentally appropriate learning sequence (Choksy, 1981; Sinor 1997)

These philosophical components are the guiding beliefs that Kodály-influenced teachers use to guide and inform their teaching. While there have been many researchers and educators who have published methods that are influenced by the Kodály philosophy (Choksy, 1999; Eisen & Robertson, 2002; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008), there is no one, singular method of teaching according to the Kodály philosophy.

Kodály firmly believed that music is for everyone, not only the elite members of society, and that everyone has a right to music literacy (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

Therefore, he believed it was necessary for all children to receive excellent, daily musical training in the schools. Additionally, music instruction should be based on folk songs of the highest quality from the child's native culture (Choksy, 1981; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Williams, 1975).

Kodály's Philosophy and Singing

Singing is a central component of Kodály's approach to teaching music (Zemke, 1977). Kodály believed that, because every person has the ability to access his or her singing voice (Williams, 1975), it was the most "direct means to a musical education" (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008, p. 21). Kodály recognized that singing is a natural act for children; so long as they have not had their musical impulses curbed by adults, thus becoming highly self-conscious (Choksy, 1975).

Kodály's philosophy establishes the tenet that all musical concepts and skills should first be introduced through the voice. This belief is rooted in the natural role of music in children's imaginative play. Pond (1980) observed that children often accompany their own play with singing, using improvised musical motives that are typically rooted in a sol-mi melodic pattern. Additionally, playing and singing are deeply intertwined for young children (Kraus, 1972; Pond, 1980). Kodály wrote, "The simple song does not hinder the action of play, rather the opposite; it makes play more attractive, more interesting" (as cited in Kraus, 1972).

Much of Kodály's philosophy has roots in the natural development of human beings and reflects Pestalozzian principles. The music education of children should progress from simple to complex and the sequence should be based on their cognitive and psychomotor development (Sinor, 1980). Children learn to speak through immersion, listening to the adults in their world and eventually imitating what they hear. Children typically do not learn to speak by first learning to read. Therefore, Kodály believed that music education should develop in a similar organic fashion, beginning with the sound

long before the symbol is presented. Singing should, therefore, be the first step in creating a musically literate society.

In addition to the voice being the primary vehicle for movement toward music literacy, Kodály also made it clear that singing has the power to aid in both intellectual and emotional development (Zemke, 1977). Kodály wrote that through singing, humans can find a “deep experience of happiness” and the “enjoyment given encourages the study of instrument and the listening to other pieces of music” (as cited in Zemke, 1977, p. 12).

Kodály also insisted that children’s musical skill development must begin as early in life as possible. In fact, according to Choksy (1981), “the education of the musical ear can be completely successful only if it is begun early” (p. 7). For Kodály, this meant that regular music education should be included in all schools for all children beginning in kindergarten, if not earlier (Choksy, 1981; Kraus, 1972).

Summary

Singing has long held a significant role in American music education, initially serving as the primary means through which musical skills and concepts were learned. The singing school masters of the eighteenth century were some of the first music educators in the United States of America who helped to shed light of children’s abilities to learn to sing and read music. Formal music education was brought to the public schools by Lowell Mason, an entrepreneurial music educator, and was formally established in primary schools by Luther Whiting Mason.

In the 1920’s the term “general music” surfaced as a way to differentiate it from the more performance-based instrumental groups. Throughout the twentieth century

singing continued to be used as a key component in general music education despite some shifts toward music appreciation. The accountability movement of the latter part of the twentieth century spurred the development of national and state standards that impacted the daily teaching lives of general music teachers.

Many researchers have found that singing was and continues to be a frequently utilized music activity in elementary general music classes; however, they have indicated singing activities comprise less than one quarter of the class time despite both researchers and educators pointing to the importance of singing. Additionally, many state standards and district curricula include singing as a required skill. Kodály-influenced music educators are some of the strongest proponents of singing in the elementary general music classroom; however, there is a noticeable absence of research on the impact of the Kodály philosophy on teachers' use of singing. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine and describe Kodály-influenced teachers' use of singing in elementary general music classrooms. This research will provide a better understanding of the role of singing in classes taught by Kodály-influenced teachers, and will inform the teaching practices of general music teachers and provide guidance for the effective inclusion of singing in music education.

Chapter 3: Research Method and Design

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classrooms. The Kodály philosophy upholds the tenet that singing should be a central component of elementary general music classes, and that it should be utilized as the primary vehicle for both music making and musical skill development. According to Wagner and Strul (1979), singing is a music activity where students are engaged in vocal music performance. Based on this definition, I defined *singing activities* as any activity in the course of a music lesson where students were engaged in teacher-led singing for either the purpose of making music or for developing other musical skills. Questions that guided the research were:

1. How much time do elementary Kodály-trained music teachers spend engaging students in singing activities?
2. What types of singing activities do teachers use to engage students?
 - a. Do the music teachers lead students in singing activities for the purpose of making music?
 - b. Do the music teachers use singing activities to teach or reinforce other musical skills?

Method Overview

Based upon the research questions and my desire to deeply examine the reasons why Kodály-based educators utilize singing, I determined that a qualitative methodology using a collective case study design was most appropriate (Glesne, 2011). This design enabled me to explore the actions and pedagogical choices of the participants, incorporate the participants' individual narratives, and contextualize the intersection of action and personal narrative (Glesne, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I was able to situate myself within the research context and to acknowledge the subjectivities involved in conducting research with people (Green & Stinson, 1999).

I observed each participant teaching a music lesson for the same grade level (third or fourth grade) on three separate, sequential occasions. All observed lessons were 45-50 minutes in length. Following the completion of the observations, each participant was interviewed. Further communication took place via email, which included member checks, clarifications of statements made by the participants in the interviews, and additional researcher questions.

Participant Selection and Description

Participants were selected through purposeful sampling procedures whereby each participant was selected for his or her "relevance to the research questions, analytical framework, and explanation or account being developed in the research" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 269). Because I sought to describe the characteristics and practices of a specific subgroup, a type of purposeful sampling defined by Patton (2002) as homogeneous sampling was used where the participants were selected because of their similarities to one another. This strategy was appropriate because I was not seeking to make

generalizations (Glesne, 2011); rather, I was seeking to describe the practices of a specific group.

The participants in this research study were elementary general music teachers who incorporate the Kodály philosophy of music education into their daily teaching. Participants in this study were required to meet the following criteria in order to participate:

- Self-identify as a Kodály-influenced music teacher
- Hold full Kodály certification from an Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) endorsed program which was completed at least five years prior to this study
- Have at least ten years of elementary music teaching experience
- Currently teach in a public elementary school

Following IRB approval, a list of potential participants who had the potential to meet the study criteria were identified through the recommendations of faculty members of the School of Music at a large university in the Midwest. Potential participants confirmed their qualifications during the recruitment process.

The goal of this qualitative research study was to deeply examine and understand a social phenomenon; therefore, it was appropriate for a small number of qualified participants to be recruited. Recruitment continued until a total of six consented participants were reached. Because all of the consented participants met the study criteria, I randomly selected three to participate in the study. The remaining three consented participants would only participate in the case that one of the three initial participants chose to end his or her participation in the study for any reason.

Potential participants were sent a recruitment letter (see Appendix A) via email. If a potential participant was interested in participating in the study, they responded to my email and confirmed their interest. Then, I sent the potential participant the informed consent form (see Appendix B) and requested to schedule a time to meet in person to discuss and sign the informed consent form. Five participants chose to forgo the in-person meeting and emailed their signed consent back to me. These participants did this of their own accord. One participant requested a phone conversation with me prior to scheduling an in-person meeting. That participant agreed to an in-person meeting to review and sign the consent form.

Once six consented participants had been recruited, I chose three at random to participate in the study. The remaining three participants were informed that they were not initially selected to participate in the study, but that they may be contacted should a participant withdraw from the study. Two of the three randomly selected participants readily confirmed their continued participation in the study; however, one participant could not be contacted. Therefore, I randomly selected one of the remaining consented participants and invited her to participate.

Data Collection Methods

Field observations and semi-structured interviews were used to gather and generate data for this study. I observed each participant teaching three sequential 45-50 minute general music lessons for an agreed upon grade level. Upon completion of the field observations, I scheduled an interview with each participant. I utilized a semi-structured format for each interview, which allowed for both open-ended questions and theoretically based questions that elicited “data grounded in the experience of the

participant as well as data guided by existing constructs in the particular discipline within which one is conducting research” (Galletta, 2013, p. 45). Questions asked in the interviews were grounded in the data gathered during the observations and addressed the research questions of the study.

Field Observation Methods

I observed each participant teach on three separate occasions during the month of December 2014. The lessons that I observed were of the same grade level (third or fourth grade) and were across three consecutive class periods. Upon arriving in a participant’s classroom, I allowed the participant to direct me to a location where I could sit and take notes without being distracting or obtrusive during the lesson. While the participant taught during the first two observations, I took detailed field notes about lesson content, teacher actions, and materials used. I tracked the amount of time spent engaged in singing activities using the stopwatch application on my smartphone. Following the second observation I designed a table that would allow me to readily track the type and length of each music activity during the third observation. A space for taking notes was also included on the table.

Interview Method

At the conclusion of my third and final observation visit to the participants’ classrooms, I requested that the participants provide me with several days and times when they would be available for the interview. Once I had gathered the availability of all three participants, I scheduled interview times with each participant. All three interviews took place during the week of January 5, 2015 and were conducted in each participant’s respective classroom.

Upon arriving, I requested that we sit in a place where both of us would be able to face the computer. I explained that I would be recording the interview using a MacBook Pro running Express Dictate. I also explained that following the interview, I would transcribe the interview and e-mail the transcript within 48 hours for review. Prior to starting the recording device, I asked if I had permission to audio record the interview. Upon consent, I began to record and, again, asked if I had his or her permission to record the interview.

I utilized a semi-structured format for the interviews. Each interview lasted between 42 and 48 minutes. The following questions were used to guide the interview process:

- What degrees and certifications do you hold?
- What is your primary instrument?
- Do you consider yourself a singer?
- Do you play any other instruments? If so, which ones? What is your skill level on these instruments?
- Describe the training program from which you received your Kodály Certification.
- How many years into your teaching career did you begin your Kodály training?
- How many years did it take for you to finish your training?
- In your own words, how would you describe the Kodály philosophy?
- In what ways do you incorporate the Kodály philosophy into your own teaching?
- How much freedom do you have in regard to curriculum design?
- How much freedom do you have in regard to lesson content?

- In what ways do you use singing in your music classes?
- In the course of one music class, how much time do you think you spend leading the students in singing activities?
- How much time do you think you spend leading students in other music activities such as playing instruments, listening to recorded music, practicing rhythms, moving to music, or writing musical notation?
- Where does singing rank among other musical skills? What skills are the most important for children to acquire?
- Do you feel as though I observed the typical lessons? How might the lessons differ at another point in the school year?

Additionally, I developed several questions specific to each participant that were rooted in the data gathered during the field observations. It is important to note participants were not necessarily asked the above questions verbatim; rather, the questions were used to guide the interview process (Patton, 2002). All of the topics found in the above questions were addressed in the course of each interview.

I transcribed each interview within 48 hours and sent the transcript via email to each participant for member checking. Each participant reviewed his or her own interview transcript and informed me of any corrections, clarifications, additions, or deletions. Following approval of the transcript by each participant, I deleted the interview recording. I replaced all real names and locations with pseudonyms in the transcript, thus resulting in deidentified data.

Data Analysis

Ongoing data analysis is necessary when conducting qualitative research (Galletta, 2013). Utilizing Glaser and Strauss' constant comparative method of data analysis, I analyzed field observation data for patterns and themes throughout the observation period so that the data could inform the interviews (as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process allowed for member checking during each respective interview. Once data collection was complete, I used Creswell's (2013) data analysis spiral to recursively analyze the data. I made notes and assigned preliminary codes in my initial examination of the full data set. In subsequent examinations of the data, I refined the preliminary codes and identified emergent themes.

Because I sought to describe teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary music classes, I used a priori codes to identify the types of activities that frequently occur in elementary general music classes. Additionally, I allowed for emergent themes in my analysis to account for other issues and situations related to the teachers' use of singing.

Wagner and Strul (1979) describe singing as a type of music activity that involves "vocal music performance activities in which students participate, with or without the teacher" (p. 116). Based on Wagner and Strul's (1979) definition of singing, I used the following a priori codes to describe teacher-led singing activities in the music classes:

Purposeful singing – Vocal performance that is teacher-led and for the sole purpose of singing. These are moments where the focus is primarily on singing, vocal production, and musicality.

Secondary singing – Vocal performance that is teacher-led and is done for another purpose, such as rhythmic drills, melodic drills, games, and dances. These are moments where there is less focus on vocal production, and more focus on something else.

To account for other music activities that did not include singing, I used the following code:

Non-singing music activity – This is a music activity that does not include singing. Students might be playing instruments, listening to recorded music, practicing rhythms, moving to music, or writing musical notation (Wagner & Strul, 1979).

Upon analysis of the data, four broad themes emerged: singing, Kodály philosophy, standards and curriculum, and purpose of music education. Emergent themes and their operational definitions are as follows:

Singing – The above a priori codes plus the emergent code of vocal development are included in this theme. Vocal development is defined as the processes a participant uses to teach children to sing. Additionally, the quantitative data related to the amount of singing (discussed in the next paragraph) is included in this theme.

Kodály Philosophy – This theme encompasses participants' experiences related to their Kodály training, and their interpretation and implementation of the Kodály philosophy.

Standards and Curriculum – National, state, and district music standards and curricula play a significant role in the professional lives of the participants. This

theme includes the participants' discussions and experiences with various standards and curricula.

Purpose of Music Education – This theme includes participants' discussions of their end goals for music education.

I gathered a small amount of quantitative data in the course of the study. During each observation I noted the amount of time that each participant spent engaging students in some form of singing activity (purposeful or secondary). I calculated the amount of time spent engaging students in singing activities in the form of a percentage for each observed music class. For data gathered during the third observation of each participant, I calculated the amount of time spent in each type of activity according to the a priori codes. I also computed the average amount of time the participants engaged students in singing activities from the participants' aggregate total times. These data, presented in chapter 4, provide insight into the singing practices that occurred in the observed classes.

Trustworthiness Criteria

The qualitative nature of this study required the establishment of trustworthiness criteria due to the inherent biased nature of all research (Glesne, 2011; Lather 1986). Qualitative research designs utilize trustworthiness criteria to make researcher bias explicit, flaws in research design, and flaws in researcher interpretation (Galletta, 2013). Measures taken to ensure trustworthiness included prolonged engagement, triangulation, negative case analysis, member checks, a researcher's journal, clarification of researcher bias, and thick, rich description (Glesne, 2011).

Prolonged Engagement

Prolonged engagement ensures that researchers develop trust and rapport, more fully understand the culture and environment, and have an opportunity to check hunches (Creswell, 1998). I observed each participant teaching a lesson on three separate occasions and conducted a semi-structured interview with each participant. In addition to these formal data collection moments, the participants frequently engaged me in conversation before, after, and in between my visits. It was during these times that I was able to build rapport, gain trust, and better understand each participant's classroom environment and school culture. Additionally, I continued to maintain contact with the participants through email in order to update them on the progress of my study and to member check my analysis of the data.

Triangulation

I triangulated data through two collection methods (i.e., observation and interview) and multiple sources (i.e., three participants). Including multiple methods and sources allowed me to “seek counterpatterns as well as convergences” (Lather, 1986, p. 67). Issues and themes that arose during the observation stage of the study were checked and validated during the interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Negative Case Analysis

I consciously searched for negative cases or disconfirming evidence throughout the course of my study. Continuously refining the research strengthened the trustworthiness of the study by taking into account data that did not align with a priori theories and my own personal assumptions (Glesne, 2011; Lather, 1986; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Member Checks

Member checking is necessary in qualitative research to ensure credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). After each observation, I briefly discussed what I saw with the participants and allowed them to provide me with any additional important information. I utilized part of the interview to member check additional observation data, including the percentage of time spent engaging students in singing activities (Galletta, 2013). I also asked follow-up questions to enable the participants to clarify and expand upon the observation data. Within 48 hours of completing the interview, I sent the participants a transcript of their interview and gave them the opportunity to add, delete, and/or clarify information in the transcript. I frequently contacted the participants through email to check my interpretations and assertions, and to clarify statements made in the respective interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, I sent the participants their completed personal case studies for a final review.

Researcher's Journal

Reflexivity, the practice of critically examining “how a researcher, research participants, a setting, and a phenomenon of interest interact and influence each other,” is crucial in qualitative research because personal subjectivities, biases, and assumptions can influence and inform the research (Glesne, 2011, p. 284). Lather (1986, p. 67) notes that systematized reflexivity indicates “how a priori theory has been changed by the logic of the data” and is “essential in establishing construct validity.” I maintained a researcher's journal throughout the course of the study to keep track of my own personal biases. Before and after an observation or interview, I recorded notes and reflections in my journal about my emotional state, assumptions, and other behaviors. I also made notes

in my journal during the data analysis and writing process so that I could track analytical thoughts and evolving theories.

Clarification of Researcher Bias

The clarification of researcher bias is crucial to the establishment of trustworthiness because there is no such thing as neutral research (Glesne, 2011; Lather, 1986). A researcher's own subjectivities, biases, and positions can effect and frame the work being done (Glesne, 2011). Examining and disclosing my personal investment and biases in this research was necessary in order to establish credibility and ensure that the results were trustworthy.

I consider myself a singer, an elementary general music teacher, and a Kodály-influenced teacher. While very little of my K-12 music education had anything to do with the Kodály philosophy, much of my undergraduate and graduate studies have been rooted in the philosophy. Additionally, I often incorporate aspects of the Kodály philosophy into my teaching of collegiate-level courses.

I hold a bachelor of music degree in music education from a small, specialized music school in the northeast. Much of my education at that institution was centered on singing and teaching others to sing. Methods courses, conducting courses, and musicianship courses had varying shades of the Kodály philosophy and used tools often associated with the approach. During the student teaching semester, all student teachers were required to take a group of courses prior to going out into the school. One course was "Kodály Music Reading." This course introduced me to a sequence of concepts, techniques for teaching children to read music, and a variety of singing games. I recognized that I would likely need to seek out training in at least one of the philosophies

commonly found in elementary general music education (e.g., Kodály, Orff-Schulwerk, or Dalcroze).

Upon graduation, I enrolled in a master of arts in music and music education program where I continued to study children's musical development. It was important to me to learn how children acquired musical skills during early childhood. The flexibility of my master's program enabled me to study topics that were of interest to me.

My first fulltime, permanent teaching position was at an independent school that had a well-established Kodály-based music education program. The administration of the school desired to continue the Kodály tradition, and offered me the opportunity to complete my Kodály certification over the course of three summers in 2007, 2008, and 2009. I immediately implemented what I learned in my daily teaching.

I recognize that I am invested in this research. I have a history with the Kodály philosophy and teaching elementary general music. However, my personal history allowed me to easily gain entrée and build rapport with the participants in my study. I believe that singing should play a significant role in the music education of children, and it was this belief that initially led me to this topic. In my reporting of the findings, I consciously strove to report what I saw, and not what I wanted to see.

Description

I have included thick, rich description in this report. The description "goes beyond the mere reporting of an act," (Denzin, 1989, p. 39) and specifies "everything that a reader may need to know in order to understand the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 125). Thick, rich description increases the transferability of a study and allows the reader to contextualize the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Communication of the Findings

The findings of this study are presented in chapter 4. The chapter is organized so that the data from each participant is presented and analyzed as its own case. Each case includes a participant profile so that the researcher and reader may more deeply understand the meaningful, individual, and shared characteristics and experiences of each participant (Yin, 2009). A priori and emergent themes are presented as they relate to each case, and are supported with narrative vignettes and data excerpts.

Chapter 4: Individual Case Data and Analysis

Introduction

In this chapter I present the three cases individually. At the beginning of each case, a participant profile is provided along with a narrative vignette that is drawn from my field notes, which will aid in the contextualization of the subsequent data and analysis of the themes. Because children refer to their teachers using a formal title of Mr., Mrs., and Ms., I have chosen to refer to the participants in the same manner throughout the initial narrative vignette. Following the participant profile, the themes of singing, Kodály philosophy, standards and curriculum, and the purpose of music education are presented.

Participant Demographics: Overview

All of the participants in this study met specific criteria for participation, including self-identifying as a Kodály-influenced teacher and currently teaching at a public elementary school. The three participants are experienced teachers who completed their full Kodály certification in the mid-1990's. Jeff Scott has 23 years of teaching experience, Ellen Casper has 19 years of teaching experience, and Suzan Parsons has 36 years of teaching experience. Both Jeff and Ellen have continuously taught in public elementary schools. Suzan spent her first 17 years teaching in parochial schools and preschools, and has spent the past 19 years teaching in a public elementary school. The three participants teach within the same school district and teach at schools that are similar to one another in terms of demographics and socioeconomic status. The students

in their schools come from a wide variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and some speak English as a second language.

Jeff Scott²

Participant Profile

Jeff Scott had a unique introduction to the Kodály philosophy and approach to teaching music. Typically, teachers begin their first level of Kodály certification after the completion of an undergraduate degree. Some even teach for many years before beginning their studies. However, by the time Jeff had completed his bachelor of music in music education degree in 1992, he had also completed his first level of Kodály studies. Jeff's undergraduate institution had designed a general music track with a curriculum that incorporated the required coursework for the first level of Kodály studies. Jeff completed level two in the summer of 1992. Additionally, Jeff studied abroad in Hungary at the Kodály Institute during his undergraduate work for three months from mid September 1990 to mid December 1990.

Jeff described his experiences during his Kodály training as being appropriately challenging and he credited his ability to cope with the demands of the musicianship coursework to his experiences while studying abroad at the Kodály Institute in Hungary. Jeff explained that typically, his coursework in the United States only required that he play one line of music on the piano and sing another, for example, play the bass line and sing the soprano line of an open score choral octavo. In Hungary, he was required to play up to three lines on the piano and sing the fourth line of an open score choral octavo.

² Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants.

After Jeff's first year of teaching, he returned to his undergraduate institution and completed his level III Kodály studies in the summer of 1993. At the time, Jeff knew that his undergraduate institution was developing a master's degree with a Kodály specialization and opted to hold off on completing a graduate degree until the program launched because he knew that his completed Kodály levels would count toward a master's degree. Jeff completed the remaining coursework for the master of music in music education in the summers of 2000 and 2001. He was awarded a master of music in music education with a Kodály specialization in December 2001.

Jeff said, "I'm not sure I consider myself a purist. Um, I have tried over the last several years...to infuse the elements of the Orff methodology as well. Because, I think they really do compliment each other." Jeff's teaching has always been influenced by the Kodály philosophy. However, he explained that he has sought to incorporate some aspects of the Orff approach into his teaching, particularly in regard to improvisation and composition. Despite this hint of eclecticism, Jeff considers himself first and foremost a Kodály teacher. For Jeff, teaching according to the Kodály philosophy means that his lessons are focused on building the music literacy of his students through music that is from their native tongue. He upholds the value that singing should be the cornerstone of music education, and noted that singing is a life skill that his students will be able to use for their entire lives.

Classroom environment. The following narrative vignette draws from my observation field notes and gives the reader an understanding of musical environment set forth by Jeff Scott. In this vignette, I describe a portion of my first observation of Jeff.

I arrive at Mr. Scott's school about ten minutes before the class I am there to observe begins. After checking in at the office and receiving a visitor's badge, I proceed to Mr. Scott's classroom. Mr. Scott greets me and asks where I would like to sit and if there is anything I need. I request to sit in a place where I will not interfere with his class, but where I can also observe all of the activities he has planned for the day. Mr. Scott gives me a chair and a music stand in the front corner of the room near his desk. From my position, I can see into the hallway where the students are arriving, carrying backpacks, hats, gloves and scarves. Mr. Scott immediately meets his final class of the day, a third grade class, in the hall. After the students deposit their belongings on the floor along the wall, Mr. Scott greets them and informs them that they will notice a visitor in the music room when they enter. He tells the students that he will introduce the visitor once they enter the room and instructs the students to sing "Great Big House" while they walk into the classroom. A student requests that she be allowed to start the song. Mr. Scott obliges.

Once the class is seated on the risers in the back of the room, Mr. Scott introduces me and tells the students that I am there because I am conducting research. Mr. Scott tells them that I will be looking at him (and not them), so they shouldn't be worried about my presence. He proceeds to ask the students if they know what it means for someone to be doing research, and several students offer their interpretations. Mr. Scott defers to me for any clarifications or corrections. Mr. Scott does not seem to have any issues with including me in his classroom activities.

To transition out of the conversation about research, Mr. Scott instructs the students to sing “Great Big House” again. The students sing quite well, with the majority of students singing in tune. Mr. Scott has the students sing through the song again, but this time he sings the song in canon with them. Once the song is over, Mr. Scott asks the students if they noticed what he was doing. The students identify that he sang the same song, but that he started after them. Mr. Scott reinforced the definition of a canon. Then, he takes a brief moment to recognize that a student, who had been struggling to sing, had “fixed his singing voice.”

Mr. Scott transitions to the next activity by telling the students that a canon is similar to a round. He says that the word “round” reminds him of another term the students know: rondo. Mr. Scott instructs that students to move to the floor and to listen to a recording of Mozart’s Rondo Alla Turca. They will be working together to figure out the form of the piece. Mr. Scott presents the students with the rhythm of the A theme on a chart. Immediately, several students begin to sing the A theme. This is not a new piece for them. They work as a class, reading the rhythm of each theme, listening to each section, and assigning each section the appropriate alphabetical label. Mr. Scott draws attention to the repeated sections of the piece and offers an explanation about why Mozart may have repeated sections (because he frequently had very little time to write pieces of music). Mr. Scott concludes that activity by explaining that they were analyzing the music.

The vignette above details about half of a 50 minute music class that I observed Jeff teach on Friday, December 5th, 2014, and it is representative of the lessons I observed Jeff teaching on three occasions. In all three observed lessons, Jeff focused the content on listening and discussing. Jeff purposefully drew attention to and discussed many musical terms and concepts, resulting in a high amount of teacher talk. I should note, however, that almost all of Jeff's talking was about music and rarely included off topic content.

Jeff has a good rapport with his students, with a mutual respect between all present in the class. Although the students were fairly talkative during transition moments, they readily participated and eagerly contributed to conversations led by Jeff. In the vignette above, Jeff guided the students through the process of analyzing the form of Mozart's *Rondo Alla Turca*. Throughout the exercise, the students readily contributed to the discussion and sang and tapped along to the rhythms of each of the themes in the piece.

Singing

Jeff considers his voice to be his primary instrument. When I inquired where singing ranked among other music skills, Jeff said, "Singing is number one...because it's a life skill" that the children will be able to do throughout their lives. This statement is reflective of a position held by most teachers who identify as Kodály teachers because singing is the "essence" of Kodály's approach to music education ("The Kodály concept," n.d.). Jeff readily spoke about singing, how he uses singing, and how he navigates issues related to vocal development and gender.

Purposeful singing. Jeff utilizes singing in his music classes for several reasons, including both purposeful and secondary singing. In the following interview excerpt, Jeff describes the ways in which he uses purposeful singing in his classes.

Megan: As you think about your own teaching, and it doesn't necessarily have to be about the class I saw, this could be all of the classes that you teach...in what different ways do you use singing in the course of the lessons?

Jeff: I think the first thing that I try to do is what I call "common singing" where they're just learning songs. Um...they may not recognize that there's a reason or rationale for what songs we're learning. They hopefully just feel that they're for fun. I sometimes give some background on them. But folk songs, um, many times they don't really have background information to share, so the kids just recognize them as fun songs to sing. I try to shy away from what some would say are the really typical children's songs because a lot of them come in already knowing those. Uh, so I try to introduce... for example Yankee Doodle, I don't know that I've ever sung Yankee Doodle with a class and maybe I should, but, um, that's one that if I start singing, most of my class picks it up.

Megan: They already know it.

Jeff: Um....um.... so.....I use [singing] primarily for common singing.

Jeff described using singing in his classroom in a purposeful manner, or what Jeff calls "common singing." He noted that he teaches his students songs that are initially used for the purpose of singing and that they are for "fun." I only observed Jeff engage his students in "common singing" for one brief moment when the students entered the class at the beginning of my first observation. Although I did not observe a significant amount

of “common singing,” it is possible that he utilizes this type of singing during other times of the school year. During the observed lessons, it appeared that Jeff was primarily focused on teaching the students about form. Each lesson included a listening example where they spent a significant amount of time breaking down the form of the piece (all were rondo form).

Secondary singing. Instances of secondary singing were readily observed in Jeff’s classes. Additionally, he spent a large part of our interview discussing the ways in which he uses singing. After Jeff outlined how he uses “common singing,” he quickly shifted to discussing secondary singing.

Jeff: ...and then from there.....we start breaking it down into melodic and rhythmic concepts. Those are the two biggie concepts or elements that I use...the songs to dissect and to extract a melodic pattern and a rhythmic pattern.

Um...singing is sometimes used...like what you saw in the class primarily was to analyze form, same and different, and it was a little bit different because I wasn’t really focused so much on singing of pitches. I didn’t...they weren’t learning the melody exactly the way it was. They were just learning the general contour.

Megan: They were using it to help identify the different sections of the various works.

Jeff: Right. So when they heard (sings phrase from Kodály’s *Viennese Musical Clock*) they were like, “That’s A” (snaps fingers).

Megan: Yeah.

Jeff: Um...so using it just to kind of identify little nuggets of a piece.

Megan: Do you think it helps them to internalize it a little bit better?

Jeff: I think it does. I haven't always done that, and I don't always do that. If, for example, the...if the rhythmic values....like the rondo that we did before....well I think you saw a little bit of....

Megan: The Mozart?

Jeff: The Mozart. It was a rhythmic thing that we were after. So I, I didn't necessarily focus too much on that. It was more about (sings A theme of Mozart's *Rondo Alla Turca*). So they were more focused on (sings with rhythm syllables) than they were (sings on da da).

Megan: Right.

Jeff: Um, it's a difficult melody, for one, and they had just learned the four sixteenth notes, so that was more um.....recognizable to them.

Megan: Right.

Jeff: Than anything in the melody would have been. So I use it for that....we...in the Orff methodology, if I'm teaching them, um...say a bordun pattern, I have them actually sing the bordun so that when they go over to play it, it hopefully sounds like what they just internalized by singing. Um,....

Jeff uses known song material to help his students aurally recognize and label melodic, rhythmic, and structural concepts, learn movements of a dance, and play patterns on xylophones. I observed Jeff engaging his students in secondary singing on many occasions. We discussed his use of singing to teach the students various borduns. Specifically, we discussed an episode I had observed in which Jeff was having his students practice a variety of borduns on the xylophones. Rather than telling the students what to play or having them read the pattern, Jeff sang the bordun on the letter names of

the pitches, then had the students echo him before moving to the xylophones to practice. He encouraged the students to sing the bordun while they played to ensure that they were playing the correct notes.

In our interview, Jeff stated, “Singing...is internalizing.” In support of his belief, Jeff frequently has his students sing melodic and rhythmic patterns as a means of becoming familiar with the concept, especially before they play something on a xylophone or listen to recorded orchestral music. For example, in the vignette presented at the beginning of Jeff’s case, I wrote about observing Jeff guide his students through the form analysis of *Rondo Alla Turca* by W. A. Mozart. Jeff also discussed the listening activity in the above interview excerpt. Prior to having the students listen to the piece, Jeff reviewed the melodic themes present in the piece. He encouraged the students to sing each theme using rhythm syllables. This evidence supports Jeff’s philosophy that singing helps to internalize a concept, thereby giving the students a more intimate and thorough understanding of larger, more complicated musical works.

Vocal development. It is not uncommon for elementary music teachers to focus on the vocal development of their students. Jeff makes a concerted effort to help his students develop their singing voices and understand how their voices work.

Jeff: If they can sing it....that’s why so much of the singing that we do is unaccompanied so that they’re just really focused on what their own voices are producing. And I call attention from a pretty early age to how it feels when they’re singing certain pitches and how they’re...we talk a little bit about their vocal chords and how their vocal chords can tighten and loosen when the pitches go higher and lower so that they can begin to associate how it feel in their throat

with the pitch that they're singing. Um...I find that helps some of the kids who don't match pitch naturally, that they understand that it is actually a physical act and they can change the, the way that their muscles are working and get better.

In this interview excerpt, Jeff discussed how he approaches vocal development with his students. By helping children to understand how their voices function, Jeff believes that his students are more likely to be able to successfully use their singing voices.

Although Jeff explained that he focuses on vocal development, the fact that he is male and has a lower voice impacts his approach to singing. Female elementary music teachers are able to use their normal singing voices to teach children to sing; however, as a male, Jeff frequently uses falsetto when modeling vocal techniques for his students. Jeff also explained that he often has male students express that they feel like they "sound like a girl" when they sing.

Jeff: We have conversations from the beginning. When I sing in my head voice, I say to the first graders, "Am I a girl? So...then you can't say I sing like a girl because I'm not a girl".....I try to be humorous about it.

Amount of singing. I tracked the amount of time Jeff spent engaging students in singing activities during each observation and converted the time to a percentage of class time. Jeff spent 13% of class time during the first lesson, 11.8% of class time during the second lesson, and 6.5% of class time during the third lesson engaging students in singing activities. All of the singing activities included in the three lessons were secondary singing activities with the exception of approximately one minute at the beginning of the first observed lesson. I calculated Jeff's average amount of time dedicated to singing activities over the three observed lessons to be 10.4%.

I asked Jeff to estimate the amount of time he regularly spends engaging his student in singing activities.

Jeff: Probably not as much as I would like. Um...20% 25%? I tend to talk too much so that takes up the time where they should be singing (both of us laugh). Uh...and obviously it depends on whether we're focused on a melodic concept versus a rhythmic concept that day. But, just in terms of.....20%.....because in a 50 minute lesson that would be 10 minutes, you know, if I broke it down and scribed out or listened or recorded myself, I'll bet it would only be about 10 minutes which there should be more.

Kodály Philosophy

Jeff completed his Kodály training during and immediately after his undergraduate degree program. As a result, Jeff has had over twenty years to develop his own approach to teaching music that is heavily influenced by the Kodály philosophy and that also incorporates Orff-Schulwerk techniques. However, Jeff considers himself “first to be a Kodály teacher” because he uses the sequence of melodic and rhythmic concepts he learned in his training along with folk songs and classical listening examples.

Jeff believes that the “Kodály philosophy is one that really tries to build students’ [musical] literacy.” In each lesson that I observed, Jeff included activities that advanced the musical literacy of his students. The following vignette is from my field notes taken during my second observation of Jeff’s teaching.

Jeff is using the known song “Listen” to introduce the half rest to a third grade class. Jeff sings the song and instructs the students to count the rests. He sings the song again, and instructs the students to tap their legs on the rests. This

kinesthetic activity is helping the students to become aware of the number of rests that occur after the word “listen” is sung. Jeff turns their attention to a small dry erase board on an easel where he begins to write the rhythm of the song. Jeff only writes the first two beats (two quarter notes) and asks the class to finish notating the rhythm of the song. Once the class identifies and notates the rhythm of the song using known notation, Jeff draws their attention to the two quarter rests that occur after the word “listen.” Jeff changes the two quarter rests to a half rest, explaining that a half rest can be used in place of two quarter rests. The class sings the song one final time before moving onto the next activity.

In addition to teaching his students to read notation, Jeff also includes a variety of listening activities where the students are required to apply known musical concepts to larger classical works. During my time observing, Jeff was having his third grade students practice reading and hearing sixteenth notes by identifying rhythmic patterns in Mozart’s *Rondo Alla Turca*. Moreover, Jeff was using this listening activity as an opportunity to reinforce rondo form with the class. The students read and performed the rhythm of each theme, identified the theme in the recording, and assigned the section a label (A, B, C, etc.).

Jeff includes a large amount of listening in classes because he believes that part of the Kodály philosophy and approach to teaching is giving students the tools and experiences necessary to be able to listen to a classical piece of music and understand what they are hearing. To do this, Jeff begins with folk song literature and leads his students on a path of musical discovery that begins by building a student’s aural awareness of a concept before presenting and practicing the notation for that concept.

Then, Jeff incorporates the concept into a listening activity to culminate the learning process.

Standards and Curriculum

The district mandated curriculum plays a significant role in Jeff's day-to-day teaching, influencing the content and processes that Jeff implements in his classroom.

Jeff briefly described the district curriculum:

It starts with the state and we, our district, basically looks at the state standards and then as a group, there are twelve of us elementary music teachers, we looked at those to make sure that as a group we felt they were appropriate, and then there were just a couple of small additions that we made that we felt were left out of the state curriculum. But that, that is our approved curriculum in the district and that's what I use everyday. I have my little cheat sheet just to make sure that at some point in the year, I'm hitting all of the standards.

The curriculum in place in Jeff's district very closely resembles the current standards for the state in which his district resides. Specific skills that students are to have experience with, know, and/or master by the end of each grade level are outlined. The vast number of skills noted for each grade level can be overwhelming; therefore, Jeff opts to utilize a "cheat sheet" to ensure that he is meeting each standard and skills that are mandated by his district and the state.

Jeff raised the issue of the state standards early in his interview by connecting his Kodály training to what he is required to teach as a public school music teacher. After briefly talking about how the Kodály philosophy is evident in his teaching, Jeff stated:

A lot of that is now, you know, codified in the state standards. So it's not just because that's the way I learned it in college, but it's because that's what the state...says I need to be teaching. So, I'm fortunate that I felt like my background, my undergraduate and masters programs, you know, fits pretty seamlessly into that.

Jeff is very conscientious about teaching what he is supposed to teach as stated by his district and the state, and this was evident in the classes I observed. The following excerpt is from my field notes:

Jeff verbalizes a lot of concepts and terms for his students. Earlier in the class, when the students were listening to Rondo Alla Turca, Jeff reviewed the term rondo and its definition. He also made sure to state the objective of the listening activity for the students – they were analyzing music. Now, Jeff is reviewing the term bordun and its definition. He closes the lesson by playing various patterns on a xylophone and asking his student to give a thumbs up if the pattern is a bordun or a thumbs down if it's not. He asks the students to explain their answers.

He has made a distinct effort to address those state standards that could easily be overlooked in favor of the performance-based standards. I saw a notable amount of emphasis placed on listening, identifying, comparing and discussing in Jeff's music classes.

Although Jeff is required to meet specific standards, he does have the freedom to select musical materials and design his lessons in a manner that fits his students and his teaching style.

Megan:Do you have a specific lesson plan format that you follow? Because I noticed that sometimes the listening practice came in the middle of lesson...or it was at the very end. I didn't know if you had a specific order that you like to do things in or just depends upon what you were doing that day....

Jeff: It really does depend...and in any given....like when I refer back to a previous year. I find that while the lessons aren't exactly the same...I change repertoire...I change listening examples and things. I do find that certain things just kind of lead better to another thing such that sometimes I'll start with a movement game first. Some of it depends on the group. And I know there are certain groups, you know, my second grade this year, they need to start and I need to gauge how they're doing with movement first. So they can get a lot of that energy out and then I can get them to focus. Um...older grades...I often will start with them more on the risers and doing more singing....lots of repertoire that we'll then use in that lesson that day. But there isn't kind of a set....

Megan: Set order to things....

Jeff: Order...yeah.

Megan: Do you always include this in the lesson and there's always that in the lesson....?

Jeff: Generally, I've got something going on at a very conscious level... uh...I used to have simultaneous rhythmic and melodic elements. Um....within a lesson. I've kind of shifted to focusing more on one, and then either being in the preparatory or practice stage of the other. Um...so they kind of overlap a little bit, but at any given time, I'm really more focused on a certain rhythmic unit. So

that's where the bulk of the lesson would be and I might do two or three activities on a rhythmic thing and only touch on a melodic thing that either we're going to be learning. Whether it's just learning a couple of songs with the melodic phrase in it....or we just did something like with form....I might, I might, uh pick up on that one activity with that. So, but within each lesson I hope to have movement, focus concept whether that be rhythm or melody, and then play around other things.

Jeff uses a flexible planning style that allows him to vary the timing and placement of musical activities in his lessons. Of the three lessons I observed Jeff teach, each lesson was structured in a slightly different manner. The first lesson included a song, listening component, movement activity, and xylophones (in that order). The second observed lesson included (in order) a movement activity, xylophones, song with music reading component, and a listening activity. The third lesson included (in order) a listening activity, a song with music reading component, xylophones, and a movement activity. The movement activity, a circle dance to "Dinah," remained consistent in all three lessons.

Finally, Jeff makes a distinct effort to connect music to other academic subjects, including science and language arts. Jeff made a conscious effort to connect the analysis of listening example to scientific practices. Jeff discussed how he connects music to other subjects:

I'm willing to take half of a lesson, which is what I think that the Viennese Musical Clock took, I'll take that lesson to really....we listened to it five times even though it was only a two minute piece. So...but then you stop and you talk

about it, and you teach them how to break down long pieces into little sections. I think those are things that have some life application. We talk about...today....well, what are we doing? We're dissecting, we're analyzing. What scientists do. So we're gonna be scientists today and break this down.

Purpose of Music Education

In my interview with Jeff, he stated "For kids to know how to break down a big thing into small things to make it more manageable, I think it's one of those things that hopefully will serve them well in the future." During my observations of his teaching, I noted that Jeff strives to help his students understand music by analyzing and breaking down larger musical works into smaller, more manageable parts. Ultimately, Jeff hopes that by giving his students analytical skills, his students will be able to go out into the world and understand and appreciate the "music of the masters."

Including listening activities that focus on musical form helps Jeff to build his students' understanding of music. During the analysis process, I noticed how frequently Jeff discussed analyzing and decoding with his students. In an email, I asked Jeff to elaborate on what he ultimately wants his students to understand. Jeff replied:

Yes, I do focus a lot on musical form. But I think my bigger focus is to teach students to break down something big into more manageable parts. This is a theme that runs throughout the curriculum, whether it's writing a paragraph or solving a complex word problem. I often compare it to scientists looking at something through a microscope. Students often have to scaffold information, which includes recognizing whether new information is the same as/similar to/different from information they have already learned. So in a way, studying

musical form is a pretty important piece of their overall learning.

When I first sing a new song to students, I often hold up fingers as I'm singing to indicate which 'part' of a song I'm singing. This helps them organize a long song into something that is easier to understand. Immediately, when possible, I ask them to describe the form. In fourth grade right now, we're listening to and singing spirituals, which have a pretty distinct form. They can most often tell me the form after hearing it just once or twice.

Throughout the grade levels in music, this also prepares them for compositional processes, mainly breaking down into 8-beat phrases, often in question and answer format.

For Jeff, the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand what they hear in music and to help them to apply it to reading, writing, and performing music. He guides his students through activities that require them to be able to hear various components of music, including form, so that they will be able to make sense of large, complex works.

Ellen Casper

Participant Profile

From childhood, Ellen was exposed to the Kodály philosophy and approach to teaching. Ellen and her sister traveled to Texas with their mother for several summers in a row as their mother completed her Kodály training. Ellen explained, “I’d grown up with the method³, my mom taught it as well....She went to school as a nontraditional age

³ Ellen used the term “method” when referring to what I call the Kodály approach.

student, and so when she was working on her Kodály certificate, my sister and I both traveled with her to Texas.” Because the Kodály approach to teaching was familiar, it made sense that Ellen attended an undergraduate program that was heavily influenced by the Kodály philosophy. Ellen graduated with a bachelor of music in music education in the spring of 1996.

Ellen did her Kodály training in the summers between each year of her undergraduate degree, completing level I after her sophomore year and level II after her junior year. This training gave Ellen the opportunity to spend an extra five weeks during her student teaching semester out in the schools. She was excused from a course that student teachers were required to take in the first week of the student teaching semester. Ellen spent this extra time in her elementary placement, an elementary school that ultimately hired her as the music teacher upon her graduation and her completion of her Kodály certification in the summer of 1996.

In addition to her undergraduate degree, Ellen also has a master of arts in education, 45 credit hours beyond the master’s, and has completed level one of Orff-Schulwerk training. Ellen recognizes that she has an extensive education; however, she feels somewhat limited in her knowledge because she has used her only Kodály training throughout her career. Ellen spoke to the detriment of having had Kodály training before she began teaching:

For me, the only thing I see as more of a detriment to it was I didn’t understand a lot of the.... classroom management that went on, because I was a student still.

And, the other thing I think, um, is that other teachers who have come out and had to have taught a different way first, like pulling things from everywhere with a

more eclectic approach...sometimes when it comes time to planning a program or, “hi we need a song for, you know, this such and such.” I was so focused on the Kodály curriculum that I don’t have a lot of more resources to pull from. But instead, I find other colleagues and things like that to pull from.

The main limitation that Ellen notes is her lack of resources and the lack of knowledge of how to find those resources. To compensate, Ellen consults her colleagues when she is in need of materials.

Ellen wholly identifies as a Kodály teacher. Although she has one level of Orff-Schulwerk training, she does not apply that training to her teaching, but she does not let her self-identified limitations restrict her. Ellen stated, “I didn’t get that more eclectic...which I don’t think is necessarily bad, because 99% of the time I’m following the Kodály curriculum, and then that one percent is when I need something else.”

Classroom environment. The following narrative vignette is drawn from my observation field notes and gives the reader an understanding of the musical environment set forth by Ellen Casper. In this vignette, I describe a portion of my second observation of Ellen.

This is my second time visiting Mrs. Casper’s music class. I have arrived about five minutes before class begins. Mrs. Casper and I exchange greetings and I take my seat at a table in the front of the classroom. I use this quiet moment as an opportunity to note the structure and décor of the classroom. At the front of the room near me are two tables placed against the wall where Mrs. Casper has two computers, several iPads, a stack of books, and various musical manipulatives. Beside the tables are cabinets with sliding chalkboards that allow

Mrs. Casper to hide prewritten information from view of the children. She does not have a SMART board.

As I look into the classroom, built-in levels resembling risers run along the back wall and part way onto the far right wall. A piano sits in the far left corner and drums are stacked in the front right corner near Mrs. Casper's desk. There are bulletin boards on the back and right walls that are decorated with various music terms and concepts.

The students arrive and quietly walk to the assigned seats on the levels. Mrs. Casper quickly takes attendance and without missing a beat, sings "Rico's Pizza Restaurant." This is a new song for the students. After she finishes singing, she asks the students, "What food?" The students reply, "Pizza." She sings again and asks, "What is the name of the restaurant?" The student reply, "Rico's." She sings a third time and asks, "Why do pies have extra cheese?" (a reference to the words of the song). The students explain that pizzas can be called pies and they have cheese.

Then, Mrs. Casper directs the students' attention to the chalkboard where she has written various pizza sizes, toppings, and crust types. Mrs. Casper sings, "What size?" and demonstrates how to sing a response such as "large." She repeats this process for "What topping?" and "What crust?" Mrs. Casper has spoken very little thus far.

Mrs. Casper takes out a toy microphone and sings the song. At this point, the students have caught onto the song and are singing along with her. She walks to individual students and places the microphone in front them to elicit a solo

response to one of the questions. Each student gets an opportunity to sing a solo. Mrs. Casper clearly has built a positive rapport with her students because she is able to correct individual singing voices without any children feeling bad. As she nears the end of the final row of students, she improvises questions like “Anything to drink?” and students improvise answers.

Throughout the entire time that Mrs. Casper and the class have been singing “Rico’s Pizza Restaurant,” Mrs. Casper has tapped her waist, then her legs, and then her knees anytime the melody has the pattern mi-re-do. Some students caught on and did the movements with her. Mrs. Casper uses this kinesthetic pattern to introduce a mystery note. The students identify mi and do in the pattern. Mrs. Casper asks where the mystery note is located and the students identify that it is in the middle. Mrs. Casper demonstrates the movements that she has been doing for the pattern and instructs the students to sing the song and add the movements.

Mrs. Casper transitions to the song “Bow Wow Wow.” The students know this song. They sing and Mrs. Casper has the students find where the mystery note pattern (mi-re-do) is located. The students sing again and add the body movements for the mystery note pattern.

Mrs. Casper quickly reminds the students of the movements for “Bow Wow Wow” and instructs them to set up to play. While the class sings and plays, Mrs. Casper does not sing, but she does play. As she meets each of her partners, she compliments their singing and encourages them to “keep it up.”

This vignette represents about ten minutes of a 45 minute class. Throughout this entire vignette, Ellen spoke very little. She either demonstrated what it was that she wanted the children to do or she gave very clear and concise directions to her students. Ellen's students easily followed her directions and readily participated in every aspect of the music lesson.

Ellen's students appeared to trust and respect her. She was firm and direct, but kind. I never saw her discipline a student. A simple correction, such as "Joey, stop," was enough to correct an improper behavior. As a result, Ellen was able to engage her students in a wide variety of musical activities, including solo singing, throughout the music lesson.

Singing

Singing is at the center of everything that Ellen does with her students. Each lesson begins with singing, sometimes even before she takes attendance. Her practice of musically engaging the students from the moment they walk into the room set the tone for the entire class. Throughout each lesson that I observed, I saw Ellen using singing in a variety of ways in all parts of the music class.

Ellen is not a professionally trained singer, but she considers herself a singer when she is at school. "I consider myself a singer during the school day. Would I sing a concert in front of a large audience? Probably not. Would I sing here in front of the school if need be? Sure." Ellen's primary instrument is the flute, and she considers her piano skills to be average. As an instrumental student, vocal training was not part of Ellen's undergraduate education; however, she developed her own voice and learned how to teach children to sing through her Kodály training.

Purposeful singing. Ellen included some purposeful singing in each music class that I observed. One of the most frequent uses of purposeful singing that I observed was the singing of holiday songs. I observed Ellen teaching during the month of December while the students were preparing for a school wide event where each grade level sings a secular holiday song. The third grade was preparing “I’m Getting Nuttin’ for Christmas.” The following is a vignette from my field notes taken during my first observation of Ellen:

Ellen instructs the students to get their folders. In the folders are various secular holiday songs. She tells the students to sit in the chairs at the back of the room and work on memorizing the first verse of “I’m Getting Nuttin’ for Christmas.” The students work independently and quietly. After about a minute, Ellen calls the students over to the piano. She reminds them that they will be singing the song with their entire grade in from of all of the students in their school. Ellen accompanies the students while they sing the first verse from memory. They pause, Ellen has the students look at the words for verse two, and then they continue singing. Throughout this entire singing activity, Ellen is reminding the students to sing softly and to try to sing with a good tone.

When the song is finished, Ellen offers to sing a song as requested by the students. They request “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” The students sing, and Ellen plays the piano without singing along. I’ve noticed that Ellen does not sing with her students. She often will get a song started, but quickly drops out.

Throughout the singing activity, Ellen encouraged her students to sing with a good singing voice, and verbally reminded them to sing softly and gently. Although

Ellen did not sing along with her students, she encouraged her students to be musically independent and to take responsibility for their own music making.

Ellen also included purposeful singing when introducing a new song. For example, in the second lesson that I observed, Ellen taught the song “Rico’s Pizza Restaurant.” This instance was described in detail as part of her participant profile. Once Ellen had taught the song, the purpose behind singing was the song was to sing and sing in tune. Students had the opportunity to sing alone, allowing Ellen to help those who were struggling.

Ellen’s students do not receive music education in kindergarten, unlike other districts in the area that provide regular music education to kindergarten students. As a result, Ellen’s students are essentially a year behind when they finally enter music class in first grade. Therefore, Ellen must spend a significant portion of the first grade year focusing on teaching the children to use their voice and to sing in tune. She described purposeful singing in first grade:

Ellen: My main goal at the end of the year is for them to sing in tune. At least on the minor third of a (sung) “sol-mi.”So a lot of first grade is spent on singing echoes and greetings and incorporating their head voice into it because they might not all come from the same background. And then after that, we’re singing throughout the lesson...other than when we’re listening to a piece of classical music or doing a chant. ...Sometimes my transitions are sung and we do a lot of classroom literature at the end of class, so there’s a book that has singing in it. So, it’s woven throughout.

Secondary singing. Secondary singing played a significant role in Ellen's music classes. She carefully wove musical concepts and goals into each singing activity, combining singing with the introduction of new melodic patterns, practicing rhythms, dances and circle games, listening, and aural skill development. Ellen frequently used one song for several purposes.

Ellen has the students sing "Tideo." They sing using the words of the song and include their body sofla signs when they sing a phrase that includes the pattern mi-re-do. They place mi on their hips, re on their thighs, and do on their knees. At the end of the song, Ellen tells them to set up for the game. The students make a double circle and are guided through a review of the movements by Ellen. Once the movements are secure, Ellen has the class sing "Tideo" and perform the circle game several times.

Then, Ellen has the class sit on the floor. She brings out flash cards that have the rhythmic patterns found in Tideo printed on them. Ellen posts them on the chalkboard. The students are instructed to sing Tideo using rhythm syllables while looking at the cards. After the students successfully sing Tideo using rhythm syllables, Ellen replaces the cards that correspond with "jingle at the window Tideo" with the rhythm for the first two beats and "mi ? do" for the third and fourth beats. The students sing the song on rhythm syllables with the new pattern.

Ellen used "Tideo" to prepare mi-re-do, a movement activity, and to practice rhythm patterns. These activities occurred within a span of just under nine minutes. The

students were engaged in three different types of secondary singing activities while also using good vocal techniques to support in tune singing.

Ellen explained that sometimes singing takes on a secondary role when completing other tasks in elementary music classes. When talking about singing in first grade, Ellen said that “when we’re playing a game, if they’re singing voice is falling, that’s part of it because you’re having fun. You’re playing a game.” Ellen acknowledged being less focused on vocal production during these times because one of the most important parts of games in first grade is to have fun and allow the students to enjoy music class.

In our interview, I asked Ellen how much of each class was dedicated to non-singing musical activities.

Megan: So then, just thinking a little bit about the other types of activities, playing instruments, moving, all of that. How much of your lesson includes things like that? And they might be singing while they’re doing them.

Ellen: We are moving.....does it have to be to a folk song?

Megan: Any kind of movement activity. So it could be to a folk song, it could be to recorded music.... like what we would consider a movement activity.

Ellen: And does it have to be... like if I went back and looked at my lessons from today. Right we’re doing “Frog in the Meadow,” they’re doing...they’re playing a game. They’re leap-frogging. There’s a game.

Megan: A game would count, too.

Ellen: There’s a game. Um.....I’d say that with most of the songs that we’re singing, there’s some type of game or movement activity that goes with it. It

might be organized like a folk dance. Um....folk dances, I try to put in...um.....like I have a list of certain ones that I try and do every year, similar to trying to be organized.....like the rhythm and melodic [concepts].

Um.....so...when I'm doing a folk dance of some sort, they might do it like three classes in a row and then we might have like two weeks where we don't have something and then we have something in again. And it depends, too, on where we are. Sometimes you're just rushed for other things. So...the bulk of what we're doing is going to be melodic based or rhythmic based. With singing and games of some sort, and then we're going to try....I usually put in a listening lesson....of some kind of recorded music. I usually try and put one in the preparation stage and one in the practice stage, so they have that at least two times per element. Um.....and they would hear it at least two times. One class and then the next class. Sometimes a third class..... But you're not always going to see all of those in one class period. You're going to see a listening lesson in one class period, and you're going to see a folk dance in another class period. And, so you're always going to see something melodic and something rhythmic that's going on. And then you're going to see... instrument playing is probably my worst thing that I'm...that I include. So, um.... I'm not Orff certified, but I don't get my instruments out very much and play them. But, I use more classroom instruments like tambourines, maracas, things like that. But, again, it's not always...there's not always something to put into it. So..... and my goal is always...every year sometimes I try and make "this is my new goal for

myself...to be better at this” and I swear I try and make it those darn xylophones every time (laughter).

Ellen explained that most songs that she uses include some sort of movement activity; therefore, it was hard for her to separate moving and singing. It is also evident that the structure of each lesson that Ellen designs varies depending on the material that she wants to cover. Over the course of teaching each musical element, Ellen tries to include folk dances, a listening component, and instrumental work, many of which will include singing in some form. Therefore, the majority of the activities that Ellen includes in her lesson can be categorized as secondary singing activities.

Vocal development. Ellen hopes that her students never grow up and say, “My teacher told me not to sing and to mouth the words.” She strives to create an environment where her students are comfortable singing and exploring their voices, regardless of their development level. Ellen dedicates a significant amount of time to teaching students how to use their voices and how to determine if they are matching pitch and singing in tune.

The students at Ellen’s school come from a wide variety of backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities. She works with several students whose first language is not English, and noted that singing can be a challenge for them. Additionally, students with special needs and students who move to her school from other schools occasionally struggle with singing. However, Ellen does not give up on these children. She works with them, knowing that eventually, most of them will be able to sing. Some students need more time than others.

Ellen: Now there are some kids who...it takes longer. I think it just percolates longer in them..... I had one kid who's Japanese and he moved in and (imitates low, gravelly voice) he sang like this. And it was like fourth grade...and then all of a sudden in fifth grade he like sang once. And I'm like, that's it! That's your singing voice!

Ellen was very excited when she told me that brief story. She could have easily overlooked this child or accepted the fact that he could not use his singing voice. Instead, over the course of about two years, Ellen worked with him and helped him figure out how to use his singing voice. In the end, Ellen rejoiced in a student's success in finding his singing voice.

During our interview, I found that asking Ellen a seemingly simple question could elicit a passionate response.

Megan: When you're working with children on developing their singing voices, how do you teach them to sing?

Ellen: So, first of all, my first thought is that we sing a lot in first grade. Now when you start, we're doing more chants because we're doing kindergarten curriculum, and that's fast and slow, and loud and soft, and high and low. So high and low, it's more extreme. So (in high pitched voice) you're using your high voice, (in a low pitched voice) you're using your low voice. So, then we're getting into beat, that's when we're really starting to sing a lot.

Ellen continually emphasized that she does not teach kindergarten music; therefore, she has to spend part of the first grade year teaching concepts and skills that are normally taught in the kindergarten year.

Ellen: If I get them singing in tune in first grade, we're good to go. It's not something you have to reteach over and over. So, in first grade, that's my big focus. And I will put in an opening song.... So we'll do "Come on Boys" or "Hey, Hey Look at Me"... something that like we're going to do for an entire month, so they're used to singing that melody. And I think just the repetition of singing over and over again is a big help, especially if they've never sung before. Then we're going to do echoes and greetings. So we'll start out with our echoes (uses a high, almost hooty voice) "woo woo ah choo yeeha" just to engage those muscles and they get really used to that. And then we start adding some greetings like (sings) "Yoo hoo Mrs. C." A teacher one time told me one time before to get rid of the "hello good morning," because all those consonants mess it up. So do just "yoo hoo." It stays the same no matter what time of day it is. Makes your life easy.

Ellen gave several examples of techniques that she uses to help her students begin to find their singing voices. Repeating songs, vocal exploration, and singing greetings give her student opportunities to explore the range and sensations of their voices. Ellen continued:

And then after we start that, I'll take a preliminary grade, so I have a starting point. And then I do all sorts of different activities throughout the year. So I have, for example, I have a big target that they have little magnets on that we put where they're singing at so if they hit it, they match. They do that. We have a match game that we play. It was actually [from a] dissertation [study]. It's a game where you lay these animal cards out and they have to turn them over and make the sound as well. So you're saying the pictures match and the sounds

match. And then after that, and one of them is a cuckoo bird, so they have to go (sings) cu-ckoo. Um...so I talk to them about, what if one bird went (sings) cu-ckoo, and the other bird went (sings slightly lower) cu-ckoo. Is that a match? No. So, that's getting their idea of when you say, you're not matching, because that was her point [of the] dissertation, like, if you say match, does the kid even know...

Megan: Understand....

Ellen:what you're talking about? And so then they do jars...little baby jars with different items in it and two of them are very similar. So that's more about talking about, oh now you have to, if I'm singing (sings) "yoo hoo Megan" and you sing (sings slight lower) "yoo hoo Mrs. C." Oh, that's very similar, it's close, but you're not there yet. And then I use Feierabend's book of pitch exploration ideas. I just put in the lesson for next rotation, the rainbow toss where you throw the bean bag and (makes sound) whooooo. It's a bunch of activities to engage those muscles and usually by the end of first grade, a majority of them can match on a simple sol-mi pitch because they've had so much repetition and so much of engaging of those muscles.

Ellen explained that young students don't always understand what it means to match pitch. To help her students understand the concept of matching, Ellen uses a match game that was originally developed for another study and that was subsequently shared with her. She also uses jars filled similar items to help her students visually understand what it means for two things to be similar, but not a match. She has found that teaching her students about matching has helped them to better grasp the concept of matching pitch.

Ellen compared singing to reading, explaining that every child is different when it comes to developing literacy skills, with reading coming more naturally to some than to others.

Ellen: It's the same as readers. You're going to have low readers and high readers and average readers. And your goal is to always be working with those kids. So, you know, some classes gel better and you have a great group of singers altogether. And then some classes you have more that you're working on. So I think that helps, too, with...if they're in a class with a lot of strong singers and they're hearing that all the time. So..... a bunch of little activities thrown in there in first grade. That's my goal.

Here, Ellen also acknowledges the impact that class dynamics can have on uncertain singers. Ellen has found that surrounding uncertain singers with strong singers can have a positive impact.

To support vocal development beyond the early stages, Ellen constructs her lessons so that opportunities to sing are spread throughout the class period. "My goal is to have them singing right at the beginning...right after I take attendance." I observed her demonstrate this approach in each lesson. The lesson I saw in my first observation opened with the singing of "Paw Paw Patch," after which they played the game several times. The second and third lessons that I observed opened with a new song, "Rico's Pizza Restaurant." Each time, Ellen quickly took attendance, and with little to no speaking, began the opening song.

In addition to providing plenty of singing opportunities, Ellen supports her students' vocal development through verbal guidance and praise. I observed Ellen

complement individuals and the entire class with statements including “Good singing. Keep it up,” and “Thank you, singers.” She also encouraged good vocal production by reminding students that they should sing softly and concentrate on getting a “good tone.” When giving individual students solo opportunities, Ellen encouraged and guided students who were struggling to sing. For example, in the second lesson when students were taking turns singing the solo lines of “Rico’s Pizza Restaurant,” Ellen helped students who struggled by singing the solo for them and having them echo her.

Amount of singing. I observed Ellen teach three 45 minute third grade elementary general music lessons. On average, 60.3% of class time was spent engaging students in singing activities. In Ellen’s first two lessons, 55.5% and 44.4%, respectively, of class time was devoted to engaging students in any type of singing activity. In the third lesson, Ellen spent 81% of the class time engaging students in singing activities, of which 26% of the overall time was dedicated to purposeful singing.

When I shared these results with Ellen, she expressed both positive and negative reactions toward the results. When I told her that I observed singing activities in 55.5% of the first lesson, she said, “Ok. That’s good.” Then, when I said that her second lesson had singing in 44.4% of the lesson, Ellen said, “That’s not good.” Prior to sharing these results, I asked Ellen how much time she thought she devoted to singing. Ellen said, “I’m trying to have them singing as...unless we get really waylaid down by some behavior, which isn’t a lot, I’m hoping that they’re doing, I don’t know...I’d hope for at least 65%-70%.” Compared to her average percentage, her estimate was fairly accurate.

I also shared results of some studies that were conducted on the amount of singing activities that occur in elementary general music classrooms with Ellen. The following

interview excerpt includes the sharing of both research data and the data I gathered during my observations of Ellen.

Megan: So let me first say that studies over the last about 40 years have shown a variance of anywhere from about 8% (Ellen gasps) of the time was spent singing, which is extremely low, to upwards of 20%-25%.

Ellen: Ok

Megan: The 20%-25% is kind of an average...average thing. And that's for any type of singing activity. The kids are singing a song, they're doing reading, or they're singing a pattern that they're playing on a xylophone. That's all of those. So that's average.

Ellen: Ok.

Megan: Your first lesson had about 55% of the time.

Ellen: Ok

Megan: So that's way above normal.

Ellen: That's good.

Megan: And then, your second lesson had 44%.

Ellen: That's not good.

Megan: So that's a little bit lower, but there's still a lot.

Ellen: Ok.

Megan: Um... and I think that was because...

Ellen: Was I introducing something?

Megan: You were introducing, um....all of the movements for "Tideo" and it was a new song.

Ellen: Ok, yes.

Megan: So that technically didn't count as a singing activity because you were teaching them how to do a do-si-do and all of that. But that counts as a non-singing activity. So, but then, the most interesting one was the last lesson that I saw. Where I created a chart and I checked off different things that you did.

Ellen: Ok.

Megan: This might be an outlier. 81%.

Ellen: Oh!

Ellen reflected on the amount of singing I found in her classes, noting that there are times where they can't sing, including when she's teaching new games and dances, folk dances that are accompanied by recorded instrumental music, and drumming. Ellen also explained that the likely reason for the larger amount of singing in the third observed lesson was that she spent some extra time having the students work on their holiday song for the upcoming program. Ellen concluded our discussion on the amount of singing in her classes by stating, "That's sad. I don't know what people are doing if they're only singing 25% sometimes."

Kodály Philosophy

As stated previously, Ellen was first introduced to the Kodály philosophy as child when her mother completed a certification program in Texas. She continued her own education in the philosophy during her undergraduate studies. The Kodály philosophy has been at the center of Ellen's teaching from the beginning of her teaching career. So much so that she has been teaching in two Kodály certification summer programs for the past several years.

During my time with Ellen, it became evident that over the course of many years Ellen had developed a personal interpretation of the Kodály philosophy. Ellen said, “I think that it is the best way to teach music to children...to become literate musicians.” She compared music literacy to the skills that children learn in math:

I want my students to be just as literate in music as a mathematician would be [in math]. They’re not just going to study about the famous mathematicians that come up with these algorithms and....they’re going to actually be literate in math and know how to do that. So that’s the premise of the Kodály philosophy is that you’re making them literate and that they love music.

Additionally, she believes that it is her “job to expose them (students) to more than they are used to” through the incorporation of classical music and other high “quality music.”

Ellen: I see sometimes in hearing other music teachers talk is it’s more about, first of all, I hear a lot of we’re going to go to where the kids are and go from there. And use pop music and whatever they’re listening to. Which I don’t always think is the best quality music to use. So when I start, and I’m introducing them to, you know, classics, they love it.

Ellen expressed concern over music teachers using popular music in elementary general music classes because she doesn’t feel that a lot of the popular music being used is of high quality.

The ultimate goal of musical independence influences Ellen’s interpretation of the Kodály philosophy. Because she wants her students to grow into adults who are musically literate and can sing “Happy Birthday” without modulating several times, Ellen strives to allow the Kodály philosophy to permeate her teaching, particularly the tenet

that all musical learning should begin with the voice. I observed Ellen prepare and practice several musical concepts during my time in her classroom. Everything began with singing.

The students finish playing “Paw Paw Patch” and Ellen sings, “Find a spot on purple line” using the melody of the last phrase of the song. Ellen shows the students the rhythm of the song and has individual students speak the rhythm of each phrase. The class labels the form of the song solely based on the rhythm (AAAB). Then, Ellen has the class sing “Paw Paw Patch” using rhythm syllables instead of the words. Once the class is able to successfully complete the task, Ellen leads the students through adding solfège in to phrases one and three. The class sings the song again, using solfège and hand signs for phrases one and three, and rhythm syllables for phrases two and four.

In this excerpt from my field notes, I described how Ellen led her students through an activity where they practiced reading and performing sixteenth notes and do-mi-sol patterns. Ellen derived all of the practice activities from a song that the students had been singing.

Most Kodály-influenced music educators agree that reading and performing from traditional music notation is part of being musically literate. In addition to reading and performing notated music, Ellen works to build her students’ aural skills. I observed Ellen build her students’ aural skills through both singing and non-singing activities. One non-singing activity that stood out was the “Cup and Candy Game.” I described the game in my field notes:

Ellen tells the students to find a seat for the “Cup and Candy Game.” Quickly and excitedly, the students move to the floor near the piano. Ellen places four Styrofoam cups on top of the piano. They are labeled with the solfa do, mi, sol, and la. Before beginning the game, Ellen asks the students about the relationship between the pitches. The students identify steps and skips. Then, Ellen asks the students where the mystery note belongs (they have been progressing toward labeling re). A student comes forward and places a cup with a “?” on it in between do and mi.

Ellen instructs the students to close their eyes. She places a piece of candy under a cup, then tells the students to open their eyes. Ellen plays a phrase from “Bow Wow Wow” and stops on the pitch that corresponds to the cup with the candy. Ellen selects a student to sing the pitch that she stopped on. If a student sings the correct pitch, they receive the piece of candy. Ellen keeps track of the students who successfully complete the task so that over the course of several classes, each child is ensured to receive a piece of candy.

I labeled this as a non-singing activity because the students relied on their aural skills and did not sing the song aloud while Ellen played each phrase. Additionally, this activity included only four sung pitches (one pitch from each of the four respondents).

Overall, Ellen brings her interpretation of the Kodály philosophy to life through her daily teaching. Singing permeates every music class and is used to develop her students’ music literacy skills. Ellen wants her students to enjoy making music and be able to carry the skills they learn with them throughout their lives.

Standards and Curriculum

Ellen was eager to share her thoughts about state and national music standards and trends. She began discussing their impact on music in her district long before I asked any questions about them. Ellen described several issues that she has been grappling with because they do not align with her philosophy of teaching.

Ellen believes that the newer standards and her district's curriculum do not place enough, if any, emphasis on music literacy.

Ellen: Um....and so we have a lot of arguments as a group because there are some teachers who are very...“We are following the district curriculum and this reflecting and receiving and all of this is so important.” And I feel that the way that the state redid their standards, it's not focusing as much on literacy anymore and it's getting further down the line. So, sometimes at our meetings when everybody's getting upset, I just kind of think, well I'm going to go back to my room and continue to do what I do.

As a Kodály-influenced music teacher who believes that music literacy is extremely important, Ellen is struggling with idea that her district does not appear to be emphasizing the literacy aspect as much as they did in the past.

Reflecting and discussing musical experiences appears to play a significant role in Ellen's district curriculum. Ellen explained that she doesn't feel like she has the time to cover everything that the district is mandating, and that she feels that some portions of the curriculum are not really helping her students to build their musical skills.

Ellen: We don't really have yet any - because we not a tested - we don't have anybody checking up on all the different parts of the curriculum. Um....If I

actually sat down and looked at it though, I could say yes, I do this, this, this, and this. ...And the one where they talk about “How does your subject connect to all the other subjects” And there’s a lot of that in there that I think is more discussion based or journaling and we just don’t have time for it. There’s not enough time in the school year to see the kids to do that. We see them about 40 times for 45 minutes. That’s...and for me I’d rather them sing in tune and be able to read and write music. And, um, some of the reflecting portion....yes they can reflect to a certain extent, but when we’re doing something and some of the other teachers are like “ok, tell me how you did...show me a 3, a 2, or a 1.” Well, some of that’s my job. I’m the one who’s the professional and I’m the one who’s going to say, I’ll do this with my kids instead of reflect on what we did (voice is pitched higher). I would say, “which measure do we need to fix up?” And then they would answer back and we’d discuss really quickly, though, because we don’t have time to journal and discuss ad nauseum.

Megan: Yeah.

Ellen: So...Um.....I, I tend to focus on one area of the curriculum and then I look back and if somebody were to ask me, I could defend myself on different areas. I actually had to go through, because I feel like our meetings are getting a little more heated. That I should make sure that I am touching...there are still some that I...some of the standards are just like, “What?” Um...but I did go through at the end of the first trimester and I was like, I wrote down all the standards and I was putting underneath like activities that I had done. And some of them have a ton of activities and then some of them is just like one. One thing. So.....

The state in which Ellen's district resides requires teachers to complete Student Learning Objectives (SLO's) where the teachers are required to show student growth in a certain skill. Each district handles SLO's in different way. In Ellen's district, the elementary music teachers were told the initial SLO that they were going to be required to complete would focus on the half note for second grade. Because her students do not have music in Kindergarten, they are behind in terms of skills for the first and second grade years. This is where Ellen explained the issue that she is facing.

Ellen: Nobody from the district is prescribing... except for the student learning objectives, the SLO's that we're required to do for.... So that is... like, for example, for second grade, one of them is half note. So I do have to put half note and I don't feel it belongs in second grade in the curriculum of where it's placed, but I have to do it because I have to have my testing done by like March or April 1st or something like that. So, I feel like I have had to, uh, readjust the order of what I do and sometimes, too, here's the other thing, our curriculum is based off of K-5. We don't teach kindergarten.

Megan: Right.

Ellen: And I've had the argument with some central office people as well. Because they're like "Well, you just have to, you know, second grade's what your testing, you just have to get that done." And I'm like, "Yes, but we've missed 40 classes." We would have had them for 120 classes from kindergarten to second. We've only had them for 80. So, we're missing, you know, 40 classes. And shouldn't we kind of readjust what we're doing? And....here's what I do when you say wiggle room, like.....since we don't have them in kindergarten, I start

with kindergarten concepts. Because I think that's a better foundation. Other teachers don't. They might start with first grade concepts. So because of that, I'm a little behind at the end of first grade.

Megan: Ok

Ellen: Then I'm behind in second grade because we have a winter...we have a program in second grade, so I get a little behind.

Even though the state standards align with a typical Kodály sequence, the fact that her district does not give students music in Kindergarten affects her ability to properly complete the required SLO. She is being required to test students on a skill for which they are not prepared.

Outside of the SLO's and district curriculum, which outlines specific skills that students are to acquire, Ellen has the freedom to choose content and design her lessons as she sees fit. Ellen acknowledged that she doesn't always have as much time with her students as she would like; however, she makes the effort to include a variety of activities in her lessons so that her students gain the necessary music skills according to both her and her district.

Purpose of Music Education

Ellen believes that the purpose of music education is to enable her students to understand and appreciate music. She believes that understanding is achieved through music literacy. Ellen wants her students to be musically literate adults who will enjoy both consuming and making music through out their lives.

Ellen: My main goal for them, like singing, because when they're an adult to never say, "my music teacher told me not to sing and to mouth the words." I

don't want that to happen. And I want them to be able to go out and be able to sing in tune at different places. We had the same when we did the curriculum recently, not this latest one, but the one that I was on the committee. The curriculum, before that, it had been written in the 80's, and it was typed and there was not one mention of singing in tune as....as a standard at all. Like that was not an important goal. Singing wasn't even in there. So like, that's our first goal. Our first goal is that they enjoy making music, and singing in tune, and then literacy. So yes, there are going to parts where we're working on the staff because that part of it... "If sol is in a space, then mi is in the space below." So...that is going to take time out. But....yeah they should be singing. So that they're a literate adult out there. That's my goal. How many times do you hear happy birthday with three modulations in it?

Ellen believes that being musically literate will help her students to be better consumers of music who make informed decisions and who will be able to intelligently speak about music. Ultimately, her students will understand and appreciate music because they have had educational experiences that have been enjoyable and that have expanded their music literacy skills.

Suzan Parsons

Participant Profile

Suzan has been teaching music for 36 years. She has taught in preschools, parochial schools, and public schools, having spent the past 19 years in her current public elementary school position. Although Suzan has a significant number of years of

teaching experience, she didn't begin her first Kodály level until the early 1990's. Suzan described her introduction to the Kodály approach:

Well.....when I began, it was in the days when you needed different hours and you could get them anywhere you wanted from different courses to recertify. And I had taken off of teaching for a little while and I needed to recertify. So I absolutely knew nothing about the Kodály certification at all, but I was looking at a local university with a Kodály program and I was told that I could get six semester hours [every summer for] three summers. And I thought, hmmm, where else could I do this? So, I decided that I would, um, you know, go and do my training over at that Kodály program. And I remember so well that I went in and I hadn't had a music theory or a music history class since the early 70's and this was probably in 1992 or 93. And the first thing we had to do was we had to take a, um, dictation test. And I remember there was a Hungarian woman there and we were all sitting down and she said, "Well we're going to put you in your sight-singing class, but we're going to see how well you can do." So she says, "I am going to play four part dictation and I want you to write down what you hear." And she begins to play this and I am in shock.

Suzan's first experiences with the Kodály approach to teaching challenged her view of herself as a musician and teacher; however, Suzan explained that it was the most worthwhile thing she has ever done.

Suzan: Um...it was, by far, the most grueling course that I had ever taken. I never spent more time on anything, including my master's degree, but never anything this worthwhile.

Suzan holds a bachelor of music in music education, a master of music in music education, Kodály certification, and Orff-Schulwerk certification. She followed a fairly typical pattern in her education, completing her bachelor's degree first, followed by her Kodály certification, master's degree, and Orff-Schulwerk certification (in that order). Each degree and certification was completed independently of the others. She also teaches level III classes in a Kodály certification program each summer.

As I observed Suzan teach, I quickly realized that there is a carefully thought out purpose behind every moment of her music classes. Near the end of our interview, Suzan shared with me a folder full of papers. On each sheet was a list of eight to ten songs and other musical materials for one lesson, and there was a sheet for every lesson that Suzan has and would be teaching over the course of the 2014-2015 school year. Every moment of every class is methodically planned so that Suzan can maximize the quality of the musical experiences she provides for her students.

Classroom environment. I never once saw Suzan reprimand or discipline a student, and I attribute this to the pacing of her class. From the moment the students entered the room and sat on the risers in the back, they were making music. Suzan said, "I think my class is filled with active music making...I know that I've never had a music class where we haven't sung."

Each music lesson opens with choral singing. Suzan said, "Every class is a choir." She leads her students through six or more songs during this time, one of which is always a multicultural song. The following vignette describes the opening of the second lesson that I observed Suzan teach.

The students enter the room and quietly take their seats on the risers in the back of the classroom. Mrs. Parsons wastes no time beginning the class by starting the “Hello Song.” She starts the song, but does not sing with the students. Rather, she conducts them. During a previous visit, Mrs. Parsons explained to me that they always begin with this song and that all grade levels sing this song. The students sing very well and every single student is actively singing.

Immediately upon finishing the song, Mrs. Parsons has the class say good morning to me. I return the greeting. Then, she quickly takes attendance before having the students stand. Mrs. Parsons starts the “Canoe Song” and conducts while the students sing. The song ends and Mrs. Parsons reviews the term ostinato and instructs half of the class to sing “Dip, dip and swing” repeatedly. Once the ostinato has gained traction, Mrs. Parsons leads the other half of the class in singing the “Canoe Song.” The students switch parts and the class sings again.

The third song of the day is “Big Fat Biscuit.” This is another known song. Mrs. Parsons starts the song and lets the students sing through once on their own. Then, Mrs. Parsons sings the song alone, but bends her knees and dips on “Chew-ba-lew.” She is kinesthetically highlighting the low la in the phrase. She instructs the students to sing and dip in the same manner that she had. The students are not completely successful. Mrs. Parsons gently corrects them and has them sing again. This time, the class is mostly successful.

Without missing a beat, Mrs. Parsons begins the “Boatman Song.” The students know this song well. They sing through it once. Immediately upon finishing the song, Mrs. Parson says, “Echo me,” and begins singing “Phoebe in her Petticoat” phrase by phrase. This song is fairly new, but not brand new. I can tell that the students have a little bit of experience with the song. After echoing by phrases, Mrs. Parsons conducts the students as they sing through the song once on their own. When Mrs. Parsons said, “Echo me,” that was the first time she had spoken since she took attendance at the beginning of the class. At this point, Mrs. Parsons says to the students “Rest your bones,” (the students sit) while she sings “Poor Little Kitty Cat.” Then, she has the students echo her phrase by phrase before having the students sing the song alone. This is another semi-new song for the class. Thus far, each song had featured low la. It has become evident to me that she is in the preparation phase of low la.

Mrs. Parsons picks up the book “Old Mr. Rabbit.” This is another song that features low la, and is a song that students know very well. Mrs. Parsons turns the pages and allows the students to take the responsibility of singing through the book.

Mrs. Parsons sets the book down and says, “Listen to my song.” She sings the “Raspberry Picking Song,” an upbeat song of Ukrainian origin. After singing once through, Mrs. Parsons has the students echo her phrase by phrase. During this process, she pauses to remind the students to keep their hands away from their faces without causing the pace to slow.

Then, Mrs. Parsons has the students stand and sing though the “Raspberry Picking Song” with her. Because this is her multicultural song for this lesson, Mrs. Parson shares the origin of the song and a short story about the student who had initially shared the song with her. To conclude this section of the lesson, Mrs. Parsons slowly sings each phrase in Ukrainian and has the students echo her. Finally, Mrs. Parsons sings the song in Ukrainian up to tempo and encourages the class to try their best to sing along.

As evidenced by this vignette, Suzan covers many songs over the course of one music class. The time elapsed from the beginning of the lesson to the “Raspberry Picking Song” was about eleven minutes. All of the students actively participated and there were no discipline issues. Throughout my time in Suzan’s classroom I never observed any resistance on the part of the students to participate and perform alone and with others. Suzan has created a safe space for students to be musical and take risks.

Singing

As evidenced by the previous vignette, singing plays a significant role in Suzan’s music classes. I observed singing in nearly every single activity that took place. When I asked Suzan how she uses singing in her classes, she opened with the following statement: “Well, first of all, we start out with choral singing. Every class is a choir is what I tell the kids. Every class. Every part is a choir. We are singers.” Suzan sees every single student as a singer, regardless of level of singing ability.

Suzan’s school is very transient, with many students moving in and out of the school each year; therefore, it is not uncommon for her to have fourth and fifth grade

students who are still learning to use their singing voices and are hesitant to sing. Suzan explained:

That fourth grade class you saw, there's 7 new children in that class. You know, we're a very transient school...I do have kids that come in and they're just like "what?" And I always start them with singing in small groups, especially, because there are children who come in and they're afraid to sing. And they're, "I don't know how to sing." And again, of course, you've always heard things like "my music teacher said I shouldn't sing or that I should mouth the words." And those kinds of horrendous things.

For all of the singing that I observed in Suzan's classes, I could have never predicted the following portion of our interview:

Megan: What do you consider to be your primary instrument?

Suzan: Um...piano.

Megan: So then, considering that, do you consider yourself a singer?

Suzan: No.

Megan: Could you expound upon that a little bit?

Suzan: I know that I can sing in tune. I know that I can teach children how to sing, but as a trained vocalist, I am not.

Megan: Ok. Um....in addition to the piano, do you play any other instruments?

Suzan: No. I do recorder in the classroom. But, no. Just the piano.

Suzan was very quick to state that she does not consider herself to be a singer during the interview. Because I was somewhat thrown off by her reply, I decided to contact her through email to ask for further explanation. I sent the following:

Megan: When I asked you if you considered yourself a singer, you initially said no. Then, you clarified with the following, “I know that I can sing in tune. I know that I can teach children how to sing, but as a trained vocalist? I am not.” But, later in the interview you said that you tell the children, “We are singers,” and I also heard you tell the students that during a class. What qualities makes one a singer? Have you ever had an experience or a combination of experiences that led you to not consider yourself a singer?

Suzan sent the following reply:

Suzan: Am I a singer? When you ask that question of an instrumentalist instead of a vocalist, my answer of no is probably what you are going to get first. I am thinking only of my training as a professional. I am a singer and so are all of the students who come into my classroom. I want them to sing in church, sing at parties, sing in the shower, sing in the car and never feel that they are not good at it. SO ASK ME AGAIN AM I A SINGER YES

Suzan’s clarification makes more sense when considering her significant focus on singing in her music classroom. She also pointed out that because she is an instrumentalist first, she more readily classifies herself in that manner, rather than identifying herself as a singer.

Purposeful singing. Every class that Suzan teaches opens with purposeful singing. During the first class that I observed, Suzan engaged the students in eleven minutes and 45 seconds of purposeful singing at the beginning of the lesson. My second and third observations were no different. Suzan explained why she includes purposeful singing at the beginning of each class.

Suzan: Um, we always start with a repertoire of music, some of it being in every class, folk songs that I use that I might pull out elements that I might be teaching. Another part will be songs just for the beauty of singing these beautiful songs. And I always, always, always have some multicultural songs in my lessons as well. Um, my school is very diverse, which I love every day. It's like a little UNICEF. And, um, to me, we...I could be the only place where these children are getting these kinds of exposures.

Suzan recognizes that her class may be the only place where some of her students have the opportunity to sing a wide variety of songs, some of which are unfamiliar.

The opening of each class is an opportunity for Suzan's students to sing a variety of songs without having to focus on anything other than singing. Additionally, Suzan uses this time to introduce her students to songs from other cultures and to include a book that is sung. Suzan uses that same multicultural song and book across all grades that she teaches. She said, "That way, when the kids go home, and there's different siblings, they're all singing the same kind of song from the multicultural group" and they have experienced the same book. Suzan has been able to create purposeful singing experiences that are transferring into the home lives of her students.

Secondary singing. Suzan said, "When we go to the Orff instruments, we sing. When we play the recorder, we still sing. Um, you know when I'm presenting an element, I would say that singing is within my whole classroom." She strives to include singing in the process of teaching all types of musical activities. I observed Suzan using singing while teaching her students to play specific patterns on Orff instruments.

The students are now seated at the Orff instruments. Suzan sings “Tideo” and asks the students if they remember the song. The students do, and proceed to sing through “Tideo” on their own. Then, Suzan sings “Tideo” and demonstrates a crossover pattern the air. Once she is done, the students sing “Tideo” and play the crossover pattern in the air. Next, Suzan transfers the pattern to a xylophone while singing “Tideo”. She tells the students that they should play C-G-C using their crossover pattern. The students practice playing while Suzan sings the letter names. Once the students are able to comfortably play the pattern, Suzan leads the students in singing “Tideo” while they play. On the first attempt, most of the students play the pattern too quickly. They try to sing and play a second time and are more successful.

Suzan used singing to help her students learn and play a crossover bordun to accompany the song “Tideo.” The main focus of the activity was to play the Orff instruments, and singing was used in a secondary role.

Suzan included work at the green board in every class. The green board is a portable chalkboard that Suzan has placed in the front corner of the room. On the board, Suzan pre-writes various sight-reading exercises that she will engage the students in during a portion of each class.

Once the students have put away their rhythm sticks, Suzan says, “You owe me three minutes at the green board.” The students take a seat in front of the green chalkboard at the front of the classroom. Suzan says, “Your song is number two. Look at it.” She gives the students a moment to look at the song before tapping the rhythm of the song. The students identify the song as “Great

Big House.” Suzan instructs the students to first speak the solfège of the song. Then, the students go back and sing the song using solfège syllables, once without hand signs and once with hand signs. After the students complete the task, Suzan tells them to look at another song on the board. She tells them that it’s the third grade song and it’s one that they know. Suzan instructs the students to sing the song using solfège syllables. The students are able to identify the song as “Billy Sadd.”

Suzan used singing to enable her students to practice their musical memory and sight-reading skills.

Vocal development. Suzan believes that it is imperative that she teaches her students how to sing regardless of age or number of years that the student may have been at her school. Suzan explained that each year she has several new students move to her school, some of who have had very little music education or singing instruction. For students who have consistently been at her school, Suzan said that she could usually get 85%-90% of them to sing in tune by the third grade.

I observed that Suzan’s students were very willing to sing, both alone and with others, which Suzan credited the fact that she has engaged her students in many singing activities from the beginning of first grade.

Suzan: And because we spend so much time singing by ourselves. Our kids, they think nothing of singing by themselves, because they’ve doing that since day one. There’s not a problem doing that. I don’t know if you ever saw me do a vocal assessment, or not, when they sing by themselves and match a pitch... Or one person goes to a phrase and we go to the next phrase. Because we do that a lot.

So I think that you make them more comfortable with doing that, then singing is not such a scary thing to them.

When I observed Suzan, I saw her teaching a fourth grade class. I noticed that as a group, the class sang very well. I asked Suzan how she teaches students to sing.

Megan: Ok. So when you get your first graders, how do you teach them to sing?

Suzan: Well, I begin with just vocal, little exercises and games that we do. We do the bean bag toss with...I am throwing them the bean bag...the path of the bean bag (does siren sound) and they give it back to me. We do, um, a lot of, um, little, you know pass the butterfly around and vocal exploration type games. Uh, a lot of simple, simple type songs and singing things, a lot of repeated patterns. Then we get to the point...they start singing by themselves immediately on day two. They start singing by themselves. Um, we do a microphone game....I'm on this way, I'm on that way. At first, I just....if they can't sing it back, we just go to the next person, the next person...everybody's comfortable. When they get to know me better, then we talk about, "Hmm was that really a match?" "Was it higher or was it lower?" ...So we play a match game and we play things so they know what a match is. Um, I don't know...I just....we're always singing, we're always trying to get your voice out. Pull our voice. Put your eyebrows high.

Additionally, Suzan does not shy away from truthfully evaluating her students during progress report time.

Suzan: And, um, I have had parents, like that first trimester and one of our grades is vocal development: does your child match a pitch? And I will write PR – they're progressing toward it. It's either limited progress, they are not, PR they're

progress toward the standard, AC they're achieving. And I cannot tell you how many times I have a parent call and say, "you wrote PR, that's they're not singing in tune. Why?" And I say because they're not singing in tune. And they go, "oh." And then I say to them, "do you sing at home?" and usually, the answer is no. Usually the answer is no, I never knew how to sing.

Amount of singing. I tracked the amount of time Suzan spent engaging students in singing activities during each observation and converted the time to a percentage of class time. Suzan spent 41.8% of class time during the first lesson, 41% of class time during the second lesson, and 41.7% of class time during the third lesson engaging students in singing activities. Of the time, nearly two thirds was dedicated to purposeful singing. Additionally, Suzan was the most consistent participant across the three observed lessons. I calculated Suzan's average amount of time dedicated to singing activities over the three observed lessons to be 41.5%.

I shared with Suzan the amount of time she spent engaging her students in singing activities during the first two lessons that I observed. Prior to sharing my information, I asked Suzan to estimate how much time she thought she spent engaging students in singing activities.

Suzan: 90%. At least. Actively using their singing....yes. Every time, except when they're doing a movement game. And sometimes they are when they're moving. It depends if it's a singing game. They're always singing.

When I shared my results, Suzan initially found them "interesting." Then, she paused for a moment and reflected.

Suzan: Yeah. Because I'm thinking we're singing all the time. I'm thinking everything we're doing, we're singing. But then again, I guess I'm taking, if I'm spending 7 or 8 minutes on an assessment, I'm not thinking of that as part of that, you know, singing kind of thing. Now if I'm assessing a melody, that would have been different.

Megan: That would have been included in singing.

Suzan: Yeah. In singing. So I happened to be assessing a rhythm that day.

Megan: Right.

Suzan: Yeah.

Kodály Philosophy

Suzan's interpretation of the Kodály philosophy is heavily influenced by the experiences she had while completing her certification. I had asked Suzan to describe her Kodály certification program to me. I expected to hear about the classes she was required to take, some information about her instructors, and the assignments that she was given. I was not prepared to hear an impassioned story of struggle and enlightenment. Below I present Suzan's story as she told it to me in its entirety, including quotes that were used in previous sections of this case. Periodically, I have inserted a sentence or two to provide clarification or to draw the reader's attention to a specific statement. I have not removed or deleted any portion of Suzan's story⁴.

Suzan: Well.....when I began, it was in the days when you needed different hours and you could get them anywhere you wanted from different courses to

⁴ Names were removed or replaced in order to protect identities.

recertify. And I had taken off of teaching for a little while and I needed to recertify. So I absolutely knew nothing about the Kodály certification at all, but I was looking at a local university with a Kodály program and I was told that I could get six semester hours in three summers. And I thought, hmmm, where else could I do this? So, I decided that I would, um, you know, go and do my training over at that Kodály program. And I remember so well that I went in and I hadn't had a music theory or a music history class since the early 70's and this was probably in 1992 or 93. And the first thing we had to do was we had to take a, um, dictation test. And I remember there was Hungarian woman there and we were all sitting down and she said, "Well we're going to put you in your sight-singing class, but we're going to see how well you can do." So she says, "I am going to play a four part dictation and I want you to write down what you hear." And she begins to play this and I am in shock. I'm like, "what in the world is she doing?" So I'm thinking at this time I have my four daughters at home and my niece, I've got five kids at home, I've been teaching and I'm thinking, "ok?" She gives us this little test and I write down on my piece of paper, "You have got to be kidding me." That's all I write on my piece of paper and I have...all these people are writing things down and she's just smiling at me because she's thinking that I must be brilliant. So, we're walking out of the class and I go to [a teacher] at the time and I said, um...didn't know her at all. And I said, "I would like to have my credit card back. I'm not going to take this course. It's not for me." I said, "There is no way that I'm going to be able to do this." And [another teacher], at the time, who I had met her that day, she said to me, "Why don't you go ahead

and just give it a try.” She said, “We’ll put you in sight singing number one.”

She said, “Give it a week and see what you can do.” I absolutely spent for those three weeks, I know that I spent 10, 11, 12 hours a day just studying and learning, going home, putting my kids to bed...studying and learning again. And I kind of got hooked, but not hooked to the point that I thought, hm, I wonder if this is really going to work or not.

Suzan’s first experience in her Kodály training was a shock to her. She was asked to complete a musical task that was, at the time, outside of her skill set. However, with the urging of one of the teachers, Suzan decided to continue with the coursework.

Suzan: So, I take my level I, and then you were rewriting all of your music. I was learning all about the Kodály philosophy. I was thinking, wow, this would be really nice to have something that has some sequence as opposed to, “Hm....what am I going to do today?” People say that good teaching practices are good teaching practices. I am here to tell you that I think that good teaching practices are good teaching practices, but when I look back at it now, that my Kodály certification...I was doing a little of this and a little bit of that and a little bit of this and a little bit of that. And, I finished my level I and went back to school. And, I taught level I to two of my grades. And I was like, “Oh my goodness. This is really working.” And from then, I was hooked. I mean hook, line and sinker. And I was just, I saw kids progress. I felt better in what I was doing. I wasn’t guessing on what I was supposed to do next.

Suzan recognized that her teaching had been lacking guidance and a sequence. She found both of those in the Kodály philosophy and approach to teaching.

Suzan: I never really thought until my Kodály certification that it was my responsibility to teach kids how to sing in tune. Never thought that. I taught for 15 years playing the piano every time they sang. I taught...teaching them to sing...if I taught them by rote, I echoed back and sang with them. I discovered that I sang more than they sang. And, that with my Kodály certification really, really helped me to know that I wanted my kids to know more than I knew as far as being able to aurally hear things. Because that's where I struggled. I remembered in college, I could play anything that you gave me on the piano. I could sing songs, but when it came to sight-reading, I had to play them on the piano first. And found out mostly, my own musicianship just developed so much from my Kodály certification.

Suzan's Kodály studies not only improved her own musicianship, but they taught her how to improve the musicianship of her students.

Suzan: Once I got to level II, it made even more sense. And by level III, I knew that what I learned was nothing but a transfer of knowledge from I and II and how do I transfer it, how do I bring it back to my classroom. Um...it was, by far, the most grueling course that I had ever taken. I never spent more time on anything, including my masters degree, but never anything this worthwhile. And I am a true believer, and I feel that it's my responsibility, number one, to teach children how to sing. And to teach them to sing in tune.

Suzan's Kodály training caused her to reshape her philosophy of teaching. It wasn't until she had completed her Kodály program that she felt she had a responsibility to teach her students how to sing and that she could teach them to sing in tune.

Megan: Ok. Um...so I'm curious about your actual coursework that you did for your Kodály certification. You mentioned doing some dictation. So what kinds of courses did you have throughout your day, each day?

Suzan: We started each day with sight singing and that was.....we had...we sang solfège. We did sight singing, we did rhythmic dictation, we did sing and plays, uh...we did...for level I we started with the pentatonic scale and then we continued. By the time I was in level III we were doing modes. It was at the very beginning of the day and I remember that I was in sheer panic from 9am to 10:30am every single day. It was...some days I feel like it was worse than going through labor. I was just, like, I can't believe how grueling this is. And it was a testament of my own musicianship and how I needed to improve first. There is...people say, and I should say, I've heard it many times....that you have to be a good musician to be a good teacher. I agree with that 100%. But I do not think that all good musicians are good teachers. So, what I had decided, for myself, is that I had to learn what I had to do and I had to be able to learn with my knowledge and make sure that could give it to somebody else so that they could achieve.

Suzan recognized that she needed to improve her own musicianship in order to be a good music teacher. The program was not easy for her and she compared her experiences to labor and childbirth. She also decided that she needed to learn as much as she could so that she would be able to pass on her knowledge to her students.

Suzan: After the sight singing, then we were in methods. Methods was, obviously, my favorite because I felt very comfortable in the classroom. I...a lot

of people say they don't like to teach in front of their own peers. It doesn't bother me. And it never has. I've always been pretty confident about that. It does not bother me. So, we learned methods class. Which I loved. We learned games and singing and those kinds of things. And that was about two hours. From there, we went to conducting. I've never conducted a choir in my life. If you wanted me to tell you that it was really a fun experience for me, it was not. Um...and it wasn't. And, um, that was a class where I wasn't really sure of myself. I had, um, two really good instructors and one that was very intimidating. And from there we went to choir. And in choir, it was just fun to be in a group singing again. So that was, you know, that was kind of the end of our day. And we had something called special topics. And our special topics is where they would either....we'd talk about recorders and or we would do folk dancing. I have....both of my parents were born in Eastern Europe. I was in the folk dancing group. We were folk dancers and singers. We did that as I was going up. So the folk dancing was something that I loved, and that was part of our class each day as well. So went from, when you say from relaxation to concentration to relaxation.... I went from severe concentration to oh my God, thank God I can relax for a few minutes, back to severe concentration to relaxation.

Megan: Yeah.

Suzan: And it was a challenge for me. A huge challenge.

Ultimately, Suzan took what was initially a very daunting and intimidating experience, and used it to fuel her desire to give her students the best music education she could.

I asked Suzan to describe the Kodály philosophy in her own words.

Suzan: Well, I believe that the Kodály philosophy...its main purpose is to teach musical literacy to children with the voice being the most important instrument. I think that it builds, obviously, from teaching children folk songs of their own heritage, taking those folk songs, pulling them apart to learn musical elements. It is a hearing before a writing. It is sound before sight. It is a preparation of...a sequential preparation of songs, dances, movement to aid with musical literacy. Each lesson that I observed Suzan teach embodied these sentiments. Suzan said, "I live, breathe, eat, and sleep it." Everything in her class began with the voice. She used folk songs and games from her students' cultures to teach them elements of music literacy, with every element progressing from sound to symbol.

Suzan explained her philosophy behind including games and other children's activities in her music classes.

Suzan: And there's, I feel like my philosophy....children basically I think are growing up way, way too fast. And what a fun time for them to only be in the fifth grade and still be able to play games, because some kids don't know how to play games because they've never done anything that doesn't have a coach or it's not designed as competition. And I, that's another thing about the Kodály philosophy, it allows children to be children through love of singing and singing games. And I will say that there are many times when a recess teacher will come in and say, "Oh my gosh, there were 20 kids there playing this game that I had never heard before." So, they're singing outside. I mean, that makes me thrilled they're singing outside. So that's all part of everything. It's just part of everything that they do.

Kodály believed that music is for everyone. Although Suzan didn't articulate it, her actions in the classroom showed that she believes all of her students deserve to have music in their lives. She engaged every single student in the music activities and expected that every student would put forth their best effort.

Standards and Curriculum

Suzan highlighted some of the challenges she has faced in recent years with new curricular developments in her district. She explained that while her district is usually fairly progressive, they have merely taken the state music standards and made them the district curriculum.

Suzan: They're really taking the state standards...and some of them are not my favorite, to tell you the truth. But, we have to have them incorporated into our classroom. So, the days of kind of just doing what you want to do are over. So I have to take in....what I have decided is I keep with my philosophy and the things that I think are the most important and give myself four or five goals, and these are the things that I will not bend on. I must have this, this, this, this, this in my class each time. And then, from there, then I'll put those other little things in the curriculum... they're very big on responding and reflecting. Um, you know we are doing testing now. We are being scored. We are being evaluated constantly. Suzan expressed frustration over the fact that she does not feel the district curriculum is serving her students' needs. To cope, Suzan has decided to have specific things (she did not name them) that she must first have in her music classes before she can include aspects of the curriculum with which she does not agree.

Suzan is concerned about the future of music education because she has seen a downward trend in singing in elementary music classes. She attributes this to recent changes in state and national standards.

Suzan: It's just different than it used to be. But, I'm afraid...and I don't know if I've said this to you, but I'm afraid that sometimes if we don't have dissertations like this or work like this that's we're going to be a dying breed. And I really...I've seen it in my many years of teaching... and since....I see it happening. And it's very encouraging to me to have kids sing and to keep this philosophy going.

Although the district curriculum mandates the skills and concepts children are to learn each year, Suzan has the freedom to decide what materials she uses and how she will teach them.

Suzan: As long as I stick to the standards, and if the standard would be to show eighth note sixteenth note combinations, that would be something that might be in the standard, I have total reign on what I want to do. I can pick the music that I want to pick. I can pick the songs, the listening lesson, everything from that. It's up to me because I'm the only one here.

Overall, Suzan expressed a great deal of concern about the trajectory of music education. She fears that music making is declining in order to make time for more reflection and discussion. However, Suzan thanked me for conducting this study.

Suzan: Thank you. It has been a pleasure to be a part of this. I really mean that. And obviously, maybe you're getting to know me. I don't say things that I don't

mean. I mean it really had been. It's really...I think it's helped me. It's revitalized me to think, "Wow, yes." A "There's still hope" kind of thing.

Purpose of Music Education

Suzan: I think its ultimate goal is an appreciation for music, but the appreciation doesn't come unless there is an understanding. And I think that that's pretty much how I feel about that.

Suzan was very clear about what she believes is the purpose of music education. For Suzan, the purpose of music education is to help students to understand music so that they will appreciate it. Understanding is achieved through music literacy, which begins with singing.

Suzan: So I take that vocal part very seriously, because I'm hoping that if you can sing a song in tune and you know how to sing and you're enjoying what you're singing, that the melodic and the rhythmic and all of the other elements will come so much easier because you know how to sing better. Playing the instrument, especially playing the recorder. Today, I was introducing a new note, and I said sing the song in your recorder, and it was amazing to me, how much the production of the sound was better. I said sing it in your head. Sing it in your recorder first. As opposed to this is a G, this is an E and this is a D.

To help her students understand and appreciate music, Suzan always includes a listening exercise in each lesson. I observed Suzan use "Fossils" from *Carnival of the Animals* and "Trepak" from *The Nutcracker* as listening exercises with her students.

Suzan gave her students specific tasks while listening to each piece so that they would be

actively listening. Additionally, Suzan shared background information about each piece, including the composer and other relevant information.

“I...want my kids to be music lovers of the future.”

-Suzan Parsons

Chapter 5: Discussion

Restatement of the Problem/Purpose of the Study

There is a significant body of research on singing and its presence in elementary music education. However, there has been a noticeable lack of attention paid to the ways that teachers use singing within the course of a music class, the specific types of singing activities in which students are be engaged, and whether a teacher's preferred approach to teaching music affects the amount and use of singing. Because the Kodály philosophy stresses the importance of singing in music education, it was chosen as the philosophical framework for this study. This study was designed to examine the role of singing in classes taught by three Kodály-influenced elementary general music teachers.

The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classrooms. The Kodály philosophy upholds the tenet that singing should be a central component of elementary general music classes, and that it should be utilized as the primary vehicle for both music making and musical skill development. Based on Wagner and Strul's (1979) definition of singing activities, I defined singing activities as any activity in the course of a music lesson where students were engaged in teacher-led singing for either the purpose of making music or for developing other musical skills. Questions that guided the research were:

1. How much time do elementary Kodály-trained music teachers spend engaging students in singing activities?

2. What types of singing activities do teachers use to engage students?
 - a. Do the music teachers lead students in singing activities for the purpose of making music?
 - b. Do the music teachers use singing activities to teach or reinforce other musical skills?

Summary of Findings

In this section, I review the findings of this collective case study in terms of the research questions and emergent themes. First, I provide an overview of the teachers' use of singing. Then, I review each research question and results through the presentation of data from the cases. Finally, I present each emergent theme and the supporting evidence from the cases.

Teachers' Use of Singing: An Overview

The Kodály philosophy upholds the tenet that singing should be placed at the core of music instruction and used as the primary means for developing all musical skills (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Williams, 1975; Zemke, 1977). All of the participants self-identify as Kodály-influenced teachers; therefore, it was likely that singing would be present in the data gathered through both the observations and interviews.

Singing played a significant role in the classrooms of the three Kodály-trained participants in my study. The participants included singing activities in every lesson that I observed, and all willingly discussed the ways they used singing in their classrooms. Because the participants were free to design their own lessons and methods of teaching, there was a wide spectrum of singing activities.

During their interviews, participants detailed how they used singing in their classes. Ellen and Suzan's descriptions were fully supported by the teaching that I observed. For example, Ellen stated that she uses singing and singing activities throughout her lesson, and my observations supported this statement. She included songs that stood on their own as singing opportunities, singing for preparing, presenting, and practicing known musical concepts, and singing to accompany movement activities. Ellen used a moderate number of songs, but she used them in a variety of ways; therefore, Ellen's students were given many opportunities to sing.

Suzan also described using singing in nearly all sections of her lessons. What differentiated Suzan from the other participants was that she included a significant amount of repertoire at the beginning of every lesson and treated her class as a choir, despite having never formally conducted a choir herself. Her students readily sang and used clear, developmentally appropriate singing voices. Suzan included singing activities that supported listening, aural skills, preparing, presenting, and practicing musical concepts, and movement.

Jeff's description of how he uses singing did not fully align with the classes that I observed. He described using singing primarily for what he calls "common singing," or purposeful singing. However, I observed only one brief instance of this type of singing during his lessons. Jeff's description of using singing for secondary singing activities was more reflective of the classes that I observed. I observed Jeff using singing for movement, listening, and preparing, presenting, and practicing musical concepts.

Research Question 1: How much time do elementary Kodály-trained music teachers spend engaging students in singing activities?

The three participants varied greatly in the amount of time they spent engaging students in singing activities. I chose to express this value as a percentage because the length of each observed class was not consistent among the participants. Ellen and Suzan taught 45 minute classes and Jeff taught 50 minute classes. Expressing this value as a percentage allows for comparison among the participants.

On average, Ellen spent the most time engaging students in singing activities ($M=60.3\%$); however, she was the least consistent across her three lessons (55.5%, 44.4%, 81%). Suzan was the most consistent across her three observed lessons (41.8%, 41%, 41.7%; $M=41.5\%$). This might be attributed to Suzan's use of a consistent lesson plan format. Every lesson that I observed had a similar structure with the opening 11-12 minutes being dedicated to singing at least six songs. Additionally, Suzan always included a movement activity and a listening activity, both of which may or may not have included singing. Jeff included the least amount of time engaging students in singing activities in his classes, averaging 10.4%. The amount of time Jeff spent engaging students in singing activities decreased with each observed lesson (13%, 11.8%, 6.5%). Jeff acknowledged that he tends to use too much teacher talk and that it affects the amount time he spends engaging his students in musical activities.

Research Question 2: What types of singing activities do teachers use to engage students?

The participants in this study engaged their students in a wide variety of singing activities, including both purposeful and secondary singing activities. Types of

purposeful singing activities included singing American folk songs, singing songs from other cultures, and singing the text of books. When the participants engaged their students in these purposeful singing activities, they were focused only on singing and did not require their students to perform any other activities aside from simple movements to help them accurately sing the pitches or words.

The participants most commonly used singing in a secondary manner. Secondary singing activities included singing to prepare, present, and practice musical concepts and elements, singing in conjunction with the listening activity, singing in conjunction with instrument playing, and singing to accompany movement activities. Each participant had their own techniques and reasons for incorporating singing in a secondary manner.

The number of singing activities included in each lesson varied among the participants and was influenced by the lesson plan and structure that the participant chose to use. The observed lessons included anywhere from three to twelve singing activities. On average, Jeff included the least number of singing activities and Suzan included the most singing activities. However, the number of singing activities was not indicative of the amount of time a participant spent engaging their students in singing activities. For example, in one of Suzan's lessons, she led the students in 12 individual singing activities for a total of 18 minutes and 30 seconds of singing. Ellen, on the other hand, led the students in 8 individual singing activities, but she spent more time engaging the students in singing activities (25 minutes) in one lesson.

Research Question 2a: Do the music teachers lead students in singing activities for the purpose of making music?

The data suggest that the participants led their students in singing activities for the purpose of making music; however, the extent of these activities varied widely among them. Suzan made a conscious effort to include singing activities in each lesson that were solely for the purpose of making music. She led her students through several songs at the beginning of each class, asking only that they sing with good vocal technique. Suzan explained that she includes these singing activities “just for the beauty of singing these beautiful songs.”

Ellen’s inclusion of purposeful singing activities was not as deliberate as Suzan, but Ellen did include purposeful singing activities in each lesson. The initial singing of “Rico’s Pizza Restaurant” during the second and third observed classes gave students the opportunity to sing without having to perform any other tasks. When Ellen discussed singing in our interview, she did not mention singing for the purpose of making music. Ellen referenced singing in terms of how she uses it to build musical literacy.

Jeff included only one instance of purposeful singing in the lessons that I observed. In the first lesson that I observed, Jeff opened the class with singing “Great Big House.” Any other time that I observed the inclusion of singing, singing was being used to achieve another goal.

Research Question 2b: Do the music teachers use singing activities to teach or reinforce other musical skills?

The participants most frequently used singing activities to teach or reinforce other music skills. Because all three participants identified music literacy as an important

component of their teaching, they frequently used known song material to prepare, present, and practice a variety of music concepts (e.g., rhythmic patterns or solfa patterns). Jeff frequently used singing to teach his students about form and to help them learn to play patterns on the xylophones. For example, Jeff taught the students a broken bordoun through singing before having them attempt to play it on a xylophone. He believes that singing something first helps students to internalize the concept. Ellen used singing to prepare her students for a new pitch that was going to be added to their solfa set. This was an obvious realization of the sound to symbol process of teaching. Suzan used singing to practice melodic and rhythmic patterns and to accompany movement activities.

Emergent Themes

Kodály philosophy. Zoltan Kodály's philosophy was initially conceived for application in Hungarian schools; therefore it is necessary for educators to adapt his philosophy and make it applicable to the culture and educational situation in which it is being applied (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). Kodály did not describe his approach to music teaching as a method, meaning that there are not prescribed techniques and procedures for teachers to follow (Choksy, 1999). The participants in this study reflected Kodály's beliefs by presenting their own personal interpretations and applications of the philosophy. Additionally, each participant placed varying degrees of emphasis on different components of the philosophy.

Central to the Kodály philosophy is the belief that music is for all people, regardless of socioeconomic status, innate ability, ethnicity, or culture. All three participants taught music lessons that were inclusive of all students, including those who

may have had learning challenges, language barriers, and other special needs. The participants clearly believed that all children could learn to sing and could participate in every aspect of the music classes. For example, Ellen told a story about working to help a young boy find his singing voice. The young boy, originally from Japan, was a new student in her class. Although the boy struggled to sing for more than two years, Ellen never gave up on him. Then, one day in fifth grade, he finally sang, and Ellen rejoiced in his success.

Music literacy was a common theme among the three participants who sought to give their students the tools necessary to be able to read and understand music. Through the process of teaching their students to read music, all of the participants built their students' aural skills by presenting concepts in a sound to symbol process. Additionally, once a musical concept had been presented to the students, the participants gave the students opportunities to practice the known concepts. Both Suzan and Ellen used activities that were focused on reading and understanding traditional notation. Suzan consistently included reading exercises (green board work) that required students to apply their musical knowledge both independently and in groups. Ellen incorporated known concepts into the "Cup and Candy Game" where students were required to use a combination of reading and aural skills to successfully name the pitch on which she stopped. On the other hand, listening activities played a significant role in Jeff's classes. He built his students' musical literacy through helping them understand the musical form of recorded music. He did not appear to place as much emphasis on the reading of traditional notation as the other participants.

All of the participants agreed that music learning should begin with the voice and that music from the students' home culture should be the primary source of musical material. However, the extent to which each participant demonstrated these beliefs varied. Suzan used a large number of folk songs, most of which were from the United States, but included one "multicultural song" in each lesson. In comparison, Ellen used fewer songs, but all of her material was from the United States. Ellen also included some popular holiday songs in her lessons. Jeff differed in that he used a combination of American folk songs and composed songs in his teaching, a practice that is reflective of his attempt to incorporate aspects of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy into his teaching.

The participants had unique paths to Kodály certification and described individual experiences they had during their Kodály studies. These factors may have impacted the way they interpreted and implemented the philosophy in their teaching. Jeff completed some of his training as part of his undergraduate program and Ellen completed her training during the summers between years of her undergraduate program. Suzan already had a significant amount of teaching experience before she began her training. Suzan also described her Kodály training as being very challenging with many tasks outside of her skill set, but noted that it was extremely worthwhile. She explained that although she was required to spend many hours each evening "studying and learning" while caring for five children, she found that her Kodály training significantly improved her musicianship and gave direction and purpose in her approach to teaching. Ellen and Jeff were less emotional about their training. This may be because they completed their training during and shortly after their undergraduate degrees. Kodály training changed Suzan's teaching, whereas Kodály training was part of Ellen and Jeff's teaching preparation.

Standards and curriculum. State and national standards played an influential role in the teaching lives of the participants. Suzan and Ellen expressed significant concerns over recent trends in education. Suzan and Ellen felt that recent changes to state standards and district curricula are not positive changes and have the potential to negatively affect the music education of their students. Suzan stated that she has seen a drop in the amount of singing taking place in elementary music classrooms due to a new curricular emphasis on reflection and discussion. Ellen echoed Suzan's sentiments, but added that she is also concerned that the newer standards do not place an emphasis on music literacy. Jeff did not express concern regarding recent changes to the state standards or district curricula. Rather, Jeff referred to the vast number of concepts he is required to cover, and he explained that he has to maintain a "cheat sheet" to ensure he meets all of the standards.

Jeff was more concerned about meeting every standard than Suzan and Ellen. Suzan and Ellen have continued to teach in a manner that they believe is most effective; however, they have made small adaptations to ensure that they are meeting their district and state requirements. Jeff stated that he believed that his Kodály training has helped him to adapt to changes in state and national standards in music education and to cope with required assessments.

Purpose of music education. Suzan said, "I think its ultimate goal is an appreciation for music, but the appreciation doesn't come unless there is an understanding." Ellen and Jeff also reflected Suzan's statement in both their interviews and teaching. They believed that the ultimate purpose of music education is to give students the necessary tools to be able to understand music when they see and hear it.

Understanding is achieved through music literacy, and music literacy is achieved through singing.

Jeff stated that “singing.....is internalizing.” Learning and practicing musical concepts through singing gives students a deeper and more personal experience with music, and aids in the eventual transfer of concepts to instruments. Additionally, all three participants believed that students must first be able to sing something before it is given a label or symbol. They believed that teaching their students to read, write, and hear music allows the students to make sense of and understand new music when it is encountered. When students understand music, they can then appreciate it in a deeper manner.

For these three Kodály-trained teachers, everything originated in singing. Through singing, students would become musically literate, which would enable them to understand and ultimately appreciate music. They hoped that their students would grow into adults who have music in their lives and who can enjoy musical experiences.

Discussion

Singing

The findings of this study support previous studies that found that singing activities are one of the most commonly utilized music activities in elementary general music classes (Forsythe, 1977; Moore et al., 2002; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997). Two of the participants, Ellen and Suzan, used singing as the primary musical activity throughout their classes. Jeff included singing in his lessons; however, he placed a greater emphasis on listening and analyzing recorded music.

Unique to this study was the categorization of singing activities into purposeful singing activities and secondary singing activities. All of the participants included both

types of singing activities in their classes; however, they varied in the amount of each type of activity. Suzan included up to twelve minutes of purposeful singing at the beginning of each class where she led her students through many songs. Most of the songs were known songs and only one or two were new. Suzan also expressed a strong belief that it is her “responsibility, number one, to teach children how to sing. And to teach them to sing in tune.” Suzan’s practice of including a significant amount singing combined with the repetition of songs helps her to achieve her goal of teaching her students to sing in tune (Runfola & Rutkowski, 2010). Ellen’s inclusion of individual purposeful singing (“Rico’s Pizza Restaurant”) as a means of vocal development is supported by research (Rutkowski, 1996). As a result of Ellen and Suzan’s use of purposeful singing, their students consistently sang in tune and with good vocal technique. Although Jeff included some purposeful singing, it was not used extensively in the classes I observed.

All three participants used secondary singing in their lessons to prepare, present, and practice various musical concepts, accompany movement, teach and reinforce instrumental techniques, and guide listening. Although several previous studies categorized music activities with specific labels, they did not account for overlap of music activities (Forsythe, 1977; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997). However, Orman (2002) did account for some overlap of music activities. Orman (2002) found that elementary general music teachers often use two or more modalities of experiencing music at once to achieve learning goals (e.g., singing combined with movement or singing combined with playing an instrument). The results of this study support Orman’s (2002) findings regarding teaching and learning modalities.

The amount of singing included in the participants' classes did not fully reflect previous studies. Earlier studies found that teachers dedicated between 8.86% and 23% of class time to singing activities (Forsythe, 1977; Moore, 1981; Orman, 2002; Wagner & Strul, 1979; Wang & Sogin, 1997). Ellen averaged 60.3% and Suzan averaged 41.5% of class time engaging students in singing activities. Both participants far exceeded the upper threshold of the results of previous studies (Moore, 1981). Ellen and Suzan's belief that singing should be the central component of their classrooms likely affected their results. Jeff, however, fell below the lower threshold (Orman, 2002) of the previous findings despite stating that he felt that singing was the primary activity in his classroom.

Several factors may have impacted the amount of time that Jeff spent engaging his students in singing and singing activities. Jeff acknowledged that he has a tendency to engage in teacher talk; however, in the lessons that I observed the vast majority of his talking was about music and the musical activities in which he is engaging his students. Although Jeff appeared to be aware of his tendency to talk, he may not have been aware of the extent of his talking and the impact that it had on his teaching and the design of his lessons (Nápoles & Vázquez-Ramos, 2013; Wang & Sogin, 1997). For example, in each lesson I observed, Jeff led his students in an extensive listening activity. Jeff walked his students through the process of listening to and analyzing the form of each piece. He frequently paused the music to discuss what the students had heard and to check for understanding. Additionally, Jeff commonly replayed sections to ensure that the students had grasped concepts related to musical theme and form.

It is also possible that gender may have played a role in the lower amount of singing in Jeff's classes. Issues surrounding gender and singing frequently arise in music

education (Ashley, 2002; Gates, 1989; Legg, 2013; Roulston & Misawa, 2011). An obvious issue that Jeff deals with on a regular basis is the fact that he naturally sings in a register that is different from the register of children. He often chose to sing in the falsetto register in order to sing in the same range as his students. I observed Jeff frequently singing along with his students, switching between the chest and falsetto registers. As a result, he likely experiences vocal fatigue. Over use of the voice in any register can cause vocal fatigue and vocal damage (McCoy, 2012). To mitigate these issues, Jeff may have been subconsciously excluding singing from his lessons and favoring listening and instrumental activities.

Jeff also talked about having to mediate gender issues with his students. He said that on occasion, male students will claim that they “sound like a girl” when they sing. It is not uncommon for boys to be resistant to singing because of a belief that singing is a feminine activity (Ashley, 2002). Jeff responds to these situations by singing to the children and then asking them if he is a girl or a boy. The students recognize that Jeff is not a girl. Jeff’s response to the situation raises an additional issue. Is it a bad thing to sound like a girl? It is not directly stated, but it is suggested. Between having to navigate gender issues with his students and having to frequently manipulate his own voice, it is possible that Jeff might be including less singing in his classes to avoid these issues.

Although Ellen included a significant amount of singing in her classes, the amount of time dedicated to singing was noticeably varied between the observed classes. Several factors may have contributed to the variance in the amount of time dedicated to singing activities, including lesson structure, lesson content, and the time of year. Ellen purposefully did not use a consistent lesson plan structure. She explained that a flexible

lesson structure allows her to vary the types of music activities that she includes in each lesson, some of which might be non-singing music activities. Additionally, Ellen was preparing her students for a performance during the time of my observations. The students spent a portion of each class practicing a holiday song that during other times of the year would not be part of the lesson.

The amount of singing in Suzan's lesson was very consistent across the three observed lessons. This is likely a result of Suzan's use of a consistent lesson plan structure. Suzan explained that she includes many activities in one lesson, often spending no more than a few minutes on any one song or activity (Boshkoff, 1991; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). The routine created by the lesson plan allows her students to be more focused because they have a general idea of what type of activity may be coming next. Suzan also said that the structure enables her to be a more organized and effective teacher (Boshkoff, 1991).

Ellen and Suzan consider themselves to primarily be instrumentalists in terms of professional training, but view themselves as a singer when in the role of a music teacher. Jeff views himself a singer at all times. Interestingly, the participants who are not professionally trained singers included more singing in their classes than did Jeff, who is a professionally trained singer. The reasons for this phenomenon are not known at this time, but warrant further investigation.

Kodály Philosophy

Philosophically, these three Kodály-trained teachers reflect the tenet that singing should be at the center of the classroom (Choksy, 1981); however, based upon my observations, only two participants, Ellen and Suzan, appear to be fully reflecting the

tenet in their teaching. Because I was able to observe each participant teaching on three occasions, I can state only that Jeff did not fully reflect this specific tenet in the lessons I observed. It is possible that in other classes and at other times of the year that Jeff may include more singing activities in his classes. On the other hand, Jeff effectively used singing to initiate music learning, and connected concepts learned through singing to other music activities.

Zoltan Kodály believed that music literacy was a necessary part of music education (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). For the three Kodály-trained teachers in this study, the goal of music literacy influenced everything they did with their students. They included music activities that taught concepts through a sound to symbol process (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008), and connected concepts learned through folk music to masterworks (Choksy, 1981). Furthermore, the participants presented concepts in a developmentally appropriate sequence, moving from those that were familiar and more concrete to those that were abstract (Boshkoff, 1991; Sinor, 1980).

In order for music teachers to be considered Kodály certified, they must complete coursework through an Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) endorsed training program. OAKE endorsement ensures that there is some consistency regarding hours and types of courses among the training programs found throughout the United States. All of the participants completed an OAKE endorsed Kodály training program in the mid-1990's. Coincidentally, they received certification from the same Kodály training program, but in different years. Although they likely received similar training, each participant brought different experiences to the program that influenced their interpretations of the Kodály philosophy. This suggests that personal experiences while

going through the training process can affect one's interpretation and implementation of the Kodály approach. This also supports the idea that Kodály-influenced teaching is an approach and not a method. If it were truly a method, one would expect to see very similar teaching sequences and emphases among the participants (Abril, in press)

Standards and Curriculum

State standards and district curricula played an influential role in the teaching lives of the participants. All of the participants taught in a state with state standards that were modeled after the National Association for Music Education new Core Music Standards, which served the purpose to give teachers a framework to work within and guidance for sequencing musical concepts (Abril, in press; Mark & Gary, 2007).

Consequently, the participants' district curriculum was heavily influenced by the state standards.

Johnson (2008) identifies three levels of "social reality": micro, meso, and macro (p. v). The micro level includes small-scale social systems and face-to-face interactions. Factors situated within the micro level have the most direct influence on people and programs. Conversely, the macro level includes large-scale social systems that include national education bodies and government entities (Abril & Bannerman, 2015). The meso level lies in between, is outside of the school, and can include occasional interactions among its agents. The participants in this study recognized the influence of and relationship between district and state mandates and their individual teaching. This reflects a socioecological model where individuals and levels of the environment are inextricably intertwined and continuously influence one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

Abril and Bannerman (2015) found that music educators perceive micro-level factors to be the most influential, and, therefore, focused their interactions on factors at this level. However, participants in this study made no mention of micro-level factors during the interviews. During casual conversations over the course of this study, the participants indicated that their principals were supportive of their music programs and did not indicate any significant issues within their school environments. This may partially explain why the participants discussed issues that fall within the meso- and macro-levels of socioecological theory.

At the macro-level, two participants expressed concern that recent revisions to state standards will have a negative impact on music learning. Both Ellen and Suzan were concerned that the new standards focused too much on discussion, reflection and broad conceptual ideas (Shuler et al., 2014), and felt that they did not have the time to include as much of these concepts as they might be expected to include. They were also concerned that the lack of explicit inclusion of singing and music literacy in the standards and their district curricula would prevent their students from gaining the “musical skills” necessary to “understand” music (Abril, in press). Both women described having observed a decline in the quality of singing in elementary general music classes in their region. Ellen and Suzan pointed to the standards as the reason for the decline in singing; however, it not yet known if the standards are the actual cause.

Ellen and Suzan were very confident in their teaching abilities and musical knowledge, and have made minimal changes to their teaching since the implementation of the new standards. It may be that Ellen and Suzan are focused on this macro-level issue because the standards are new and uncomfortable. In their teaching lives, they are

experiencing the most discord outside of their school (micro) environment; therefore, they focus heavily on those issues. They did not view most macro-level policies as influential factors in their individual classrooms, but expressed concern over how they will affect others and the professional as a whole (Abril & Bannerman, 2015).

Standards and curricula played a different role in Jeff's teaching; however, he still indicated that meso- and macro-level policies impacted his teaching. He did not express any concern regarding recent changes; rather, he credited his Kodály training for his ability to cope with the changes. Jeff has made a distinct effort to address state standards that could easily be overlooked in favor of the performance-based standards, a reflection of the goals of the new Core Music Standards (Shuler et al., 2014). I saw a notable amount of emphasis placed on listening, identifying, comparing and discussing in Jeff's music classes. This may have affected the amount of time that Jeff spent engaging students in singing activities.

Although Suzan and Ellen did not make outright statements like Jeff, it is likely that their Kodály training has helped them to adapt to new requirements, including SLO's (Student Learning Objectives). Both women referenced the sequence of musical concepts and the teaching process they learned through their training as elements that have helped them to make pedagogical choices when faced with curricular changes that do not consistently align with their teaching processes (Boshkoff, 1991). Ellen and Suzan recognized that significant curricular changes had been made, but they consciously decided to continue teaching in ways that they felt were most appropriate.

Purpose of Music Education

Abril (in press) defines general music as “a type of music education designed for *all* students, to develop basic musical skills, knowledge, and understanding” (p. 1). The participants in this study wholly reflected this notion. The participants believed that through the acquisition of skills and knowledge, their students would understand and appreciate music, and ultimately, be “empowered” to “choose” to make music “a central” component of their lives (Regelski, 1998, p. 44). Moreover, the participants were supported by Choksy’s (1999) statement, “...one only truly enjoys and appreciates things one understands” (p. 171).

The Kodály philosophy states that “music [is] for everyone, not only for [the] elite” (Sinor, 1997, p. 38). Additionally, Reimer (2003) states “the purpose of music education is that it exists to make musical experiences, in all their various manifestations, as widely available to all people, and as deeply cultivated by each individual, as possible” (p. 38). The belief that music is for all children was evident in the participants teaching and personal philosophy. It appears ‘music for all’ is a universal belief among music educators. All children deserve “to be handed the key with which [they] can enter the locked world of music” (Kodály, 1974, p. 77).

None of the participants indicated that they expected their students to become professional musicians as a result of their elementary general music classes. Rather, the teachers hoped that by gaining musical skills and knowledge their students would be able to “listen for and comprehend the full range of meanings that musical works present to our powers of consciousness” (Elliott, 2008, p. 248). They recognized that their students

were most likely to be consumers of music when they reached adulthood, and they wanted their students to be able to appreciate and understand the music they encounter.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Several limitations were present in this study. The participants were in control of the information they chose to share with me, and the classes and activities they selected for me to observe. My time with the participants was limited in that I only observed them teaching on three occasions and conducted only one interview with each participant. Each participant assured me that I observed typical classes and that the information shared with me was truthful; however, there is no way for me to absolutely prove these statements. I have assumed that the participants have been honest. All of the collected data was subject to situational limitations, such as time of day, health, and/or mood, which may have affected the information gathered (Glesne, 2011; Patton, 2002).

While the data cannot, and should not, be generalized to a broad population due to the small, purposeful sample, readers may find some of the information transferrable to their own experiences. It appears that Kodály-trained music teachers likely use singing as a central component of elementary general music education, but do not consistently include purposeful singing activities in their music classes. These results are intended to serve as a foundation for future studies, and indicate that further research is needed regarding the use of purposeful singing and its place in elementary general music.

Ellen and Suzan, who considered their primary instruments to be the flute and piano, respectively, included more singing in their classes than Jeff, who's primary instrument was his voice. The relationship between a teacher's identity as a singer, both professionally and in the classroom, was not a focus of this study but it warrants further

investigation. Additionally, Suzan first stated that she did not consider herself a singer, although she later clarified that she is not a professional singer, but considers herself a singer when in the role of a music teacher. This raised the question of what makes a person a singer versus a non-singer? How does culture and society define ‘singer’ and how does that affect people’s willingness to sing?

The participants identified incongruence between their personal philosophies and state standards and district curricula. The results of this study indicate that having a personal philosophy helped the participants to navigate the incongruence, but did not explain why a personal philosophy may have helped the participants. Further research is needed in this area.

Finally, it is recommended that this study be replicated with other frameworks including the Orff philosophy, the Dalcroze philosophy, and eclecticism to examine how teachers who may or may not identify with a specific philosophy use singing in their classrooms. The results of these recommended studies combined with the results of the present study could give researchers and educators a better understanding of the current role of singing in elementary general music.

Suggestions for Practice

The participants in the study had very clear and specific beliefs about the purpose of music education and the best approaches for teaching music to children. For the participants, understanding how they teach and why they teach appeared to help them navigate the daily challenges of teaching. Establishing a personal philosophy may help both new and experienced teachers manage new requirements in teaching and assessing.

The issue of gender was not expected, but when it emerged, it warranted examination. Other studies have indicated that singing is often considered a ‘feminine’ activity, which may explain males’ resistance to participate (Ashley, 2002; Gates, 1989). Teachers must be careful in how they navigate gender issues so as to not associate negative connotations with one gender or the other. When a male child claims that he ‘sounds like a girl’ when he sings, it may be best for the teacher to respond with ‘no, you sound like a child.’ Such a response removes the good/bad dichotomy that might be associated with sounding male or female.

The stories of people have the potential to impact other lives. It is possible that by reading the stories and experiences of Jeff, Ellen, and Suzan practicing educators might reflect on their own teaching practices and become aware more of what they teach and how they teach it. Studies have indicated that teachers often do not have an accurate perception of their own teaching (Nápoles & Vázquez-Ramos, 2013; Wang & Sogin, 1997). During this study, the participants discovered their own misperceptions of their teaching. They consistently over estimated the amount of singing that they included in their classes and became more aware of the amount of talking they did while teaching.

The teachers in this study effectively used singing as tool for teaching children other music skills, including movement, music literacy, and playing instruments. Music educators can use the results of this study to support the inclusion of singing in music classes across all age and ability levels. Moreover, music educators might consider including more purposeful singing to give children the opportunity to make music without being required to concentrate on other tasks. Additionally, purposeful singing activities may aid in the vocal development of children.

Finally, the participants in this study demonstrated and discussed using singing in ways that included all children and that gave them opportunities for growth. The teaching practices of the participants provide evidence that all children have the potential to learn to sing and can develop music skills through singing. Moreover, the teaching practices of the participants indicate that singing can be an enjoyable experience for children that can help them to find joy in musical experiences.

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Appendix A: Teacher Recruitment Letter

Dear Teacher,

My name is Megan M. Sheridan and I am a doctoral student at The Ohio State University. For my dissertation, I am investigating teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classes. The faculty at OSU recommended you as someone who might be able to participate in my study.

I am looking for experienced elementary music educators who identify as Kodály teachers, have at least ten years of teaching experience at the elementary level, have full Kodály certification that was completed at least five years ago, and who currently teach in a public elementary school in central Ohio.

Participation in my study will require you to allow me to observe you teaching three separate music lessons for the same grade level on three separate occasions within the course of one month and to participate in one interview that will last no longer than 60 minutes. When I observe you, I will take detailed notes about what I see you do. I will not include students or their actions in my notes.

The interview will take place after the three observations have been completed. We will schedule a day, time, and location that are mutually agreed upon by both of us. During the interview, I will ask you questions that relate to your experience with the Kodály approach, your musical background, and your pedagogical choices. It is possible that I will also ask you questions that are related to what I have observed. The questions will be fairly open ended and you may go into as much or as little detail as you would like.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any consequence to you. When I write about the observations and interview in my final document, I will ensure your anonymity by removing all identifying information about you, the places where you received your education, and the school where you teach.

If you are willing to participate in my project, please let me know by responding to this e-mail. If you have any questions or would like more information, you may contact me, or you may contact my advisor, Dr. Jan Edwards, at 614.292.9411. Once you have confirmed that you would like to participate, I will send you a copy of a consent form to review and will ask to schedule a meeting with you to set up days and times for the observations and interview.

Thank you for considering participating my research.

Sincerely,

Megan M. Sheridan
PhD Candidate
The Ohio State University
Sheridan.130@osu.edu
724.355.2754

Appendix B: Informed Consent Letter and Form

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Title of Project: Singing is elementary: Teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classrooms

Investigators: Dr. Jan Edwards, Associate Professor &
Ms. Megan M. Sheridan, PhD Candidate

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for considering participation in this study. The purpose of this study is to describe teachers' use of singing in three Kodály-based elementary general music classrooms. Participation will require you to allow the co-investigator to observe you teaching three separate music lessons for the same grade level on three separate occasions within the course of one month and to participate in one interview that will last no longer than 60 minutes.

While conducting the observations, the co-investigator will take notes while you teach. All notes will remain in the sole possession of the co-investigator. When the co-investigator writes about what she observes, she may describe or quote what you do or say, but will do so in a way that will ensure your anonymity. Students and their actions will not be included in any of the notes.

The interview will take place after all of the observations have been conducted. Questions asked in the interview will relate to your experience with the Kodály approach, your musical background, and your pedagogical choices. It is possible that the co-investigator will also ask you questions that are related to what is observed in the observations. The interview will be audio recorded for data transcription. All identifying information from the interview, including names, the places where you received your education, and places of employment, will be removed from the transcript. You will have an opportunity to review and verify the data gathered from the interview. Following your verification, the interview recording will be deleted permanently. When the co-investigator writes about the interview, she may quote from your interview, but will do so in a way that will ensure your anonymity.

Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time with no consequence to you. Withdrawing from this study will not affect your future relationship with the School of Music or The Ohio State University. You may stop an observation at

any time if you want. During the interview, you may choose to not answer a question if it makes you uncomfortable, and you may stop the interview at any point. If you have any questions, concerns, or if you feel you were harmed during the course of the study, you may talk to either of the co-investigators. For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

We cannot offer you any compensation for participating in this study or promise that it will help you personally. We do hope, though, that you might gain insight into your own teaching practices and that the results of this study might help other teachers in their own teaching practices.

Please consider the information in this letter carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Dr. Jan Edwards
Associate Professor
The Ohio State University
Edwards.689@osu.edu
614.292.9411

Megan M. Sheridan
PhD Candidate
The Ohio State University
Sheridan.130@osu.edu
724.355.2754

Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Printed name of subject

Signature of subject

AM/PM

Date and time

Printed name of person authorized to consent for subject (when applicable)

Signature of person authorized to consent for subject (when applicable)

AM/PM

Relationship to the subject

Date and time**Investigator/Research Staff**

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Signature of person obtaining consent

AM/PM

Date and time