Chapter 5

# Unpopular Music: Beliefs and Behaviours towards Music in Education

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...the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best
(Henry Van Dyke)

## Introduction

Studies show school music is enjoyed by many pupils (Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall and Tarrant, 2003), and there is widespread belief among commentators and policymakers that music should be 'for all' (for example Welch, 2001). However, there remain a host of negative beliefs and behaviours towards music in formal schooling, among both learners and teachers, which pose serious challenges for music education and which innovations in policy and practice have had limited success in overcoming. Understanding the basis of attitudes and practices among learners, teachers and music education researchers towards music in formal education is crucial for enabling widening participation and the future success of a music curriculum. Underpinning this situation lies a second-order problem within music education research itself. Taken as a whole, existing studies show the challenges facing music education to be multifaceted, but, while existing research provides a host of ideas for resolving particular issues, as yet the field remains fragmented. We have many pieces of the puzzle but no means of bringing them together. Research requires a framework capable of integrating the findings of studies of the different issues facing music education. In this chapter we address this issue using an approach from the sociology of educational knowledge: Legitimation Code Theory (LCT). As we shall illustrate, this approach is not only useful for understanding problems in music education but also enables studies of disparate issues to be brought together within an overarching framework.
  We begin by briefly sketching the field of research on problems facing music education, highlighting the multidimensional character of these problems and the often fragmented nature of research in the field. Secondly, we introduce some key concepts from LCT. Finally, we show how this framework can integrate diverse foci and data by exploring three illustrative issues: the beliefs and practices of pupils; the attitudes of teachers; and the field of music education research itself. Our aim is not to offer a definitive account of the problems facing music education,

nor to suggest that LCT is the only sociological theory that should be adopted, but rather to illustrate what this approach can offer.

## The 'Problems' of School Music

In this chapter we focus on educational contexts where music is taught as a compulsory and integral part of the school curriculum (including the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Greece, and parts of Germany). In such contexts, pupils learn a range of musical skills and ways of understanding, including singing, playing instruments, composing and improvising, listening to music, and evaluating their own and others' music. Children may also opt to study music (usually instrumental lessons) as an extra-curricular activity either at or beyond school. In addition, there are many opportunities to experience music in informal contexts outside of school, mostly through listening (North, Hargreaves and O'Neill, 2000; Zillmann and Gan, 1997) but also through playing in informal bands and learning with peers (Green, 2002a, 2002b). This provides a 'third environment' (Hargreaves, Marshall and North, 2003) for what is usually informal learning.

   In England and Wales there is a 'problem' with school music that has been exercising researchers and commentators for decades (for example Bray, 2000; Harland, Kinder, Lord, Stott, Schagen and Haynes *et al*., 2000). According to these commentators, music is often not a 'successful' school subject, and pupils do not respond positively to it, particularly in secondary school, a picture supported by inspection reports that suggest music is not well taught (OFSTED, 2002, 2004). At the primary level, many generalist classroom teachers express fears about teaching music, mostly stemming from lack of confidence in their own musical skills (Hennessy, 2000; Seddon and Biasutti, 2008). At the secondary level, many teachers have relatively narrow classical backgrounds that do not equip them well to deal with a range of musical styles and traditions or different teaching methods (Hargreaves, Purves, Welch and Marshall, 2007; York, 2001). Among learners, around a third of school pupils show no interest in learning to play musical instruments (Lamont *et al.*, 2003); among those who do there is a large drop-off in numbers as they move into secondary school (Sloboda, 2001); very few pupils opt to study music as a formal school qualification when it becomes an option (Bell, 2001); and many popular musicians report their school experiences in music were unhelpful for their future careers (Green, 2002a).

   Many different definitions of the 'problem' facing school music, and its corresponding solution, have been proposed over the past 40 years (Pitts, 2002). An initiative in the 1960s and 70s focused on the type of music being taught. This stemmed from the argument that formal education tended to prioritize 'serious' music while largely ignoring 'popular' music which it was suggested might engage pupils more (Vulliamy, 1977; Swanwick, 1968). In Great Britain popular music had been taught only in the lower status Certificate of Secondary Education qualification and not in the higher status General Certificate of Education

Ordinary Level, and then only as a way into higher-status classical music (Green, 2002a, 2003). In *Popular Music and the Teacher*, Swanwick (1968) conceded that bringing popular music into the classroom would not solve all the problems of control and attention, but argued it was an important way of breaking down barriers and bringing new cultures into the school (see also Green, 2002b).

While this approach highlights curriculum content, it largely overlooks questions of pedagogy and teachers' lack of experience with or training in popular music (Green, 2002c; York, 2001). It also tends to obscure differences in contextual forms and functions of musical experience, something pupils themselves recognize (see Stålhammar, 2003). For example, pupils report that listening to music at school serves different (primarily educational) functions to listening at home (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001). Following this argument, school music can never be as 'appealing' to pupils as music they experience outside the confines of the education system because of its nature as an educational activity (see also Folkestad, 2005; Kushner, 1999).

Another definition of the problem of school music, particularly at secondary level, focuses on pedagogy. The introduction of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualification in 1985 provided a formal articulation of more progressive teaching methods in music and the notion of learning by doing, and a move away from music as a minority subject area within the curriculum for pupils aged 14-16 (Atkinson with Spruce, 2002; Paynter, 1992). The GCSE criteria explicitly stated that teachers should encourage children of all abilities to study music at GCSE, and it has been argued that this is important for pupils at both ends of the academic spectrum (Atkinson with Spruce, 2002). However, these changes in the pedagogy of music at age 14-16 have not translated into higher numbers of examination entrants (Bell, 2001). Thus a focus on pedagogy in isolation provides at best only a partial understanding of the problem. Similarly, existing explanations of low GCSE music uptake have been largely speculative, ad hoc and piecemeal (c.f. Lamont and Maton, 2008). Bray (2000), for example, hypothesises a disparate series of potential explanations, including discontinuity in the curriculum, devaluing of the vocational worth of music by parents, the inherent inappropriateness of studying music as an examination subject, and pupils' perceptions of the expertise required to succeed in music. Other factors have been suggested by other studies, such as the perception of difficulty and importance of the subject (for example Wright, 2002) and the significance of peers and other social influences on subject choices (for example Warrington, Younger and Williams, 2000).

As this brief sketch illustrates, existing research on the 'problem' of school music offers a patchwork quilt of disparate potential problems and solutions. While highlighting the multifaceted nature of the issues, this also reflects shortcomings in the intellectual field itself. There is often little empirical evidence for claims and weak explanations of the roles played by various conjectured factors. Moreover, studies of particular factors tend not to integrate their findings into a bigger picture. The many facets of the problem - curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation, etc. - are thereby typically isolated from one another. To reach a fuller, multidimensional,

more empirically based understanding of the issues requires, then, both systematic research and a coherent and integrative theoretical framework. We shall now discuss a framework that can be applied to a variety of objects of study using diverse research methods to address a range of issues, and which offers a valuable starting point for enabling systematic and integrated empirical research into the multidimensional problem of music education.


**Legitimation Code Theory**

Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) integrates and builds on the sociological approaches of Pierre Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein (see Maton, 2000, 2007, 2009, 2010; Moore and Maton, 2001). The theory focuses on the bases of achievement within educational contexts. It views the practices and beliefs of agents as embodying messages as to what should be the dominant basis of achievement. The underlying structuring principles of these messages are conceptualized as 'legitimation codes'. One dimension of this code, which we shall focus on here, is 'specialization' or what makes someone or something different, special and worthy of distinction. This dimension highlights that every practice, belief or knowledge claim is about or oriented towards something and by someone, and so sets up an *epistemic relation* to an object and a *social relation* to a subject. Put briefly, each relation may be more strongly or weakly emphasized in practices and beliefs, and these two strengths together give the legitimation code of specialization. Figure 5.1 outlines four such codes:

- a *knowledge code*, where possession of specialized knowledge, skills or procedures are emphasized as the basis of achievement, and the attributes of actors are downplayed;
- a *knower code*, where specialist knowledge and skills are less significant and instead the attributes of actors as knowers are emphasized as the measure of achievement, whether these attributes are viewed as born (such as 'natural talent'), cultivated (such as artistic gaze or 'taste') or socially based (for example a gendered gaze in feminist standpoint theory);
- an *elite code*, where legitimacy is based on both possessing specialist knowledge and being the right kind of knower (the term 'elite' does not necessarily mean socially exclusive but rather possessing both legitimate knowledge and legitimate knower attributes); and
- a *relativist code*, where legitimacy is determined by neither specialist knowledge nor knower attributes.

These codes thereby conceptualize different rulers of achievement, where the underlying rules are that what matters is: 'what you know' (knowledge code); 'the kind of knower you are' (knower code); both (elite code); or neither (relativist code).
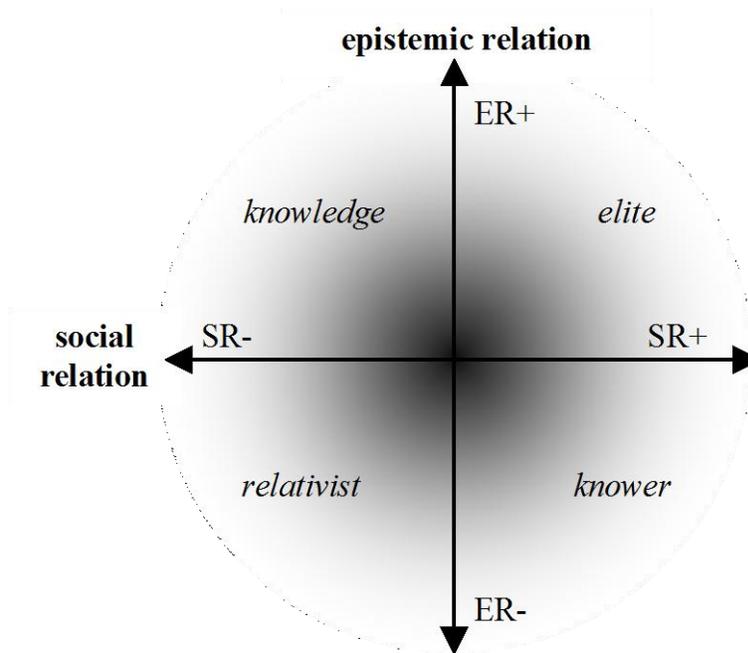
*Source*: Maton (2007, p.97)

Figure 5.1     Legitimation codes of specialization

The code describes the 'rules of the game' or dominant basis of success in any particular context. A specific code may dominate as the (typically unwritten) rules of the game, but not everyone may recognize and/or be able to realize what is required, and there may be struggles over which code is dominant. One can thus talk of a *code clash* between the code characterizing, for example, a pupil's ways of thinking and being (or in Bourdieu's terms their 'habitus') and that demanded by the educational context. This may lead to difficulties for the pupil, leading to anxiety, alienation or boredom and a sense that 'this is not for the likes of me'. The dominant code may also change, between subject areas, classrooms and stages of a curriculum. Such a *code shift* effectively changes the rules of the game. Pupils who succeeded under the previous code may find themselves doing less well under the new code. If the code shift and the new code are not made explicit to pupils then the inexplicable decline in achievement of pupils whose habitus codes do not match the new educational code may lead to loss of motivation, bewilderment and a sense that 'this is *no longer* for the likes of me'. Where pupils are aware of a potential code clash or code shift in the near future, they may choose to opt out of facing that prospect.

This conceptual framework is now being used in a range of studies of diverse issues in education (for example Carvalho, Dong and Maton, 2009, Doherty, 2008;

Lamont and Maton, 2008). Though our examples above focus on relations between pupils' perceptions and curricular expectations (reflecting a study we discuss further below), they can also be used to conceptualize the beliefs and practices of any actors, such as teachers, policy-makers, commentators, and researchers. The value of LCT for our focus here thereby lies in its applicability across diverse research agendas. Firstly, LCT can be used to analyse any number of practices: curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation, beliefs, interactions within a classroom, and so forth. Secondly, it can also be used at different levels of analysis: a national curriculum, a school, a classroom, a subject area, specific aspects of a subject's curriculum, particular tasks within that area, and so on. Thirdly, it can also be used with a range of methods, including documentary analysis, surveys and interviews. These affordances of the theory thereby allow different dimensions of music education to be brought together. Similarly, one can compare different contexts (such as classrooms) and analyse change over time without becoming lost in surface empirical differences. Lastly, the theory is also suggestive. The notion of 'code clash' highlights that one issue for music education might be that its underlying bases of achievement may not match those of the majority of learners and/or teachers, and 'code shift' highlights how anticipated changes in the rules of the game might affect pupils' decision-making about beginning or continuing to participate in music education, of what kind (formal/informal) and in what contexts (educational/everyday). Legitimation Code Theory thereby offers a valuable basis for building a theoretically-informed, empirically-based approach that can bring together quantitative and qualitative studies of a range of educational levels and contexts.

## Legitimation Codes in Music Education

To illustrate the potential of LCT we now turn to consider three different areas of concern to music education, addressing in turn illustrative issues relating to pupils, teachers and intellectual production. The first illustrates how LCT can serve as the basis of research, generating hypotheses capable of being empirically investigated, and draws on our own research on the apparently unpopular nature of school music as a qualification in England. The second uses the framework as a means of re-analysing and integrating existing research, exemplified by a study of low levels of confidence in singing amongst a cohort of student teachers. The final example illustrates how LCT can illuminate the field of music education research itself, focusing here on the implications of currently fashionable intellectual positions.

*Pupils: Explaining the Unpopularity of Music as a School Qualification*

Our first example draws on research into English education (Lamont and Maton, 2008, Maton, 2007), where music has remained relatively unpopular as a qualification in secondary schooling at the optional stage (age 14), enjoying a much lower take-up rate than many other subjects (Bell, 2001). As discussed

earlier, existing work hypothesized a disparate range of potential reasons for this comparative unpopularity but has been typically piecemeal and undertheorized (for example Bray, 2000; Harland *et al.*, 2000; QCA, 2004).  Despite many changes to the nature of the qualification to include more popular music and more interesting modes of assessment (Atkinson with Spruce, 2002), uptake remained low at less than 10% (QCA, 2002).  Our question was: why might this be the case?

We began by using LCT to analyse principles of achievement underlying the English school music curriculum, as exemplified by the written National Curriculum attainment targets and programmes of study and by the GCSE syllabi and assessment criteria.  This documentary analysis shows that the official requirements for music embody different legitimation codes of specialisation for different stages of the curriculum (see Lamont & Maton, 2008).  In primary school (Key Stages 1-2, ages 5-11) achievement is defined in terms of pupils' capacity to express themselves rather than demonstrate skills or knowledge, with the goals of 'increasing personal involvement, independence and creativity' and exploring their 'thoughts and feelings' (DfES/QCA 1999, p.18).  This embodies a *knower code*.  In the first three years of secondary school (Key Stage 3, ages 11-14, while music is still a compulsory part of the curriculum), aptitude, attitude and personal engagement are downplayed in favour of the demonstration of musical skills and knowledge and an emphasis on the formal elements of music and critical thinking, representing a *knowledge code*.  At GCSE level (Key Stage 4, ages 14-16) the code changes again, requiring pupils to demonstrate *both* their capacity for personal expression and aesthetic sensitivity *and* their musical knowledge and technical skills: an *elite code*.  The framework thereby provided a means of characterizing the basis of achievement at different levels, highlighting code shifts through the curriculum.

From this analysis we hypothesized that one reason for low uptake of GCSE music in England might be the second code shift.  The first code shift (from knower code to knowledge code) reflects a general change in the school context, coinciding with the move from primary to secondary school.  This changes the 'rules of the game' and often creates difficulties for pupils across a wide range of subjects.  In music a second code shift occurs between Key Stage 3 and GCSE, where the basis of success changes from a knowledge code to an elite code.  The rules of the game are thereby changed again, at least at the level of curriculum guidelines and syllabus demands, to a code requiring not only the right knowledge but also the right kind of personal attributes.  Thus, at GCSE level there are, in effect, two measures by which pupils might judge their future chances of achievement.

Whether this affects subject choices depends on whether these codes are reflected in pupils' perceptions of the basis of success in school music.  We conducted surveys with pupils aged 7 to 14 exploring their attitudes towards a range of school subject areas (Lamont and Maton, 2008).  Pupils were asked about their perceptions of reasons for success at five school subjects - mathematics, music, English literature, science and history - and asked to choose one of four options (here annotated with the code they were intended to reflect):

- Anyone can do it, nothing special is needed [relativist].
- You need to learn special skills or knowledge [knowledge].
- You need to have 'natural ability' or a 'feel' for it [knower].
- Only people with 'natural ability' can learn the special skills needed [elite].

We refer to these as options (for example 'knowledge option'); codes are principles underlying practices and beliefs, while options are a possible way in which the codes may be realized in pupils' perceptions. The modal responses were the knowledge option for maths, science and music, and the relativist option for English literature and history. Analysis of the results for music showed that although the knowledge option dominated responses, as pupils approached GCSE study in Key Stage 3 the proportion choosing the elite option rose, and this was even stronger for pupils in Year 9 (age 13-14) who had already chosen to study music for GCSE. Thus, the longer that pupils are at school and the closer to GCSE (and in particular choosing GCSE music), the greater the likelihood that they viewed music as an elite option (i.e. requiring both natural ability and special skills).

This study revealed some intuitively surprising results. While one might expect mathematics and science to be associated with a knowledge option, the choice of a relativist option for English and history is less easily interpreted. This was not a weakness of the concepts but rather reflected our first attempts at operationalizing them, and specifically the wording of the original four options (cf. Maton, 2007). Our knower option conflated natural ability and a 'feel' for the subject, which might have reduced the number of pupils choosing the knower option for English and history (which are not typically associated with 'natural ability'). Furthermore, our elite option ('only people with "natural ability" can learn the special skills needed') made natural ability the *basis* for access to skills rather than bringing together *both* personal attributes and knowledge, potentially limiting the choice of this option. (This does, however, make the higher number of elite option responses found for music even more striking). Finally, the forced-choice design suggested the codes were four ideal types, rather than focusing on the relative strengths of the epistemic and social relations that underpin codes. Simply put, offering only four options did not access the *relative* strengths of emphasis on knowledge or knower attributes (Maton, 2007).

Accordingly, in subsequent studies we have developed this simple instrument to: (i) include the issue of cultivated 'taste' or 'gaze', as might be expected in the humanities; (ii) remove sequencing in the elite option (so that natural talent need not be the basis of acquiring a developed 'feel' or 'gaze'); and (iii) move from a forced-choice to a rating scale approach which allows independent ratings to be provided of each of the relations.

These have been operationalized in terms of the following reasons for success:

- skills, techniques and specialist knowledge;
- natural-born talent;
- taste, judgement or a developed 'feel' for it.

In theoretical terms, the first ('skills') represents the epistemic relation and 'talent' and 'taste' represent different dimensions of the social relation.

In a study with 93 first year university students (Maton, 2007), respondents were asked to give ratings of importance for success on these three scales for a range of subjects including English, maths, science, history, music, and psychology. Respondents thus gave ratings of the significance of a subject's epistemic relation ('skills') and of its social relation ('talent' and 'taste'). In order to calculate their relative strengths, talent and taste were first combined to create a composite knower score, and means were calculated across all subjects for the knowledge score and again across all subjects for the combined knower score in order to give baselines for the epistemic and social relations respectively. The results are shown in Figure 5.2.
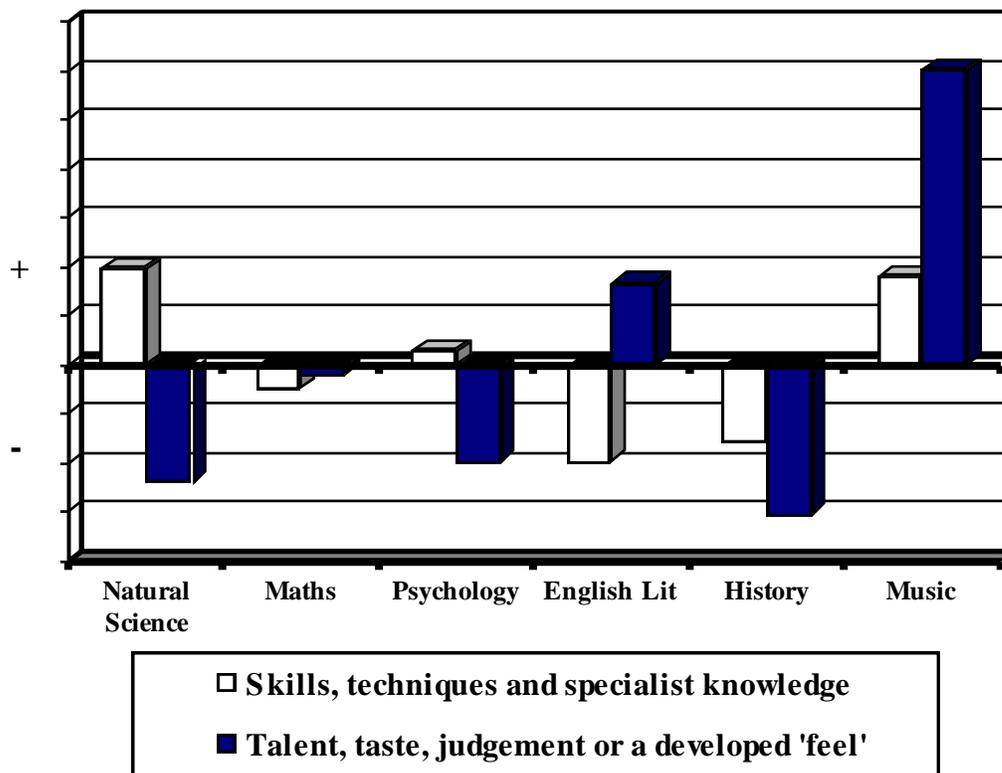


*Source*: Maton (2007, p. 102)

Figure 5.2     University students' perceptions of basis of achievement

Comparing individual subjects against these baselines, science and psychology had higher than average skills scores (stronger epistemic relation) and lower talent/taste scores (weaker social relation): a *knowledge code*. English had the opposite scores: a *knower code*. Maths scored evenly on both, which requires further investigation. History presented a *relativist code* with lower than average scores for both skills and talent/taste, while music was scored higher for both variables, again demonstrating an *elite code* in students' perceptions. Breaking down the knower code into talent and taste, the results indicate a significant proportion of 'taste' judgements for English (reflecting the notion of a cultivated 'gaze' gained through immersion in exemplary texts), but for music an equally high level of talent and taste judgements as the basis of success.

This study of students who have already made a series of subject choices reinforces the notion that one factor affecting decision-making among subjects may be their perceived codes. Of the subjects addressed here, only music was perceived predominantly as embodying an elite code, i.e. as comprising two measures of achievement against which pupils are judged. When set alongside ratings of subject significance in which music ranked comparatively low (see Lamont and Maton, 2008), this presents a picture of a subject viewed by pupils as becoming more demanding at the same time as the rewards to be gained may be diminishing, making it for many a relatively unattractive choice.

Here we have only given a flavour of these studies, which alongside quantitative data and documentary analysis also involved qualitative data from student focus groups which underscored the elite code portrait of music (Maton, 2007). However, this brief summary of key points illustrates the methodological flexibility of LCT and shows how it can fruitfully serve as the basis of research by highlighting potentially significant foci and generating hypotheses capable of further empirical investigation.

*Teachers: Explaining Changing Levels of Confidence*

As well as serving as the generating basis for new research, LCT can also enable existing research to be brought within an overarching framework. To illustrate this, and the flexibility of focus of the approach, we turn to explore a different issue in music education, a key problem highlighted earlier above: teacher confidence, particularly at primary level.

Primary school teachers are often required to teach general class music without having received musical training. Such teachers often report severe problems of confidence in teaching music (for example Hennessy, 2000, Seddon and Biasutti, 2008). Although there is as yet little clear evidence (Lamont, 2002), it has often been argued that class teachers' ambivalence towards music in such settings may be translated to their pupils (Glover and Ward, 1993). Teachers' explanations of such lack of confidence typically hinge on issues of skill. For example, prior to their teaching practice, trainee teachers in Hennessy's study (2000) strongly emphasized the importance of being a skilled performer, and noted that in music

there was more emphasis on their own abilities and skills. One, Kate, noted 'music needs more practical skills than other arts', and a second, Tom, explained:

> I think one of the main problems with music is you regard it as being something you can't do unless you're really good at it ... you have a similar thing with art but not quite as much because you've got your own personal way of doing things. If you're playing a set piece you can't play it to your own interpretation ... but if you're producing a picture then you can put yourself into it, there's no specific structure. (Hennessy, 2000, pp. 188-189)

Such responses suggest such teachers hold a *knowledge code* conception of music, even in primary-level teaching: they emphasize the possession of formal musical skills. However, experience of the different basis of achievement to be found in primary school music - a *knower code* - can help to change these views. After teaching experience in their third and fourth years of training, two of the 12 trainees in Hennessy's study had dramatically changed their views on what was important in music teaching. The first, Julia, recognized that her own skills were less significant:

> I realise that it doesn't matter what my ability is because as long as I set it up right and get my aims across then it's up to them. They don't want you interfering – just give support and advice to get the structure. It's so different to maths where you've got to know how to do it, it's what they want to do, their interpretation. (Hennessy, 2000, pp. 189-190)

Similarly, Tom, after a positive experience of teaching composition, noted that he was proud of pupils' achievements and that the 'social skills and the enjoyment they felt when we changed volume and tempo and they could see how they impacted on the composition ... I think this is more important than the knowledge bit' (Hennessy, 2000, p. 191).

Reinterpreting Hennessy's (2000) findings using LCT suggests that such teachers are learning the dominant code to be found in this stage of the music curriculum, where skills, knowledge and procedures are less significant than they had previously thought, while issues relating to pupils as knowers (in terms of self-expression rather than notions of natural talent) are more significant. In other words, it is a recognition of the knower code dominating music in primary school that helps alleviate their profound lack of confidence and reluctance to engage - they come to see the 'rules of the game'. This in turn suggests that teaching teachers the legitimation code underlying music education at primary level could help overcome these issues. In re-theorizing such findings, LCT can thus help integrate studies of diverse issues within a wider problematic, both bringing existing studies into relation with one another and pointing the way forward for future work.

*Research: The Intellectual Field of School Music Education*

Having touched on examples of issues relating to pupils and teachers, our final focus is music education research itself. As well as generating new research and integrating diverse existing studies, LCT can also be used to analyse intellectual fields of research. Carvalho *et al.* (2009), for example, use LCT to describe competing positions within the field of design studies in order to provide a neutral meta-language for the field to reflexively understand itself. Such a review is beyond our scope here, but we shall briefly discuss the dominant code of research within the field, highlighting how LCT raises questions for how its underlying assumptions relate to substantive issues of concern to music education.

An increasingly dominant argument within contemporary music education writing proclaims that music is for everyone (for example Welch, 2001). This position arose in response to two factors thought to be limiting the growth of music education: the 'myth' of talent as the basis of achievement in music (Sloboda and Davidson, 1996; Welch, 2001), and the impact of societal, cultural, institutional and psychological characteristics of actors on levels and forms of access and inclusion (Green, 2003; Jorgensen, 2007). Universal inclusion has become a dominant driving force in the rhetoric of music education (DfES/DCMS 2004, 2006; Woodford, 2005). Glover and Ward, for example, begin their handbook for primary music teachers by stating '*There is nothing exceptional about being musical. Everyone is*' (1993, p. 1, original emphasis). In LCT terms, such proclamations suggest that access to music is best served by a relativist code; in other words, that neither specialist knowledge nor particular knower attributes are required for achievement. Such an impulse also underlies a growing trend of emphasizing the importance of musical teaching and learning beyond the school (Folkestad, 2005; Hargreaves *et al.*, 2003; Kushner, 1999).

However, the relativist code can be held only as a position *on* the field rather than a position *in* the field - in rhetoric rather than reality (Maton, 2010). If 'anything goes', then there is no basis for determining what should be taught, how it should be taught, how it should be assessed, as well as by whom, based on what and why. Whether one agrees with their aims or not, 'traditional' forms of music education, such as the music appreciation movement in early twentieth-century England, had clear aims, such as immersing pupils in high culture, which provided the basis of answers to these questions. Similarly, music pedagogy through instrumental tuition focuses primarily on skill acquisition, shaping its curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and so forth. However, it is less clear how a rhetoric of democracy and social inclusion if based on a relativist code can play out in formal education (cf. Spruce, 2002).

If the relativist code underlies rhetoric, in reality much education research tends to emphasize what is known as a 'cultivated knower code', one focused on developing taste and sensibility (Maton, 2010). For example, Kushner (1999) refers to the importance of 'personal taste based on independent judgement' (p. 212); the 'progressive' methods championed in the 1960s and 70s in British

music education (for example Paynter and Aston, 1970) emphasize creativity and personal expression; and Elliott (2005) argues for the importance of expression and emotion in music education. Similarly:

> Music lessons are now regarded as the means of 'initiating' children into the discipline or 'world' of music as part of a liberal education directed towards the opening and development of minds. The arts are a unique form of knowing and thinking ... It must be stressed, however, that educators subscribing to the idea of music as a way of knowing are always at pains to point out that this is *experiential* or *acquaintance* knowledge, to be acquired through direct contact with music and not by merely learning about it. (Plummeridge, 2002, pp. 7-8)

Reflecting the contemporary dominance of constructivist approaches to education more generally, this cultivated knower code has come to eclipse the 'born knower code' (the notion that musicians are born rather than made) in the discourse of music education (McPhee, Stollery and McMillan, 2005), though the latter has shaped initiatives favouring 'gifted and talented' children and young people, such as Creative Partnerships' Find Your Talent pilot work in the UK.

The implications of a knower code dominating music educational research can be illustrated by considering a current intervention. Musical Futures (Green, 2008), which is being implemented in parts of England at secondary school level, attempts to engage more pupils in music during Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14). Its form begins from the argument that much class music teaching has depended on traditional methods even when the curriculum has been expanded (Green, 2002c), and that these forms of pedagogy have little in common with how popular musicians learn outside a formal school setting (Green, 2002a; Folkestad, 2005; Soderman and Folkestad, 2004). The Musical Futures programme draws heavily on the form taken by informal learning and teaching of popular music. The guiding principles of the project are to work with music that pupils choose, like and identify with, to learn through listening and copying from recordings, with friends, and with minimal teacher input. In other words, it downplays the epistemic relation (specialist knowledge and skills) and emphasizes the social relation (for example free expression, personal engagement) - a knower code. Having modelled performance and composing with popular music, the project then applies these informal learning practices to classical music. Throughout, the role of the teacher is downplayed to that of observing, diagnosing, suggesting and modelling while pupils work on musical materials.

Though demands on pupils are high in the programme, early indications suggest it has met with enthusiasm and might help with motivation and engagement at a stage of the curriculum when some pupils are put off by the knowledge code emphasis on musical skills and knowledge. However, drawing on LCT raises questions that may temper conclusions about its efficacy and wider applicability because of its implications for other facets of the problem facing music education. For example, research shows that this form of knower code pedagogy can have

potentially deleterious effects. Minimizing explicit instruction can disadvantage pupils whose backgrounds have not provided the means to recognize and realize what is required under a knower code (Chen *et al*., 2008). Though inclusive in intent, when allied to assessment tasks this code thereby often tends to act as a classifier of social backgrounds, leading to socially stratified outcomes. It can also often result in segmented learning experiences, where what is learned remains tightly bound to its context and difficult to transfer to new contexts (Maton, 2009). Furthermore, how the knower code of the programme will relate to the knowledge code dominating attainment targets in secondary schooling and to the elite code of GCSE qualifications (see p. 69) requires investigation - if these are not changed to match the programme's code, then such a programme may have negative effects on GCSE uptake or achievement.


**Summary**

We began this chapter by highlighting the range of challenges facing music education and argued that a necessary condition for addressing these challenges is to be found in a second-order problem: the often undertheorized and fragmented nature of music education research itself. The diverse nature of existing studies, we suggested, highlights the multifaceted nature of the problems for advancing music education. While this requires research on a range of topics using different methodologies, without a means of integrating the findings of studies such research is likely to remain partial and fragmented.

   To address these issues we drew on concepts from an approach in the sociology of educational knowledge: Legitimation Code Theory. Focusing on issues concerning pupils, teachers and research we illustrated how LCT can be used to address a range of diverse problems facing music education and using different methods, including documentary, quantitative and qualitative analyses. In particular, we discussed studies of the factors that contribute to making school music less popular than it can be. First, we discussed research using LCT that suggests the elite code of GCSE music may contribute to low uptake of this school qualification. Secondly, we re-analysed a study of trainee teachers, proposing that LCT highlights the significance of teachers learning the dominant code of the primary context for their self-confidence and willingness to engage with music. Lastly, we briefly addressed the field of music education research itself, using LCT to raise questions about the implications of its dominant knower code. These examples show that the approach can thus serve not only to generate research but also to integrate existing studies from other traditions and reflexively analyse the nature of research itself.

   Making school music popular is not an easy task. It is tempting to view discussions of the second-order problem of theoretical approach as secondary, as fiddling while Rome burns. However, the challenges facing music education are real, pressing and complex. Getting the theory right is thus crucial if we are

to offer nuanced solutions to difficult problems rather than merely indulge in proclamations that show our hearts are in the right place. As we have tried to show, LCT offers one example of an approach that aims to fully engage with the problems facing music education and to contribute to making music popular.

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