

“Thaifying” Kodály: Developing an Applied Prototype Pedagogical Method for 7th-Grade Students in Thailand

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Abstract

This study focused on creating an applied prototype of a Kodály-based pedagogical method for 7th-grade students in the Thai education system and on evaluating its implementation in a school in Central Thailand. The research objectives were: 1) to develop Kodály-based lessons to improve students’ musicianship skills; 2) to analyse the learning process of students taught with this approach; 3) to gather students’ views on the method; and 4) to obtain feedback from music educators, academics, and experts on its applicability. The sample comprised 18 students and 15 respondents from the music education community. The findings showed clear improvement in musicianship skills, and students reported increased confidence and engagement, suggesting that Kodály-based instruction can help make complex concepts more accessible. Feedback from the specialist group affirmed the method’s suitability for strengthening foundational skills and its adaptability within Thai educational settings. The applied prototype incorporates culturally grounded components, including a Thai song composed for this research, the use of Thai solfège, and the Thai quarter rest (*yood*). The study demonstrates how Kodály’s pedagogical principles may be reinterpreted through context-specific modifications and provides a model for culturally responsive music education.

Keywords: culturally responsive pedagogy, Kodály-adapted method, music education in Thailand, music pedagogy, musicianship skills

Introduction

Education in Thailand is overseen by the Ministry of Education, whose mandate is to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for learners to participate effectively in society. This mandate is articulated in the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551, which outlines eight learning areas: 1) Thai language; 2) mathematics; 3) science; 4) social studies, religion, and culture; 5) health and physical education; 6) arts; 7) occupations and technology; and 8) foreign languages. Music education falls under the arts learning area (Ministry of Education, 2010).

The teaching approach developed by Zoltán Kodály (1960, 1974) in Hungary is widely recognised in international music education for its emphasis on cultivating inner hearing skills through singing. This method prioritises the use of traditional songs in learners' first language and introduces musical concepts gradually, beginning with sound and progressing to notation. Effective implementation of the method requires music teachers to be well-versed in solfège ("movable-do"), hand signs, and rhythm syllables. Research in Thailand and elsewhere has examined the method's applicability across various educational levels (Phokha, Saepueng, & Jirotkul, 2023), and numerous studies report substantial gains in musicianship, sight-singing, and dictation skills among students who receive Kodály-based instruction (Liu, Pattananon, & Pongvatnanusorn, 2024; Tissadikun, Tongkarnpanich, & Srisiadngam, 2022).

Although research has demonstrated the merit of the Kodály approach, it has not yet been adopted consistently or systematically within Thai music classrooms. This gap prompted the authors to develop an applied prototype of the Kodály pedagogical method aimed at improving the musicianship skills of 7th-grade students. The findings may offer practical guidance for the Ministry of Education in Thailand as it continues to refine the arts curriculum, especially in music education. They may also assist teachers in both public and private educational institutions, as well as the broader community, by providing insights that can inform current instructional practices.

In light of the issues outlined above, the study was designed around the following four objectives:

1. To develop music lessons based on Kodály's pedagogical method to improve the musicianship skills of 7th-grade students in the Thai education system;
2. To examine the learning process of 7th-grade students taught using Kodály-based pedagogical method;
3. To gather students' views on the developed method; and
4. To obtain feedback from music teachers, academics, and experts on its applicability.

Literature Review

The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551, established by the Thai Ministry of Education, aims to develop learners holistically by addressing physical well-being, knowledge, morality, national identity, and global citizenship (Ra-ngubtook & Bhongsatiern, 2022). Grounded in a learner-centred philosophy, the curriculum assumes that every individual has the potential to learn and grow. It is organised into eight learning areas: Thai language; mathematics; science; social studies, religion, and culture; health and physical education; arts; occupations and technology; and foreign languages. Within the arts learning area (which includes visual arts, music, and dance), the curriculum encourages creativity, imagination, artistic skills, aesthetic understanding, and appreciation of the arts. Learning standards and indicators are specified for each level to ensure students achieve expected outcomes during their schooling. Complementing this national curriculum is the Thailand International Music Examination (TIME), developed by the College of Music at Mahidol University (Jumneanpan, 2024). TIME comprises four annual examinations in different musical subjects. Among these is the aural skills exam, structured into 12 grades and assessing dictation and sight-reading abilities, including sight clapping and sight singing. TIME certification is recognised in applications for pre-college and college music programmes.

Against this curricular backdrop, Kodály's pedagogical philosophy offers a structured approach to musical literacy. Motivated by a desire to elevate musical understanding among the Hungarian population, Kodály emphasised the development of both skilled musicians and thoughtful listeners. As outlined by Suttachitt (2012, 2017), Kodály's philosophy rests on three interrelated elements: policy, pedagogical principles, and classroom practice. Kodály's belief that music education is a universal right corresponds with the learner-centred principles of the Thai curriculum. His emphasis on early access to music learning and on rigorous preparation of music teachers parallels Thailand's broader educational goals, including its efforts to incorporate global perspectives. Kodály's method foregrounds singing, hand signs, and solfège as tools for developing musical literacy, contrasting with methods such as Orff Schulwerk, which focuses on creativity and improvisation using percussion instruments (Mabini, 2024). Despite these differences, both approaches have become widely used in schools, demonstrating the enduring significance of sound-based learning in music education (Jiang, 2025). Kodály's sequence begins with simple traditional songs in the mother tongue and gradually introduces more complex repertoire so that learners internalise musical concepts in a clear, logical progression.

Central to Kodály's approach is the belief that accurate singing and early musical development help children form a deep and lasting relationship with music. Ear training and aural perception are integrated throughout the learning process to ensure that students can recognise and internalise musical nuance (Kutlimuratovich, 2024). Kodály viewed musical literacy as essential for engaging meaningfully with both national traditions and the wider global repertoire (Cuskelly, 2021). Early instructional materials commonly use limited intervals and pentatonic scales, which are more accessible for young singers (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). As students

advance, the curriculum gradually introduces more demanding classical works. Kodály also recognised the importance of physical engagement and incorporated movement into lessons to support active participation and deepened understanding.

In Thailand, Kodály's method was introduced in 1977 by Carolyn Kingshill at Payap University in Chiang Mai (Khanthayot & Chuangprakhon, 2019). However, its widespread adoption has been hindered by cultural and pedagogical factors, including the adaptation of the “movable-do” system and the strong tradition of oral transmission in Thai music education (Phokha, 2021; Phokha, Saepueng, & Jirotkul, 2023). Nevertheless, Kodály's method is compatible with Thai educational conditions, particularly where access to costly musical instruments is limited (Mogyorósi, 2023). Its structured, sequential progression and emphasis on experiential learning using local folk songs in the students' native language facilitate meaningful engagement with musical material (Coughlan, 2024). Kodály's prioritisation of singing reinforces its accessibility; he believed that the human voice is the most immediate and universally available instrument for all learners (Lin & Simeon, 2025).

Methods and Findings

This study used a mixed-methods research design to assess the effectiveness of the Kodály pedagogical method in developing musicianship skills among 7th-grade Thai students. The purposively selected sample consisted of 18 students from Kanchanapisek Wittayalai Nakhon Pathom School in Central Thailand, chosen for their representativeness in terms of educational background and potential receptiveness to the Kodály approach. Twelve 50-minute instructional sessions were developed specifically for the study. Open-ended group interviews were conducted to elicit students' perspectives on the method, including their experiences, the challenges involved, and the perceived benefits. In parallel, focus group discussions were held with 15 music teachers, academics, and experts to obtain professional views on the method.

The research instruments consisted of a pre-test, in-class tests, a post-test, a learning observation form, informal group interview record forms, and a questionnaire. The pre-test and post-test measured students' musicianship skills before and after the intervention, while in-class tests monitored students' progress and provided formative indications of learning. Quantitative data from the 12 tests were analysed using basic statistical procedures, including mean scores for individual students and for the group. These analyses allowed for the identification of trends, patterns, and overall changes in skill development. Qualitative data from interviews and observations were synthesised to identify key themes and categorised according to the research objectives.

Ethical guidelines from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) were followed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained before data collection, including parental consent for minors. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity and were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence. All procedures were carried out transparently, with full respect for participants' rights.

Development of Lessons Using Kodály's Pedagogy

The music lessons for 7th-grade students were developed using three key resources: 1) the Basic Education Core Curriculum Standard S 2.1 Indicator 1, which concerns reading, writing, and singing Thai and Western musical notation; 2) the Listening Skills Curriculum from the Thailand International Music Examination (2016); and 3) Kodály's established music lessons.

Twelve 50-minute sessions were taught, progressing from the simplest to the most complex material. The lessons were taught in Thai using both Thai solfège symbols and their Western equivalents. The instructional content covered: 1) rhythm, including quarter notes, eighth notes, and quarter-note rests; and 2) scales, focusing on the *do* pentatonic scale (d-r-m-s-l). The content was taught in three parts:

- Part 1 (Classes 1–4): *ta*, *ti-ti*, and the trichord
- Part 2 (Classes 5–8): *ta*, *ti-ti*, and the tetratonic scale
- Part 3 (Classes 9–12): *ta*, *ti-ti*, rests, and the *do* pentatonic scale





These components are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. *Content of the Kodály-based lessons*

Teaching session		
1 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 12
Duple metre (time signature: 2/4)	Duple metre (time signature: 2/4)	Duple metre (time signature: 2/4)
4 bars	4 bars	4 bars
<i>ta</i> and <i>ti-ti</i>	<i>ta</i> and <i>ti-ti</i>	<i>ta</i> , <i>ti-ti</i> , <i>yood</i> * ("rest" in Thai)
Trichord (d-r-m)	Tetratonic scale (d-r-m-s)	<i>Do</i> pentatonic scale (d-r-m-s-l)

In this study, the Kodály approach was applied through the use of specially composed Thai songs for classroom teaching. The researchers wrote the lyrics and melodies to introduce and reinforce the musical elements presented in each lesson. Four core components of Kodály-based instructions, i.e., hand signs, sol-fa singing, rhythmic syllables, and stick notation, were also incorporated. In adapting the method to the Thai context, the stick notation included Thai solfège alongside pentatonic sol-fa and employed the *yood* rest. The above components are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. *Application of the Kodály method in the research*

Subject	Kodály Pedagogical Method	Application in the Research
Song	Folk song	Composed by the researchers (Thai)
Singing	☑	☑
Hand signs	☑	☑
Moveable-do	☑	☑
Stick notation	 d r m s l	 d r m s l
Quarter-note rest		
Rhythm syllables	quarter note (<i>ta</i>) eighth note (<i>ti-ti</i>) quarter-note rest (<i>szun</i>)	quarter note (<i>ta</i>) eighth note (<i>ti-ti</i>) quarter-note rest (<i>yood</i>)

Implementation of the Kodály Pedagogy and Assessment of Student Learning

Following the Kodály pedagogical approach, the learning sequence for the 7th-grade students in this study was organised into three key phases: Introduction, Teaching, and Summary. Throughout these phases, eight specific activities were implemented: 1) reviewing previous lessons; 2) arranging rhythm cards; 3) teaching singing techniques; 4) transcribing rhythms from songs; 5) adding melodies to the songs; 6) writing and reading musical notes; 7) writing notes as they were heard; and 8) sight-reading using flashcards.

Students were assessed in four areas: 1) rhythmic dictation; 2) melodic dictation; 3) rhythmic sight reading; and 4) sight clapping. The results were presented in two parts: the mean score for each student, which indicated individual progress; and group mean score calculated over 12 assessments, which showed that overall skill development was rated as excellent. The mean scores for each content area demonstrated clear improvement in the post-test compared to the pre-test.

Part 1

Part 1, taught in classes 1 to 4, covered *ta*, *ti-ti*, and the trichord. Rhythm lessons focused on quarter notes and eighth notes; scale work introduced the trichord (d-r-m). The pre-test scores and the mean scores from classes 1 to 4 are presented in Figure 1.

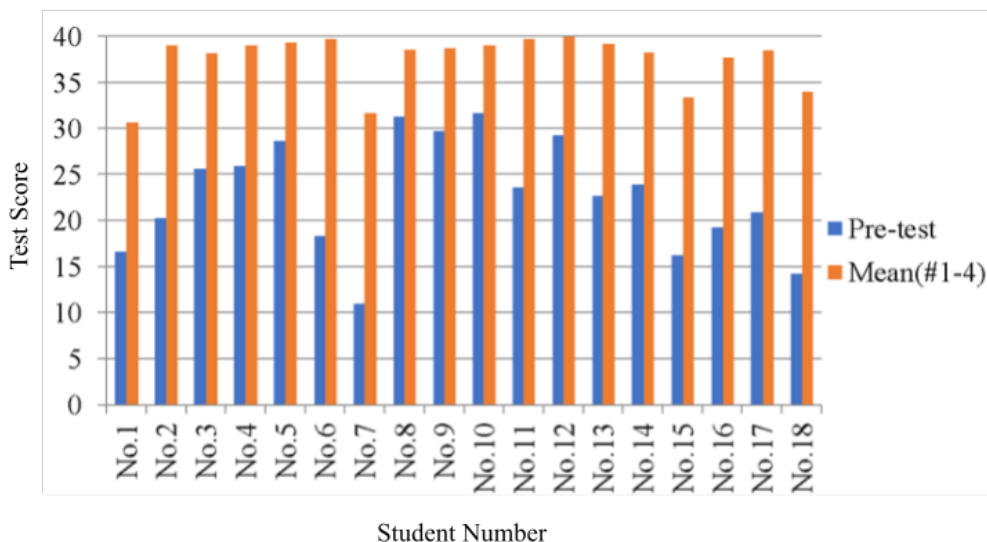


Figure 1. Pre-test scores and mean scores for Sessions 1–4 (Content Group 1: *ta*, *ti-ti*, and trichord)

The results in Figure 1 show that in Part 1, all students demonstrated improvement. The pre-test scores fell into three bands: 1) 10.1 to 20, with six students; 2) 20.1 to 30, with 10 students; and 3) 30.1 to 40, with two students. After instruction, the mean scores for all students were within the 30.1 to 40 range.

Analysis of the change in individual mean scores revealed three groups: 1) a difference of 0 to 10 points, seen in three students (students 8, 9, and 10); (2) a difference of 10.1 to 20 points, seen in 13 students (students 1–5 and 11–18); and 3) a difference of 20.1 to 30 points, seen in two students (students 6 and 7). Students 6 and 7 showed the largest improvements, while most students in the second group showed moderate improvement.

Part 2

Part 2 focused on *ta*, *ti-ti*, and the tetratonic scale and was taught in classes 5 to 8. Rhythm work continued with quarter and eighth notes, and the pitch component introduced the tetratonic scale (d-r-m-s). Figure 2 presents the pre-test and mean scores for these classes.

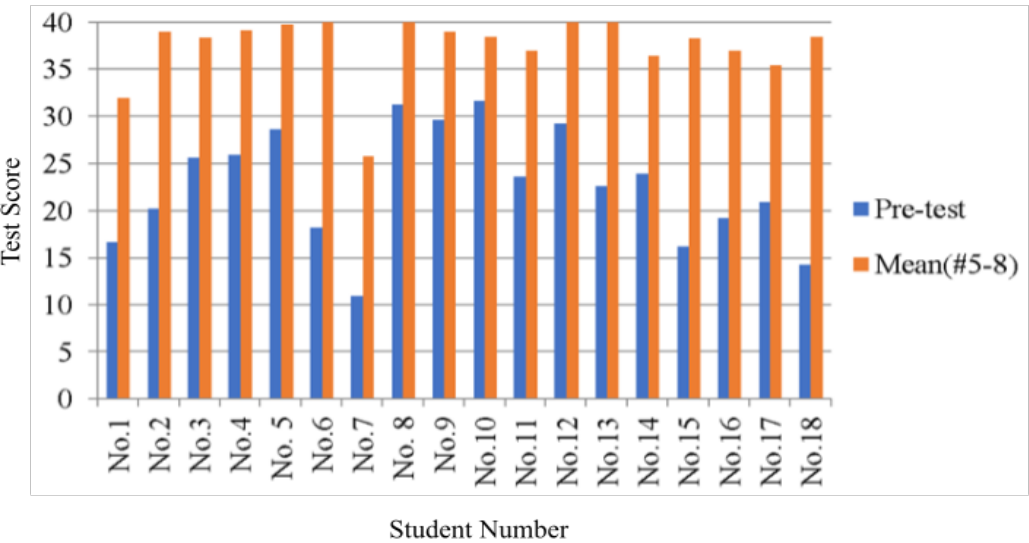


Figure 2. Pre-test scores and mean scores for Sessions 5–8 (Content Group 2: *ta*, *ti-ti*, and the tetratonic scale)

Based on the results shown in Figure 2, all students demonstrated measurable gains in Part 2. The pre-test distribution comprised three bands: 1) 10.1 to 20, with six students; 2) 20.1 to 30, with 10 students; and 3) 30.1 to 40, with two students. After the lessons, the mean scores clustered into two bands: 1) 20.1 to 30, represented by one student; and 2) 30.1 to 40, represented by 17 students.

Analysis of individual score changes produced three groups: 1) a difference of 0 to 10 points, observed in three students (students 8–10); 2) a difference of 10.1 to 20 points, observed in 12 students (students 1–5, 7, 11–14, and 16–17); and 3) a difference of 20.1 to 30 points, observed in three students (students 6, 15, and 18). Students 6, 15, and 18 recorded the most significant improvement, while the majority of students in the middle group showed moderate progress.

Part 3

Part 3 covered *ta*, *ti-ti*, and the *do* pentatonic scale and was taught in classes 9 to 12. Rhythm instruction extended to quarter notes, eighth notes, and the quarter-note rest. The pitch component introduced the *do* pentatonic scale (d-r-m-s-l). The pre-test scores and the mean scores for these classes are illustrated in Figure 3.

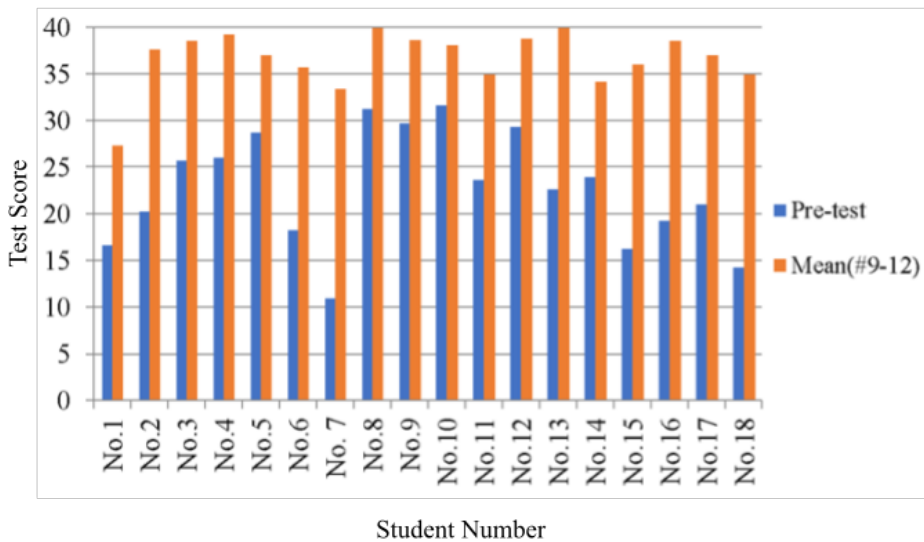


Figure 3. Pre-test scores and mean scores for Sessions 9-12 (Content Group 3: *ta*, *ti-ti*, *yood*, and *do* pentatonic scale)

From the results shown in Figure 3, it is evident that in Part 3, all students made measurable progress. The pre-test scores fell into three bands: 1) 10.1 to 20, with six students; 2) 20.1 to 30, with 10 students; and 3) 30.1 to 40, with two students. After the lessons, the mean scores formed two bands: 1) 20.1 and 30, represented by one student; and 2) 30.1 to 40, represented by 17 students.

An analysis of the changes in individual scores revealed three groups based on growth: 1) a difference of 0 to 10 points, observed in five students (students 5, 8–10, and 12); 2) a difference of 10.1 to 20 points, observed in 11 students (students 1–4, 6, 11, and 13–17); and 3) a difference of 20.1 to 30 points, observed in two students (students 7 and 18). Students 7 and 18 exhibited the largest increases, while the majority of students in the second group showed moderate improvement.

The mean scores of the group were calculated after each of the 12 sessions. The results show that the averages remained fairly stable, ranging from about 35 to 39. A few sessions (in particular, sessions 1, 3, 7, 8, and 12) recorded slightly higher means, with session 8 being the highest. Although some fluctuation is present, the overall pattern indicates steady group performance across the sessions. The group's mean scores for all 12 sessions are shown in Figure 4.

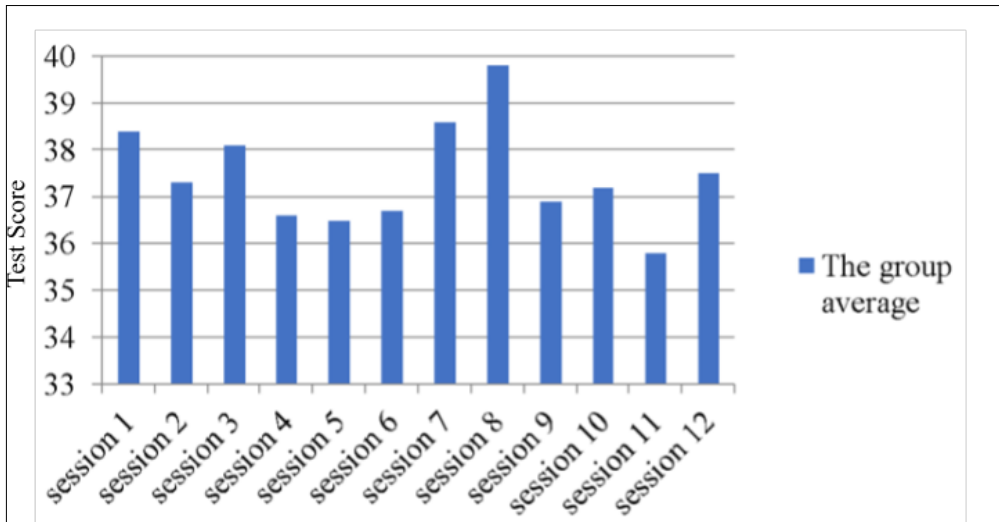


Figure 4. Group average scores over the 12 teaching sessions

Feedback from Students

Student feedback on the developed Kodály music teaching method pointed to several key aspects. Students' prior knowledge of Western music strongly influenced their perceptions of the level of difficulty. Two distinct perspectives emerged: one group felt that the lessons were appropriately challenging, while another expressed a desire for more advanced content.

The learning activities were commended for their logical and effective sequence, which required focused listening, both to the music and to the instructors. Activities designed to aid memory, such as using rhythmic cards for echo clapping and arranging them from memory, were especially helpful. The lessons included singing activities that helped students transcribe rhythms and melodies. For most, this was their first experience with music transcription. The use of Kodály's learning tools, including hand signs, sol-fa singing, rhythmic syllables, and stick notation, was well-received. These tools made learning enjoyable and helped students visualise scales and grasp musical concepts more easily. Music theory was taught through practical application, and several students noted that using Thai solfège syllables (ด-ร-ม) together with the Western system (d-r-m) made the lessons clearer and should be emphasised in future instruction. The songs used in the lessons, each consisting of eight beats, were considered suitable for the students' level. However,

some of them suggested that access to a piano would further add to the learning experience.

Students also reported that the skills they acquired during the lessons were transferable to other musical activities, e.g., playing notes more accurately on wind instruments and transcribing notes for songs of personal interest. Overall, the lessons resulted in clear development for all students compared to their abilities prior to instruction. They also showed a more positive attitude toward learning and the instructors.

Feedback from Teachers, Academics, and Experts

The 15 teachers, academics, and experts consulted deemed the lesson content appropriate for beginners in Western music, particularly for developing reading and note-writing skills. The progression of lessons was viewed as consistent with students' readiness in note values, pitch work, chords, scales, intervals, and basic musical symbols. The teaching process and activity flow were judged to be suitable, although respondents advised that the duration of each activity should be flexible. They also recommended the inclusion of echo singing and improvisation to support students' responsiveness.

Regarding learning materials, respondents proposed that classrooms be equipped with a range of musical instruments, including the piano, keyboard, recorder, melodica, flute, and guitar. Accompanying instruments, especially piano or digital piano, were regarded as useful. Songs selected for instruction should fall into three categories: traditional repertoire with simple rhythmic structures suitable for beginners; newly composed songs emphasising intervals and scales consistent with Thai tonal patterns; and songs that reflect students' interests to encourage participation. Visual aids, such as large and small illustrations of note values, were recommended to help students recognise rhythmic differences. Although Thai repertoire is valued, respondents noted that many traditional Thai songs contain melodic ornamentation, modal features, or rhythmic complexities that are not suited to the highly structured sequence required in early Kodály training. As such, they felt that only selected Thai songs (or newly composed songs written within Thai tonal frameworks) are appropriate at the foundational level.

Kodály's teaching tools were widely regarded as effective in strengthening students' musical understanding. Stick notation, for instance, helps students to focus on pitch and rhythm without the added challenge of staff placement; hand signs assist in visualising relative pitch; rhythmic syllables promote accurate clapping; and sol-fa singing (used alongside stick notation and staff notation) facilitates note reading. Rhythmic cards further help in distinguishing between rhythmic patterns, and strong singing skills were seen as essential for teachers using the approach. Respondents stressed the importance of teachers serving as good role models, preparing lessons carefully, demonstrating readiness to teach, and providing adequate learning materials. Teachers should also possess basic skills in accompanying instruments.

The use of technology was praised, particularly for assessing students' practical skills and collecting feedback. For instance, students submitted video-

recorded assignments and selected their best performances for evaluation, a process viewed as effective for monitoring progress. Respondents recommended providing additional exercises for independent practice and incorporating a final performance in the last session to demonstrate students' overall learning. In addition, they emphasised the importance of developing students' thinking processes and musical aesthetics and noted that the teaching approach should enable students to apply musical knowledge in everyday contexts. At the same time, reliance on technological tools and other resources was noted as a limitation, as these primarily support the technical rather than interpretive or expressive aspects of learning.

Several potential challenges in the classroom were identified, including the varying levels in students' musical backgrounds, the changing voices of 7th-grade males, and the difficulties faced by those with limited musical training, particularly in hearing inner pitches required for accurate singing. Broader issues in music education were also raised, such as the tendency to emphasise theory over practical work, the shortage of music teachers, the closure of small schools, and the diminished importance placed on music classes. According to the respondents, differences in school size impact curriculum design and development, and only a small number of teachers are adequately prepared to teach Kodály-based lessons. They further observed that music teachers are often assigned other arts-related subjects while still being responsible for meeting all indicators of the core music curriculum. They added that a substantial portion of 7th-grade students enter with weaker Western music foundations than those expected by the end of 6th grade.

Respondents proposed integrating Kodály-based music lessons into the core curriculum, either by linking them with indicators in other arts subjects or by incorporating them into music classes across grade levels. They also suggested implementing these lessons in extracurricular activities, such as marching bands and choirs. Finally, broader dissemination of the Kodály philosophy was encouraged through social media, training programmes for music educators, and the publication of music books and teaching guides.

Discussion

The teaching method based on the Kodály pedagogical approach for improving musicianship skills in 7th-grade students was organised into three stages. The introductory stage involved a brief review of prior learning. The main teaching phase included activities such as arranging rhythmic cards, singing, rhythm transcription, composing melodies, note reading, note writing based on listening, and rhythm reading from flash cards. The final phase consisted of a summary of the lesson and allowed the students to reflect on what they had learned. This structure is consistent with Suttachitt's (2017) three-step sequence (preparation, teaching, consolidation) and reflects the graded nature of the Kodály philosophy, which moves from simple musical elements to increasingly complex concepts. Because the Thai Basic Education Core Curriculum follows a similar progression, the approach developed for this study makes it possible for students to build their knowledge incrementally to support both technical and creative development (Lin & Zhang, 2025). The Kodály emphasis on active participation and experiential

learning also reflects the holistic aims of the Thai educational system (Ra-ngubtook & Bhongsatiern, 2022).

Student feedback indicated that the progression of activities was appropriate and required sustained concentration and attentive listening. Memory-based tasks such as echo clapping and singing exercises that involved transcribing rhythms and melodies proved particularly effective. Music transcription was new to many students, yet it served as an important component of the Kodály sound-to-symbol process by strengthening audiation, musical literacy, and precise listening, skills not commonly emphasised in Thai music classrooms. The singing activities were in line with Huncharoen's (2018) lesson designs, which develop listening skills through Kodály principles. Kodály's original ideas were adapted to help students distinguish pitch height, recognise constant pitch patterns, and identify pentatonic structures. The use of Thai solfège, together with the incorporation of local folk songs, adheres to Kodály's insistence on teaching through familiar music materials in the learners' mother tongue. The culturally grounded approach developed for this study therefore extends Kodály-based pedagogy by supporting comprehension and reinforcing students' connection to their musical heritage, in line with the Thai arts curriculum (Cuskelly, 2021).

The Kodály learning tools employed in this research (hand signs, rhythm syllables, sol-fa singing, and stick notation) played a central role in facilitating experiential learning. Hand signs helped students perceive pitch height visually and kinaesthetically; rhythm syllables improved accuracy in clapping; sol-fa singing combined with clapping improved coordination; and stick notation allowed students to apply their understanding of rhythm and pitch without the added complexity of the staff. Adaptations for the Thai context increased accessibility. Stick notation was modified by incorporating Thai solfège (ด-รี-ม-ส-ล) alongside pentatonic sol-fa (d-r-m-s-l) to express Thai musical identity; a Thai quarter rest shaped like half the letter *u* and pronounced *yood* was also introduced. These modifications proved effective in this study.

A coherent music education system spanning early childhood through tertiary study is essential for maximising students' musical development. Hungary provides a model of such coherence: it systematically integrated Kodály's concepts into its national curriculum some 60 years ago, building on a pedagogical lineage of more than a century (Suttachitt, 2012). This long-term adoption has produced internationally recognised outcomes and illustrates the effectiveness of a sequential, nation-wide approach to music literacy. The global reach of Kodály-based instruction, visible in its uptake in many countries (Cuskelly, 2021; Lin & Zhang, 2025), further demonstrates its adaptability. In Thailand, the introduction of Kodály's method—albeit not without challenges—represents an important step toward strengthening the national music curriculum. Because the method relies primarily on singing, it is well suited to schools with limited access to instruments (Mogyorósi, 2023). Moreover, its emphasis on the human voice and local musical traditions ensures that music education remains inclusive and culturally resonant, a position that echoes the goals of the Thai educational framework (Khanthayot & Chuangprakhon, 2019; Phokha, 2021; Phokha, Saepueng, & Jirotkul, 2023).

Previous studies have discussed the value of Kodály's approach and its ability to be adapted to different educational settings. For instance, Theerapan (2015) reported marked improvements in learners' musicianship skills, while Thintalay (2021) documented its effectiveness in listening, singing, and pitch discrimination through Kodály-based choir activities.

Limitations and Suggestions

Several limitations were identified in this study. The sample comprised 18 students from a single school in Central Thailand, a scope that does not represent the diversity of Thai educational contexts, especially in rural or underserved areas with limited resources and few trained music educators. Future research could therefore involve a wider and more varied selection of schools to understand how Kodály-based instruction may be adapted across different settings. Extending the duration and number of lessons would also give students more time to consolidate skills, especially those with little prior exposure to formal music learning. In addition, because the rhythms *ta*, *titi* and *yood* became insufficiently challenging in the later lessons, follow-up studies might introduce more complex patterns such as *too* and *tika-tika* in subsequent stages of instruction.

Although the lessons were tailored to fit the Thai educational context, the adaptations may not fully address the linguistic and cultural nuances across regions in Thailand, where local dialects and music traditions vary considerably. The reliance on a fixed curriculum and standardised materials also restricts flexibility needed to accommodate individual learning needs and pace of students, particularly those with little to no prior exposure to Western music theory. Future adaptations could incorporate regional folk music and local dialects more extensively to increase cultural relevance. Teacher training should be prioritised to make sure that educators are well-prepared to implement the method effectively. Training could include workshops, ongoing mentorship, and access to teaching resources such as digital tools and instructional materials tailored to the Thai context.

Finally, the Kodály tools used in the study were effective but require considerable preparation and familiarity. Schools with limited opportunities for professional development may find this demanding. Integrating technology such as apps for sight-singing or rhythm practice could increase engagement and provide avenues for independent learning outside the classroom.

Implications

Kodály's approach provides a cost-effective and inclusive solution to the budgetary constraints faced by many Thai schools. Because it centres on the voice, it enables students to acquire foundational musicianship skills without reliance on expensive instruments, which expands access to quality music education. The study shows that the Kodály philosophy has the ability to bridge the gap between Thai oral traditions and Western theoretical frameworks to create a more integrated foundation for musical understanding. The applied prototype's incorporation of Thai folk songs and Thai solfège demonstrates how Kodály's ideas can be adapted to preserve

national heritage while exposing students to broader musical practices. This combination supports technical development and nurtures cultural pride. Positive feedback from students and teachers also suggests that the method developed for this study has the capacity to enhance engagement, confidence, and enjoyment in music learning. For policymakers and curriculum developers, the findings provide a rationale for embedding Kodály principles into the Thai Basic Education Core Curriculum. Doing so could standardise the teaching of foundational musicianship skills across schools and ensure equitable access to quality music education. Successful implementation, however, will be dependent on sustained investment in teacher training.

Conclusion

This study developed an applied prototype based on Kodály's pedagogical principles to enhance the musicianship skills of 7th-grade students. The prototype adapted core Kodály components into a structured sequence suited to Thai classrooms. Cultural relevance was achieved through the selective incorporation of local musical elements, including a specially composed Thai song and modifications to stick notation. In this adaptation, Thai solfège (ด-ร-ม-ซ-ล) was used alongside pentatonic sol-fa (d-r-m-s-l), and a Thai quarter rest (*yood*) was introduced, both of which helped to anchor the material in familiar linguistic and cultural cues. Active learning was central to the design, with singing, rhythmic exercises, and transcription activities used to establish a firm foundation in both Western and Thai musical traditions (Suttachitt, 2017). Tested in a series of 12 50-minute lessons and evaluated through qualitative and quantitative measures, the prototype demonstrates how Kodály's ideas can be adapted for different cultural and educational settings and puts forward a model for further applications.

Novelty and Theoretical Contribution

The study's novelty lies in its adaptation of the Kodály pedagogical method to the Thai educational context and addresses a long-standing gap between Thailand's oral-based musical practices and Western theoretical instruction. Unlike prior studies that tended to replicate Kodály's techniques, this research extends them by presenting an applied prototype that integrates Thai solfège and Thai songs. The study contributes theoretically by showing how Kodály's original concepts can evolve through cross-cultural hybridisation. By incorporating culturally specific rhythmic symbols and tonal structures, it expands Kodály's philosophy from a universalist framework to one responsive to local pedagogical needs.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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