https://doi.org/10.30775/KMES.53.1.235
음악교육연구 제53권 제1호 pp. 235-260 (2024년 2월) ISSN 1229-4179 (Print)
Korean Journal of Research in Music Education Vol.53, No.1, (February, 2024) ISSN 2713-3788 (Online)

파이어라벤드의 대화식 솔페지 음악교수법
- 12단계의 원리와 교수 학습 방법의 실제 -
Elucidating Feierabend's Conversational Solfège: Its Practical Application of 12 Steps to Teaching Folk Songs

차동주*
Dong-Ju Cha

Abstract The purpose of this paper was to capture both practical and applicable lesson ideas to teach American folk music using the Feierabend's Conversational Solfège. Direct instruction on the folk songs exclusively employed the 12 Steps of Conversational Solfège (CS) designed by John M. Feierabend. Ultimately, this article unpacked the 12 steps of the CS curriculum, with an emphasis to what types of activities can be included in these 12 steps of the Feierabend approach to music learning and teaching. Theoretical and practical implications from this study were also discussed as follows: (a) enhancement of tonal/rhythm accuracy through inner-hearing and inferential skills, (b) effectiveness of sequential and repetitive learning in reinforcing musical concepts, (c) integration of unconscious comprehension from singing games into cognitive processes, and (d) recommendation of F major as a suitable starting key in the general music classroom. The application of the CS to teaching children's songs would be a cornerstone for Korean music practitioners to make educated decisions when exploring other traditional piece of music within the systematic pedagogical framework.

Key words: children's folk song, general music, Feierabend, conversational solfege, musical literacy

초록 본 연구의 목적은 한국의 음악 교육 분야에 그동안 소개되지 않았던 John M. Feierabend의 Conversational Solfège (CS) 교수법을 이론적으로 조명하고, 이를 바탕으로 교육현장에 적용 가능한 실질적인 교수 학습 방안을 모색하는 것이다. CS 교수법을 구성하는 12단계 구성요소를 소개하고, 연구자의 수업을 실제 적용 사례로 들어 학교현장에서 가창 수업 시 활용할 수 있는 지도 전략과 학습활동 전개 방식을 구체화하였다. 연구의 시사점은 다음과 같다. 첫째, CS 교수법은 학습자의 내청 능력과 청각적 추론 능력을 바탕으로 음악적 문해력을 향상 시킬 수 있다. 둘째, 반복적이고 계열성 있는 교육 과정을 통해 학습자가 체계적으로 음악과 개념 학습을 할 수 있다. 셋째, 놀이를 통한 자연스러운 지식의 전이가 가능하다. 넷째, 저학년 가창 제재곡 선정 시 학습자의 적정 음역대를 고려하여 바장조 악곡부터 학습하는 것이 권장된다. 한국의 초,중등 음악교사들이 가창 제재곡을 선정할 때 본 연구에서 소개한 CS 음악 교수법을 바탕으로 음악과 교수 학습 맥락에 맞는 체계적인 학습을 설계할 수 있기를 기대한다.

주제어: 가창 영역, 전래 동요, 음악 교수법, 음악적 문해력, 파이어라벤드 교수법

* Corresponding author, E-mail: dcha3@asu.edu
Ph.D., Arizona State University, 50 E Gammage, Pkwy, Tempe, AZ 85281, USA

Received: 27 November 2023, Reviewed (Revised): 2 January (5 January) 2024, Accepted: 16 January 2024

Ⅰ. Introduction

John M. Feierabend believes that all people become *tuneful*, *beatful*, and *artful* through research-based pedagogy and frequent exposure to the world's diverse folk music (Feierabend & Strong, 2018). Since only 10% of students in the United States (US) choose to continue participating in ensembles, such as band, orchestra, or choir, with approximately 90% opting not to, Feierabend posits that knowledge of notation is not a primary concern, but rather fostering one's *tuneful*, *beatful*, and *artful* abilities is of importance to all school-age students (Feierabend, 2001, 2019; Greene & Strong, 2018). With this objective in mind, Feierabend (2001) crystalized his pedagogical ideas into the Conversational Solfège (CS), an approach to learning and teaching music. The primary goal of his pedagogical framework seems to be the establishment of all-encompassing learning atmosphere that accommodates every student, irrespective of their future participation in official music programs.

The CS, conceptualized and formulated by Feierabend, is an educational approach primarily focused on general music educators in the US. Within the realm of the US PreK-12 music education, a relatively large number of general music teachers in some states hold Euro-centric pedagogies' certificates—the Orff-Schulwerk and Kodály—compared to those in the CS (Cha, 2023a). Nevertheless, some of general music teachers in the US adopt Feierabend's programs and resources in their curriculum (Feierabend & Strong, 2018). In the early 2000s, Feierabend's work has been introduced to educators in several other nations, such as Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Singapore, and Spain (Greene & Strong, 2018). Yet music practitioners in South Korea may still not be acquainted with the CS and Feierabend's work remains on the fringes of mainstream educational research in its music learning and teaching. This is likely due to the scarcity of Korean music practitioners who obtained Feierabend's CS teacher curriculum certificates, which are endorsed by the Feierabend Association for Music Education (FAME). Moreover, in the landscape of the US and Korea PreK-12 music education, where Euro-centric pedagogies (i.e., Orff-Schulwerk and Kodály) are prevalent, the CS may offer a distinctive perspective. Incorporating the CS approach can enrich Korean music education, providing a comprehensive and inclusive learning atmosphere that aligns with the evolving landscape of global music education practices.

As a certified music educator specializing in Feierabend-inspired teaching methods in all levels—Conversational Solfège Level I, II, and Upper Levels, I have taught general music methods to collegiate students for three years. Music in Early Childhood, one of my previous

undergraduate courses, provided the US college students with the practical application of American folk songs to the Feierabend's CS program. The purpose of the present article was to offer a brief overview of the CS and to elucidate the types of activities that might occur in each of the 12 steps. In essence, this article addressed my own curricular planning process of American children's folk songs within the framework of Feierabend's CS.

Ⅱ. Pedagogical Background

1. Philosophy of Feierabend's conversational solfège

Feierabend embodies a core belief that "every person should have the opportunity to become a musical person—someone who is *tuneful*, *beatful*, and *artful*" (Feierabend et al., 2018, p. 206). He explicitly emphasizes the importance of these three-dimensional concepts in the CS approach. Each dimension encompasses a distinct characteristic: (a) *tunefulness*, which involves the capacity to identify, remember, reproduce, and generate melodies, (b) *beatfulness*, which refers to the capacity to effortlessly synchronize with beats, and (c) *artfulness*, which involves the capacity to convey emotions from music. Feierabend (2019) conceptualized such dimensional concepts as prerequisites to learning the CS. He firmly believes that all school-aged students will develop into individuals with musical abilities, capable of demonstrating their lifelong skills by singing lullabies to their children, dancing at social gatherings, participating in rhythmic chants, and clapping at athletic competitions in their daily lives (Feierabend & Strong, 2018).

2. Basic principles of the conversational solfège

The Conversational Solfège (CS), as its name implies, underscores the significance of the bi-directional musical interaction between a teacher and students. Feierabend and Strong (2018) argue that the CS is in line with the conversational language-learning model. This model suggests that the acquisition of a new language should proceed in a step-by-step manner, starting with listening and speaking the language prior to progressing to reading and writing. The principles of Feierabend's CS are grounded in Edwin E. Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT), which postulates that individuals may learn music in a way similar to how they acquire English (Gordon, 1997, 2007). Adhering to this principle, the primary objective of the CS appears to foster the

growth of musical literacy. This can be achieved by first acquiring the skill to perceive and vocalize music, and then progressing to the ability to comprehend musical notation and compose music through active engagement in music-making activities.

1) Rote learning

In the field of music education, rote learning is often defined as a learning method that relies primarily on auditory perception without the aid of musical notation. Rote learning is a method that is in contrast to a visual-based learning strategy, such as note presentations (Shehan, 1987). According to Chappell (2020), rote learning is "a teacher-led activity that involves verbal and visual instructional cues without traditional notation" (p. 7). Several music educational methods, including Dalcroze, Kodály, Orff-Schulwerk, and Gordon, include a multitude of pedagogical techniques centered upon rote learning to stimulate artistic expression via physical movement and aural awareness (Volk, 1993). Gordon (2007) provided a concise explanation of rote learning. He compared it to the process of memorizing and reciting nonsensical syllables or repeating foreign words without comprehension. Similarly, toddlers might remember and sing a song without grasping its musical significance or its context and content. Grey (2020) reinforced the notion that incorporating rote learning in the early stages of music instruction prior to reading notation might enhance a more internalized understanding of music. Related, Musco (2010) in the literature review study collectively concluded that aural-based instruction (i.e., rote learning) was found to be effective. To develop aural perception before introducing music notation, Feierabend (2001) also advocates for the inclusion of rote learning in each first phase of the CS.

2) Rhythm and tonal sequence

Rhythm and tonal sequence of the CS is as follows (see <Table 1>):

<Table 1> Rhythm and tonal sequence (Feierabend, 2001, pp. 273-274)

Level	Instructional contents	Keys
1	1) 2/4 - quarter/paired eighths 2) 6/8 - dotted-quarter/three eighths 3) 6/8 - quarter/eighth 4) *drm*	F Major

<Table 1> Continued

Level	Instructional contents	Keys
2	5) *drm s* 6) 2/4 - quarter rest 7) 2/4 - half note 8) 6/8 - dotted-quarter rest 9) 6/8 - dotted-half note 10) *drm sl* 11) *drmfs* 12) *drmfsl* 13) 6/8 - eighth/quarter	G Major D Major
3	14) Low *s* 15) 2/4 - eighth note upbeat 16) 6/8 - eighth note upbeat 17) 2/4 - eighth rest 18) 6/8 - eighth rest 19) Low *l* 20) Low *t* 21) 2/4 - paired sixteenth notes 22) 6/8 - paired sixteenth notes 23) High *d* 24) High *t*	B-flat Major E-flat Major A Major d minor e minor b minor g minor c minor f-sharp minor
4	25) Expanded range, diatonic notes 26) *si* - harmonic minor 27) 2/4 - dotted-quarter/eighth 28) 2/4 - eighth/dotted-quarter 29) 2/4 - syncopation (eighth-quarter-eighth) 30) 2/4 - syncopation (sixteenth/eighth/sixteenth) 31) 2/4 - dotted-eighth/sixteenth 32) 6/8 - dotted-eighth/sixteenth 33) 2/4 - sixteenth/dotted-eighth 34) 6/8 - sixteenth/dotted-eighth 35) Triplet 36) Diminished and augmented rhythms and meters - duple 2/4, 4/4, 2/2 37) Diminished and augmented rhythms and meters - triple 6/8, 3/8, 3/4, 6/4	C Major E Major A-flat Major a minor c-sharp minor f minor
5	38) Tonic and dominant - Major 39) Subdominant - Major 40) Tonic and dominant - minor 41) Subdominant - minor	
6	42) *fi* 43) *te* 44) *di* and *ri*	

<Table 1> Continued

Level	Instructional contents	Keys
	45) Mixolydian 46) Lydian 47) Aeolian 48) Dorian 49) Phrygian 50) Relative modulations 51) Closely related modulations - Major 52) Closely related modulations - minor	

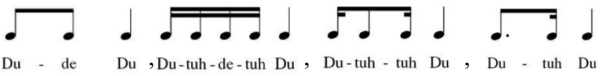
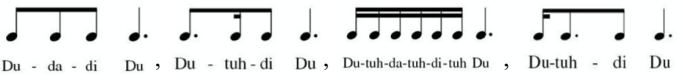
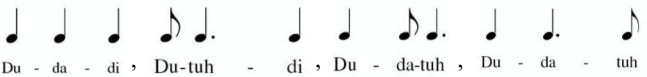
The sequencing of rhythm and tonal patterns in the CS was determined by analyzing the repetitive rhythms and tonal elements present in American children's folksongs and rhymes. This curriculum starts with the simplest patterns and gradually moved towards more complex ones (Feierabend, 2001). For instance, in 2/4 meter, it consists of a quarter note and a pair of eighth notes. On the other hand, in 6/8 meter, it consists of a dotted-quarter note, three eighth notes, and a quarter note followed by an eighth note.

Tonal sequence of the CS is inconsistent with the principles of Kodály approaches. An observable disparity in melodic characteristics exists between the CS and Kodály methods (Feierabend et al., 2018). Kodály-inspired teachers, for example, typically adhere to melodic patterns derived from Hungarian melodic sequence. This sequence typically begins with *so-mi*, but American folk songs begin with *mi-re-do*, which deviates from the Hungarian melodic sequence (Sheridan, 2019). To accommodate this difference, the US Kodály-inspired teachers added English lyrics to the Hungarian *so-mi* folk songs or created new *so-mi* melodies, such as "*See Saw Up and Down*"). This suggests that Feierabend contextualizes tonal patterns found in American folk songs ending on "*do*" because the existence of the resting tone (i.e., "*do*") seems to be a more conspicuous feature of Western musical tonality (Feierabend, 2001).

With the permission of GIA publications, the CS used rhythm syllables developed by James Froseth and Edwin Gordon (Feierabend, 2001; Feierabend et al., 2018). The beat, for example, is consistently denoted as "*du*." Additional sounds are classified based on their positional relationship with the beats (see <Table 2>, see also more details for rhythm syllables, Feierabend, 2001, pp. 277-282). Feierabend's use of rhythm syllables operates on a beat function system, indicating that the down beat is consistently represented by the syllable "*du*," while the shorter beat is represented by various neutral sounds (e.g., "*da*", "*di*", "*tuh*"). Due to the frequent use of the "*oo*" vowel on the syllable "*du*" and the incorporation of voiced consonants and breath support,

the syllable Froseth devised had the additional advantage of enhancing vocal resonance when singing, hence improving vocal tone and intonation (Feierabend et al., 2018). More specifically, in terms of the effect of echoing patterns, the use of such neutral syllables (e.g., *du*, *du-de*) have proven to be effective for elementary school students to echo more accurately (Feierabend & Strong, 2018).

<Table 2> Rhythm syllables (Feierabend, 2001, pp. 277-282)

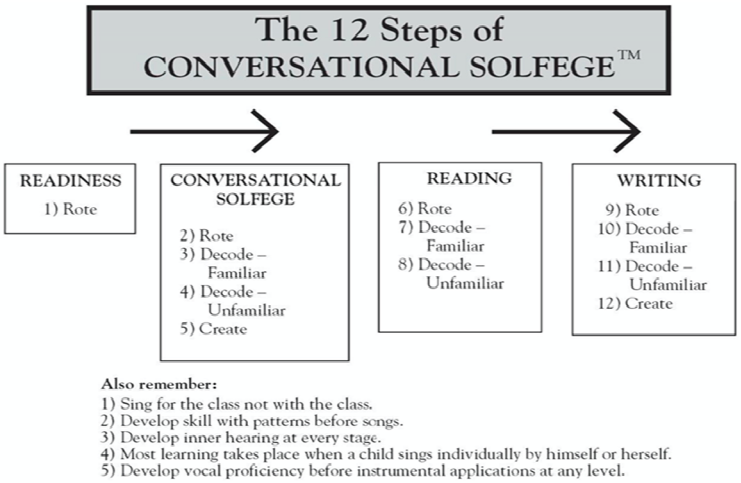
Meter	Syllable examples
2/4, 4/4	
3/8, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8	
3/4, 6/4	

The rhythmic sequencing of the CS is also inconsistent with its principles of Kodály pedagogy (Feierabend et al., 2018). Kodály approaches primarily address duple meter, namely *ta* and *titi*, with less emphasis on triple meter (e.g., 6/8 meter) because of the prevalence of Hungarian folk melodies that begin with a quarter note and a pair of eighth notes. In contrast, the CS demonstrates the sequence of rhythmic features in American folk songs and start with 6/8 meter. Upper levels of instruction include increasingly intricate rhythmic patterns, such as syncopation and mixed meter, by integrating them into song repertoire.

Ⅲ. The 12 Steps of the Conversational Solfège and Its Application

The Conversational Solfège (CS) is comprised of 12 steps. As previously explained, the CS is precisely designed to enhance one's musical literacy. Throughout the 12 steps, Feierabend-inspired general music teachers may utilize solfège syllables as an effective tool to facilitate the internalization and externalization of musical concepts. Noteworthy is that teachers should check if students have fully mastered each step prior to moving on to the next one, since each

step is designed to introduce a sequence of musical concepts and skills (Feierabend & Strong, 2018). Hence, the 12 steps prioritize the recognition and performance of simple musical pattern leading to a comprehensive understanding of more complex musical structures. Overall, the CS consists of four stages starting with readiness, followed by conversational solfège, reading, and writing. Each section subsumes unique steps, albeit all of the sections begin with the same step, *rote instruction.* Presented is an overview of the 12 steps within the CS as follows (see [Figure 1]; Greene & Strong, 2018, pp. 145-187):



[Figure 1] The 12 steps of conversational solfège

The following section provided a comprehensive explanation of four principles within the 12 steps of the CS, as well as its application to Level I in the context of MUE 310 course. Those who registered for MUE 310 course (hereafter MUE students) constructed their learning experience in the field of general music pedagogy, with a particular focus on the curriculum of Feierabend's Conversational Solfège. Again, this present study exemplified each step of the CS curriculum with the contents where MUE students learned from me.

1) Readness-rote

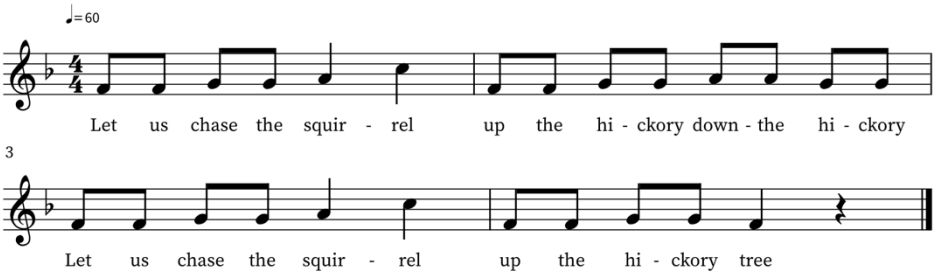
The first stage in the CS is *Readness* along, which includes one step, *Rote.* This stage ensures that students initially learn the targeted song via learning by rote from the teacher. Ideally, it is recommended that the students engage in singing games or movements while learning the song.

In the first step, the pedagogical intention of my instruction was to encourage MUE students to willingly participate in singing games (see more detailed procedures for the singing game in <Table 3>). The goal of the singing game unconsciously reinforced melody and rhythmic patterns into the musical memories of MUE students. The song that I selected for the CS curriculum was titled "*Let us chase the squirrel*" (see [Figure 2]). Before participating in singing games, I first sang for them without the use of musical notation in order to accomplish the objective of rote learning. As a consequence of learning the song by ear, MUE students developed proficiency in singing the whole song. Then, the singing game was taught to MUE student. The singing game was iterated about three to five times. I meticulously observed the active participation of each student in the singing game and their engagement in singing the song, since I firmly thought that student-centered learning occurs when students get pleasure from the music.

Let us chase the squirrel

American folk song

transcribed by Dong-Ju Cha



[Figure 2] *Let us chase the squirrel*

<Table 3> Singing game procedure

Number	Procedure
1	Make a big circle and sit on the floor.
2	Pick one student and have he/she close eyes. Then, the teacher hides a squirrel puppet somewhere in the classroom.
3	The rest sitting in a circle starts to sing a song for the student. while tapping their knees for steady beat.
4	The student gets a musical clue from the voice of the rest. The rest sings louder as the student gets closer to the squirrel, and they sing more quietly as the student moves away from it.
5	The game is over when the student finds the puppet.

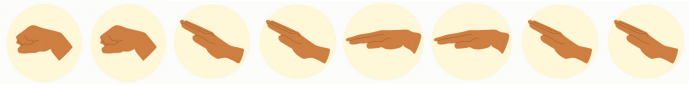
2) Conversational solfège-rote

The second stage in the CS curriculum is *Conversational Solfège*, which consists of the following four steps: (a) *Rote*, (b) *Decode/Familiar*, (c) *Decode/Unfamiliar*, and (d) *Create.* During the step 2, known as *Conversational Solfège-Rote*, the teacher presents rhythm or solfège syllables for the students to imitate by repeating the same syllables. The teacher permits the students to stimulate their inner-hearing skills throughout this step.

After MUE students completed the process of learning by rote in the step 1, I sought to choose the suitable rhythm and solfège syllables for step 2. Four phrases were extracted for both rhythm syllables and solfège syllables. Upon seeing my handclapping with rhythm syllables (e.g., *du*) or hand signs accompanied with its solfège (see both <Table 4> and <Table 5>), MUE students echoed the exact syllables in unison. The sequence of rhythm syllables and solfège syllables used in echo exercises did not always match the sequence of the song.

To promote the development of one's inner hearing skill for rhythm and solfège syllables, I directed MUE students to respond to a certain part of the song. As an example, I performed the song using hand signs with "*re*" muted. Then, I asked the class to think "*re*" parts of the song when I muted that part during the song. After three times repeated, as I sang the song, I asked the class to sing aloud only when sing "*re*" parts of the song. In the same vein, the class was responded to the rhythm syllable, "*du*," by clapping their hands to establish a rhythmic syllable pattern while mentally processing that portion. The selection of rhythm or solfège syllables for inner hearing was contingent upon me.

<Table 4> Extracted solfège syllables

Me	MUE students
 *d* *d* *r* *r* *m* *s*	Echo with hand signs
 *d* *d* *r* *r* *m* *m* *r* *r*	Echo with hand signs
 *d* *d* *r* *r* *m* *s*	Echo with hand signs

<Table 4> Continued

Me	MUE students
 *d d r r d*	Echo with hand signs

<Table 5> Extracted rhythm syllables

Me	MUE students
 *du - de du - de du du*	Echo with handclapping
 *du - de du - de du - de du - de*	Echo with handclapping
 *du - de du - de du du*	Echo with handclapping
 *du - de du - de du*	Echo with handclapping

3) Conversational solfège-decode/familiar

In the step 3, *Conversational Solfège-Decode/Familiar*, the teacher sings rhythm and solfège patterns that the students have already learned in the step 2. This allows the students to aurally recognize and identify the familiar rhythm and solfège syllables. Meanwhile, the teacher should use neutral syllables to help students clarify a new musical information by connecting it to their existing knowledge. The rationale of this step is to encourage the students to develop their decoding skills by assessing their ability to link the auditory input from the teacher with the previously memorized syllables.

During this step, I transformed MUE students into musical detectives. They were instructed to perform the entire song with lyrics, then subsequently they sang using solfège syllables or rhythm

syllables. The goal of this step was to decode familiar patterns, namely phrases from "*Let us chase the squirrel.*" I proceeded to perform one of the previous rhythm patterns by either handclapping or text (see both <Table 6> and <Table 7>). MUE students endeavored to decode the precise patterns by speaking rhythm phrases, relying on their auditory perception. This mirrored activities for solfège syllables with hand signs. To further ignite their musical curiosity, I used neutral sound (i.e., *bam*) for solfège exercises (see <Table 8>). In addition, I sang the song by breaking it down into individual phrases and providing the accompanying lyrics. This allowed MUE students to analyze the sounds and identify the sounds into rhythm or solfège syllables.

<Table 6> Step 3 for decoding rhythm syllables

Me	MUE students
	Decode (*du-de du-de du-de du-de*)
	Decode (*du-de du-de du du*)
	Decode (*du-de du-de du rest*)
	Decode (*du-de du-de du du*)

Note. A hand drum exercise followed the same procedure.

<Table 7> Step 3 for decoding solfège syllable exercise

Me	MUE students
Up the hickory down the hickory	Decode (*du-de du-de du-de du-de*)
Let us chase the squirrel	Decode (*du-de du-de du du*)
Up the hickory three	Decode (*du-de du-de du rest*)
Let us chase the squirrel	Decode (*du-de du-de du du*)

<Table 8> Examples of decoding solfège syllable exercise for step 3

Me	MUE students
Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam Bam	Decode (*dd rr m s*)
Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam-bam	Decode (*dd rr mm rr*)
Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam Bam	Decode (*dd rr m s*)
Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam	Decode (*dd rr d* -)

4) Conversational solfège-decode/unfamiliar

The step 4, *Conversational Solfège-Decode/Unfamiliar*, boosts students' aural decoding skills and inference thinking skills. Initially, the teacher speaks or sings rhythm and tonal patterns, then the students echo the same patterns with rhythm and solfège syllables. Noteworthy is that rhythm and solfège patterns in this step should not be the same as what the students have previously learned. Thus, a new song should be selected by the teacher.

The purpose of this step intends to develop the students' ability to draw musical conclusions. For example, when the teacher introduces new musical information about rhythm or solfège patterns, the students may use their existing musical knowledge and analytical skills to deduce and comprehend the meaning form musical components.

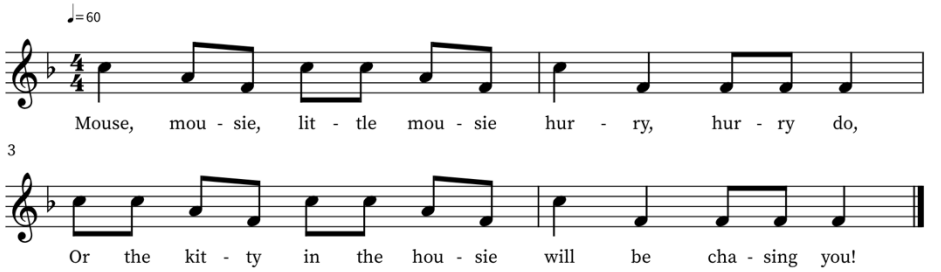
This step was slightly challenging part for MUE students. Proficiency in inferential reasoning was necessary for them to independently arrive at their own musical interpretations, drawing on auditory information. For this step, I selected another folk song, "*Mouse, mousie*" (see [Figure 3]). From this song, I extracted rhythm and solfège syllables (see [Figure 9] and [Figure 10], respectively). While the solfège syllables used were the same as "*Let us chase the squirrel*," their arrangement was different. Meanwhile, the elements of rhythm syllables remained consistent, albeit their order varied significantly. Therefore, I selectively extracted unfamiliar patterns from the new song for this step.

During the step 4, MUE students still relied on their ears without the use of musical notations. They encountered unfamiliar patterns for the first time inside the CS framework. I performed unfamiliar patterns on handclapping and spoke neutral syllables for the students to decode them. Over 90% of the MUE students easily identified unfamiliar solfège patterns due to the similarity of the syllable patterns between "*Let us chase the squirrel*" and "*Mouse mousie*."

Mouse, mousie

American folk song

transcribed by Dong-Ju Cha



[Figure 3] *Mouse, mousie*

<Table 9> Extracted unfamiliar rhythm syllables for step 4

Me	MUE students
	Decode (*du du-de du-de du-de*)
	Decode (*du du du-de du*)
	Decode (*du-de du-de du-de du-de*)

<Table 10> Extracted unfamiliar solfège syllables

Me	MUE students
Bam Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam-bam	Decode (*s md ss md*)
Bam Bam Bam-bam Bam	Decode (*s d dd d.*)
Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam-bam Bam-bam	Decode (*ss md ss md*)

5) Conversational solfège-create

In the step 5 (i.e., *Conversational Solfège-Create*), the teacher instructs students to generate their own musical product by using their existing knowledge of rhythm and solfège patterns. Once the students use the information that they acquired from the steps 1 to 4, they start to improvise as a group before doing so individually. When each student demonstrates their capacity to compose their own music, the teacher has an opportunity to assess their specific musical literacy.

The step 5 enabled me to assess student musical creative skills through improvisation exercises. Two distinct types of activities were employed. The first task was a musical exchange between me and MUE students. Using the previously introduced patterns (e.g., *d, r, m, s, l, du, du-de*), I presented a four-beat rhythm or solfège patterns to them. The students made a musical judgement on the different response to the teacher's patterns. Another exercise included a pairing-up exercise. For example, I formed them into pairs. One student assumed the role of the teacher, while the other student improvised and responded to the auditory stimuli from the peer. If someone repeated the same pattern or did not follow the four-beat pattern, the role was altered. Upon reaching a point where all students demonstrated complete proficiency in generating their own patterns, I proceeded to the subsequent step. Table 11 provides a concise overview of examples of this step.

<Table 11> Examples of four-beat patterns for step 5

Teacher's role	Student's role
S^a: *d s mr d* R^b: *du-de du du-de du*)	S^a: *s ms d m* R^b: *du du-de du du*

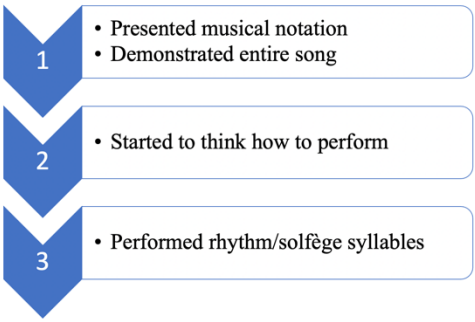
Note. *a* = solfège pattern example; *b* = rhythm pattern example

6) Reading-rote

Once the teacher determines that approximately 90% of the students possess the ability to improvise, it is undoubtedly appropriate to move on the next stage, *Reading.* This stage includes three sequential steps: (a) *Rote*, (b) *Decode-familiar*, and (c) *Decode-unfamiliar.* In the step 6 (e.g., *Reading-Rote*), the teacher begins to show students visual representation of the music or musical notations for the first time while speaking or singing rhythm and tonal syllables.

The MUE students were given a musical notation of the song, including the names of the notes. I demonstrated the process of performing rhythm and solfège syllables comprehensively, from start to finish. During this procedure, the students started to contemplate the my demonstrations

for their inner hearing. Next, they attempted to read the notation using rhythm and solfège syllables. At this point, they began linking the syllables to the genuine musical notations. [Figure 4] summarizes the step 6.



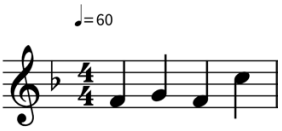
[Figure 4] Step 6 procedure

7) Reading-decode/familiar

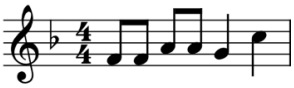
The step 7, *Reading-Decode/Familiar*, stimulates students' inner hearing. The teacher presents rhythm and solfège flashcards without speaking or singing them, and thereafter prompts students to think the sounds.

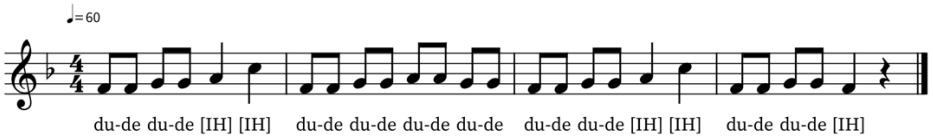
Familiar solfège and rhythm patterns were given MUE students. They were asked to see flashcards displaying rhythm and solfège patterns (see examples in <Table 12> and <Table 13>) and began contemplating how to speak or perform. I gave MUE students a sheet of "*Let us chase the squirrel*" to have them sing the song using syllables. Subsequently, I did let them seek to inner hear "*du*" when they read the whole song, followed by "*du-de*" (see an example in [Figure 5]) This procedure replicated the solfège syllables: (a) *d*, (b) *r*, (c) *m*, (d) *s* (see an example in [Figure 6]).

<Table 12> Flashcard example of familiar solfège pattern

Me	MUE Students
	Decode (*d r d s*)

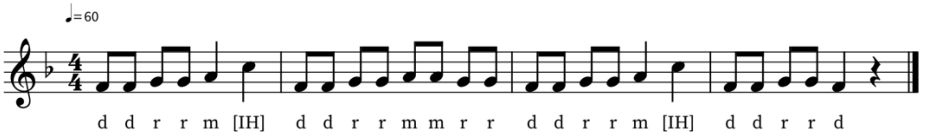
<Table 13> Flashcard example of familiar rhythm pattern

Me	MUE Students
	Decode (*du-de du-de du du*)



Note. [IH] denotes inner-hearing "*du*".

[Figure 5] Example of inner- hearing "*du*"



Note. [IH] denotes inner-hearing "*s*."

[Figure 6] Example of inner- hearing "*s*"

8) Reading-decode/unfamiliar

The step 8, *Reading-Decode/Unfamiliar*, is known as sight-reading. When the teacher presents unfamiliar notated patterns to ask students to both think and sing the rhythm or tonal syllables. During this stage, the teacher can use an audio recording of the piece by playing the music for students to sing along with rhythm and tonal patterns. Engaging in a discussion about the piece may extend their knowledge on the genre, composer, or instrumentation of the music as needed.

Tchaikovsky's "*Dance of Sugar-Plum Fairy*" was selected for this step. Unfamiliar rhythm patterns were extracted from the music for MUE students (see <Table 14>). The reason for this piece of the music was that features of main melody comprehensively consist of a quarter note and eight notes, which was in line with what the students previously learned from "*Let us chase the squirrel.*" To expand their musical knowledge and stimulate musical reading skills, the extracted unfamiliar patterns were provided to the students. Subsequently, they were asked to think and play phrase by phrase (i.e., each four-beat pattern). After completing their practice

of the patterns, I used a recording of that music while the students played along with their body percussion—a stamp for a quarter note, double claps for a pair of eighth notes.

<Table 14> Flashcard examples of unfamiliar patterns from "*Dance of the sugar-plum fairy*"

Unfamiliar patterns				Students
				Think and play
				Think and play
				Think and play
				Think and play

9) Writing-rote

The last stage of the CS curriculum is the *Writing.* This stage contains four steps: (a) *Rote*, (b) *Decode-Familiar*, (c) *Decode-Unfamiliar*, and (d) *Create.* In the step 9 of *Writing-Rote*, students are given the teacher's instruction on the names of musical notes and begin to develop their understanding of how to transcribe them in written form.

Building proficient manuscript skills was a primary goal of this step in my class. While MUE students transcribed my notation manuscript onto the board, they began acquiring the skill of writing the names of musical notes. The notehead, stem, and quarter note were crucial components for honing writing abilities. The proficiency in manuscript abilities was crucial as it formed the fundamental basis for the subsequent phases because one's poor manuscript skills would have impeded the timely development of writing lesson plans. Therefore, I checked the proficiency of all the students in accurately transcribing musical notation during this step.

10) Writing-decode/familiar

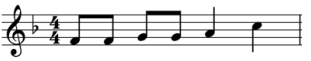
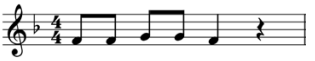
The step 10, *Writing-Decode/Familiar*, provides students with an opportunity to engage in the practice of writing notation. As students listen to rhythm/tonal patterns or phrases from the familiar song, they attempt to interpret musical information by singing with syllables.

A procedure of this step aligned with the step 3, which is *Conversational Solfège-Decode/amiliar*, given that the students' task was to decode familiar patterns. Nevertheless, the notable feature of this step was the enhancement of notation skills. For example, the students listened to the four-beat patterns by using rhythm syllables or solfège syllables accompanied by hand signs from "*Let us chase the squirrel*." They effortlessly transcribed the auditory information into a series of notated arrangements. <Table 15> and <Table 16> exemplify this process.

<Table 15> Decoding rhythm examples for step 10

Me	MUE students
du-de du-de du-de du-de	Decode 
du-de du-de du du	Decode 

<Table 16> Decoding solfège examples for step 10

Me	MUE students
 *d d r r m s*	Decode 
 *d d r r d*	Decode 

11) Writing-decode/unfamiliar

The step 11, *Writing-Decode/Unfamiliar*, focuses on the practice of dictation. During this step, students listen to unfamiliar patterns or phrases from a song, making an effort to sing along with rhythm or solfège syllables, and then converting these syllables into musical notation. Syllables are used as a method for practicing dictation.

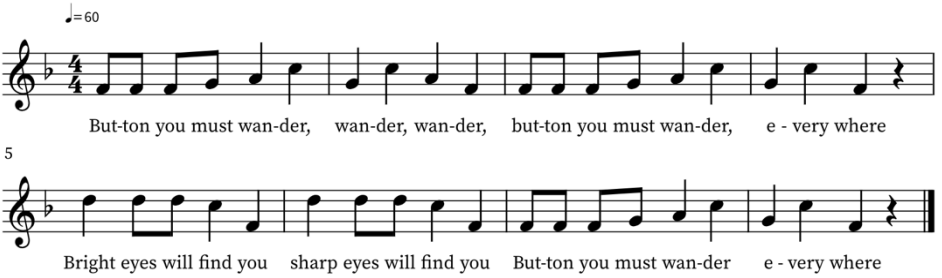
"*Button you must wander*" was selected for this particular step in my class (see [Figure 7]). I extracted unfamiliar patterns to give MUE students an opportunity to write them down on a piece of paper. The process of converting the rhythm and solfège syllables into notation required

more time compared to the previous step, which as the step 10, due to the complexity of the patterns, which proved to be fairly rough for some of the MUE students. <Table 17> and <Table 18> provide examples of this step.

Button you must wander

American folk song

transcribed by Dong-Ju Cha

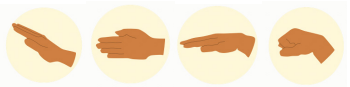
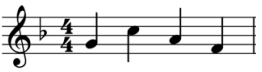
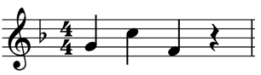


[Figure 7] *Button you must wander*

<Table 17> Decoding rhythm examples for step 11

Me	MUE students
du du du du	Decode 
du du-de du du	Decode 

<Table 18> Decoding solfège examples for step 11

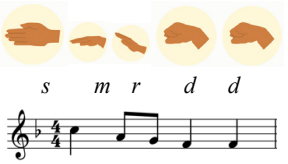
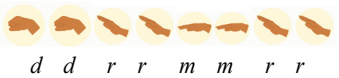
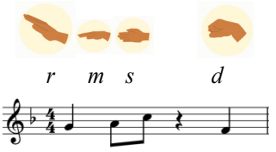
Me	**MUE students**
 *r s m d*	Decode 
 *r s d*	Decode 

12) Writing-create

This is the final step, the step 12: *Writing-Create*. Students are prepared to compose their own music using syllables and transcribe it into notation. Given their use of rhythm and solfège syllables acquired from the teacher, the present moment is ideal for conducting individual assessments.

A new staff notation was distributed to MUE students. A quarter note, a pair of eighth notes, and rest were used as a building block of rhythm syllables, while *do*, *re*, *mi*, and *sol* were that of solfège syllables. They engaged in a question-and-answer game within the four-beat patterns. Both improvisation and transcription were needed while participating in the question-and-answer games. For example, when I asked a musical question with rhythm and solfège patterns, they answered in a creative manner and transcribed the patterns into notation (see more detailed examples in <Table 19>). The rule was clearly specified for MUE students: (a) the question must not end on "*do*," (b) the question must use the existing patterns, (c) the answer must not echo the question, (d) the answer must start on the same note of the ending note, and (e) the answer must end on "*do*." In particular, this exercise provided MUE students with a sense of tonality.

<Table 19> Question and answer examples for step 12

Me (***Question***)	**MUE students** (***Answer and write***)
	
	

Ⅳ. Discussion and Implications

This current study delved into the curriculum of Feierabend's Conversational Solfège and its

application to American folk music, with the aim of shaping one's capacity to strengthen musical literacy in school-aged students. The pedagogical framework of the CS evinced a systematic and progressive procedure in which the students incrementally accumulate musical knowledge, starting from fundamental to more intricate musical concepts. All the MUE students assumed the role of musical detectives so as to unravel tonal and rhythmic patterns using existing musical vocabularies. The transition from unfamiliar to familiar patterns signifies the growth of students' inner hearing and composition skills, eventually leading to a sense of personal musical ownership —a core principle of the CS learning via MUE 310 course.

Both theoretical and practical implications emerged from this study as explained in the followings. When choosing a repertoire, elementary general music teachers may consider students' vocal range and tessitura of the piece. The beginning repertoire of the CS starts with F major, mostly because of its widespread use in North American folk music (Feierabend, 2001; Feierabend & Strong, 2018). Bartolome (2022) claims that exceeding one's inherent vocal range when singing might result in vocal damage and the development of detrimental habits. C major represents a tonal center without any sharps or flats in the key signature. Yet this does not guarantee that children will be able to sing a piece of music in C major accurately, vice versa. In fact, c4 is the pitch outside of the tessitura of children, including kindergartners, first grade, and second grade (Bartolome, 2022; Rutkowski, 2018). Elementary general music teachers should avoid choosing musical pieces that have pitches lower than middle C and fall beyond the kids' vocal range in order to minimize one's frustration. Hence, F major is a suitable key to begin with in the general music classroom. Future studies may evaluate the vocal range of Korean children specifically for singing activities, as well as examine the suitability of Korean musical repertoire in music textbooks for each grade's curriculum.

The incorporation of singing games at the beginning of the CS curriculum—the step 1—enables students to make their subconscious knowledge become conscious. At first, MUE students encountered the song while engaging in the singing game. The joyful nature of this pedagogical approach is in accordance with Kodály's approaches. Albeit researchers have proposed that Kodály approaches may include three-to-four steps (Bowyer, 2015; Dunbar & Cooper, 2020; Gault, 2016; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Mason, 2012; Scott, 2016), all Kodály approaches prioritize the principle of "sound-before-symbol". Both Feierabend and Kodály's approaches suggest that children absorb musical information via learning by ear while participating in singing activities. Afterwards, their unconscious comprehension may be deeply integrated into their cognitive processes through the teacher's note presentations. Additional studies are necessary to modify various singing games

to better align with the unique context of Korean children's songs, in order to promote unconscious learning.

Decoding familiar/unfamiliar steps within the CS curriculum are a fundamental determinant of students' own musical growth via aural skill acquisition. Thinking in sounds necessitates either cognitive process of interpreting the sounds by inner-hearing or musical inference skills, wherein individuals use prior knowledge to derive musical inferences. Consistent with Kodály (Bowyer, 2015; Cha, 2023b; Gault, 2016; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Mason, 2012) and Gordon's pedagogical approaches (Gordon, 1997, 2007; Taggart, 2016), inner hearing may be an analytical tool for aural information as needed for musical inference learning skills in the CS framework. Indeed, when flashcards or body percussion exercises were given to MUE students, they continuously interpreted aural or visual information based on the existing knowledge of the songs they learned, or they attempted to construct a new musical knowledge from a different four-beat pattern. During this process, MUE students built on musical generalization skills and maximized tonal/rhythm accuracy. Related, inferential skills as critical thinking skills could be a basis for musical comprehension in early childhood music education.

Due to its repetitive and sequential nature, the 12 steps of the CS framework provide convincing evidence that individuals accumulate their musical knowledge progressively. The CS curriculum corresponds to the principles of Bruner's (1960) spiral curriculum model. As Bruner (1960) elaborated, the learning progression from rudimentary to sophisticated concepts is represented conceptually as a spiral. This means that topics are revisited to strengthen understanding and develop a better comprehension of the subject matter. The reinforcement process is an essential attribute of the spiral curriculum. In the same vein, targeted learning concepts of the CS can be returned to each step in the framework. For instance, the decoding exercises in other analogous musical pieces, such as "*Mouse mousie*," "*Button you must wander*" and Tchaikovsky's "*Dance of the Sugar-Plum Fairy*," served to strengthen the understanding of the same musical concepts: (a) a quarter note and (b) paired eighth notes. As shown in this study, the CS curriculum proposes a deeper grasp of musical concepts through reinforcement. Future studies may explore on how Korean traditional folk songs can be sequenced within the CS framework.

V. Conclusion

The lesson ideas presented in this study convincingly undergirded the curriculum of Feierabend

CS in the elementary general music classroom. The term "*curriculum*" seems to correspond to a pedagogical method, which entails a prescriptive adherence to all the procedures. However, it ensures that general music practitioners can make a pliable curricular recipe that can be adjusted to place varying levels of emphasis on different aspects of the CS curriculum, based on the specific needs and the context of their own school community. Thus, selective use of the CS curriculum or its lesson ideas is advisable. All the lesson ideas of this current study are expected to be a source of inspiration for Korean music practitioners to adapt or further develop them aligned with their own school context and specific curriculum objectives. Applying the CS to children's songs would provide Korean music practitioners with a solid foundation for making well-informed decisions when exploring other traditional music repertoire within a flexible educational framework.

References

Abril, C. R., & Gault, B. M. (Eds.) (2016). *Teaching general music: Approaches, issues, and viewpoints.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Bartolome, S. J. (2022). Singing in the elementary general music classroom. In Abril, C. R., & Gault, B. M. (Eds.), *General music: Dimensions of practice* (pp. 17-37). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bowyer, J. (2015). More than solfège and hand signs. *Music Educators Journal*, 102(2), 69-76.

Bruner, J. S. (1960). *The process of education.* Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Cha, D. (2023a). Exploring the relationship between prek-6 music teachers' engagement in professional development and their self-efficacy (Publication No. 30426923). Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

_____ (2023b) Enriching musical understanding through Kodály-inspired drawing activities: An action research study. *Korean Journal of Research in Music Education*, 52(4), 189-209.

Chappell, E. (2020). Research-to-resource: The importance of aural learning in the strings classroom. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 38(3), 5-8.

Dunbar, L., & Cooper, S. (2020). Speaking the same language: How the Kodály method

promotes disciplinary literacy. *General Music Today*, 34(1), 14-20.

Feierabend, J. M. (2001). *Conversational solfege level 1: Teacher's manual.* Chicago: GIA Publications.

_____ (2019). *Conversational solfege. Developing music literacy with conversational solfege: An aural approach for an aural art.* Feierabend Association for Music Education. https://www.feierabendmusic.org/conversational-solfege/

Feierabend, J. M., Greene, B., Jackson, L., & Strong, M. (2018). Conversational solfege explained. In Feierabend, J. M., & Strong, M. (Eds.), *Comparing major methodologies* (pp. 189-214). Chicago: GIA Publications.

Feierabend, J. M., & Strong, M. (Eds.) (2018). *Feierabend fundamentals: History, philosophy, and practice.* Chicago: GIA Publications.

Gault, B.M. (2016). Kodály-inspired teaching: A bridge to musical fluency. In Abril, C. R., & Gault, B. M. (Eds.), *Teaching general music: Approaches, issues, and viewpoints* (pp. 73-88). New York: Oxford University Press.

Gordon, E. E. (1997). *Learning sequences in music: Skill, content, and patterns.* Chicago: GIA Publications.

_____ (2007). *Learning sequences in music: A contemporary music learning theory.* Chicago: GIA Publications.

Greene, B., & Strong, M. (2018). Conversational solfege explained. In Feierabend, J. M., & Strong, M. (Eds.), *Feierabend fundamentals: History, philosophy, and practice* (pp. 145-159). Chicago: GIA Publications.

Grey, A. N. (2020). Rote instruction in secondary instrumental music classrooms: A review of the literature. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 39(1), 59-69.

Houlahan, M., & Tacka, P. (2015). *Kodály today: A cognitive approach to elementary music education.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Mason, E. (2012). Idea bank: Using Kodály to promote music literacy skills. *Music Educators Journal*, 99(1), 28-31.

Musco, A. M. (2010). Playing by ear: Is expert opinion supported by research? *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 184, 49-64.

Rutkowski, J. (2018). Development and pedagogy of children's singing. In Burton, S. L., & Reynolds, A. M. (Eds.), *Engaging musical practices: A sourcebook for elementary general music* (pp. 33-50). Lanham and London: Rowman & Littlefield

Scott, S. (2016). The challenges of imitation for children with autism spectrum disorders with implications for general music education. *Update: Applications of Research*

in Music Education, 34(2), 13-20.

Shehan, P. (1987). Effects of rote versus note presentations on rhythm learning and retention. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 35, 117-126.

Sheridan, M. M. (2019). The Kodály concept in the United States: Early American adaptations to recent evolutions. *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, 41(1), 55-72.

Taggart, C. C. (2016). Music learning theory: A theoretical framework in action. In Abril, C. R., & Gault, B. M. (Eds.), *Teaching general music: Approaches, issues, and viewpoints* (pp. 183-208). New York: Oxford University Press.

Volk, T. M. (1993). Factors influencing music educators in the “rote-note” controversy, 1865-1900. *The Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education*, 15(1), 31-43.