

운율에서 교실로*:

중국 초등 음악교육에 우한 아동 동요를 통합하기 위한 코다이 영감의 리듬 중심 프레임워크

From Rhymes to Classroom: A Kodály-Inspired Rhythm-Centered Framework for Integrating Wuhan Children's Rhymes into Chinese Primary Music Education

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Abstract This study investigates how Wuhan dialect children's rhymes can be transformed into rhythm teaching materials for Chinese primary music education. This issue is significant because, although Chinese curriculum policy encourages the use of local and culturally responsive musical resources, a clear pedagogical pathway from orally transmitted rhymes to sequenced classroom rhythm instruction remains underdeveloped. Adopting a qualitative framework design, the study documented 74 orally transmitted rhymes in Wuhan in 2025 and selected 30 representative examples for transcription and analysis. Guided by Kodály-inspired principles of sound before symbol, rhythmic preparation, cultural authenticity, and sequential development, the analysis examined meter, rhythmic patterns, rhythmic structure, type, and text. Four representative lesson plan exemplars are included to illustrate how the analytical framework may be applied in practice. The findings show recurring reliance on stable duple meter, quarter-note and paired-eighth-note patterns, short symmetrical phrases, and embodied play structures that support a progression from steady-beat internalisation to rhythm-syllable application and early notation reading. The study therefore positions Wuhan children's rhymes as culturally grounded and instructionally usable resources for early rhythm literacy in Chinese primary music education.

Key words: Wuhan children's rhymes, Kodály-inspired pedagogy, culturally responsive music education, primary music education, rhythm literacy

초록 본 연구는 우한 방언 동요를 중국 초등 음악교육을 위한 리듬 교수 자료로 전환하는 방안을 탐구한다. 이는 중국 교육과정 정책이 지역적이고 문화적으로 반응적인 음악 자원의 활용을 장려하고 있음에도, 구전 동요를 순차적인 교실 리듬 수업으로 연결하는 명확한 교수 방법이 충분히 마련되지 않았기 때문이다. 본 연구는 질적 프레임워크 설계를 채택하여 2025년 우한 지역에서 구전 전승된 동요 74편을 기록하고, 그중 대표적인 30편을 선정하여 전사 및 분석하였다. 코다이 영감 기반의 소리 우선, 리듬 준비, 문화적 진정성, 순차적 발달 원리에 따라 박자, 리듬 패턴, 리듬 구조, 유형, 텍스트를 분석하였다. 또한 분석 틀의 실제 적용 가능성을 보여 주기 위해 네 가지 대표 수업안 예시를 제시하였다. 연구 결과, 안정적인 2박자, 4분음표와 짝을 이룬 8분음표 패턴, 짧고 대칭적인 악구, 신체 놀이 구조가 반복적으로 나타났으며, 이는 일정박 내면화에서 리듬 음절 적용과 초기 기보 읽기로 나아가는 학습 과정을 지원하는 것으로 나타났다. 따라서 본 연구는 우한 동요가 중국 초등 음악교육에서 초기 리듬 문해력 함양을 위한 문화적 기반의 교수 자료로 활용될 수 있음을 제안한다.

주제어: 우한 동요, 코다이 기반 교수법, 문화 반응적 음악교육, 초등 음악교육, 리듬 문해력

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I . Introduction

China's compulsory education curriculum standards emphasise the inheritance of excellent traditional culture and encourage schools to draw on locally meaningful resources in arts education (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2022). Recent analyses of state-approved music textbooks further indicate that school music is expected to foster cultural identity, social responsibility, and broader citizenship values, thereby strengthening the curricular relevance of locally grounded repertoire (Ho, 2025).

For music education, however, the key challenge lies not only in recognising the value of local materials, but in transforming them into developmentally sequenced instructional content. Within this context, Wuhan dialect children's rhymes merit focused study. These rhymes remain living oral materials circulated through family memory, peer play, and local school culture, while preserving distinctive dialect vocabulary, place-based imagery, and communal play structures. Their speech-based rhythmic features provide musically workable material for early rhythm instruction. As an urban cultural centre, Wuhan offers a particularly relevant case in which traditional oral transmission continues to coexist with formal schooling, allowing for an examination of the intersection between local culture and institutional education.

Wuhan dialect children's rhymes are particularly significant due to their distinctive prosodic rhythm shaped by regional speech patterns, tonal variation, and syllabic stress. Unlike standardized Mandarin-based materials, these rhymes retain localized rhythmic articulation that provides rich pedagogical potential for rhythm-focused instruction. Furthermore, as an urban cultural center, Wuhan offers a unique case in which traditional oral transmission continues to coexist with formal schooling, making it an ideal site for examining the intersection between local culture and institutional education.

The Kodály approach is especially relevant to this problem because it offers more than a general respect for folk repertoire. In this study, Kodály-inspired pedagogy refers specifically to four principles: sound before symbol, the use of speech and chant as rhythmic preparation, sequential movement from simple to more complex patterns, and the selection of culturally familiar material as the basis for early musical literacy (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Kokas, 1970). These principles are particularly suitable for rhythm-dominant nursery rhymes, where pulse, speech stress, and coordinated movement can be experienced before children are asked to decode notation. In this sense, Wuhan rhymes are not merely examples of multicultural inclusion; they are potential starting points for culturally responsive and musically structured

learning (Abril, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Previous work has shown that locally rooted children's repertoire can be documented and adapted for formal music learning while preserving cultural meaning (Jumneanpan & Pidokrajt, 2025; Pan, 2021; Simeon & Pugh-Kitingan, 2021). Despite growing attention to culturally responsive music education in China, existing studies remain predominantly melody-centered and rarely address rhythm-based, speech-driven materials such as dialect rhymes. This need for practical and clearly sequenced materials is heightened by the Chinese school context, where lesson implementation is often shaped by large classes, fixed lesson structures, and demonstration-oriented teaching cultures (Zhang & Leung, 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). Consequently, there is a lack of systematic frameworks that connect oral rhyme collection to sequenced rhythm pedagogy.

In this study, Kodály-inspired pedagogy is operationalised as a structured approach to rhythm learning that begins with embodied and aural experience, progresses through speech-based rhythmic preparation, and culminates in symbolic representation. This framework is particularly suitable for dialect rhymes, where speech rhythm serves as the primary musical material.

This study addresses that gap by examining Wuhan dialect children's rhymes as rhythm-centered materials for Chinese primary music education. Rather than treating the rhymes as supplementary cultural content, the study asks how their recurring musical and performance features can be systematically described and pedagogically translated. The emphasis therefore falls on the analytical pathway from oral rhyme to classroom sequence.

Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research questions:

- RQ1. What rhythmic features characterise Wuhan children's rhymes in terms of meter, rhythmic patterns, and structural organisation?
- RQ2. How can these rhythmic features be analysed, categorised, and sequenced according to Kodály-inspired pedagogical principles?
- RQ3. What implications do these findings have for the development of culturally responsive rhythm pedagogy in Chinese primary music education?

II. Literature Review

1. Dialect-based nursery rhymes and cultural identity

Dialect-based nursery rhymes function not only as cultural artefacts but also as carriers of

linguistic rhythm and regional identity. Shaped by local pronunciation, stress, and rhyme patterns, they preserve culturally specific modes of expression while offering memorable rhythmic material. Research on Cantonese nursery rhymes, for example, demonstrates how regional children's repertoire can support music, language, and cultural learning simultaneously when integrated into educational settings (Pan, 2021). More broadly, nursery rhymes have long been associated with language development, memory, and phonological awareness (Bryant et al., 1989).

The rhythmic organization of Wuhan children's rhymes is linked to the prosodic properties of the dialect itself. Because prominence in connected Chinese speech is influenced by pitch configuration, duration, prosodic boundary, and tonal pattern, and because disyllabic grouping and tone sandhi are important in Wuhan-related prosodic organization, the rhythmic shape of many rhymes can be interpreted as closely related to natural speech flow. This is one reason why speech-derived rhythmic regularity should be considered in the musical and pedagogical analysis of Wuhan children's rhymes (Wang et al., 2003; Yin, 2021; Zeng, 2024; Zhu, 1992).

However, existing studies primarily emphasise the cultural and linguistic functions of nursery rhymes, with insufficient attention to how dialect-based oral traditions can be systematically translated into structured music pedagogy.

2. Embodied rhythm learning and cultural relevance in primary music education

Within primary music education, singing games, movement-based activities, and speech-based chants are widely recognised as effective means of helping children internalise beat and rhythm before formal notation is introduced (Pretty-Norbury, 2024). Through embodied and playful engagement, children experience pulse, pattern, and coordination in a pre-symbolic manner. Chant materials without fixed pitch further allow rhythm to be foregrounded, supporting the development of beat stability and rhythmic discrimination. This approach aligns with the Kodály principle of sound before symbol learning (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Kokas, 1970; Menhart, 2012).

At the same time, culturally responsive teaching emphasises the importance of connecting musical learning with students' cultural backgrounds and lived experiences (Abril, 2013; Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In the Chinese context, recent studies further demonstrate that the purposeful integration of local or ethnic musical materials can support students' cultural identity, rather than functioning as a decorative addition to the curriculum (Guan et al., 2023). A

comparable example can be found in Japan. J. Lee found that traditional music has been systematically included in Japanese middle school music textbooks, often through appreciation, vocal, and instrumental activities (Lee, 2021). This suggests that integrating traditional musical materials into curricula is a broader East Asian concern, not only a Chinese issue.

While embodied approaches to rhythm learning are well established, few studies have systematically examined how dialect-based chant materials can be organised into sequenced instructional progression within primary music classrooms.

3. Kodály pedagogy and cultural adaptation

Kodály emphasised the use of musically meaningful materials that begin with what is familiar to the child and gradually lead to literacy and musicianship (Kodály, 1974). Later classroom-oriented interpretations highlight principles such as sound before symbol, embodied learning, careful sequencing, and the use of culturally meaningful repertoire (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). Studies outside Hungary further demonstrate that Kodály-based and Kodály-inspired practices depend on adaptation rather than direct replication, with local repertoire collected, analysed, and organised according to teachable musical elements (Bidner, 1978; Brondial, 1995; Storck, 2003). These studies emphasise the importance of sufficient and appropriately sequenced materials for effective pedagogy.

Related research further suggests that indigenous and local repertoire can be adapted for classroom use while maintaining cultural integrity (Jumneanpan & Pidokrajt, 2025; Simeon & Pugh-Kitingan, 2021). However, most studies focus on melodic songs rather than rhythm-centered speech forms. Wuhan dialect rhymes therefore provide a useful case for extending Kodály-inspired analysis to chant, game, and dialogue materials in which rhythm is the main pedagogical resource. This study is framed as a framework study rather than an intervention report, with its main contribution being the clarification of an analytical pathway from corpus construction to rhythmic and formal coding, and then to sequenced classroom illustration. Therefore, a clear analytical and pedagogical pathway that links dialect-based oral materials to Kodály-inspired sequencing remains underdeveloped. This study addresses this gap by focusing specifically on rhythm-centered Wuhan dialect rhymes.

Wuhan dialect children's rhymes therefore provide a valuable case for extending Kodály-inspired analysis to rhythm-driven materials. Rather than functioning as an intervention study, the present research adopts a framework-oriented approach, aiming to develop a structured pathway that

connects corpus construction, rhythmic and formal analysis, and pedagogical sequencing for classroom application.

III. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative design aimed at developing an analytical and pedagogical framework through documentation, transcription, categorical musical analysis, and pedagogical interpretation. Rather than evaluating educational effectiveness through classroom intervention, the study focuses on how a locally transmitted corpus can be systematically described and translated into classroom-ready rhythm learning materials. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate given the culturally situated and orally transmitted nature of the materials, which are embedded in social practices of speech and play (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015).

A Kodály-inspired framework guided both the analytical and pedagogical stages of the study. Specifically, each rhyme was examined in relation to its potential function in developing pulse stability, rhythm-pattern recognition, rhythm syllables, and early notation reading. At the same time, attention was given to preserving cultural familiarity, dialect features, and participatory play structures (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008; Kokas, 1970).

1. Participants

Data collection was conducted in Wuhan, China, during the ‘Hometown children's rhymes (家乡童谣)’ competition held from March 2025 to December 2025. This community-based event provided access to children’s rhymes that continue to be remembered and performed within contemporary educational and social contexts.

A total of 65 participants were involved, including 60 middle school students aged 13-14, four parents, and one primary school music teacher. Although the student participants were from middle school, the rhymes performed reflected repertoire commonly learned during early childhood and primary school years, thereby capturing continuity in oral transmission across age groups.

The parents and the primary school music teacher served as key informants. Parents provided insights into intergenerational transmission within family contexts, while the teacher contributed pedagogical perspectives on the relevance and adaptability of the repertoire for primary music education.

2. Data collection and procedure

Children's rhymes were collected through audio and video recordings of performances presented during the competition, supplemented by field notes and brief informal conversations with participants. Students were encouraged to perform rhymes learned through family interaction, peer play, or early schooling. Newly composed rhymes were excluded to ensure cultural authenticity.

Through this process, a total of 74 children's rhymes were documented. The repertoire was organized according to Kodály-inspired repertoire principles and included children's rhymes, play games, and movement-based game forms; the game materials were further identified by type, such as circle, partner, and line games (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, 2008).

3. Selection criteria for analysis

From the 74 collected rhymes, 30 examples were selected for detailed transcription and analysis. Selection was guided by the following criteria:

- 1) The rhymes were not newly composed and were recognised by participants as traditionally transmitted or commonly shared repertoire.
- 2) The same rhymes appeared in similar or closely related versions across multiple participants, indicating collective circulation rather than isolated invention.
- 3) The selected set was designed to represent recurrent rhyme and game types across the corpus, in line with these Kodály-inspired repertoire principles, including children's rhymes, play games, and movement-based game forms, so that the analytical framework was not derived from a single repertoire type (Forrai, 1998; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

Pedagogical interpretation was applied after the analytical selection stage rather than as a primary inclusion criterion. This distinction was important for reducing selection bias. In other words, the 30 items were first chosen for authenticity, recurrence, and representational range within the corpus, and only then examined for how their musical features might relate to classroom sequencing. Four of these 30 examples are presented in detail in Section V because they clearly illustrate different pedagogical pathways within the broader analytical set.

4. Data analysis and coding framework

Each selected rhyme was transformed into standard notation and coded using a structured

analytical template. The coding dimensions included meter, rhythmic patterns, rhythmic structure, type, and text.

The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, each rhyme was transcribed and categorised according to its musical and textual features. Second, recurring rhythmic and structural patterns were identified across the dataset. Third, the rhymes were interpreted in relation to a progressive learning sequence informed by Kodály-inspired pedagogy.

This classification was established with reference to the grade-level progression from Grade 1 to Grade 6 described in Kodály-inspired pedagogical literature (Choksy, 1999). Materials at the initial stages were typically characterised by a stable duple meter, a limited note-value vocabulary, short repetitive phrases, and low coordination demand. Materials in the intermediate stages showed greater rhythmic contrast, longer phrase structures, and moderate coordination requirements. Materials at later stages were characterised by denser rhythmic patterns, less predictable phrase organisation, and increased coordination demands.

The coding framework was applied consistently across all 30 examples and cross-checked against recordings, field notes, and contextual explanations provided by participants and the teacher informant. The purpose of this classification was to clarify the potential placement of each rhyme within a developmental sequence for early rhythm instruction, rather than to evaluate their cultural value. This approach aligns with Kodály-inspired pedagogical literature and adaptation studies that organise local repertoire according to teachable musical concepts and grade-level progression (Bidner, 1978; Brondial, 1995; Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

5. Ethical considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians prior to audio and video recording. As the data were collected during a publicly organised community competition, no personal identifiers were disclosed, and all materials were anonymised and used solely for academic research purposes.

As this study adopts a framework-oriented approach, the lesson plans presented in later sections should be understood as theoretically grounded illustrations rather than as evidence of measured classroom outcomes.

IV. Analytical Findings

1. Meter

The meter organisation of the 30 samples can be classified into three types. Among all items, 28 samples (93.3%) are in 2/4 meter, while one sample (3.3%) combines 2/4 and 3/4, and one sample (3.3%) is in 3/4 meter. This distribution demonstrates a strong predominance of duple meter within the dataset.

The prevalence of 2/4 meter indicates that the rhymes are largely organised around a regular and stable duple pulse. From a pedagogical perspective, such metrical regularity supports the development of steady-beat awareness, basic metric organisation, and the recognition of simple rhythmic patterns. In contrast, triple and mixed meters occur only occasionally and may therefore be more suitable as supplementary materials introduced at later stages of instruction.

2. Rhythmic patterns

The distribution of rhythmic materials shows that paired eighth notes (*ti-ti*) and quarter notes (*ta*) appear in all 30 samples (100%), forming the core rhythmic foundation of the corpus.

By contrast, rhythmic patterns involving sixteenth-note subdivisions occur less frequently. The pattern of one eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes appears in 40.0% of the samples, while the dotted eighth note followed by one sixteenth note appears in 26.7%. More complex patterns are rare: four sixteenth notes account for 6.7%, and the pattern of two sixteenth notes followed by one eighth note accounts for 3.3%.

In terms of combined rhythmic patterns, the sequence 'ti-ti ta' appears in 13 samples (43.3%), indicating that combinations built from basic rhythmic units are highly representative within the corpus. Overall, the findings suggest that the dataset is dominated by simple and regular rhythmic materials, while more complex subdivisions appear only in a limited number of cases (see <Table 1>).

3. Phrase structure

Phrase structure across the 30 samples shows a clear preference for relatively simple forms. The single-phrase type 'a' is the most common, occurring in 18 items (60.0%), indicating a predominance of structurally simple and repetitive organisation. The two-part structure 'a b'

appears in 8 items (26.7%), suggesting that contrasting two-part forms are also present but less frequent.

More complex structures are comparatively rare. The ‘a b c’ structure appears in 3 items (10.0%), while the ‘a b c d’ structure does not occur in the dataset. Only one item (3.3%), Zhang Da Tie, falls into the category of ‘more than four phrases,’ representing the most structurally complex case.

Additionally, four samples exhibit uneven phrase lengths, primarily within the ‘a b’, ‘a b c’, and more complex categories. This suggests that irregularity in phrase length tends to increase with structural complexity. Overall, the corpus is characterised by simple and regular phrase structures, with more complex and uneven forms appearing only infrequently. A summary of the metrical, rhythmic, and structural characteristics is presented in <Table 1>.

<Table 1> Musical characteristics of representative Wuhan dialect rhymes (n = 30)

Category	Feature	Frequency (n = 30)	Percentage (%)
Meter	2/4	28	93.3
	2/4-3/4 (mixed)	1	3.3
	3/4	1	3.3
Basic rhythmic units	Quarter note (<i>ta</i>)	30	100.0
	Paired eighth notes (<i>ti-ti</i>)	30	100.0
Sixteenth-note patterns	<i>ti-ti-ri</i> (eight + two sixteenths)	12	40.0
	<i>ti-ri</i> (dotted eighth + sixteenth)	8	26.7
	<i>ti-ri-ti-ri</i> (four sixteenths)	2	6.7
	<i>ri-ti</i> (two sixteenths + eighth)	1	3.3
Phrase structure	a (single phrase)	18	60.0
	a b	8	26.7
	a b c	3	10.0
	> 4 phrases	1	3.3

4. Representative examples analysis

The pedagogical application section presents four representative examples selected from the

30 analyzed rhymes. Although the broader corpus contains multiple texts and performance settings, these four cases reveal a coherent musical profile that helps clarify why Wuhan rhymes are pedagogically useful for early rhythm instruction.

First, all four examples are in simple duple meter (2/4). Second, all rely primarily on a restricted note-value vocabulary built from quarter notes and paired eighth notes aligned with Wuhan dialect speech stress. Third, phrase organisation is short and symmetrical: one case spans eight measures in four two-measure phrases, while the other three span sixteen measures in eight two-measure phrases. Fourth, each rhyme is associated with embodied play and coordinated movement, as reflected in activity types such as action and movement games, travelling games, clapping games, and bridge-trapping games. This supports the view that rhythmic learning in these materials is closely connected with bodily coordination (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

These findings do not claim measured classroom effectiveness. Rather, they identify recurrent musical and performative features that justify sequence placement within a Kodály-inspired approach. Across the four cases, the pathway consistently begins with pulse stabilisation through movement, proceeds to speech-rhythm coordination and repetition, and only then moves toward rhythm syllables and notation.

<Table 2> Musical and pedagogical characteristics of representative Wuhan dialect children's rhymes

Rhyme	Performance type	Meter	Rhythmic pattern	Rhythmic structure	Primary teaching focus	Grade
Swing your hands	Speech-based movement chant	2/4	ta ti-ti	8 measures; 4 balanced two-measure phrases	Steady beat and speech-movement coordination	1
Rolling dragon	Collective action chant	2/4	ta ti-ti	16 measures; 8 balanced two-measure phrases	Beat/rhythm differentiation through whole-group movement	1
Clapping song	Partner chant	2/4	ta ti-ti	16 measures; 8 balanced two-measure phrases	Synchrony, pulse tracking, and paired coordination	1
City gate, city gate, egg cake	Dialogic gate-passing chant	2/4	ta ti-ti ta rest	16 measures; 8 balanced two-measure phrases	Phrase timing, anticipatory listening, and adaptive response	1

From a Kodály-inspired perspective, the dominance of simple duple meter and limited rhythmic vocabulary suggests that these rhymes naturally function as preparatory materials for early rhythm literacy. Their structural simplicity reduces cognitive load, allowing learners to focus on beat internalisation and pattern recognition before engaging with more complex rhythmic structures. A summary of the musical and pedagogical characteristics of the four representative rhymes is presented in <Table 2>.

V. Pedagogical Lesson Plan Exemplars Based on Wuhan Dialect Rhymes

The four lesson examples below were drawn from the broader set of 30 analyzed rhymes to illustrate recurring application types identified in the framework: action & motion game, traveling game, clapping game, and bridge trapping game (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). They are presented as exemplars of pedagogical translation rather than as intervention results.

1. Swing your hands

1) Cultural context of the rhyme

This rhyme is performed in the Wuhan dialect. ‘Swing your hands (搖擺手)’ reflects imagery drawn from everyday life and local cultural practices. The text references regional geography and historical livelihood patterns. For example, ‘go to Hankou (下漢口)’ refers to travelling to Hankou, a historically significant commercial district in Wuhan associated with river transport and marketplace activities. The line ‘take a boat’ evokes the region’s historical river culture and its connection to trade and mobility through inland waterways.

The phrase ‘drink rice wine’ refers to a traditional sweet rice beverage commonly consumed in Wuhan. In the context of children’s rhymes, it typically denotes a mildly fermented or alcohol free sweet rice drink widely enjoyed by families during festivals and daily gatherings. Rather than implying alcohol consumption, it symbolizes warmth, hospitality, celebration, and family cohesion within local culture.

Yao Bai Shou
摇 摆 手

Swinging hands (8 seconds)

Cheng Qingyan (12) 成清妍
Wuhan City
9/6/2025

♩=139
2/4

yáo bǎi shǒu, jiā jiā zǒu;
摇 摆 手, 家 家 走;

dā yáng chuán, xià hàn kǒu;
搭 洋 船, 下 汉 口;

chī jī dàn, hē mǐ jiǔ;
吃 鸡 蛋, 喝 米 酒;

mǎi duì bā bā wǎng zhuǎn zǒu.
买 对 粑 粑 往 转 走。

[Figure 1] Transcription of the Wuhan dialect children's rhyme 'Swing your hands'

Chinese Lyrics:

摇摆手

English translation:

Swing your hands

摇摆手, 家家走;
搭洋船, 下汉口;
吃鸡蛋, 喝米酒;
买对粑粑往转走。

Swing your hands, Walk to grandma's house,
Take a boat, Go to Hankou,
Eat some eggs, Drink rice wine,
Buy two flour cakes, Turn around and keep walking.

2) Musical analysis

'Yao Bai Shou (摇摆手)' is action & motion games with chanting set in simple duple meter (2/4) with a tempo of approximately quarter note equals 139. The musical structure is defined entirely by rhythm, as no fixed pitch, tonal center, or identifiable scale is present. The rhythmic vocabulary mainly uses quarter notes and paired eighth notes that reflect the natural prosodic patterns of spoken Wuhan dialect. In children's rhymes, prominence may arise from verbal emphasis, syllabic salience, rhythmic grouping, pausing, and tonal movement in connected speech, all of which can shape rhythmic flow and phrase organization. The chant comprises eight measures organized into four balanced two measure phrases, following a repetitive formal structure (a a a a¹), with slight rhythmic variation in the final phrase. Its limited rhythmic

complexity and symmetrical phrase grouping make it suitable for Grade 1 rhythm instruction, supporting steady beat internalization, basic quarter and eighth note discrimination, and coordination between speech and movement.

3) Suggested activities

The teacher begins by introducing the cultural background of the rhyme. Students are informed that the chant is performed in the Wuhan dialect. The teacher explains selected dialect vocabulary to support cultural understanding. For example, ‘家家’ (gā gā) refers to ‘grandmother’ in the Wuhan dialect, and ‘粑粑’ (bā bā) refers to a type of local flour cake typically purchased in pairs. This brief explanation helps situate the rhyme within everyday life in Wuhan.

The teacher then models the chant while maintaining a steady beat through simple body movements, such as gently swinging the arms or walking in place. Students listen to the teacher and follow the movements in order to internalize the pulse.

Next, the chant is taught phrase by phrase using an echo technique. The teacher chants one phrase while demonstrating the corresponding movement, and students echo the phrase while maintaining the same steady beat.

After all phrases are learned, students chant the complete rhyme continuously while coordinating movement with the steady beat. The pedagogical emphasis remains on internalizing pulse and maintaining rhythmic stability rather than speed or dramatic performance. This activity reflects Kodály- inspired principles of sound before symbol learning, embodied steady beat experience, and sequential phrase acquisition prior to the introduction of rhythmic notation.

2. Rolling dragon

1) Cultural context of the rhyme

Rolling dragon (卷卷龙, juǎn juǎn lóng), also known locally as Juan Baicai, is a traditional children’s traveling game from Wuhan that combines collective movement with chanting. Typically involving more than ten participants, children hold hands to form a long chain resembling a dragon. A leading child initiates the game by guiding the line to coil inward, gradually transforming the chain into a compact spiral formation while the group chants the accompanying rhyme: “Juanjuanlong, roll into a tube, one tube after another; roll inward, roll

outward, again and again.”

After the inward coiling phase, the group reverses direction and gradually uncoils outward, often increasing speed as the activity progresses. As an embodied and synchronised group exercise, Rolling Dragon promotes whole body coordination, balance control, and collective timing. It also fosters peer cooperation through shared tempo, spatial awareness, and continuous hand to hand connection. Due to the expanding and contracting spiral movement and the potential for acceleration, the game is best conducted in open spaces that allow safe movement and clear group circulation.

Juan Juan long
卷 卷 龙
Rolling Dragon (18seconds)

Huang Chen (33) 黄晨
Jiang Han area, Wuhan City
6th June, 2025

$\text{♩} = 100$

$\frac{2}{4}$

juǎn juǎn lóng, juǎn juǎn lóng, juǎn chéng yī gè tǒng, juǎn chéng yī tiáo lóng, juǎn juǎn lóng, juǎn chéng tǒng, juǎn le yī tǒng, yòu yī tǒng, wǎng lǐ juǎn, wǎng wài juǎn, juǎn le yī juǎn, yòu yī juǎn.

[Figure 2] Transcription of the Wuhan dialect children's rhyme 'Rolling dragon'

Chinese lyrics:

卷卷龙

卷卷龙, 卷卷龙,
卷成一个筒筒;
开开龙, 开开龙,
开成一条龙龙。
卷卷龙, 卷成筒,
卷了一筒又一筒;
往里卷, 往外卷,
卷了一卷又一卷。

English translation:

Rolling dragon

Rolling dragon, rolling dragon,
Roll into a little tube;
Unrolling dragon, unrolling dragon,
Unroll into a long dragon.
Rolling dragon, roll into a tube,
Rolled one tube and another tube;
Rolling inward, rolling outward,
Rolled one turn and another turn.

2) Musical analysis

‘Rolling dragon’ is a game oriented spoken chant set in simple duple meter (2/4), with an approximate tempo of quarter note equals 100. Its musical organization is rhythm based, as the chant is delivered through speech without fixed pitch or melodic contour.

The rhythmic vocabulary consists primarily of quarter notes and paired eighth notes, reflecting the natural prosodic patterns of spoken Wuhan dialect. The chant comprises 16 measures organized into eight balanced two measure phrases. It follows a repetitive formal scheme (a b a b a a¹ a a¹), with slight rhythmic variation occurring in phrases two, four, six, and eight.

The relatively low rhythmic complexity and symmetrical phrase structure make Rolling Dragon suitable for Grade 1 rhythm instruction. It supports steady beat internalization, discrimination between quarter note and eighth note values, and the development of coordination and balance through integrated speech and movement activities.

3) Suggested activities

The lesson implements a Kodály-inspired prepare-present-practice sequence in which steady beat and speech rhythm are first experienced bodily and aurally, then formalised through rhythm syllables and simple notation, and finally consolidated through structured play.

At the outset, the teacher establishes a consistent tactus in 2/4 (approximately ♩ = 100), using a drum or knee pats, and invites pupils to entrain through stepping and patting with one step per beat. Brief stop-restart cues are introduced to assess whether pupils can re-enter the same pulse independently, thereby supporting early beat internalisation.

The chant text of ‘Rolling dragon’ is introduced through spoken imitation rather than immediate

singing, with phrase by phrase echoing that foregrounds natural speech stress as the source of rhythmic organisation. Dialect features are treated as culturally valid and pedagogically functional; instructional emphasis remains on rhythmic clarity and collective participation rather than accent correction (Choksy, 1999; Houlahan & Tacka, 2008).

Following text immersion, pupils are guided to differentiate beat from rhythm by sustaining the tactus in the lower body while clapping the surface rhythm with the hands. Alternating roles across groups further stabilises the dual layer coordination required for later ensemble interaction. The teacher then presents salient rhythmic cells extracted from the chant and labels them using Kodály rhythm syllables, supported by stick notation or rhythm cards. In this repertoire, a core pattern such as ti ti ta aligns with the three syllable unit “juan juan long,” while a longer pattern such as ti ti ti ti ta corresponds to phrases like “juan cheng yi ge tong.” Pupils practise decoding and recoding across modalities by reading the patterns with syllables, clapping them, and reinserting the original text, thereby linking aural recognition, kinaesthetic execution, and symbolic representation.

Practice activities consolidate accuracy and automaticity through short sequencing and response tasks, including arranging rhythm cards to match the chant's phrase order and rapid teacher pointed reading that shifts from syllables to text. The lesson culminates in an adapted Rolling Dragon game that functions as an embodied assessment of beat stability and group synchrony. Pupils form a hand held chain in groups of approximately eight to ten; one group moves while another provides a steady external reference through chanting and beat patting. The moving group prioritises beat based stepping as the line coils inward into a spiral and then reverses to uncoil outward, with tempo regulated by the teacher to ensure safety and musical control. A second round may incorporate gradual acceleration only after pupils demonstrate stable pulse and cooperative spatial awareness.

The lesson concludes with a brief formative check in which pupils reproduce the target rhythmic cells using syllables and clapping, followed by short reflection on how maintaining the tactus supports coordinated movement and prevents uncontrolled acceleration during collective play.

3. Clapping song

1) Cultural context of the rhyme

Clapping song (拍手歌, pāi shǒu gē), as performed in the Wuhan dialect, reflects localized forms of children's play, particularly hand-clapping interaction, coordinated movement, and

The repetitive dialogic structure ‘You clap one, I clap one (你拍一, 我拍一; Nǐ pāi yī, wǒ pāi yī)’ establishes a cooperative and interactive format that encourages synchronised clapping and steady beat maintenance. The sequential counting from one to eight integrates early numeracy within a rhythmic and embodied activity. When articulated in the Wuhan dialect, variations in vowel quality, consonant articulation, and tonal contour subtly influence speech rhythm and phrase shaping.

As an embodied chant activity, Clapping Song supports rhythm internalization, coordination, and dialogic interaction. Its performance in the Wuhan dialect further reinforces regional cultural identity and intergenerational transmission, positioning the rhyme as both a pedagogical resource and a medium of local cultural continuity.

Pai Mei Shou 拍手歌

Clapping Song (26 seconds)

Zhang Hui (12) 张惠雨
Wuhan City
14/6/2025

♩=110

2/4

nǐ 你 pāi 拍
yī 一, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
yī 一, gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 èr 二, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
liǎng 两 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 sān 三, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
sān 三 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 sì 四, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
sì 四 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 wǔ 五, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
wǔ 五 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙

zuò 坐 fēi 飞 jī 机;
shù 梳 xiǎo 小 biān 辫;
chī 吃 bīng 冰 gān 干;
xiě 写 dà 大 zì 字;
zài 在 tiào 跳 wǔ 舞;

nǐ 你 pāi 拍 liù 六, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
liù 六, gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 qī 七, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
qī 七 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 bā 八, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
bā 八 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 sì 四, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
sì 四 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙
nǐ 你 pāi 拍 wǔ 五, wǒ 我 pāi 拍
wǔ 五 gè 个 xiǎo 小 yá 牙

pí 皮 qiú 球;
qī 七, yā 鸭;
cǎi 猜 mí 谜 yá 牙;
bā 八, ba 叭;
chuī 吹 lǎ 喇叭;

[Figure 3] Transcription of the Wuhan dialect children's rhyme 'Clapping song'

Chinese lyrics:

English translation:

你拍一, 我拍一, 一个小伢坐飞机;	You clap one, I clap one, one little child rides on an airplane.
你拍二, 我拍二, 两个小伢拍皮球;	You clap two, I clap two, two little children bounce a ball.
你拍三, 我拍三, 三个小伢吃饼干;	You clap three, I clap three, three little children eat biscuits.
你拍四, 我拍四, 四个小伢写大字;	You clap four, I clap four, four little children practise big characters.
你拍五, 我拍五, 五个小伢在跳舞;	You clap five, I clap five, five little children are dancing.
你拍六, 我拍六, 六个小伢拍皮球;	You clap six, I clap six, six little children bounce a ball.
你拍七, 我拍七, 七个小伢猜谜语;	You clap seven, I clap seven, seven little children guess riddles.
你拍八, 我拍八, 八个小伢吹喇叭。	You clap eight, I clap eight, eight little children blow trumpets.

2) Musical analysis

‘Clapping song’ is a clapping games set in simple duple meter (2/4), with an approximate tempo of quarter note equals 110. The rhythmic vocabulary consists primarily of quarter notes and paired eighth notes, shaped by the natural prosodic patterns of spoken Wuhan dialect. The chant comprises 16 measures organised into eight balanced two measure phrases. It follows a highly repetitive formal scheme (a a¹ a a¹ a a¹ a a¹), with slight rhythmic variation occurring in the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth phrases.

The relatively low rhythmic complexity and symmetrical phrase structure make Clapping Song suitable for Grade 1 rhythm instruction. It supports steady beat internalisation, discrimination between quarter note and eighth note values, and the reinforcement of counting skills through coordinated speech and pulse tracking.

3) Suggested activities

Students work in pairs, standing face to face while maintaining a steady beat. Both partners chant the rhyme together in synchrony. On the phrases ‘You clap one, I clap one, students first clap their own hands and then clap their partner’s hands in coordination with the established pulse. As the chant progresses through the numerical sequence, the paired clapping continues in time, reinforcing steady beat and rhythmic consistency throughout the activity.

This activity emphasises synchronised movement, accurate speech rhythm, and cooperative interaction between partners. The primary pedagogical focus remains steady beat internalisation rather than speed or performance accuracy. In accordance with Kodály inspired principles, rhythm learning begins with embodied pulse experience before the introduction of symbolic notation. Through coordinated speech and movement, pupils strengthen beat stability, bilateral motor

coordination, and rhythmic control within a simple duple meter framework.

Only after students demonstrate consistent pulse maintenance does the teacher introduce rhythm syllables, such as *ta* for quarter note and *ti ti* for paired eighth notes, thereby connecting aural experience with symbolic representation.

4. City gate, city gate, egg cake

1) Cultural context of the rhyme

The gate passing version of ‘City gate, city gate, egg cake’ transforms the chant from a simple recitation into an embodied rhythmic dialogue game. Structured around a question and answer exchange, the activity reinforces speech rhythm, call and response interaction, and anticipatory listening. The alternating dialogue format enhances rhythmic phrasing while encouraging attentive group participation.

The physical action of raising and lowering the ‘gate’ in coordination with the chant aligns bodily movement with pulse, thereby supporting coordination and steady beat internalization. As participants move through the human gate, timing becomes crucial, reinforcing rhythmic awareness within a socially interactive setting.

Beyond its rhythmic function, the game reflects traditional communal play culture in which cooperation, negotiation, and role play are central to childhood socialization. Through collective participation and structured dramatic interaction, the rhyme operates not only as a rhythmic exercise but also as a medium of social and cultural transmission.

Cheng Men Cheng Men Ji Dan Gao
城 门 城 门 鸡 蛋 糕
City gate, city gate, egg cake (19seconds)

Guo Yuchen (12) 郭煜宸
Wuhan City
10/6/2025

cheng mén chéng mén jī dàn gāo
城 门 城 门 鸡 蛋 糕
sān shí lǜ dòu gāo
三 十 绿 豆 糕
chī xī fàn yān là jiāo
吃 稀 饭 腌 辣 椒
zǒu dào mén kǒu dā yī jiāo
走 到 门 口 哒 一 跤
chéng mén chéng mén jǐ zhàng gāo
城 门 城 门 几 丈 高
liù qī bā jiǔ shí zhàng gāo
六 七 八 九 十 丈 高
qí bái mǎ dài gāng dāo
骑 白 马 带 钢 刀
zuān jìn mén lái duō yī dāo
钻 进 门 来 剁 一 刀

[Figure 4] Transcription of the Wuhan dialect children's rhyme 'City gate, city gate, egg cake'

Chinese lyrics:
城 门 城 门 鸡 蛋 糕,
三 十 绿 豆 糕。
吃 稀 饭, 腌 辣 椒,
走 到 门 口 哒 一 跤。
城 门 城 门 几 丈 高?
六 七 八 九 十 丈 高!
骑 白 马, 带 钢 刀,
钻 进 大 门 来 剁 一 刀。

English translation:
City gate, city gate, egg-cake,
Thirty mung-bean cakes.
Eat rice porridge, eat pickled chilli,
Walk to the doorway and take a tumble.
City gate, city gate, how many zhang high?
Six, seven, eight, nine-ten zhang high!
Ride a white horse, carry a steel sabre,
Slip in through the main gate and chop once.

2) Musical analysis

'City gate, city gate, egg cake (城 门 城 门 鸡 蛋 糕, chéng mén chéng mén jī dàn gāo)' is a bridge trapping game with chanting set in simple duple meter (2/4), with an approximate tempo of quarter note equals 100. Its musical structure is primarily rhythm based and closely tied to

the rhythmic patterns of the Wuhan dialect.

The rhythm uses quarter notes and paired eighth notes. These patterns come from the natural speech rhythm of the Wuhan dialect. The chant comprises 16 measures organised into eight balanced two measure phrases. It follows a repetitive formal scheme (a a^v a^l a a a^l a), with slight rhythmic variation occurring in the a^v and a^l phrases.

The relatively low rhythmic complexity and symmetrical phrase organisation make the chant suitable for Grade 1 rhythm instruction. It supports steady beat internalisation, discrimination between quarter note and eighth note values, and the development of adaptive response skills through game-based turn taking and rapid decision making embedded in the gate passing format.

3) Suggested activities

The activity is structured as a gate-passing game in steady duple meter. Two pupils serve as gatekeepers, standing face to face with raised joined hands to form an arched ‘city gate’. The remaining pupils form a single-file line and proceed through the gate while chanting the rhyme, stepping once per beat to reinforce pulse consistency and coordinated movement.

As the first verse is completed, the gatekeepers lower their arms to ‘close’ the gate, typically capturing one pupil. The captured child completes a pre-agreed playful task or replaces a gatekeeper. The line then continues processing through the gate while chanting the second verse, maintaining steady beat alignment between stepping and speech rhythm. At the end of the second verse, the gate closes again according to the same timing convention.

In subsequent rounds, the tempo may be gradually increased to heighten rhythmic challenge while maintaining safe and controlled movement. Roles are rotated regularly to ensure broad participation.

Structurally comparable to the London Bridge game, this format transforms the chant into an embodied rhythmic dialogue. The precisely timed arm movements at phrase endings reinforce anticipatory listening and phrase awareness, while the integration of stepping, chanting, and closure supports steady beat internalisation, rhythmic coordination, and adaptive response skills within a culturally grounded play structure.

Taken together, the four exemplars demonstrate a consistent instructional pathway. Learners first experience pulse through large-scale movement or coordinated action, then align speech rhythm with a shared beat, subsequently stabilise recurring patterns through repetition and structured play, and finally connect familiar sound patterns to rhythm syllables and early notation.

This sequence reflects the operational logic of a Kodály-inspired approach, showing how local oral materials can be systematically transformed into sequenced rhythm instruction while preserving dialect, imagery, and embodied play.

VI. Kodály-Inspired Lesson Framework for Rhythm Instruction

Ta, ti-ti, and ta rest through Wuhan dialect rhymes

1. Lesson structure and duration

The instructional framework is designed as a short unit spanning two to three sessions (35-40 minutes each), allowing for the progressive development of rhythmic concepts in accordance with Kodály-inspired principles of cumulative learning.

2. Pedagogical approach

Instruction follows a Kodály-inspired approach emphasising sound before symbol, teacher modelling, and rote learning. All repertoire is introduced aurally, with the teacher first presenting each chant in full to establish a clear musical model, followed by phrase-by-phrase imitation. This ensures that rhythmic understanding is grounded in embodied and aural experience prior to the introduction of abstract representation.

3. Learning objectives

By the end of the instructional unit, students are expected to:

- maintain a steady beat through coordinated movement and chanting
- internalise pulse through embodied musical activities
- perform and identify rhythmic patterns (*ta* and *ti-ti*)
- recognise and respond to moments of silence (*ta rest*)
- coordinate speech, movement, and rhythm within structured musical activities

4. Teaching materials

Four Wuhan dialect children's rhymes are used as core materials:

- Swing your hands - steady beat preparation
- Rolling dragon - pulse reinforcement through movement
- Clapping song - introduction of *ta* and *ti-ti*
- City gate, city gate, egg cake - introduction of *ta rest* through game-based interaction

5. Instructional procedure

1) Prepare stage: Embodied beat experience

Instruction begins with the development of steady beat through movement-based chanting. The teacher performs 'Swing your hands' in full while demonstrating simple body movements such as arm swinging or walking. Students first listen, then imitate the chant phrase by phrase, maintaining a consistent pulse through movement.

This is followed by 'Rolling dragon', in which students participate in a collective movement activity involving coiling and uncoiling actions. The teacher models the chant and movement before guiding students through step-by-step imitation. Each movement corresponds to the beat, reinforcing pulse stability and group coordination.

2) Present stage: Introduction of rhythmic concepts

Rhythmic concepts are introduced through 'Clapping song', a partner-based clapping chant. The teacher first performs the complete chant, after which students learn it through phrase-by-phrase repetition. Through guided clapping activities, students distinguish between steady beat and rhythmic patterns.

At this stage, the teacher introduces rhythm syllables:

- *ta* (one sound per beat)
- *ti-ti* (two sounds per beat)

Students practise these patterns through clapping and chanting, linking auditory and kinaesthetic experiences with emerging rhythmic awareness.

The concept of *ta rest* is introduced using 'City gate, city gate, egg cake' a gate-passing game.

The teacher demonstrates the activity in full before students participate. At specific phrase endings, movement stops as the gate closes; these moments of silence are identified as *ta rest*. Students experience the contrast between sound and silence through embodied action, enabling intuitive understanding prior to formal explanation.

6. Practice stage: Consolidation and application

Students engage in structured practice activities to reinforce rhythmic concepts. The teacher models short rhythmic patterns incorporating *ta*, *ti-ti*, and *ta rest*, and students respond through imitation, clapping, and movement.

Activities include echo imitation, group responses, and simple sequencing tasks. Through repeated performance across modalities, students consolidate accuracy, coordination, and rhythmic fluency.

7. Closing

The lesson concludes with a brief consolidation of key rhythmic concepts through guided recall. The teacher prompts students to identify rhythmic patterns and moments of silence, reinforcing conceptual understanding.

A short goodbye song is then introduced. The teacher sings the complete song first, and students join through imitation while maintaining a steady beat through clapping or gentle movement. This provides structured closure and reinforces pulse internalisation within a familiar musical routine.

8. Assessment

Student learning is assessed through observation of:

- steady beat maintenance
- accuracy in performing *ta* and *ti-ti*
- appropriate response to *ta rest*
- coordination of movement, speech, and rhythm

The lesson plan exemplars demonstrate how the identified rhythmic characteristics can be

systematically translated into structured classroom practice. Through a Kodály-inspired sequence of preparation, presentation, and practice, learners progress from embodied beat experience to the recognition of rhythmic patterns (*ta*, *ti-ti*) and the understanding of silence (*ta rest*).

The consistent use of teacher modelling and rote learning ensures that musical concepts are internalised aurally before being conceptualised symbolically. These findings confirm that Wuhan dialect children's rhymes function not only as culturally meaningful artefacts but also as pedagogically structured resources that support the development of early rhythm literacy in Chinese primary music education.

VII. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examined how Wuhan dialect children's rhymes can be systematically analysed and translated into rhythm teaching materials for Chinese primary music education. By combining corpus-based analysis with a Kodály-inspired pedagogical framework, the study contributes to both theoretical and practical discussions on culturally responsive music education and early rhythm pedagogy.

From an analytical perspective, the findings reveal a strong predominance of simple duple meter, limited rhythmic vocabulary centred on quarter notes (*ta*) and paired eighth notes (*ti-ti*), and short, symmetrical phrase structures. These characteristics are consistent with previous research highlighting the role of nursery rhymes in supporting phonological awareness, memory, and rhythmic perception (Bryant et al., 1989; Pan, 2021). More importantly, this study demonstrates that such features are not only linguistically meaningful but also pedagogically functional, as they align closely with Kodály-inspired sequencing principles that prioritise simple, repetitive, and aurally accessible materials in the early stages of learning.

The findings further reinforce the importance of embodied rhythm learning. The integration of movement, speech, and play observed across the rhymes supports pedagogical approaches that emphasise pre-symbolic musical experience and bodily engagement (Choksy, 1999; Kokas, 1970). Rather than treating these features as incidental, the study shows how they can be systematically identified and organised into a structured instructional sequence, moving from steady-beat internalisation to speech-rhythm coordination, rhythmic syllables, and early notation reading.

From a culturally responsive perspective, the study highlights the dual function of dialect-based rhymes as both cultural artefacts and pedagogical resources. In line with culturally responsive

teaching frameworks (Abril, 2013; Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995), the use of Wuhan dialect rhymes connects classroom learning with students' lived linguistic and social experiences. Crucially, the findings demonstrate that local materials need not be treated as supplementary content; instead, they can serve as central components of structured music instruction.

A key contribution of this study lies in the articulation of a clear analytical and pedagogical pathway linking oral tradition to classroom practice. By moving from corpus documentation to rhythmic and structural coding, and subsequently to Kodály inspired sequencing and lesson design, the study provides a replicable framework for transforming locally transmitted materials into developmentally appropriate teaching resources. The lesson exemplars further illustrate how different rhyme types such as movement chant, collective action chant, partner chant, and dialogic game can support distinct but related aspects of rhythm learning.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. The corpus was collected through a school based competition, and the performers were primarily middle school students recalling rhymes from earlier childhood. In addition, the study presents pedagogical applications through illustrative lesson plans rather than reporting measured classroom outcomes. Future research should therefore implement and evaluate the proposed framework in primary classrooms, examine its impact on beat stability and rhythmic decoding, and explore how teachers adapt dialect-based materials within contemporary curriculum contexts.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that Wuhan dialect children's rhymes can be systematically analysed and organised into a developmental sequence aligned with Kodály inspired principles. By integrating cultural authenticity with pedagogical structure, the study positions these rhymes as viable and instructionally effective resources for early rhythm literacy in Chinese primary music education. More broadly, it contributes to ongoing discussions on how local musical traditions can be meaningfully incorporated into formal education through structured and culturally responsive approaches.

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