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The Role of Kodály in Music Education:
Signature pedagogy or surrogate profession?

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Abstract

What is the role of a “signature” pedagogy in providing characteristics of a profession? In this paper I investigate the issues that arise when Kodály, a signature music education pedagogy, takes on the role of a “surrogate” profession--- that is, a substitute for the defining characteristics of a profession. An analysis of eight Kodály educator interviews suggests that the Kodály philosophy, considered by the interviewees as Kodály’s greatest strength, is actually a hindrance when these educators are faced with complex ethical decisions. From these interviews I gained a sense that this group of educators looks to Kodály to act as a surrogate profession in providing answers for all situations of ethical uncertainty. In the role of surrogate profession, Kodály circumvents a key component of professional judgment, the “*developed*” capacity to render judgment.

I propose five strategies to move Kodály toward the position of a relevant signature pedagogy. By eliminating its role of surrogate profession, Kodály can reach its potential as a dynamic instrument of guidance and growth.

Introduction

As defined by Shulman (2005), signature pedagogies are “Types of teaching that organize the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions.” In this paper, I examine the role of ‘signature pedagogy’ in the development of a well known approach to musical education and discuss the features of what I’ve termed a ‘surrogate’ profession.

My study entails an examination of findings from interviews of eight Kodály certified music educators. Like teachers everywhere, these educators deal constantly with work conditions and negative pressures that can lead to job dissatisfaction, burnout, attrition, and poor work. Additionally, music teachers must confront issues of physical and occupational isolation that leave them particularly vulnerable to negative pressures. In professions like law and medicine, certain characteristics provide that structure, procedure, and oversight relevant to ethical, work-related decisions. However, particularly in the United States, pre-collegiate education lacks a number of these positive characteristics and therefore may not qualify as a profession. Without these characteristics, educators more often than not must fend for themselves when facing the complex ethical and pedagogical issues encountered in their jobs. The resulting “dis-organization” leads to an education system that many label as dysfunctional, or in crisis. It becomes significant to ask whether it is possible for a source outside of education proper to supply professional characteristics.

More specifically, in this paper, I seek to answer three questions:

- 1) What role should a signature pedagogy play in providing the characteristics of a profession?

2) What are the consequences of a signature pedagogy becoming a “surrogate profession?”

3) What steps should a signature pedagogy take to strengthen its effectiveness?

In focusing on one such signature pedagogy, Kodály music training, I argue that Kodály has become a surrogate profession, that is, an organization that considers itself deputized to carry out the functions of a profession,. Further, I maintain that the Kodály philosophy, the standard that Kodály educators apply when considering ethical dilemmas, may actually hinder its development as a profession. I also propose several concrete steps by which Kodály might become a valued and relevant part of its members’ teaching lives.

The findings could prove helpful in several ways. First, in determining whether the education system should encourage other music educators, and teachers in other specialized areas (library, art, foreign language,) to maintain relationships with signature pedagogical organizations; second, in suggesting strategies to improve the value and relevance of signature pedagogies; and third, in providing a framework for discourse pertinent to the resolution of ethical issues in education.

Background

There is common agreement that the United States is experiencing a crisis in its education system. In light of this realization, researchers have worked to identify factors that characterize an effective teaching force. To many, a major step in addressing the problem is the retention of quality teachers. Liu and Ramsay (2007) identify teacher retention as a major component of the crisis, with over half of the new teachers leaving within five years. The inability to retain quality teachers has an impact on other issues such as staff shortages, lower teacher morale and the declining quality of education. A highly predictive measure of teacher retention is job satisfaction (Ingersoll, 2001, Weiss, 1999). Identifying the factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction could prove valuable in improving teacher retention, and subsequently, teacher performance.

Music teachers typically function as specialists, facing many of the same challenges as other teaching specialists. Research has identified common contributors to music teacher's job satisfaction. These include job status, benefits, pay, itinerant work, class size and lack of administrative support (Gardner, R., 2010). Determining the longevity of music educators has proved challenging. The U. S. Department of Education (2003) reported that music teachers have the highest rate of attrition and the fourth highest rate of migration of any teaching area. Standing in sharp contrast, an August 2010 report found that public school art/music teachers have the highest percent of "stayers" (88%) and the lowest percent of "leavers" (4%) of any main assignment field (Keigher & Cross, 2010). A reduction in the number of schools providing music in the time between the two studies explains the seemingly contradictory findings. This finding might also result from changing demographics of the field, hiring/firing practices, and consolidation of the music teacher work force.

Music teacher positions are often part-time or itinerant, with lower pay and minimal resources. Music teachers also perceive that they have less organizational support, are physically isolated, and have lower status than their colleagues. Within the music teacher classification, there is a subset of educators who have received training in specific music education methodologies. Orff, Kodály, Suzuki and Dalcroze are the most prominent of these signature pedagogies. While music teaching training provides additional support, it also brings additional challenges. In this paper I focus on one of these four methodologies, Kodály—viewing it as a signature pedagogy and as a surrogate profession.

Zoltan Kodály (1882-1967) was a Hungarian nationalist composer whose love for his country's folk songs propelled him to become one of the first ethnomusicologists. With his more illustrious fellow countryman Béla Bartók, Kodály used early recording equipment to collect the native folksongs of the region before they could become a victim of cultural assimilation. Following World War II, Kodály took it upon himself to rebuild Hungary's music education system. Kodály's challenge was to educate an entire generation of musically literate children in a country with a shattered post-war infrastructure and few resources. To complicate the situation, the poor quality of the music teachers and the existing system's failure to honor Hungary's vaunted music traditions appalled Kodály.

In response to this situation, Kodály supervised a restructuring of teacher training and the method of instruction. The resulting method incorporated existing pedagogical elements such as Curwen hand signs from England, "solfege" from Italy and movement principles from Dalcroze. Kodály insisted on a method grounded in the singing of folk songs of a child's own culture and mother tongue, and the implementation of a highly sequenced presentation of musical elements (Choksy, 1988).

The American variant of the Kodály method was launched in 1966. During a tour of the United States, Kodály delivered a lecture at Stanford University attended by Sister Mary Alice Hein, a professor of music at Holy Names University in Oakland, California (HNU, 2010). In 1969 she established the Kodály Music Institute at HNU where the first American Kodály conference was held in 1973. In 1975 the Organization of Kodály Educators (OAKE) was founded. OAKE currently consists of 1,700 members, organized into 4 regional divisions and 40 local chapters. Educators obtain Kodály certification through a three-year series of intensive summer training programs. Educators can earn a Master's degree at one of a handful of university music departments (OAKE, 2010).

Before discussing Kodály's role as a surrogate profession, I look at the traits and defining characteristics of a profession. Barber (1968) cites four essential attributes:

- A high degree of generalized and systematic knowledge;
- A primary orientation to the community interest;
- A high degree of self control of behavior through codes of ethics internalized in the process of work socialization and through voluntary associations organized and operated by the work specialists themselves, and;
- A system of rewards (monetary and honorary) that is primarily a set of symbols of work achievement.

Barber further states that the degree to which these attributes exist determines the state of the profession. Emerging and marginal professions (e.g., education) typically lack the third and fourth attributes. Work by Gardner and Shulman (2005) further refines the attributes into six characteristics:

- Service to society;

- Body of theory and special knowledge;
- Specialized set of unique skills, practices and performances;
- Capacity to render judgments in ethical uncertainty
- Organized approach to learning from experience; and
- Professional community for oversight of performance and standards.

I argue that because it fails to provide all of these in sufficient degree, pre-collegiate education does not qualify as a full-fledged profession.

Methods

I conducted eight face-to-face interviews of members of a chapter of the Organization of American Kodály Educators. Six of the interviews took place in public places, one in a private home, and one at the teacher's school. The subjects included 6 women and 2 men, ranging in age from 27 - 60. The subjects were Kodály certified, currently employed grade-school music teachers. Their experience ranged from 4-40 years. Though six educators consented to identification by name, I have chosen to change the names of all participants.

Interview sessions ran between 1½ and 2 hours. Following securing of permission, four of the sessions were audio recorded. For my interview protocol I employed an adaptation of the Journalism Protocol from the GoodWork Project (Gardner, H., Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2001).

Though the focus of this study is not specifically on good work, the interview protocol has the potential to provide relevant data.

I reviewed the interview data for the presence of themes. I also administered a Q sort of 30 job characteristics (see Appendix). The Q sort serves two purposes: 1) to identify trends in

high-and low-rated job characteristics and 2) to compare results with those from similar studies that have administered the same measure.

Results

In this section I report the findings as they apply to the three questions introduced above. I use the Gardner and Shulman attributes of a profession as a framework.

1) The commitment to serve in the interest of clients in particular and the welfare of society in general.

Typical of most teachers, Kodály educators feel primary responsibility to the children. However, Kodály has instilled an additional, deeper obligation to use music as the means of developing better people and in turn, a better society. Kodály said “It is our firm conviction that mankind will live the happier when it has learned to live with music more worthily.” Kodály educators take this message to heart. Their comments confirm this heightened and expanded sense of responsibility and how it provides goals that are both lofty and simple. While Sidney speaks of the child’s need to understand his or her role as a musician in society, Halle talks of simply wanting to “make better people.”

Kodály educators assign equal importance to their responsibility to provide excellent music education for everyone. Belinda says, “Music is a birthright” a sentiment that Halle echoes when she states, “All children should be given a chance. Faith in every student!” This charge is often in conflict to school organizations’ interest in providing music for only those children who show talent or initial interest.

2) A body of theory and specialized knowledge with its own principles of growth and reorganization.

Most music teachers receive music education training and hold specific content area certification. As characterizes the education world more generally, music teachers do not agree on a philosophy, methodology or body of knowledge. In contrast, Kodály educators are committed to all things Kodály. The Kodály methodology has its foundation in the Kodály philosophy. All decisions on pedagogy, materials and resources depend entirely on whether or not they align with the philosophy. The effect of this alignment on the educators is extremely powerful. While all of the interviewees taught music *before* they received their Kodály training, a majority of them indicate that they only became “teachers” *after* they completed Kodály training. Halle speaks glowingly of how “Kodály ignited it.” Sidney mentions the “huge change since Kodály.” Perhaps Amaya, who only recently finished her Kodály certification, says it best; “Now there are no excuses, it’s time to be a teacher.”

3) A specialized set of professional skills, practices and performances unique to the profession.

The Kodály philosophy led to the development of a signature pedagogy that incorporates various disparate music-teaching elements into a single method of teaching music. The elements themselves are not unique to Kodály, but their use within a clearly defined method is. Interestingly, while each of the interviewed educators strongly identifies themselves as “Kodály” not one of them strictly adheres to the tenants of the methodology. Sidney, who incorporates contemporary music elements such as hip-hop in his Kodály program, states that the mother tongue of traditional Kodály (Hungarian) is not the mother tongue of his students. In contrast, Halle, whose formative teaching background was in Eastern Europe, worries that Kodály in America is “not the real Kodály.” Yet even she prides herself on her creative adaptation of the methodology.

4) A developed capacity to render judgments with integrity under conditions of both technical and ethical uncertainty.

At the first mention of ethics, I found the interviewees reluctant to acknowledge, much less discuss, the existence of such dilemmas. However, during the course of the interview, each educator not only shared his or her thoughts on the issue, but also related specific dilemmas. In most cases, the dilemmas involved assignment of work that the educators felt unqualified to perform.

Theresa, a k-1-2 teacher, has taught for 40 years. Recently as part of a school district restructuring she was assigned to teach older students:

I was told...along with other teachers, to switch from k-2 at two schools, to k-8 at one school. I refused and threatened to quit. Two other teachers did also, but they are going to retire and the new teachers will be k-8. I do not believe that one person can teach k-8.

Amaya, another experienced teacher, relates how she has “changed jobs and informed...at interviews about what I (she) will and will not do.” These clear-cut responses to pressure to teach what they feel not qualified to teach align with the Kodály philosophy. Kodály said, “All children have the right to an excellent music education.” To accept the assigned positions would have gone against the Kodály philosophy: children would have been exposed to music education that did not meet a standard of excellence.

Not only does Kodály guide the personal judgments of the educators, but also their judgment of others who they perceive as having violated the principles of the Kodály philosophy. Belinda relates the case of a colleague who, because of financial pressures, began to take on work that required skills he lacked:

Money has changed how some people operate...being something they are not...misrepresenting themselves. It's like the emperor's new clothes...money instead of value...he did it to pay the bills.

A majority of these Kodály educators feel that, while ethics has not changed, the rules governing ethics have. Kylee has had conflicts with parents concerning the use of songs about sensitive topics: "I had lots of trouble with this other school. There was this false interest in diversity...no patriotic songs...too *feel good*." Kodály educators often feel conflicted about whether they should use songs that do not align with the goals of the school, or the goals of Kodály. Halle teaches in a Catholic school where the school's religious needs dictate much of her curriculum. This emphasis on religious music makes it all but impossible for her to teach as she would like: "I can't even teach Kodály until after Christmas." While the Kodály educators may complain about the conflict between their goals and the goals of their schools, they all agree on the necessity to work within the system.

Several educators spoke of the pressure to work to lower standards. This pressure comes from several sources such as inadequate administrative oversight (Belinda), and lack of job security (Kylee). As before, the Kodály philosophy provides guidance. In Belinda's words, "It would have been easy to be a bad music teacher...but that gives music teaching, and Kodály, a bad name."

5) An organized approach to learning from experience, both individually and collectively.

Central to the Kodály concept is the training of new teachers and the continuing education of its members. The strength lies in the 30 summer certification programs that offer a 3-year series of pedagogy, conducting, and musicianship courses that are designed to prepare the

enrolled educator. The national organization OAKE includes 40 chapters in 4 national divisions. The function of OAKE is to develop new materials and pedagogy, train collegiate Kodály administrators, and disseminate information. To this end OAKE sponsors local workshops, regional conventions and a national convention.

These gatherings constitute an important aspect of Kodály. In general music teachers teach in physical and professional isolation. The very nature of the job places them in workspaces necessarily removed from other classrooms and teachers. Many music teachers have itinerant positions, that is, they work in more than one school. This is where OAKE is of value. Kylee champions the Kodály community: “KMI (Kodály Music Institute) gives me a sense of community, of intellectual growth and emotional growth...context...a place where it all comes together, the artist, colleague, and pedagogue.” Shelley comments that Kodály is “a network of teachers speaking the same language” and that OAKE “gives a national presence.” Along with the praise comes significant criticism. Four members of the group perceive OAKE as being too rigid and not particularly effective. As Belinda says, “The pioneers didn’t get it right...not adapted for America ...I am the 2nd generation of Kodály. The 1st didn’t get it all right. That remains a problem.”

Belinda points to OAKE’s reluctance to endorse the concept of music education master’s degrees with an emphasis on Kodály. Only a small number of institutions currently offer such degrees. OAKE has refused to endorse the existing programs or advocate for the establishment of new programs. Belinda also relates how OAKE compromised its own ideals when, in the face of financial struggles, the organization summarily canceled existing contracts.

A note should be made of the presence of the IKS (International Kodály Society) and the Kodály Pedagogical Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary. Theresa mentions the powerful effect of

her study in Hungary: “It wasn’t until I returned from Hungary that I felt like a real Kodály teacher.” Belinda, who went back to Hungary a few years after her first trip, seconds this sentiment. Both of these veteran teachers stress the value of seeing Kodály practiced in its home setting.

6) The development of a professional community responsible for the oversight and monitoring of quality in both practice and professional education.

While OAKE has the authority to certify the 3-summer programs, it does not have the authority to enforce standards beyond the programs themselves. This is significant in a number of ways. Collegiate music departments routinely include “Kodály” as part of their teacher education curriculum. This means that many music teachers state that they are “Kodály trained” when in fact they have not been certified. Wilson speaks of a colleague who, upon having been exposed to Kodály in her collegiate music education program, “refers to herself as ‘Kodály’ by default.” Similarly, once a teacher has acquired Kodály certification, there is no guarantee that they will teach up to the Kodály standards. Thus, teachers who claim to be Kodály have given school administrators inaccurate representations of what Kodály entails. The situation has led many administrators to view the Kodály label as a strike against an applicant. The problem has become serious enough that a number of certified Kodály teachers intentionally omit their Kodály certification from their list of qualifications (Jaccard, personal communication). One of the original supporters of Kodály in America relates the following comment she received to a speech she gave at large, national music conference. She was told:

You would have every person in the palm of your hand in this, and you would have everybody out in the country wanting what you’ve just talked about if you just didn’t have to use the word Kodály (as cited in Baumann, 2010).

OAKE's role in rewarding exemplary work is limited to career achievement acknowledgments at the yearly national conference. This group of interviewees professes little or no interest in professional recognition, yet they also grant the value of acknowledgement by their peers, on a national stage.

The lack of organizational rewards requires consideration in light of an interesting aspect of the findings. When asked where they get their rewards, interview subjects responded that rewards come in two specific ways. First, rewards come through the joy expressed by the children. Wilson mentions "smiling kids," for Kylee the reward comes when the children say, "I want to make music." Shelley mentions "when kids are happy and want to come to class" while Theresa relates "when kids view it as fun, play, not work." The second source of reward is through the public performances of their classes. Given the priorities of Kodály, it should not come as a surprise that the sound of the children's singing is uniformly mentioned with pride. So while the educators profess to have no interest in public acknowledgment of their efforts, they do indeed seek and find rewards in the very public performances of the children.

Discussion

Kodály and professional characteristics

The results indicate that indeed Kodály provides or strengthens a number of the six characteristics of a profession delineated above. This achievement is admirable in light of education's lack of professional characteristics. The problem arises when Kodály plays the part of a surrogate profession. For the purpose of this paper, surrogate is defined as “a substitute...deputizing for another in a specific role or office” (OED, 2011). In this surrogate role, the Kodály philosophy and community substitute for the missing characteristics typically provided by a true profession. However, Kodály does not guide so much as defines. The interviewees are willing to work around this situation in matters of content and pedagogy, but not when faced with complex ethical dilemmas. In such cases, Kodály functions as the sole arbiter providing the educators with easy, autocratic answers.

The responses of the interviewees provide evidence of the effects of Kodály in the role of a surrogate profession. For example, while the comments confirm the educators' primary responsibility to the students, there also exists an almost uniform commitment to “making better people.” This goal is in total alignment with the Kodály philosophy. Clearly, for this group, it is not possible to teach in opposition to this directive and still consider yourself a Kodály educator. The mandate to provide excellent music education for all children also confirms Kodály's role as a surrogate profession. An absolute position of this type leaves no room for other points of view. School administrators may be forced to deal with complex issues that call for difficult decisions concerning the use of available resources. As a surrogate profession, Kodály dismisses the possibility of any constructive dialogue. Interestingly, while this may be a defining principle of Kodály, two of the participants recognize the need to work with the administration. However, the

prevailing attitude is to do the best they can on their own. Kylee's comment, "I am an island" and Shelley's statement, "I am the music department" are expressions typical of the rest of the group. These educators would rather soldier on in the name of Kodály than engage in a constructive dialogue. However, it must be noted that the reluctance to engage in constructive dialogue may be part of an overall issue involving levels of engagement between administrators and teachers in *all* subject areas. Perhaps in the case of these educators, the Kodály philosophy provides a ready-made reason to avoid dialogue.

The interviewees also agree about the role of Kodály as a signature pedagogy in providing a body of theory and specialized knowledge, professional skills, practices and performances. The Kodály methodology, the tangible product of the Kodály philosophy, provides its practitioners with a highly structured, teaching tool. This definitive formulation is commendable in light of education's lack of agreement upon skills and practices. But here again, the responses indicate a need for concern when Kodály moves into the role of a surrogate profession. The educators' insistence that they only became "teachers" after their Kodály training implies a pedagogical and musical superiority over, as well as a devaluing of, other music education cultures and pedagogies.

However, while each of the interviewed educators strongly identifies as "Kodály" not one of them adheres strictly to the pedagogical tenants of the methodology. Belinda says, "The sequence is too "this way"...not adapted enough for America. It's hard to get around." Wilson calls himself "the black-sheep of Kodály" because of his use of rock and roll in a Kodály context. These views are consistent with Sidney's previously reported statement on the mother tongue of Kodály. In each of these cases, the educator feels that while there is much value in the skills and practices of Kodály, a need exists for creative adaptation for its use in America.

Indeed, these educators feel creative adaptation is an integral component of Kodály in America. As before, the findings from this group show a conflict between what Kodály espouses and what the educators actually do.

In regard to “an organized approach to learning,” Kodály appears to provide adequate and appropriate support. The comments confirm the value of the Kodály organization as a supportive community of like-minded teachers. But while Kodály succeeds in supporting an approach to learning, that approach includes very little “growing of new knowledge.” The growth that exists generally involves new materials, not new methods or pedagogical knowledge. Unlike the previous items, this characteristic is not a source of conflict for this group of educators.

Kodály has little influence on “the development of a professional community for oversight of quality.” Though Kodály provides degree and certification standards, it has no authority beyond its own teacher training programs. The responses from the interviewees indicate little interest in changing this anytime soon. This view confirms the earlier reported findings that there is a conflict between what Kodály as a surrogate profession espouses, and what its members actually do. The members do not welcome organizational oversight because they do not see themselves as strictly adhering to the Kodály standard.

Perhaps the most interesting comments came in discussions of the role of Kodály in providing “a developed capacity to render judgments with integrity under conditions of both technical and ethical uncertainty.” Education typically lacks the crucial capacity to provide guidance in such situations. For these educators, the Kodály philosophy supplies the missing characteristic. Four of the educators mentioned that Kodály provided guidance when administrators asked them to teach outside their area of expertise. While this is a welcome finding, it draws attention to two significant concerns, 1) the nature of the guidance Kodály

provides, and 2) the existence of ethical dilemmas *not* mentioned by these educators. In each case of work assignment, the Kodály educator refused to engage in a dialogue with the administrator. Kodály as a surrogate profession is unable to consider such dialogue. The answers are clear and not open to interpretation, compromise or negotiation.

Music teachers typically face many more ethical dilemmas than just work assignment. Richmond (1996) lists 14 ethical decisions that music teachers face including: which musical activities to include, which musical cultures to represent, equal access and opportunities for all students, the use of sacred and patriotic music, and the use of songs about sensitive topics. Richmond also mentions the reluctance of music teachers to discuss certain widespread ethical situations such as illegal music photocopying, and music downloads (Richmond, personal correspondence).

Though each member of the group was willing to share an example of an ethical dilemma, the examples were usually about different views on which materials (songs) to teach. Only one mentioned equal access. Sidney is concerned because “Most of the choral kids are black...white in the band even though kids choose after 5th grade.” Sidney is deeply concerned yet has taken no action. Under Kodály’s absolutist tenets, administrators become adversaries rather than potential partners in solutions.

I sense that this group of educators looks to Kodály, as a surrogate profession, to provide answers for every situation of ethical uncertainty. With this mindset there is no need to mention or discuss ethical issues because there is but one relevant point of view, that of Kodály. In assuming the role of surrogate profession, Kodály bypasses a key element in the judgment characteristic, the “*developed*” capacity to render judgment. Therefore, these educators appear reluctant to confront ethical issues that do not lend themselves to easy analysis (What would

Kodály do?). Sidney and Theresa both express considerable concern about the racial divide within their school, but have taken no steps to address it. Theresa's refusal to accept a different teaching assignment did not translate into steps to correct the situation beyond her own circumstances.

Signature pedagogy vs. surrogate profession

In looking at education we see that it is not a true profession, that is, it lacks a number of the defining characteristics of a profession. The questions arise: 1) what role should a signature pedagogy play (in this case, Kodály) in providing the missing characteristics of a profession? And, 2) what steps should a signature pedagogy (Kodály) take to strengthen its effectiveness in providing the missing characteristics? Analysis of the results reveals two conflicting themes: first, Kodály's autocratic position as a surrogate profession; and second, this group of Kodály educators' selective adherence to Kodály's principles.

On the one hand there are those who see no need to change anything. To this group, the signature pedagogy functions as an anchor and a reliable measure in all situations (Baumann, 2010). This view finds support in the previously cited comments of the interviewees. Bowman (1998) finds value in a music methodology, such as Kodály, that provides a philosophy along with technical pedagogy. A senior Kodály educator voices a point of view held by many when he says "Kodály's mandate for the education of musical tastes and the discernment between what is good and bad flies in the face of today's anchorless moral relativism" (Jaccard, 2006).

However, this very absolutism challenges the effectiveness and relevance of Kodály at the present time. Kodály has gone beyond functioning as an anchor to playing the role of a surrogate profession. As a surrogate, Kodály has allowed its philosophy to dictate not only decisions of pedagogy, but ethical decisions as well. As I reported earlier, Kodály educators have

little difficulty justifying their adaptation of the methodology to suit their own pedagogical needs. However, in ethical matters they look to Kodály for absolute answers.

A number of researchers and writers challenge the value of such ethical rigidity. Richmond (1996) sees the blanket application of a single philosophy as making ethical decisions “too easy.” Application of a philosophy in an indiscriminate manner leads to a “distortion” of the issues. Educators base their decisions on the signature pedagogy, not on cultural norms of the community (Shulman, 2005). A recent study of the relationship of Kodály professional schools to a signature pedagogy underscores the lack of ethical discourse. Baumann (2010) goes to great lengths to identify the unifying pedagogical elements but at no time discusses ethics as part of Kodály professional education. A quick review of course offerings in Kodály programs reveals no ethics courses.

By playing the part of a surrogate profession, Kodály actually works against most of the six professional characteristics including the fifth, and arguably most important one: “The *developed* (emphasis added) capacity to render judgments with integrity under conditions of both technical and ethical uncertainty” (Gardner 2005). Palmer (1953) proposes that professions need to exist in a state of flux, and that such a state is necessary for growth and change, not unlike the idea from Alison Davis of “Adaptive anxiety” (as reported by Shulman, 2005).

The question arises: How can Kodály move away from the counter-productive role of surrogate profession and towards the role of a valued and relevant signature pedagogy? I propose five initial strategies.

First, Kodály needs to acknowledge American democratic principles in making choices of pedagogy and values (Reimer, 2008). This step necessitates a major shift from Kodály’s

historically autocratic norms to a system where the community becomes a contributing party to all decision, including ethical.

Second, Kodály needs to reexamine its principles in terms of current history and culture in the United States. The original Kodály methodology developed in response to specific conditions in Hungary; Kodály in America should develop along parallel principles. To become relevant, Kodály can no longer base ethical decisions on a fixed philosophy that fails to reflect the values of the community.

Third, Kodály must recognize the value of music beyond its own definition of “good” music. Though this step is primarily concerned with Kodály pedagogy, the resulting cultural inclusion and appreciation would contribute much to the desired level of discourse (deVries, 2001; Elliot, 1997).

Fourth, the topic of ethics must become an essential part of Kodály teacher education. If one believes that making ethical decisions is a learned capacity (Richmond, 1996), Kodály training institutions are the place to put that learning into context.

Fifth, and perhaps most important, there needs to be an acknowledgement that cultural discourse is crucial in ethical decision-making. The stage for discourse can take many different forms. Richmond (1996) suggests the establishment of interdisciplinary ethics panels within schools to discuss and lend support in making complex ethical decisions. Additionally, school administrations should encourage teachers to become active in professional organizations that provide opportunities to interact with other teachers representing other signature pedagogies. Perhaps Bowman (1998) says it best. “Professional solidarity consists in a sense of inclusiveness among ourselves, and between ourselves and others.”

For a signature pedagogy such as Kodály to provide the characteristics of a profession, it must do more than simply reinforce a limited number of already existing traits. It must exist as a dynamic instrument of guidance and growth. Only by eliminating the role of surrogate can Kodály reach its potential.

Implications beyond Kodály

Kodály occupies a unique place in education. Rarely does a signature pedagogy furnish its adherents not only with content, materials and curriculum, but also with a philosophy of teaching and life. This position makes it difficult to draw comparisons to other music education pedagogies such as Orff and Dalcroze, neither of which has a philosophical component to rival that of Kodály. For the same reason it is problematic to attempt to correlate Kodály with other specialized areas in education such as art, drama, library or foreign language. Yet administrators and educators alike would greatly benefit from the application of the five proposed strategies. The value of focusing on cultural and historical context is not limited to Kodály. Neither is the need for ethics coursework. Additionally, the challenges inherent in complex ethical issues are an area of concern for all educators. The five proposed strategies, especially the call for discourse, could prove valuable in all education settings.

Conclusion

In this paper I investigated the role of Kodály as a signature pedagogy in providing characteristics of a profession. I placed additional focus on the issues that arise when Kodály plays the part of a surrogate profession. I compared characteristics that Kodály provides to those considered essential to a well-aligned profession. The analysis showed that while Kodály does supply or strengthen a number of professional characteristics, it cannot provide others. Additionally, further analyses brought to light a paradox. Could it be that the Kodály philosophy,

universally viewed by the study participants as Kodály's greatest strength, hinders rather than helps Kodály's ability to function as a profession? Could it be that, in Kodály's attempt to provide guidance, it has performed more like a surrogate profession, defining rather than developing responses to complex ethical dilemmas?

I propose that the conflict results from Kodály's functioning as a "surrogate" profession, that is, as a substitute for the characteristics of a profession. In this role, Kodály identified and in effect resolves all ethical dilemmas that the educators face. Thus, the bases of ethical decisions do not arise from discourse and construction but from easy absolutes. By acting as a surrogate, Kodály negates an essential skill of all professionals, to "operate at the uncertain limits of their previous experience to be prepared to learn from the consequences, and...to learn from the consequences of their actions to develop new understanding and better routines" (Gardner & Shulman, 2005).

Richmond (1996) suggests discourse as a component of a solution. Kodály music educators would do well to expand their profession to include and appreciate other valid teaching philosophies, both from within and without. This direction should be welcome, as it is clear from the participants' comments that they already feel justified in adapting their pedagogy to the needs of their own teaching situations. Richmond further recommends that discourse be encouraged within the school faculty. Such a step seems wholly appropriate when considering Kodály educators' isolation. These strategies, along with increased democratization and attention to cultural and historical considerations, will allow Kodály to become and remain a relevant and valued part of music education in America.

Limitations

Before there can be any thought of generalizing these findings it is important to keep in mind that the study group was select in several important ways. First, these interviewees were all members of the same local chapter of OAKE. Their experiences may be more similar than would those of a random sample. Second, the participants are all survivors, that is, the study looked at teachers who have developed strategies that have allowed them to survive as music teachers. Third, music teachers have unique characteristics. Most significant is their value of autonomy over administrative support.

Future directions

Conducting similar research into comparable signature pedagogies such as Orff and Dalcroze would provide valuable perspective in to the role of Kodály philosophy. Additional studies would need to solicit the responses of Kodály educators who have left the profession. Perhaps the most valuable direction is to interview a much larger group of Kodály educators to determine how representative these findings are. Other important directions include investigating the benefit of collegial support for specialty teachers and the value of administrative support for teachers' participation in professional organizations.

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APPENDIX

Qsort

I administered the Qsort through the presentation of thirty cards, each containing a different job characteristic. The interviewee sorted the cards by ranking the job characteristics in order of personal importance. I administered the Qsort for two reasons: 1) as a way to check for consistency in interview responses, and 2) for possible future comparison to other researched groups.

Because the study focused on Kodály as a surrogate profession, I did not consider the results in this paper. However, the Qsort would prove valuable in future study into work and quality of work issues.

Most Important	Least Important
1 Personal Growth	21 Openness
2 Enjoy Activity	22 Challenge
3 Life Balance	23 Faith
4 Creativity	24 Professional Conduct
5 Hard Work	25 Solitude
6 Relationships	26 Professional Accomplishment
7 Risk Taking	27 Wealth
8 Spirituality	28 Recognition
9 Efficient Work	29 Fame
10 Honesty	30 Power

Research Participant Permission Form

Dear _____:

I am a student in a course at Harvard University Graduate School of Education exploring people's attitudes, standards and practices in their work. For my research paper in this course, I am conducting a study of people in Kodály music education. This form requests your permission for me to interview you for the purpose of writing this paper.

The interview or observations will be kept confidential, with your name removed (a pseudonym will be assigned), and accessible only by me and the course's teaching staff.

I also would like permission to record our sessions together so that I may have an accurate account for my paper. The recording will be kept confidential in the same way as all material from our sessions together. All recordings will be erased at the end of June 2011.

You do not have to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering, and you may stop the interview or observation at any point during a session. Also, please feel free to ask any questions before, during or after the session by calling me at 415-420-8620 or e-mailing me at spb046@mail.harvard.edu.

If you have questions about the course or the research paper assignment, please contact the professor, Howard Gardner (hgasst@pz.harvard.edu, 617-496-4929), or teaching fellow, Tiffanie Ting (tlt904@mail.harvard.edu)

Please sign this permission form to show that you are voluntarily consenting to participate for my research paper, that your parent/guardian allows you to participate if you are under age 18, and that we have discussed my expectations and any concerns or thoughts you have about the process. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sean P. Breen

Agreement:

The nature and purpose of this research have been sufficiently explained and I agree to participate in this study.

I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

I, (participant's parent/guardian name) _____, give permission for (participant name) _____ to be interviewed or observed by (student name) _____ for his/her course research paper.

(if participant is under 18, parent/guardian signature required)

(date signed)

COVER SHEET FOR KODÁLY INTERVIEW

Interview date _____ time _____ place _____

Level of confidentiality: Quoted by name? _____ or, Anonymous _____

Willing to be identified by name in study? Yes _____ No _____

You may also indicate when your comments should be considered “off the record.”

Name _____

Age _____ Gender _____

Years of teaching experience _____

Current employment situation _____

Kodály Interview Protocol

I. Opening: Goals and Purposes

1. What kinds of things are you trying to accomplish in your work right now?
2. Is there a goal in your work that gives meaning to what you do that is essential to making your work worthwhile?
 - (a) What is it?
 - (b) Why is this goal important?
 - (c) Are there other comparable goals?
 - (d) How do you know when your goals have been met?
3. In your work, to what or to whom do you feel responsible or loyal?

II. Beliefs and Values

4. Qualities

- a. Are there specific qualities that have contributed to your achievements?
(qualities = personal attributes: e.g., determination, persistence)

b. Are there specific qualities that have hindered your achievements?

5. Beliefs

a. Which of your personal beliefs contribute to your achievements?

(beliefs = worldview: e.g., belief in truth, justice, fairness)

a. Which of your personal beliefs hinder your achievements?

6. Do you believe that your beliefs conflict with the dominant values in your area of work?

7. Would it be different if you were working on your own or in another organization?

III. The Work Process (Personal Level)

8. In your work are you most proud of?

a. To what do you attribute your success in this endeavor?

b. (If applicable) May we have a copy of this work?

c. How important is creativity in your work?

d. What qualities are instrumental in your creative process?

e. What role does a reflection play in your creative process?

f. What qualities inhibit your creative process?

g. Is it necessary to take risks?

IV. Positive and Negative Pressures in Your Area of Work

9. Reasons that make it difficult for you to achieve your goals?

a. Constraints of workplace?

b. Relate a specific situation

c. Unique to your area of work?

d. Practical economic concerns/money?

e. What roles do prestige and fame play?

For Gatekeepers: How do you approach the challenge of managing creative and ambitious people?

- a. *Are there incidents when you have to put priority on the institutional needs?*
- b. *Does this produce conflicts with the individual needs of people working with you?*

(Work Process: Institutional/Organizational Level)

10. What kind of work is rewarded/discouraged?

- a. Is innovation/creativity rewarded?
- b. What are innovations that have changed your work process?
- c. How do you work differently from when you started?
- d. Does your job allow for time alone, to reflect?

For Gatekeeper: what kind of work do you reward or discourage?

V. Formative Background

(Childhood/Adolescence)

11. Reflecting on your formative years as a child or adolescent, what influences do you view as salient in the way you approach your professional work?

- a. Influence of family background?
- b. How you spent your time as a child? What would a person have seen if they shadowed you for a day when you were a child?
- c. As a child, were you intensely involved in one or more activities? Which ones?
- d. Influential religious and spiritual factors?

12. Do you remember the first time you thought of yourself as a Kodály music teacher?

(Mentor/Training)

13. What attracted you initially to your area of work?
14. Describe your training.
15. Have you had any mentors who have significantly influenced how you approach your work and/or how you have made crucial decisions in your career?
 - a. Any influential book, experience, or project?
 - b. Any “anti-mentors”?
 - c. Weakness of your mentors?

VI. Perspectives on your area of work

16. What do you like about your area of work? Dislike?
 - a. What does your area of work do well? Not so well?
 - b. Examples of a piece of work you respect? Don't respect?
 - c. If you were in a higher position of authority, how would you do things differently?
 - d. What direction do you see for the future of your area of work?
For Midlevel Practitioner: What direction do you see for the future of your own career?
 - e. Does your work serve the public?

(Training the Next Generation)

17. How well does your area of work train young people to have the qualities that you think are important? How would you train them differently?
 - a. How would you advise a young person who is thinking about a career in your area of work?

- b. Promising and warning signs of a young person in your area of work?
- c. What would you change about young people in your area of work?
(Respondent's Work with Young People)
- d. Is it important for you to work with young people?
- e. What's important for you to transmit through words or deeds?
- f. What are you learning from the people you mentor?

VII. Community and Family Relationships

- 18. What do you consider to be your principal community/communities?
 - a. Do you retain ties with communities in which you grew up?
 - b. Are you an active member of communities outside of work?
 - c. To what extent is your family related to your work?
 - d. How do you balance family/private life and work?
 - e. Do religious or spiritual concerns play an important role in your life?

VIII. Ethical Standards

- 19. Some people say the standards in your area of work are more ethical than they used to be, and some say they are less ethical. What has been your experience?
- 20. Can you tell me about an incident in your area of work where you weren't sure about the right course of action?
 - a. How did it become clear to you what to do?
 - b. How do you deal with beliefs/practices that you disagree with?
 - c. Has it become harder to do work that you consider responsible and ethical?
- 21. Are there things that you would not do in your profession, even though they are not illegal?

IX. Can you please comment of the role of OAKE as an organization?

IX. Closing

22. We are coming to the end of our interview. Is there anything you would like to add?

- a. Check notes for things left out.
- b. May I follow up with you in the future?