



Charles University
Faculty of Education
Department of Music Education
Magdalény Rettigové 4, 116 39 Praha 1

Review of Diploma Thesis

Thesis Examiner

Student: Aktaş Rodem
Title of the thesis: Facilitating Experiential Learning Through Soundmapping in Music Education
Thesis Supervisor: Mgr. Vartan Agopian, Ph.D.
Thesis Examiner: PhDr. Vít Novotný, Ph.D.

Evaluation of the thesis	Mark (1 - 4)
Clarity of the thesis question and its realisation	1
Difficulty of the theme in relation to the theoretical knowledge	1
Difficulty of the theme in relation to practical skills	1
Methodology and adequacy	2
Literature review	2
Structure of the thesis	1
Language and terminology	1
Writing level	1
Originality of the thesis	1
Practicality of the thesis	1

Overall assessment of the thesis

The thesis introduces the concept of soundmapping within the context of (Czech) school music education, an innovative feat in its own right. With the main focus being consciously put on the music-education aspects of such activities rather than on the eco-musicological ones, the project proves to be not only original, but also highly relevant to the present-day endeavours in the given field as well as firmly grounded in preceding efforts in closely related areas of study and research.



On the whole, the thesis has been crafted with deep knowledge in relevant theoretical backgrounds (eco-musicology, experiential learning theory, etc.), with a well-developed sensitivity for the needs of middle-school pupils as well as with an obvious sense for a succinct but elegant and vibrantly rich writing style. The structure of the paper is logical and leads the reader through all the aspects and processes of the project in a comprehensible way.

This being said, there are a few suggestions worth putting forth that might be of use for the author:

It is not clear why Chapter 2: Theoretical Background and Chapter 3: Literature Review are divided and named the way they are. Both the chapters seem to be serving a very similar purpose: to set the proposed project firmly in relevant *theoretical* contexts based on an extensive *literature review*. The examiner's suggestion is to consider merging the two chapters under a common title of Theoretical Background and Literature Review or the like. This could prevent a slight „hiccup“ on the part of the reader as they follow the author's stream of thoughts and help keep up the overall smooth flow of the text.

Some pieces of information keep recurring in the text leaving behind the feeling of unnecessary repetition. To give two examples:

- The four stages of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory are first named in Introduction (p. 3), elaborated on in Chapter 3.1 (Literature Review: Experiential Learning Theory) and then restated and described once again in Chapter 4.1 (Methodology: Experiential Learning Theory in Practice);
- The fact that R. Murray Schafer pioneered the concept of soundscape studies in 1960s and 1970s appears in the text as many as five times (p. 7, 9, 10, 25, and 32).

With a bit of editing on the part of the author of the thesis, this slight wrinkle on the otherwise flawless surface of the textual structure of the paper might be smoothed up.

One last objection lies in the fact that the validity and functionality of the proposed school activities could be enhanced greatly if there were more than a single pilot lesson conducted and more than a single group of students faced with the given tasks. The author reflects on this herself twice in text:

„Expanding the study with a broader research opportunity to include a larger and more diverse sample across multiple schools could enhance the generalizability of the findings,“ (p. 59).

„The major limitation of the presented implementation of soundmapping in music education is timing. The participant school lacked the time and resources to support multiple repetitive outdoor activities required for a thorough soundmapping project. It would be beneficial to have several sessions with students to provide them with more time for exploration, reflection, and composition preparation,“ (p. 69).

The examiner agrees with this self-assessment and hopes that these limitations of the proposed project (including the obvious fact that for a school to offer more extensive time to



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such an experiment of a visiting teacher/researcher is not an easy arrangement to achieve) will be foreseen and prevented in the author's upcoming Ph.D. project.

The examiner is very keen on following the progress of this subsequent and more extensive Ph.D. project, so wonderfully conceived already on the diploma (MA) level, in the years to come.

All the best of luck!

I readily recommend this paper for the oral defense.

Questions for discussion

- 1) If you had an option to repeat the 90-minute programme described and analyzed in your paper, what changes would you make in the arrangements (in terms of preparations, implementation, assessment etc.)?
- 2) What other methods of applying in (Czech) schools the concept of soundscapes, soundwalks or - more broadly - the area of eco-musicology could you think of? Do you feel that the potential of such additional ideas could prove as high as the activities you propose in this thesis?
- 3) Compared to the Czech Republic, how open do you think Turkish schools (school system) would be to enable you to implement your ideas? (I am aware of how difficult it might be to generalize in such a broad perspective: just a personal estimate will do). :)

Date: 4th September, 2024

Signature of Examiner