

# WRITE YOUR SONG! Using a Card Game as a Tool for Developing a Design

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## 1 Context

**Postdigitality** as a framework concept emphasizing the complete digital permeation of all areas of life; "**Compositional Turn in Music Education**" (Allsup, 2013: 50; Kaschub/Smith 2013) ensures high relevance of generative processes (composing) in music education; the British **Musical Futures** project (Green 2008) as a concept of open learning with informal methods in music lessons

## 2 Research Association - MusCoDA

**MusCoDA - Musical Communities in the (Post)Digital Age** is a joint research project (12/21-11/24) of the University of Erfurt and the University of Education Karlsruhe which investigates songwriting processes as an example of collective creativity in (post)digital communities. The subproject of Karlsruhe focuses on creative processes and practices of bands in informal contexts. While the subproject of Erfurt examines songwriting processes in school music lessons. In this context, an literature-based didactic design in form of a card game was conceived for the first survey phase, framing the lesson planning as a kind of classroom experiment. In the second survey phase, the results of both subprojects will be merged into a second didactic design with the aim of drawing new teaching concepts and didactic conclusions based on a comparative study of informal and formal learning practices in bands under the conditions of (post)digitality.

## 3 Subproject Erfurt: Songwriting at school

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which digital cultural practices can be identified in collective songwriting?
- How are informal and extracurricular actors involved in the formal learning process?

### METHODOLOGY

- Grounded Theory (Charmaz 2014, Clarke 2005)
- Qualitative Network Analysis (Hollstein/Strauß 2006; Rürup et al. 2015)

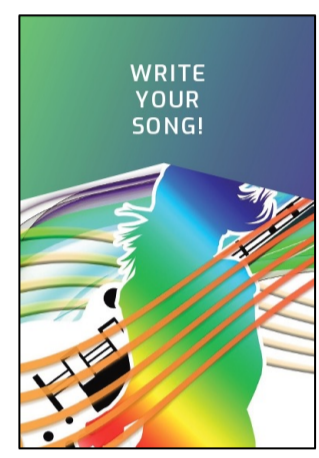
### HEURISTICS

- Social Network Theory (White 1992)
- Community of Practice (Wenger 1998; Kenny 2016)

### METHODS

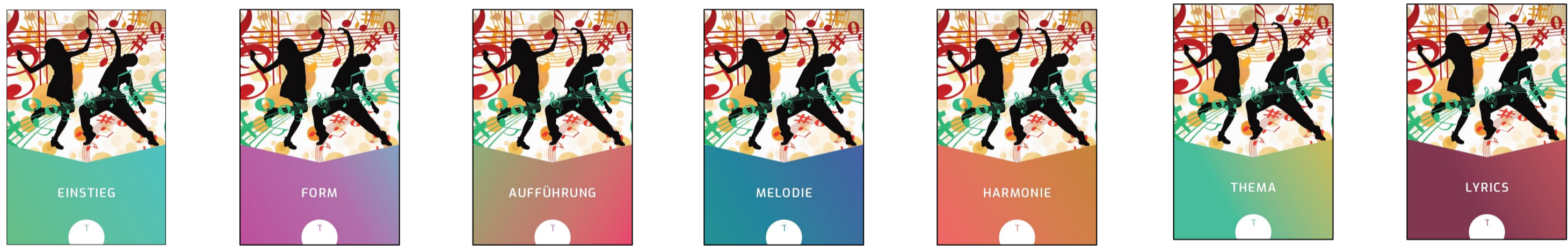
- Videography, video-stimulated-recall interviews, drawing network maps, learning diaries

## 4 Background of the card game as a planning tool



The card game **WRITE YOUR SONG!** was developed by analyzing the inter(national) music education literature with the aim of capturing the state of research on the one hand and translating it into a design for lesson planning on the other hand. In analyzing the literature, we were able to identify two recurring patterns in songwriting:

**Building Blocks** means that the songwriting process is divided into small sections that are gradually assembled into a final song. In the card game, this didactic approach is implemented at the level of theme cards, which distinguish between melody, form, harmony, lyrics, (song) theme and introduction.

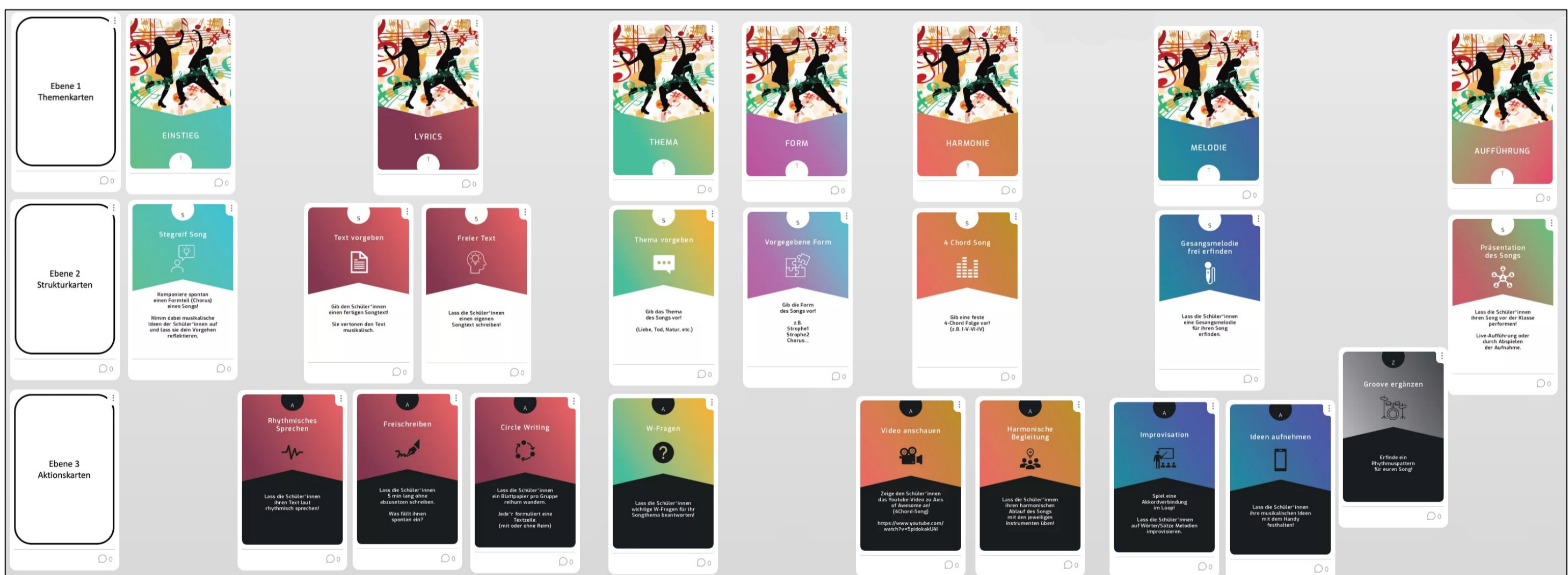


**Pre-structuring** is a kind of didactic reduction in which the teacher can pre-structure the individual blocks by giving no, partial or complete instructions. In this way, the level of difficulty in songwriting can be adapted to the learning group by choosing the degree of pre-structuring. This didactic reduction happens in the card game on the level of the structure cards. The teacher can for example structure the block lyrics by choosing the card free text, cloze text or given text.



### Structure and use of the card game

The deck consists of a total of 41 laying cards, divided into four card types: theme cards, structure cards, action cards and additional cards. Planning happens on three hierarchical levels which are laid one after the other from left to right: starting with the order of the theme cards, followed by the choice of the appropriate structure cards and action cards. Finally, the additional cards can be supplemented as desired. The framework conditions of the school and class in terms of space, media, available instruments, learning requirements of the students, learning objectives and the role of the teacher are not taken into account in the game, but should be considered by the respective teacher when planning.

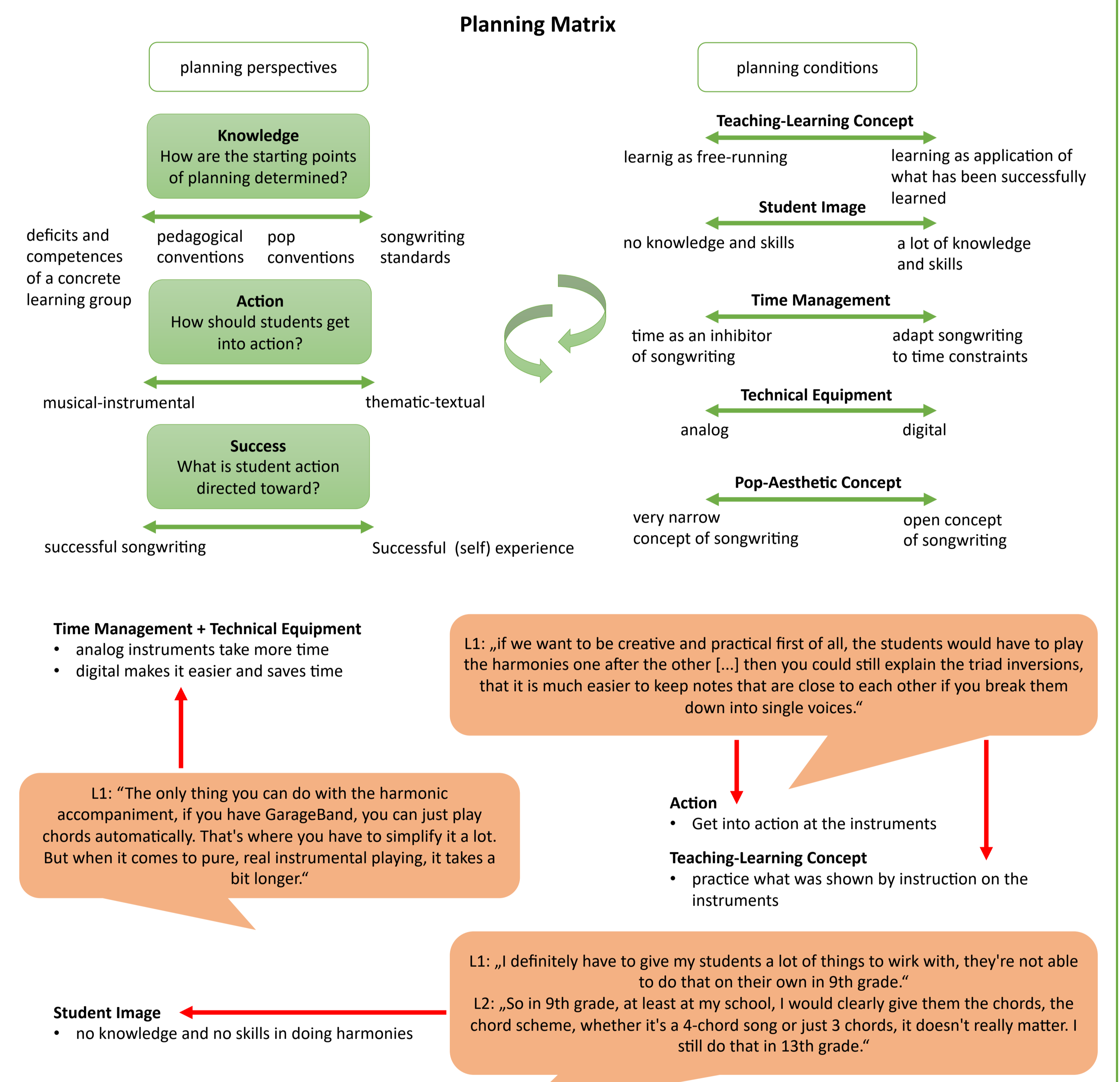


### Data Analysis

8 interviews and 8 padlets (pictures of the finished planning) were analyzed according to Grounded Theory. 7 of the interviews were recorded in an interactive music education webinar on songwriting in the music classroom and the other interview was recorded at one of our pilot schools.

## 5 Group planning of a songwriting lesson using the card game

What concepts of teaching and learning guide the decision-making processes when teachers plan lessons collectively? Lesson planning is a networked decision-making chain that constantly switches between different planning perspectives and conditions:



### Initial Findings

Songwriting as a form of music making has become increasingly important in international music education discourse. It is attributed a special value in terms of musical learning and creativity. The evaluation of the lesson plans shows that creativity in the pedagogical context is understood less as an experimentation such as trial and error, but rather as an application of what has been successfully learned. This success-didactic planning perspective focuses on learning the right things to achieve successful songwriting or successful (self) experience. Failure is not understood as a part of learning. During the planning process, a consistent student image has become apparent that fundamentally influences the decisions in the card game: "They can't do harmonies, they can all do lyrics somehow." This student image illustrates a strong ambivalence that negates the student as a competent musician and affirms him as a competent lyricist. The less pupils seem to know and be able to do on their own, the more cohesive and prescriptive the teachers plan their lessons. This correlates with a pop-aesthetic imprint of the teacher and additionally affects the degree of pre-structuring in planning. The use of analog instruments slows down the songwriting process, while digital saves time and lowers the level of difficulty. Consequently, many turn to digital instruments when they have the technical equipment to do so.

## Literature

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