

# Evaluating 9th Grade Music Repertoire in Türkiye Within the Framework of the Kodály Approach

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**Abstract:** While the Kodály approach is widely applied in early childhood and elementary music education, it also offers a structured framework suitable for learners at all levels, including secondary education. However, implementing this approach in high schools is complicated by challenges such as students' limited musical background and inadequate singing experience, thereby requiring the selection of developmentally appropriate and pedagogically meaningful repertoire. In this study, we examined the song repertoire in Türkiye's 9th Grade Music Teacher's Guidebook from the perspective of the Kodály approach. Designed as a descriptive research study, the analysis focused on all 53 songs in the guidebook, which were evaluated by 12 expert music teachers based on seven pedagogical categories defining an ideal repertoire for older learners. The results indicated representation across all categories, with folk songs and multi-part works being most frequent, while game songs were found to be the least represented. Variations in teacher evaluations revealed inconsistencies in interpreting categories. Overall, the findings suggest the need to further adapt Kodály-based practices for secondary education.

*Keywords:* Kodály Approach, High School, Singing, Song Repertoire, Older Students

## Kodály Yaklaşımı Bağlamında Türkiye'de 9. Sınıf Müzik Repertuarının Değerlendirilmesi

**Öz:** Çoğunlukla erken çocukluk ve ilkökul müzik eğitiminde uygulanan Kodály yaklaşımı, ortaöğretim dâhil her yaş düzeyi için uyarlanabilir bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Ancak lise düzeyinde uygulamada, öğrencilerin sınırlı müziksel geçmişleri ve yetersiz şarkı söyleme deneyimleri gibi güçlükler ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu durum, gelişimsel olarak uygun ve pedagojik açıdan anlamlı bir repertuar seçimini kritik hâle getirmektedir. Bu araştırma, Türkiye'de 9. sınıf Müzik Dersi Öğretmen Kılavuz Kitabı'nda yer alan şarkı repertuarını Kodály yaklaşımı çerçevesinde incelemiştir. Betimsel olarak tasarlanan çalışmada, kitaptaki 53 şarkı, daha büyük yaş grupları için ideal bir repertuarı tanımlayan yedi kategori temelinde 12 uzman müzik öğretmeni tarafından değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular tüm kategorilerin temsil edildiğini; türkülerin ve çok bölümlü eserlerin en yoğun, oyun şarkılarının ise en az yer alan türler olduğunu göstermektedir. Öğretmen değerlendirmeleri arasındaki farklılıklar kategori yorumlarında tutarsızlıklara işaret etmektedir. Sonuçlar, Kodály temelli uygulamaların ortaöğretim öğrencileri için daha fazla uyarlamaya ihtiyaç duyduğunu göstermektedir.

*Anahtar Sözcükler:* Kodály Yaklaşımı, Lise Düzeyi, Şarkı Söyleme, Şarkı Repertuarı, Büyük Yaş Grubu Öğrencileri

Received: 01.10.2025

Accepted: 15.12.2025

Article Type: Research Article

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### To cite/Atıf için

Eren, M., & Çeliktas, H. (2026). Kodály yaklaşımı bağlamında Türkiye'de 9. sınıf müzik repertuarının değerlendirilmesi. *Yaşadıkça Eğitim*, 40(1), 218–231. <https://doi.org/10.33308/26674874.20264011017>

Music is one of the most effective art forms for fostering individuals' cognitive, affective, and aesthetic development (Akgül Barış, 2002; Baydağ, 2020; Reimer, 2003). Accordingly, music education has become an essential component of schooling, shown to support skills such as analytical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity (Elliott & Silverman, 2015). Among the core competencies of music education, a central place is held by singing. Singing enhances musical awareness, memory, and expressive ability, as well as supports cognitive development (Say, 2005). As a musical skill, singing also contributes to melodic and rhythmic perception and fosters emotional expression.

The process of repertoire selection is vital for the development of singing skills. In both formal and informal contexts, well-chosen songs support musical growth and expression (Glover & Ward, 1998; Hallam, 2010). Available evidence suggests that a repertoire aligned with students' age, skill level, and cultural background enhances engagement and achievement (Baydağ, 2020; Goffi, 1996; Ragan, 2016; Swanwick, 1999). In Türkiye, the secondary education music curriculum prepared by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) also encourages the inclusion of music from diverse cultural layers to fulfill the course objectives (MoNE, 2018).

In this regard, supporting music education with a repertoire rooted in national culture is essential. Muammer Sun, a prominent figure in Turkish music education, advocated for a National Song Repertoire composed of folk and school songs. In *Şarkı Demeti* (1979), Sun (2006) categorized songs into adaptation, imitation, folk, and Turkish school songs, emphasizing the pedagogical and cultural importance of a nationalized repertoire.

Likewise, in the Kodály approach, one of the prominent contemporary music education approaches, singing is placed at the center of musical learning, and a pedagogical understanding is adopted where learners progress from a local repertoire towards exemplary works of classical and world music. Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967)—the Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist, and educator who holds a distinguished place among his contemporaries for his ideas on music education and his approach to teaching—emphasized that the songs used in music instruction should be selected from the melodic materials of the national musical culture (Boshkoff, 1991; Casarow, 2011; Howard, 1996). Kodály's emphasis on vocal-based musicianship and culturally grounded repertoire has contributed to the widespread recognition of the Kodály approach worldwide.

The Kodály approach places particular importance on beginning music education in the early years and developing musical understanding through carefully sequenced experiences (Forrai, 1988). Within this approach, various pedagogical tools—such as hand signs, tone sets, stick notation, and rhythm syllables—are used alongside inner-hearing work, sight-reading activities, and choral singing to support students' musical growth (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). Each tool contributes to musicianship in complementary ways: hand signs help students to visualize and internalize pitch relationships; tone sets facilitate the teaching of melodic structures; stick notation accelerates the development of music-reading and writing skills; and rhythm syllables make rhythmic comprehension more concrete and accessible (Choksy, 1999; Howard, 1996). In addition, the approach encourages the use of folk songs to strengthen musical skills, foster cultural awareness, and support learners' connection to their musical heritage (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

### **Problem Statement**

Previous research demonstrated that, while the Kodály approach has been widely implemented in early childhood and elementary music education, it offers a systematic and adaptable framework suitable for learners of all ages (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Howard, 1996). For instance, Houlahan and Tacka's *Kodály Today* (2015), a key contemporary resource, revisits the approach in accordance with the demands of current educational needs. The chapter *Teaching Musicianship Skills Starting in the Upper Grades* explores how the Kodály method can be adapted for older beginners, noting that many of such learners lack foundational music skills and experience. This chapter also emphasizes the importance of aligning instruction with students' current musical abilities and includes sample activities progressing from basic to advanced levels. Houlahan and Tacka (2015) outline an ideal repertoire for older students, including folk songs, solfège-

based materials, canons, classical pieces, and sight-reading activities grouped into the following seven main categories:

1. Folk songs, canons, and two- or three-part arrangements from diverse cultures
2. Ten to fifteen songs that can be sung using rhythm syllables and solfège
3. Songs suitable for use on special days and commemorative weeks
4. Two- and three-part works from classical, folk, or contemporary repertoires
5. Game songs or songs that can be used in movement-based activities
6. Songs that can be taught through sight-reading
7. Songs that can be used to prepare students for fundamental musical concepts and elements.

Furthermore, extant research at the secondary and tertiary levels demonstrates that the Kodály approach has been examined across a range of musical skill areas and instructional contexts. For example, several studies investigated its contributions to music literacy skills—such as sight-reading, rhythm, and vocal performance—among older learners (Andreasen, 2014; Li, 2023; Jacobi, 2012). Several previous studies also examined its use in ensemble-based contexts such as choir, orchestra, and band, highlighting its effectiveness in developing collective musicianship (Darazs, 1966; Feldman & Contzius, 2020). In instrumental education, a small number of studies reported that both students and educators find the Kodály method applicable and pedagogically beneficial, particularly in piano training (Moss, 2000; Sindelar, 1989). In addition, some studies have focused on its impact on teachers' pedagogical competencies, highlighting the approach's contributions to the professional development of pre-service music educators (Garner, 2011; Ibbotson & See, 2021). Collectively, these studies demonstrate the broad potential of the Kodály approach to support the musical development of learners and educators across diverse educational settings.

A review of previous research conducted in Türkiye shows that studies on the implementation of the Kodály approach with older learners remain rather limited. Most existing studies were conducted on the university level, frequently involving students receiving professional music education in courses such as voice training, aural skills, and harmony. The results of these studies revealed that the Kodály approach had a positive effect on students' achievement in these areas. The authors also emphasized that the Kodály approach is not widely known in Türkiye and highlighted the need for increased recognition and dissemination of the method (Aycan, 2017; Çoban & Avşar, 2018; Kar, 2020; Mete & Çoban, 2022; Şimşek & Bilen, 2017). More recently, Mete & Dündar (2020) examined elementary classroom teacher candidates and demonstrated the positive effects of the Kodály approach on musical hearing, rhythmic skills, and basic music knowledge. On the high school level, however, only a single study was identified (Eren, 2024). In this study, a Kodály-based module was implemented to improve the sight-singing skills of Fine Arts High School students (Eren, 2024). The results showed a significant and positive improvement in students' sight-singing performance. Overall, the existing body of research indicates that applications of the Kodály approach with older age groups in Türkiye are scarce; yet the limited findings suggest that the approach can serve as an effective pedagogical tool for developing musical skills. Considering its potential to foster a shared singing culture, enhance aural skills across levels, and provide a diverse repertoire that contributes to musical culture and aesthetic appreciation, the Kodály approach appears to hold considerable promise for implementation on the secondary education level, which constitutes a key stage of compulsory formal education.

Kodály (1974) emphasized that the ages between 6 and 16 years old are optimal for musical development. His model, which centers on singing rather than instrument access, prioritizes equity in music education, which makes it particularly relevant for countries like Türkiye, where socio-economic disparities may limit access to music instruments (Özeke & Çeliktaş, 2021). In this context, music textbooks published by the Turkish MoNE play a vital role in promoting a shared repertoire. While elementary and middle schools have student books, high school learners are provided only with teacher's guides. Making these materials directly accessible to students could improve engagement, support literacy, and help to build musical

competencies.

In conclusion, while the Kodály approach offers a strong pedagogical framework for repertoire selection, older students—particularly those on the high school level—face distinct challenges such as limited prior education and reduced exposure to singing. These factors highlight the need for more tailored applications and further research on the method’s use with older learners in Türkiye.

### **Research Aim**

In this study, we aimed to examine the song repertoire recommended for use in secondary school music classes—specifically those included in the teacher’s guidebook—through the lens of the Kodály approach. In this context, the songs featured in the 9th Grade Music Teacher’s Guidebook were evaluated by music teachers according to the seven main categories proposed by Houlahan and Tacka (2015). To this end, the existing repertoire was systematically analyzed within a framework informed by the pedagogical principles of the Kodály approach. The results provide valuable insights into how the Kodály approach might be integrated into the high school music curriculum and to shed light on its potential contributions to secondary-level music education.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

In this study, a descriptive research methodology was used. Descriptive research aims to examine an existing situation as it naturally occurs and to provide a detailed account of its characteristics without introducing any intervention or manipulation (Büyüköztürk et al. 2014; Karasar, 2014; Patton, 2015). In this study, expert music teachers evaluated the 9th grade song repertoire based on the seven main categories proposed by Houlahan and Tacka (2015). This allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the repertoire in terms of its potential to support the development of musical competencies and foster refined musical taste and cultural appreciation among older students.

### **Data Sources**

The data sources of the study consisted of a total of 53 songs included in the 9th Grade Music Teacher’s Guidebook published by the MoNE for use in secondary school music education. In line with the purpose of the study, these songs were examined in detail. The evaluation was conducted by music teachers serving as the study’s expert evaluators.

Expert evaluators were selected based on their professional characteristics relevant to the aims of the study. Specifically, individuals who met the following criteria were included:

- Having taught or currently teaching music on the secondary level, particularly in 9th grade;
- Being familiar with the 9th Grade Music Teacher’s Guidebook published by the MoNE.

A total of 12 expert music teachers (4 male and 8 female) took part in the evaluation process. Representing a range of career stages and instructional perspectives, the experts possessed between 7 and 30 years of overall teaching experience and 1 to 15 years of experience teaching on the high school level.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The study focused on the songs included in the 9th Grade Music Teacher’s Guidebook, published by the MoNE for use in secondary school music education. All songs listed in the book—the main data source of the study—were cataloged by the researchers in an online spreadsheet. During this listing process, each song was categorized based on its specific musical characteristics, including composer, mode, time signature, and vocal range. This categorization aimed to clearly present the musical characteristics of each song and to facilitate participants’ recall of the pieces during the evaluation process. In addition, a supplementary file containing the musical scores of the songs featured in the book was prepared and provided to the teachers. Following the compilation of this information, the repertoire categories proposed by Houlahan and Tacka

(2015) previously discussed in the Introduction section were added to the table to enable a systematic evaluation of each song (see Table 1). As a result, each song in the book was evaluated by the teachers in light of the specified category.

**Table 1.** *Song Repertoire Classification Based on Houlahan and Tacka (2015)*

Name of song	Composer	Modal feature	Time signature	Range	Folk songs, canons, and two- or three-part arrangements from diverse cultures	Ten to fifteen songs that can be sung using rhythm syllables and solfège	Songs suitable for use on special days and commemorative weeks	Two- and three part works from classical, folk, or contemporary repertoires	Game songs that can be used in movement-based activities	Songs that can be taught through sight-reading	Songs that can be used to prepare students for fundamental musical concepts and elements
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### Data Collection and Analysis

Descriptive statistics were first generated to summarize the musical characteristics of the songs, and then the dataset was subjected to category-based analysis. During the analysis phase, the data gathered from teachers regarding the appropriateness of the songs were quantified (1 = appropriate, 0 = not appropriate) and analyzed using basic statistical methods. Although the study was qualitative in nature, quantification was applied to enhance reliability and validity. In qualitative research, quantification is often used to ensure replicability and consistency of results, as well as the use of clearly defined themes/categories, which is known to strengthen validity (Weber, 1985, as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Accordingly, the study focused on seven pre-defined categories, and teachers evaluated the songs based on their relevance to these categories. The data obtained from each teacher were then used to identify the number of songs included in each category, and average values across all participants were calculated and presented at the end of each table. This analysis process enabled a comprehensive evaluation of the repertoire in the 9th Grade Music Teacher's Guidebook in relation to the principles of the Kodály approach.

Drawing on the data obtained from teachers, a song list was generated for each category to offer concrete outcomes from the study. Based on the repertoire in the 9th-grade music textbook, a song was included in a given category if at least 50% of the teachers rated it as appropriate for the corresponding category. This allowed us to determine both the level of consensus among expert opinions and the extent to which specific characteristics were represented within the repertoire. The list of songs identified for each category through this method is presented in the appendix at the end of the article.

## Results

### Findings on the Musical Characteristics of the Songs Included in the Book

As part of the study, information regarding the composers of the songs analyzed is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** *Categorization of Songs According to Composer Identity*

Composer	n
Muammer Sun	4
Ziya Aydıntan	3
Cemal Reşit Rey	2
Hasan Toraganlı	2
Saip Egüz	2
Ahmet Cemalettin Çinkılıç	1
Barış Manço	1
Benny Andersson - Bjorn Ulvaeus	1
Cenan Akın	1
Demet İlik	1
Eduard Zuckmayer	1

Erhan Öztürk / Ayhan Öztürk	1
Johannes Brahms	1
Ludwin van Beethoven	1
Mehmet Soyarslan	1
Salih Aydoğan	1
Sefai Acay	1
Yavuz Turgul	1
Yücel Elmas	1
Zati Arca	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

Table 2 presents the classification of 27 songs, obtained after excluding anonymous folk songs and adapted songs with unknown composers from the book, according to their composers, along with their corresponding number (n). As seen in Table 2, the composers whose songs are most frequently included in the book are Muammer Sun (4), Ziya Aydıntan (3), Saip Egüz (2), Cemal Reşit Rey (2), and Hasan Toraganlı (2). When examining the songs by these composers, it can be said that the pieces of these composers are works that have become widespread nationally.

The book also includes songs adapted from famous classical composers such as Beethoven (1) and Brahms (1). However, these works are not among the selected vocal pieces in the classical music repertoire that are suitable for singing. Therefore, instead of selecting songs solely based on well-known melodies, it is considered more appropriate to prefer pieces that are suitable for singing and that will develop students' musical taste and increase their interest in classical music. This approach would better support both students' aesthetic perception and their singing skills.

Information regarding the modal<sup>3</sup> structure of the songs examined within the scope of the study is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** *Categorization of Songs Based on Modal Structure*

Mod	n	%
Major	18	45
Minor	10	25
Nihavend	5	12,5
Kürdi	4	10
Uşşak	3	7,5
Hicaz	2	5
Hüseyni/Buselik	2	5
Acemkürdi	1	2,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

As seen in Table 3, most songs included in the book were composed using Western music modes. A total of 18 songs (45%) are in major mode, while 10 songs (25%) are in minor mode. The proportion of pieces composed in Turkish maqams is more limited. Songs written in maqams such as Nihavend (12.5%), Kürdi (10%), Uşşak (7.5%), Hicaz (5%), Hüseyni/Buselik (5%), and Acemkürdi (2.5%) collectively constitute only 37.5% of the repertoire. Information regarding the time signatures of the songs examined in the study is presented in Table 4.

An examination of Table 4 reveals that the vast majority of songs included in the book are written in simple meters. Specifically, 17 songs (45%) are written in 4/4 time, 11 songs (26.1%) are in 2/4, and 6 songs (14.3%) are in 3/4 time signatures. The proportion of songs written in mixed (aksak) meters is lower; songs written in 9/8 meter constitute 7.1% (3 songs), those in 10/8 meter make up 4.8% (2 songs), and songs in 12/8, 15/8, and 2/2 meters are each represented by 2.4% (one song each). Importantly, compound meters such as 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8 are each represented by only a single example, indicating a limited exposure to compound

<sup>3</sup> A mode is a system formed by grouping pitches according to specific intervallic relationships, in which some pitches acquire a sense of stability while others gain a tendency toward resolution (Haciev, 2005).

rhythmic structures. Based on these data, it can be concluded that the repertoire in the book largely consists of simple measures such as 2/4, 4/4, and 3/4, thus providing a suitable foundation for developing students' basic rhythmic perception. However, the inclusion of a limited number of mixed meters is considered important for introducing rhythmic patterns unique to Turkish folk music and may contribute to students' rhythmic flexibility. In future compilations, adding compound meters from a wider range of musical genres would further enrich students' rhythmic experience and diversity.

**Table 4.** *Categorization of Songs According to Time Signature*

Time signature	n	%
4/4	17	40,5
2/4	11	26,1
3/4	6	14,3
9/8	3	7,1
10/8	2	4,8
12/8	1	2,4
15/8	1	2,4
2/2	1	2,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

Information regarding the classification of the examined songs according to their vocal ranges is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** *Categorization of Songs by Vocal Range*

Range	f	%
4th	3	7,1
5th	6	14,3
6th	6	14,3
7th	2	4,8
8th	16	38,1
9th	3	7,1
10th	4	9,5
11th	1	2,4
13th	1	2,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 shows that the most common vocal range of the songs included in the book is the octave (eight-note) range, accounting for 38.1% (16 songs). Songs with a fifth and sixth vocal range make up 14.3% (6 songs), while those with a tenth vocal range account for 9.5% (4 songs). Three further songs (7.1%) are written within a ninth range, two songs (4.8%) within a seventh range, and songs with an eleventh and thirteenth vocal range are each represented by only one example (2.4%).

Considering the vocal development of adolescent students, the octave vocal range provides a pedagogically suitable framework and aligns with the vocal capacity typical of this age group (Sarrazin, 2016; Abrahams & Head, 2017). Previous research also emphasized that adolescent voices undergo complex physiological changes that vary individually, indicating that chronological age alone is not a reliable predictor of vocal capacity (Abrahams & Head, 2017; Ashley, 2024). Therefore, the vocal insecurity typical of adolescence may be one of the reasons why most songs in the book were chosen within this range. On the other hand, narrower vocal ranges—such as fourths and fifths—although suitable for beginners in terms of vocal security, are limited in the book. Wider vocal ranges, such as the thirteenth, require advanced vocal techniques and a well-structured vocal training process to be used safely without risking students' vocal health (Sarrazin, 2016). In this context, it may be more appropriate to use pieces with wide vocal ranges primarily in listening-based activities, rather than in-class singing exercises when necessary. This approach can support the development of students' aesthetic perception while enabling them to progress with repertoire aligned with their vocal capacities.

## Findings on the Evaluation of the Songs in the Book

In this section, we report the findings obtained from the participating teachers' evaluations of the songs. All songs included in the book were examined according to the specified categories, and their levels of suitability are summarized in Table 6.

**Table 6.** *Distribution of Teachers' Opinions on the Alignment of the Songs in the Book with the Specified Categories*

Participant	C1		C2		C3		C4		C5		C6		C7	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
T1	23	43,4	9	17,0	12	22,6	27	50,9	7	13,2	9	17,0	12	22,6
T2	24	45,3	4	7,5	15	28,3	35	66,0	4	7,5	4	7,5	2	3,8
T3	6	11,3	3	5,7	7	13,2	7	13,2	9	17,0	19	35,8	6	11,3
T4	18	34,0	16	30,2	30	56,6	15	28,3	19	35,8	21	39,6	6	11,3
T5	17	32,1	15	28,3	30	56,6	14	26,4	12	22,6	7	13,2	7	13,2
T6	27	50,9	15	28,3	12	22,6	10	18,9	12	22,6	16	30,2	24	45,3
T7	9	17,0	6	11,3	11	20,8	17	32,1	4	7,5	2	3,8	8	15,1
T8	25	47,2	31	58,5	15	28,3	37	69,8	13	24,5	51	96,2	53	100,0
T9	27	50,9	36	67,9	19	35,8	28	52,8	22	41,5	23	43,4	24	45,3
T10	43	81,1	21	39,6	13	24,5	42	79,2	13	24,5	13	24,5	13	24,5
T11	25	47,2	28	52,8	17	32,1	18	34,0	16	30,2	15	28,3	18	34,0
T12	45	84,9	14	26,4	8	15,1	42	79,2	10	18,9	3	5,7	5	9,4
	24	45,4	16,5	31,1	15,8	29,7	24,3	45,9	11,8	22,3	15,3	28,8	14,8	28

*Categories (C):* 1- Folk songs, canons, and two- or three-part arrangements from diverse cultural cultures, 2- Songs that can be sung using rhythm syllables and solfège, 3- Songs suitable for use on special days and commemorative weeks, 4- Two and three-part works from classical, folk, or contemporary repertoires, 5- Game songs or songs that can be used in movement-based activities, 6- Songs that can be taught through sight-reading, 7- Songs that can be used to prepare students for fundamental musical concepts and elements.

The findings summarized in Table 6 are briefly interpreted below.

- *Folk songs, canons, and two- or three-part arrangements from different cultures:* On average, 45.4% of the songs fall into this category. This finding indicates that the book's repertoire includes a certain proportion of content that can support cultural diversity and the transition to polyphony.
- *Songs that can be sung with rhythm syllables and solfège (e.g., "ta, ti-ti" or "Van, İzmir") and note names:* Ca. 31.1% of the songs are appropriate for this category. This proportion suggests that the book provides limited support for rhythm-based and solfège-based instruction.
- *Songs suitable for use on special days and commemorative weeks throughout the academic year:* 29.7% of the songs are considered appropriate for this category. This indicates that increasing the number of such songs may enhance the repertoire's usefulness for year-round instructional planning.
- *Classical, folkloric, and contemporary two- and three-part songs:* The rate of suitability for this category is 45.9%, suggesting a relatively balanced content in terms of musical diversity.
- *Game songs or songs that can be used in movement-based activities:* The suitability rate for this category is 22.3%. This implies a limited number of activity songs that could attract students' attention and support kinesthetic learning.
- *Songs that can be learned through sight-reading:* 28.8% of the songs are found to be suitable. This figure points to a need for more material to support music reading skills and auditory perception development.
- *Songs that can be used to prepare students for fundamental musical concepts and elements:* 28% of the songs are appropriate for this purpose. This suggests that the repertoire could be enriched with more songs that support early-stage musical skill development.

Overall, the data show that the experts associated a meaningful number of songs with each category, indicating that all categories are represented to a certain extent in the repertoire. This diversity can be interpreted as a positive indicator of the musical and pedagogical variety present in the book. However,

significant differences were observed in the teachers' evaluations of certain categories; in some cases, the same category received markedly different ratings from different teachers. These differences may be attributed to individual teaching approaches, professional experience, educational background, or pedagogical priorities. Concurrently, the inconsistency in categorization suggests that teachers may not share a homogeneous understanding of the conceptual boundaries of each category.

### Conclusion and Discussion

The results of this descriptive study revealed that the repertoire in the 9th-grade Music Teachers' Guidebook is represented across all categories identified in this study, with a notable emphasis on folk songs and culturally diverse canons. In line with the Kodály approach—which values folk music as the “musical mother tongue” (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008)—the observed distribution supports students' connection to their cultural roots and promotes musical skill development. Similar findings reported by Schiavio and colleagues (2020) affirm the pedagogical value of integrating folk music into education. However, the guidebook features limited polyphonic works, which may hinder students' growth in musical analysis, ensemble performance, and auditory coordination (Schiavio et al., 2020; Jiang, 2021). Accordingly, including more polyphonic and canon-based materials would enrich students' harmonic understanding and collaborative music-making skills, aligning with Kodály's emphasis on polyphonic practice (Kodály, 1974).

While two- and three-part works are included, they mostly consist of Turkish folk and art music, with minimal representation from classical, pop, or global genres. This narrow scope contrasts with the 9th-grade curriculum's emphasis on historical and international music genres (MoNE, 2018). Expanding the repertoire to include broader stylistic diversity—particularly contemporary and youth-relevant genres—could better support curricular goals and cultural literacy.

Similarly underrepresented are game and movement-based songs, although their use could enhance kinesthetic learning and classroom engagement (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). Adding traditional dance songs or rhythm-based folk pieces could support both musical and social development. The participant teachers also noted that certain songs served multiple pedagogical purposes, such as being suitable both for concept introduction and as game material. This reinforces the value of multi-functional repertoire and highlights the importance of teacher competency in repertoire selection and adaptation. In-service training provided by MoNE could further support teachers in this area.

With regard to vocal suitability, the guidebook includes songs with both wide and narrow intervallic ranges. In the Kodály approach, songs with limited vocal range—particularly pentatonic and stepwise melodies—are ideal for developing vocal precision and inner hearing (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). Considering that many high school students exhibit beginner-level vocal skills (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015), such repertoire may be especially beneficial for supporting their vocal development.

The findings from the research process highlighted significant differences in teacher opinions across some category evaluations. These discrepancies could stem from a variety of factors, including teachers' individual teaching approaches, professional experience, educational backgrounds, or pedagogical priorities. However, this outcome also suggests that teachers' perceptions of category definitions and related musical genres are not homogeneous. This can also be considered one of the limitations of the present study. Therefore, in follow-up studies, more operational and explicit definitions of these kind of categories would be needed to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

Moreover, there is a limited amount of research worldwide focusing specifically on older learners and older beginners within the Kodály approach. This gap underscores the opportunity for further development and targeted studies also in Türkiye, especially in studies aimed at enhancing music education for secondary school students. In addition, expanding Kodály-based practices to adult learners would not only enrich lifelong learning opportunities, but also contribute to a more inclusive and comprehensive music education framework across different age groups.

## Declarations

**Acknowledgements:** We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the music teachers who kindly shared their evaluations for this study. Their contributions have been invaluable in shaping the findings and insights presented in this article.

**Ethics Committee Approval:** This study was approved by the Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences Research at Bursa Uludağ University (Approval No: 2025-04, April 25, 2025).

**Authors' contributions:** Both authors contributed equally to all parts of the study. The research and writing process were carried out in full collaboration, with responsibilities shared on a fifty–fifty basis between the authors.

**Competing interests:** The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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**Appendix: Song Repertoire Classified According to the Seven Pedagogical Categories of Houlahan and Tacka (2015)**

The songs included in the Turkish Ministry of National Education's 9th Grade Music Teacher's Guidebook are presented below. Their classification was carried out in line with the aim of the study, based on findings obtained from expert music teachers.

**1) Folk songs, canons, and two- or three-part arrangements from diverse cultures**

- Dostluk (German song, adapted by Eduard Zuckmayer)
- Neşeye Şarkı (Ludwig van Beethoven, adapted by Ziya Aydıntan)
- Divane Âşık Gibi (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Şu Karşı Yayıda Göç Katar Katar (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Yangın Olur Biz Yangına Gideriz (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Gönül Penceresinden Ansızın Bakıp Geçtin (Muzaffer İlkar)
- Bahçalarda Barım Var (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Çamdan Sakız Akıyor (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Fikrimin İnce Gülü (Muallim İsmail Hakkı Bey)
- Bahar Geldi Gül Açıldı (Teoman Alpay)
- Affetmem Asla Seni (Yıldırım Gürses)
- Sarı Çizmeli Mehmet Ağa (Barış Manço)
- Bom Bili Bom (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Ederlezi (Traditional Balkan folk song)

**2) Songs that can be sung using rhythm syllables and solfège**

- Zimterelelli (Muammer Sun)
- Bir İpte İki Cambaz (Muammer Sun)
- Dostluk (German song, adapted by Eduard Zuckmayer)
- Gel Gidelim Bizim Köye (Traditional French melody, adapted by Halil Bedi Yönetken)
- Güzel Anadolu (Hasan Toraganlı)
- Güneş (adapted by Ziya Aydıntan – Saip Egüz)
- Ağaca Övgü (Sefai Acay)
- Oyun (Johannes Brahms; adapted by Hasan Toraganlı)
- Neşeye Şarkı (L. van Beethoven; adapted song)
- Lüküs Hayat (Cemal Reşit Rey)
- Bom Bili Bom (Traditional Balkan folk song)

**3) Songs suitable for use on special days and commemorative weeks**

- Biz Atatürk Gençleriyiz (Muammer Sun)
- Cumhuriyet (Zati Arca)
- Atam (Ziya Aydıntan)
- Vatan Marşı (Saip Egüz)
- Güçlükleri Yeneceğiz (Cenan Akın)
- Sakarya Marşı (Ahmet Cemalettin Çinkılıç)
- 10. Yıl Marşı (Cemal Reşit Rey)
- Barışı Anlatalım (Ayhan Öztürk)

- Gençlik (Muammer Sun)
- Selam Sana Öğretmenim (Yücel Elmas)
- Güzel Anadolu (Hasan Toraganlı)
- Ağaca Övgü (Sefai Acay)

**4) Two- and three-part works from classical, folk, or contemporary repertoires**

- Güçlükleri Yeneceğiz (Cenan Akın)
- Güzel Anadolu (Hasan Toraganlı)
- Oyun (Johannes Brahms; adapted by Hasan Toraganlı)
- Neşeye Şarkı (L. van Beethoven; adapted song)
- Divane Âşık Gibi (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Mendili Oyaladım (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Şu Karşı Yaylada Göç Katar Katar (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Yangın Olur Biz Yangına Gideriz (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Gönül Penceresinden Ansızın Bakıp Geçtin (Muzaffer İlkar)
- Bir Akşam Seni Son Defa Görmeden (Mustafa Seyran)
- Çamdan Sakız Akıyor (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Fikrimin İnce Gülü (Muallim İsmail Hakkı Bey)
- Kahveyi Kavururlar (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Kara Üzüm Salkımı (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Karahisar Kalesi (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Osman Paşa (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Yollarda Aradım İzlerini (Mustafa Günay)
- Zeynep Bu Güzellik Var mı Soyunda (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Aşkın Kanunu (Sadettin Öktenay)
- Bahar Geldi Gül Açıldı (Teoman Alpay)
- Affetmem Asla Seni (Yıldırım Gürses)
- Lüküs Hayat (Cemal Reşit Rey)
- Sarı Çizmeli Mehmet Ağa (Barış Manço)
- Bom Bili Bili Bom (Traditional Turkish folk song)
- Sultan (Yavuz Turgul, instrumental)

**5) Game songs or songs that can be used in movement-based activities**

- Zimterelelli (Muammer Sun)
- Bir İpte İki Cambaz (Muammer Sun)
- Gel Gidelim Bizim Köye (Traditional French melody, adapted by Halil Bedi Yönetken)
- Güzel Anadolu (Hasan Toraganlı)
- Dostluk (German song, adapted by Eduard Zuckmayer)
- Ağaca Övgü (Sefai Acay)
- Oyun (Johannes Brahms; adapted by Hasan Toraganlı)
- Neşeye Şarkı (L. van Beethoven; adapted song)
- Afrika (Traditional Ethiopian folk song)
- Bom Bili Bom (Traditional Turkish folk song)

- La Cucaracha (Traditional Mexican folk song)

**6) Songs that can be used to prepare students for fundamental musical concepts and elements**

- Zimterelelli (Muammer Sun)
- Bir İpte İki Cambaz (Muammer Sun)
- Gel Gidelim Bizim Köye (Traditional French melody, adapted by Halil Bedi Yönetken)
- Güzel Anadolu (Hasan Toraganlı)
- Dostluk (German song, adapted by Eduard Zuckmayer)
- Ağaca Övgü (Sefai Acay)
- Oyun (Johannes Brahms; adapted by Hasan Toraganlı)
- Neşeye Şarkı (L. van Beethoven; adapted song)
- Kış Geliyor (Muammer Sun)
- İlkbaharda Çiçekler Açar (Hikmet Türk)
- Lüküs Hayat (Cemal Reşit Rey)

**7) Songs that can be taught through sight-reading**

- Zimterelelli (Muammer Sun)
- Bir İpte İki Cambaz (Muammer Sun)
- Gel Gidelim Bizim Köye (Traditional French melody, adapted by Halil Bedi Yönetken)
- Dostluk (German song, adapted by Eduard Zuckmayer)
- Ağaca Övgü (Sefai Acay)
- Oyun (Johannes Brahms; adapted by Hasan Toraganlı)
- Neşeye Şarkı (L. van Beethoven; adapted song)
- Kış Geliyor (Muammer Sun)
- Afrika (Traditional Ethiopian folk song)
- İlkbaharda Çiçekler Açar (Hikmet Türk)