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Cultural context in teaching materials for Maonan *Feitao* ritual music

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ABSTRACT

This integrative literature review develops a framework for preparing music appreciation materials on Maonan *Feitao* ritual music. It compares 21 Chinese- and English-language publications, examining their evidence for ritual practice, cultural representation, and learning. Sources are appraised through the provenance of their material, the attribution of interpretations and the correspondence between evidence and claims. The synthesis identifies four requirements for contextual explanation: connecting voices with ritual actions; relating language to roles and addressees; tracing differences to performance, documentation, or educational editing; and attending to interpreters' and learners' knowledge. Its central finding is that general ethnographic knowledge and evidence about a selected occasion serve different purposes in teaching materials. The framework connects these findings with decisions about naming, translation, source attribution and classroom comparison, each tied to a learning objective. Three documentary examples and a resource worksheet show how teachers can apply it. The contribution is a practical account of how cultural evidence informs the preparation of particular musical excerpts. Classroom evaluation is the next stage of this work.

Keywords: Maonan *Feitao*; ritual music; teaching materials for music appreciation; cultural context; integrative literature review.

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INTRODUCTION

Feitao is a vow-fulfilment ritual practised by the Maonan people of Guangxi. Singing, recitation, ritual actions and dance all contribute to its proceedings (Yang, 2010). A video excerpt may make the masks and movements easy to recognise while leaving the purpose of the singing or recitation unclear. Who is addressing whom, and what do the vocal passages contribute to the ritual? Yang places *tiaotao*, the dances for the deities, within the wider *Feitao* event. Sun (2014, p. 44), reviewing research published before 2012, observes that scholarly attention to these dances has sometimes overshadowed the singing and recitation of ritual texts. For music appreciation teaching, this raises a practical question: what information helps a learner understand the sounds in a selected passage?

Schippers (2006) approaches the teaching of musical traditions through recontextualisation: the decisions made when music is taught in a setting different from the one in which it is practised. Mellizo (2017) considers how teachers organise cultural information and learning activities. Zhang (2017) examines the representation of ethnic music through names, lyrics and images in selected Chinese textbooks. Research on Maonan education offers a more local perspective. Lai (2011, Part 4) discusses curricular resources and connections between schools and families. Together, these publications establish the relevance of context and educational adaptation. The unresolved task is to connect the relationships described in *Feitao* scholarship with particular decisions about an excerpt, its translation and its accompanying explanation. An ethnic overview, a literal translation and an account of a recorded occasion provide different grounds for interpretation; their educational value depends on how they address the selected passage.

This review develops a framework that connects ethnomusicological evidence, the preparation of teaching materials and learning objectives. Teaching materials here

comprise audio and video excerpts, translation notes and accompanying explanations for music appreciation. Cultural context refers to relationships that explain musical activity: ritual purposes connect voices with actions; languages and roles identify speakers and addressees; occasions and records establish the provenance of versions; and learning relationships identify who supplies and interprets knowledge. These dimensions organise the four themes of the synthesis. The intended users are music teachers and resource developers preparing introductory appreciation activities for learners unfamiliar with *Feitao*. The framework concerns resource preparation across educational stages; the complexity of tasks and terminology must be matched to the learners concerned.

Three questions guide the review: Which relationships within *Feitao* need explanation in appreciation materials? How do differences between performance versions and documentary accounts affect interpretation? How can these findings inform resource preparation and learning objectives? The contribution is to make the movement from a source-supported claim to a teaching decision traceable.

These questions also concern international and multicultural music education. Teachers working outside a tradition routinely select passages, translate terms and decide whose explanation to include. The *Feitao* case gives these shared decisions a specific evidential basis. Its wider relevance lies in the method of relating a resource to its sources and intended learning, with local meanings examined in their own social and linguistic settings.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Review design and sources

An integrative review was chosen because the relevant publications investigate different aspects of musical and educational practice. Ritual studies describe singing, recitation and performance; textbook research examines representation; teacher interviews document pedagogical judgements; and theoretical work provides concepts for interpreting these accounts. Torraco (2016) discusses critical analysis and synthesis in integrative reviews, while Snyder (2019) stresses the need to match a review method to its purpose. The present review compares the evidence and arguments relevant to preparing *Feitao* appreciation materials. It examines how a claim is supported, how accounts converge or differ, and what follows for a particular teaching decision.

The initial corpus was assembled from sources checked through 8 October 2026. Chinese material came from previously collected journal articles and relevant chapters of a thesis on Maonan education. English-language sources were located through journal and publisher pages, university repositories and reference lists. The review covers Chinese- and English-language academic publications; the retained corpus spans 2006-2026. During revision, targeted public-web searches on 16 and 17 November 2026 checked publication records and the sources supporting the analysis. Appendix A identifies the exact queries, dates and publication sites used for these checks. The revision searches used no lower publication-year limit. Sources were selected for substantive relevance to the research questions.

Selection and critical appraisal of sources

Eligible sources comprised journal articles, scholarly book chapters, master's theses and doctoral dissertations in Chinese or English, with verifiable publication information and accessible full text or relevant chapters. Inclusion required a substantive account of *Feitao* practice or education, or a direct contribution to analysing cultural representation, recontextualisation or musical learning. The local studies establish the ritual and educational setting; the comparative literature helps interpret the decisions involved in preparing materials. Sources confined to compositional technique or musical form were excluded. For publications covering several topics, the synthesis used the sections relevant to the review questions. The corpus contains 21 full-text publications and relevant thesis chapters. Two further references support the review method, giving 23 bibliography entries. Publications accessed only through abstracts were excluded.

Appraisal considered the provenance of each source's material, the clarity of attribution and the fit between its evidence and the claim used here. For field-based accounts, the comparison examined the occasions and participants identified and the relationship between observation and interpretation. For document studies and reviews, it examined the material analysed and dependence on earlier accounts. Theoretical work was assessed for its contribution to the educational question. Yang's (2010) dated investigations and Huang et al.'s (2009) reported interviews provide identifiable bases for describing ritual relationships. Sun's (2014) comparison brings earlier records together, so its use requires attention to source dependence. Zhuang and Pan's (2022) interviews support analysis of nine teachers' judgements. Lai's (2011) and Thompson's (2024) theses are used for their local educational proposals and analysis of teaching books. These differences determine the weight given to each source. Table 1 records the evidence basis, appraisal and use of the 21 publications.

Thematic synthesis

The synthesis compared passages addressing four questions: how sound contributes to ritual action, how language and roles shape interpretation, where version

differences arise, and who learns or explains the practice. These questions organise the four Results themes. Within each theme, the analysis identifies agreement, differences in interpretation and the documentary scale of the accounts. Table 1 records the source-level evidence used in these comparisons. Table 2 connects each thematic finding with its sources, a decision about the material and an observable learning task. The three examples in the Discussion demonstrate these connections through passages identified by page number.

This procedure connects documentary findings with pedagogical interpretation. The review's teaching contribution lies in the decisions and learning tasks developed from that comparison. Table 2 and Appendix B present the resulting framework and planning worksheet.

Table 1. Evidence basis and scope of the full-text sources included in the thematic synthesis.

Source	Evidence basis and finding	Appraisal and use
Yang (2010)	Composite ritual and music account, drawing on investigations in 1994 and 2006 and earlier publications; vocal-dance coordination and language use (pp. 4-5, 18).	Dated investigations and explicit earlier sources make the overview traceable. It supports general ritual relationships; an excerpt needs occasion-specific identification.
Huang et al. (2009)	Field observation and reported interviews; flexibility in named components and performance arrangements (p. 187).	Identified interview testimony supports flexibility in the named components and arrangements. Its scope is those reported practices.
Lai (2011)	Master's thesis combining local investigation with educational proposals; curriculum and school-family connections (Part 4).	Local investigation grounds the setting. The educational proposals guide resource planning and remain distinct from evaluated learning effects.
Lv (2013)	Ritual cases and cultural interpretation; relationships between character names, narratives and masks (p. 104).	An explicit case and attributed interpretation support analysis of the name, narrative and mask.
Sun (2014)	Review of research before 2012; compares procedures and discusses performance adjustment and documentary discrepancy (pp. 43-44).	The comparison makes differences between records visible. Its explanations must be assessed with attention to dependence on earlier accounts.
Sun (2018)	Historical documents and field-informed interpretation; incorporation and reconfiguration of cultural elements.	Explains historical change. A particular contemporary passage needs local evidence.
Schippers (2006)	Conceptual analysis of tradition, authenticity and context; distinguishes musical practice from teaching context.	Grounds pedagogical recontextualisation and decisions about the context and purpose of teaching.
Dunbar-Hall (2009)	Experience-based analysis of Balinese gamelan learning and teaching; participation, memory and interaction.	Provides a comparison of learning relationships across settings.
Hess (2016)	Theoretical development of contrapuntal analysis; musical practices understood through social relations and perspectives.	Guides examination of the voices and relationships represented in a resource.
Krüger (2013)	Critical analysis of authenticity as a discursive construct in ethnomusicology and education.	Questions fixed authenticity judgements; local explanations of variation require specific evidence.
Mellizo (2017)	Literature-based conceptual framework and teacher action steps for multicultural music education.	Connects cultural information with activities and musical learning; offers pedagogical guidance.
Paris (2012)	Theoretical argument for sustaining linguistic and cultural practices in education.	Guides attention to learners' linguistic and cultural experience as a theoretical educational stance.
Zhang (2017)	Analysis of Chinese national music textbooks; representation through names, lyrics and images.	Supports scrutiny of resource labels and representation within the analysed textbook setting.
Zhuang and Pan (2022)	Semi-structured interviews with nine Chinese school music teachers; differing views on context and transmission (pp. 206-207).	A defined interview sample supports comparison of reported teacher judgements. Learning effects require a different form of evidence.

Table 1. Continues.

Liu and Chow (2024)	Ethnographic fieldwork and interviews concerning *Feitao* heritage presentation; includes two elders' evaluations (p. 11).	Fieldwork grounds the account of heritage presentation. The two elders' evaluations retain their attribution as individual perspectives.
Locke and Prentice (2016)	Narrative review of culturally responsive music research and pedagogy, centred on Australia and New Zealand.	Provides comparative questions about resources and interpretation; institutional contexts differ.
Sánchez-Gatt et al. (2025)	Anti-colonial theoretical argument using narrative and counterfactual history to examine transcultural teaching.	Guides analysis of representation, attribution and the selection of cultural interpreters.
Purhanudin et al. (2026)	Integrative review and conceptual model for elementary music education; experience, learning design and collaboration.	Provides a conceptual basis for connecting learners' experiences, resource design and collaboration.
Dong et al. (2025)	Systematic review of religious music education in multicultural settings.	Supports the educational distinction between studying a practice and participating in worship.
Wood et al. (2022)	Database development study connecting performance records and cultural information.	Informs resource documentation. Archival provision and community learning are separate objects of evaluation.
Thompson (2024)	Doctoral dissertation using multimodal critical discourse analysis of two instrumental method-book series.	Supports questions about labels, representation and omitted perspectives within teaching resources.

Note: The corpus comprises six Chinese and 15 English-language publications. Appraisal concerns the evidence used for the claims in this review. Relevant thesis and dissertation chapters were included. Page numbers refer to printed pagination. Snyder (2019) and Torraco (2016) support the review method and are additional to these 21 sources.

Table 2. A framework connecting ethnomusicological evidence, material decisions and learning objectives.

Dimension and sources	Relationship established in the synthesis	Material decision	Learning objective and task
Sound and activity. Yang (2010, pp. 4-5); Sun (2014, pp. 43-44).	Voices and actions have related ritual functions; accounts differ in their coverage of those functions.	Name the selected component and annotate the relation between a voice and an action. Match explanatory claims to the selected record.	Explain one vocal contribution within the activity. Annotate the passage or a source description and identify the supporting evidence.
Languages and roles. Yang (2010, p. 18); Lv (2013, p. 104).	Language use, addressees and character narratives contribute to the interpretation of vocal passages and roles.	Retain the original term, supply a checked translation and attribute the explanation of a role. Record the language identification.	Relate a word or vocal passage to a speaker, role or addressee. Explain how the contextual note changes the interpretation.
Versions and records. Huang et al. (2009, p. 187); Sun (2014, pp. 43-44); Schippers (2006).	Differences occur within performance, documentation and later teaching adaptation; a difference and its cause require separate evidence.	Identify each record, its occasion or documentary basis and any educational edits. Distinguish established causes from candidate explanations.	Compare two documented entries or passages. Identify the difference, explain what is known about its cause and specify the remaining evidence needed.
Learning and interpretation. Lai (2011, Part 4); Paris (2012); Zhuang and Pan (2022); Sánchez-Gatt et al. (2025).	Learners and interpreters bring different experience; views on contextual explanation and listening sequence differ.	Identify the explanation's author and basis, establish learners' starting knowledge and choose when information enters the listening task.	Use an attributed explanation to justify an interpretation. Revisit the passage and explain what the added information clarified.

Note: The first two columns identify the documentary basis of the synthesis. The material decisions and learning tasks are this review's pedagogical applications, for subsequent classroom evaluation. Appendix B provides a worksheet for their use.

RESULTS

Singing, recitation and dance

Yang (2010, pp. 4-5) distinguishes singing for the deities from dancing for the deities and relates both to vow fulfilment. Within *tiaotao*, chanting by the presiding ritual master, spoken-sung narration or rhymed singing by ritual specialists, and masked dance contribute to the proceedings. A description centred on dance alone leaves the function of these vocal passages unexplained. Names also need to be read in relation to their sources: the accounts compared by Sun (2014, p. 43) sometimes use *Feitao* and *tiaotao* together. Teaching notes therefore need to identify whether a source is describing the ritual as a whole or a particular part of it.

Yang and Sun contribute at different analytical levels. Yang describes the organisation of ritual sound, whereas Sun assesses the coverage and terminology of earlier scholarship, including Yang's work. They converge in making vocal activity central to understanding the ritual. Their agreement is not independent replication: one source is partly a review of the other. The educational implication follows from their complementary roles. Teachers need both a description of what the voices do and a check on whether the selected resource represents those activities adequately.

This distinction gives a local focus to broader discussions of musical context. Hess (2016) considers the social relationships and voices represented in music education, while Schippers (2006) examines the place of contextual knowledge in teaching. For *Feitao*, identifying the singers or reciters and those they address helps explain why a vocal passage occurs. Geographic and ethnic information may introduce the tradition, but further explanation is needed to connect that background with what learners hear.

Titles and images also shape what an excerpt appears to represent. Zhang's (2017) textbook analysis shows how names, lyrics and illustrations contribute to representations of ethnic music. A short passage of *tiaotao* labelled simply as *Feitao* can imply a wider representation of the event than the selection provides. A precise title and a brief account of the selected activity make its scope clear. This gives resource analysis a concrete focus: the relationship between the label, the selected passage and the explanatory note.

Languages and ritual roles

Yang (2010, pp. 4, 18) describes the mixing and alternation of Maonan, Zhuang and *Tuguaihua*, a Hakka variety. The account relates their use to deities, ancestors and historical narratives. Language contributes to the meaning of a vocal passage through both its words and the beings addressed. The label 'Maonan music' identifies a cultural association, while the language heard in a particular recording requires passage-specific identification. For material preparation, the relevant information comprises the language, the speaker or singer, the addressee and the role of the passage in the activity. Yang's overview supplies questions for this identification; evidence about the recorded occasion supplies the answers.

The scene *Tudi Pei Sanniang* presents a similar problem of interpretation. Lv (2013, p. 104) identifies *Wei Tudi* as a young Zhuang man and *Sanniang* as a young Maonan woman. The discussion links their narrative identities with the similar pronunciation of *Tudi* and *Dudi* and the Earth God elements incorporated into the mask. Reading the name literally, or identifying the character from the mask alone, would leave these connections unexplained. Sun (2018) likewise examines the historical incorporation and local reworking of cultural elements in *Feitao*.

A translation note should retain the original term, give its translation and explain its use in the selected scene. For *Tudi Pei Sanniang*, this means distinguishing the literal associations of a name from the character's identity in the narrative and the elements incorporated into the mask. Lv's interpretation provides a source-attributed account of these relationships. Alternative explanations, where documented, should retain their own attribution. The material-selection decision is therefore to include enough of the scene or accompanying description for learners to relate a character's voice and actions to the explanation offered.

Differences between versions and records

Preparing ritual music for a lesson involves choices about selection, duration and the information supplied. Schippers (2006) distinguishes the context of a musical practice from the context in which it is taught. This distinction explains why a classroom excerpt requires its own pedagogical rationale even when its source is a ritual performance. Mellizo (2017) connects cultural information with musical learning activities. Read together, these arguments support selecting contextual information for the interpretative work a lesson asks learners to undertake.

There is less agreement about when background explanation should enter listening. Schippers (2006) discusses positions that value direct encounters with sound alongside those that emphasise contextual knowledge. Zhuang and Pan (2022, pp. 206-207), drawing on interviews with nine Chinese school music teachers, document a comparable disagreement. These interviews establish differences in teachers' judgements, rather than the relative effectiveness of alternative lesson sequences. For a task focused on noticing voices and movement, an initial listening can generate questions that subsequent explanation addresses. For a task about ritual roles or language, a brief introduction can establish distinctions

that learners are unlikely to infer from sound alone. The didactic choice concerns the information needed for the stated task, its timing and the opportunity to return to the passage. This allows direct listening and contextual explanation to work within the same lesson.

Differences between *Feitao* accounts require attention to both performance and documentation. Sun (2014, pp. 43-44) compares published procedures and reports two explanations: adjustments made by ritual specialists in response to a hosting household, and omissions or sequencing errors in records. Huang et al. (2009, p. 187) provide a more specific empirical basis through a practitioner's account of improvisation in *Tudi Pei Sanniang* and the *Yao Wang* dialogue, and flexibility in the arrangement of the 'Threading the Needle Dance'. The sources converge on variation, but operate at different scales. Sun addresses discrepancies across accounts; Huang et al. identify flexibility in named components. Neither assigns a verified cause to every difference between published sequences. Krüger's (2013) critique of fixed notions of authenticity supports treating change as a subject for investigation. The comparison therefore separates a documented difference, a locally supported explanation and a cause that remains unresolved.

Public presentation brings further changes of purpose. Liu and Chow (2024, p. 11), drawing on fieldwork and interviews concerning *Feitao* heritagisation, report criticism of commercialisation from two anonymous elders. The authors' analysis of presentation strategies and these interviewees' evaluations are distinct contributions. Their difference gives teaching materials a basis for asking who benefits from an adaptation, what it is intended to communicate and whose evaluation is represented. The elders' comments retain their attribution as particular views within the study.

Learning and cultural interpretation

Dunbar-Hall's (2009) account of learning and teaching Balinese gamelan draws on participation as a student, teacher and performer. It connects musical learning with bodily activity, memory and interaction. Mellizo (2017) also considers aural learning before the introduction of notation. *Feitao* studies locate learning within more specific relationships among ritual specialists, families and hosting households (Huang et al., 2009; Yang, 2010). The comparison identifies the organisation of learning as part of musical context: demonstrating an excerpt in a lesson and acquiring a ritual role involve different knowledge, responsibilities and opportunities to practise.

Whoever explains the practice is equally relevant. Sánchez-Gatt et al. (2025) question the expectation that one person can represent a complex cultural group. Locke and Prentice (2016), in a narrative review centred on Australian and New Zealand contexts, examine resources, interpretation and school-community relationships. Their relevance to *Feitao* materials concerns the attribution and selection of cultural explanations. A teacher can identify the practitioner, researcher or publication responsible for a claim, the knowledge on which it rests and the aspect of the material it explains. Historical and institutional differences between the settings remain part of this comparison.

Learners, too, bring different experiences. Paris (2012) argues for sustaining learners' linguistic and cultural practices, while Purhanudin et al. (2026) develop an integrative review and conceptual model connecting those experiences with learning design and collaboration. These are theoretical and synthetic contributions to the educational argument. Lai's (2011, Part 4) proposals for local curricula translate a related concern into school, family and community connections in Huanjiang; Thompson's (2024) dissertation analyses cultural representation in teaching books. Together, the sources support asking what learners already know, which explanations they need and how a resource represents the people concerned. Table 2 brings the evidence, material decisions and learning objectives together.

DISCUSSION

Framework for pedagogical contextualisation

Table 2 gives these ideas a practical form. The selected activity defines the title's scope. The relationship between language and role determines what a translation note needs to explain. A difference between records identifies the evidence needed for comparison. Learners' starting knowledge guides the support supplied. Each decision is connected to a task whose response makes the interpretation visible, such as explaining a vocal contribution or distinguishing a recorded difference from its proposed cause.

The contribution is the explicit connection between a documented ritual relationship, the preparation of a particular resource and the interpretation expected from learners. This moves a general commitment to cultural context into decisions that teachers can examine and revise. The examples below show how that connection works.

This framework extends general arguments for culturally contextualised teaching by identifying the evidential work needed for particular resources. Ethnographic findings support explanations of ritual activity, while educational theory guides their pedagogical arrangement. The examples below show how these contributions inform particular teaching decisions.

Preparing excerpts and accompanying notes

A general account of *Feitao* and a recording of one

occasion provide different kinds of information. Yang's (2010, p. 4) overview draws on investigations in 1994 and 2006 as well as existing literature. It brings together knowledge from several records to explain features of the ritual. A lesson excerpt presents a selected passage from a particular occasion or documentary source. Its title and notes should identify that selection and distinguish information about the occasion from general explanations drawn from other publications.

The three examples below apply the framework to vocal-dance coordination in *tiaotao*, character interpretation in *Tudi Pei Sanniang* and differences between published ritual sequences. They are documentary applications for preparing materials. Their learning objectives and proposed tasks provide the basis for subsequent classroom evaluation.

In Yang's (2010, p. 5) description of *tiaotao*, chanting, spoken-sung narration or rhymed singing, and masked dance work together within the sequence. A resource based on this passage can be titled 'Voices and masked dance within *Feitao*', with a note identifying the ritual master, the vocal contribution and the deity or role introduced. The learning objective is to explain one relationship between a voice and an action. Learners can annotate the published description and identify the evidence for that relationship. When a corresponding recording is selected, the teacher should locate the passage by timestamp and check that its voices and actions match the note. The annotation then directs a return to the sound, keeping the explanation accountable to the chosen resource.

Tudi Pei Sanniang offers a different starting point. Lv (2013, p. 104) identifies *Wei Tudi* as a young Zhuang man and *Sanniang* as a young Maonan woman, and explains the relationship between the name, the narrative and Earth God elements in the mask. A teaching note should preserve the original scene name, provide a working translation and attribute this account to Lv. Learners can compare an interpretation based on the name or image with the explanation supported by the published passage. Their task is to explain how the additional information changes the identification of the character. This example turns translation into an examination of meaning in use, with each interpretation linked to its source.

A comparison of opening procedures makes the question of versions concrete. In Sun's (2014, p. 43) table, the column reproducing Yang begins with 'Welcoming the Ancestral Masters', whereas the *Maonan zhi* column begins with 'Sanguang Leading the Deities'. The comparison is made through Sun's table; *Maonan zhi* is a source reported there. Learners can set out the two entries, identify the documented difference and separate it from explanations for its cause. Sun's discussion of household-specific adjustments and documentary omissions, alongside Huang et al.'s (2009) accounts of flexibility in particular components, supplies candidate explanations for investigation. The cause of this specific opening discrepancy remains unresolved by those passages. The learning objective is to distinguish evidence of a difference from evidence explaining it. A completed comparison should identify both the source of each entry and the evidence still needed to decide between explanations.

A useful contextual note helps a learner hear a vocal passage in relation to an action, identify a role or compare records with attention to how they were produced. A focused excerpt can present a selected component clearly when its title defines the activity and its explanation identifies the relevant voices and roles. The preparation task is to make those connections explicit. The framework gives each piece of contextual information a purpose within the interpretative work of the lesson.

Working with classroom constraints

Limited lesson time favours a focused interpretative task. A teacher can select one relationship, such as the coordination of a vocal passage and a masked entrance, provide the information needed to recognise it and return to the passage after discussion. A longer resource can support comparison across components when the learning objective calls for it. Appendix B provides a worksheet for recording provenance, language, roles, edits, source attribution and the intended learner response. It allows teachers to prepare the explanation before deciding how much of it belongs in the lesson.

Teachers without fluency in Maonan or Zhuang need a translation and language identification checked against an appropriate source or a knowledgeable speaker. Original terms, working translations and unresolved identifications should be recorded separately. Where the language or addressee of a passage is unverified, the teacher can focus on relationships supported by the record, such as the order of visible actions, and identify the outstanding language question. Collaboration can therefore centre on a specific request rather than an expectation that one practitioner supply all cultural knowledge. An appreciation task can analyse or compare a ritual passage through listening, description and discussion, with participation in ritual practice treated as a separate activity.

Appreciation and cultural transmission

Music appreciation teaching can introduce the purpose of vow fulfilment, the meanings of ritual texts and the functions of particular roles. Participation in the ritual entails further relationships and responsibilities. Dong et al. (2025), reviewing religious music education in multicultural settings, distinguish educational understanding from faith-based practice. This offers a useful comparison for specifying teaching aims, while decisions about *Feitao* require attention to its own

practices and the local learning setting.

Claims about transmission require attention to the activity being sustained. Wood et al. (2022) connect performance records with cultural information in a database; Dunbar-Hall (2009) examines learning through participation and interaction. A well-documented recording preserves material for study. Community transmission also involves opportunities to learn, perform and use the music within continuing relationships. An appreciation course creates an educational encounter with *Feitao*. Evaluating its contribution to transmission requires evidence about those further learning opportunities and practices.

The purpose of an appreciation lesson differs with learners' experience. Those with community connections can investigate family terminology or intergenerational knowledge; others first need help identifying the activity, the language heard or the relationship between ritual and stage versions. Teachers should establish this starting knowledge through discussion or a brief interpretative task. Lai's (2011) proposals for collaboration become more specific when the knowledge sought is identified: a language question, the order of procedures and the organisation of a lesson call on different contributors. Where evaluations of adaptation differ, retaining the reasons and attribution of each view gives learners something to examine (Liu and Chow, 2024; Sánchez-Gatt et al., 2025).

For international music education, the transferable element is this relationship between evidence and pedagogical choice. A teacher using another ritual or community music tradition can apply the same questions about selection, translation, provenance and attribution. The answers depend on that tradition's languages, authority relationships and learning practices. Comparative use of the framework therefore begins with local source work and a defined learning task. This provides a basis for exchange across educational settings while keeping the cultural explanation specific.

Limitations and further research

The corpus was selected purposively, and its coverage reflects language and full-text access. The initial search did not retain a complete query and exclusion log, and the original synthesis was not independently checked by a second researcher. Appendix A records the source checks undertaken during revision. Local accounts concern different periods and sometimes draw on shared records; the comparison therefore preserves their provenance and attribution. The pedagogical framework is derived from documentary analysis. Its classroom use is the next object of evaluation.

Further research should pair the framework with recordings of documented provenance. Practitioner review can check language, roles and ritual explanations; teacher review can examine the tasks and their feasibility. Learner responses can show how the materials support identification of voices and actions, interpretation of language use and comparison of versions. Comparing contextual information before and after initial listening would examine the task-based sequencing proposed here.

CONCLUSION

The review identifies cultural contextualisation as a relationship between evidence, the selected musical passage and the work of interpretation expected from learners. *Feitao* scholarship shows why singing and recitation must be understood alongside dance, why language and role require passage-specific explanation, and why differences between versions must be located in performance, documentation or later editing. Comparative educational research adds attention to the organisation of learning and the attribution of cultural knowledge.

The contribution is a framework connecting these ritual relationships with the preparation of particular resources and explicit learning objectives. Its central distinction separates general knowledge of a tradition from evidence about the occasion or passage being taught. Table 2 and the worksheet apply that distinction to naming excerpts, writing translation notes and designing comparisons. The three documentary examples show how the framework guides interpretation and provide a basis for developing and evaluating classroom materials.

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Ethics and informed consent

This article analyses published literature and involved no

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Data availability

The publications used in this review are listed in the references. Table 1 identifies the full-text sources and their scope of use; Table 2 links sources, interpretation and teaching decisions. Appendix A records revision-stage verification searches, and Appendix B provides the proposed resource worksheet. No new participant-level dataset was generated.

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APPENDIX A

Search scope and source checks

The source checks used public-web searches followed by exact-title, author and DOI verification against journal, publisher and university-repository records. On 16 November 2026, the thematic queries were: (1) 毛南族 肥套 仪式 音乐; (2) 毛南族 肥套 传承 教育; (3) Maonan *Feitao* ritual music education; and (4) 'music education' recontextualisation cultural context. The phrase music education in query 4 was enclosed in double quotation marks.

On 17 November 2026, additional queries were: (1) 毛南族 肥套 仪式 音乐 教育 学术; (2) Maonan *Feitao* ritual music teaching materials; (3) 'music education' 'recontextualisation' 'context'; and (4) 'Chinese music teachers' 'context' 'transmission'. Each quoted phrase in queries 3 and 4 was enclosed in double quotation marks when searched. The checks used no lower publication-year limit and assessed Chinese- and English-language sources relevant to the review questions.

Chinese sources were checked in the previously collected journal PDFs and relevant chapters of Lai's thesis. International records were checked through Cambridge Core, the MayDay Group's ACT and TOPICS sites, Harmonia, the International Journal of Multicultural Education, Rupkatha, Tonika, Religions, PLOS ONE, LJMU Research Online, the Kutztown University repository and the publishers' records for the method sources. The dated searches document revision-stage source checks. Table 1 identifies the retained 21-source corpus; two additional references support the review method. Full text or relevant chapters and substantive relevance were required for inclusion; abstract-only records and sources confined to compositional technique or musical form were excluded.

APPENDIX B

Worksheet for preparing a contextualised appreciation resource

Use this worksheet to prepare one resource and one interpretative task. It operationalises Table 2 as a proposed planning instrument. Complete the source checks before writing the learner-facing note.

Resource identification

Title and source: _____
Creator or recordist: _____ Date: _____
Place and occasion: _____
Link or archive identifier: _____
Selected pages or timestamps and edits: _____

Voices and activity

Selected ritual component: _____
Voice or recitation, action and addressee: _____
Supporting source and page or timestamp: _____

Language and interpretation

Original term or passage: _____
Language and basis of identification: _____
Checked translation and responsible source or speaker: _____
Alternative interpretation or outstanding question: _____

Evidence and versions

Claim supported by the selected record: _____
General explanation and its source: _____
Difference from another record: _____
Cause supported by evidence, or evidence still needed: _____

Learning and review

Learners and starting knowledge: _____
One learning objective: _____
Information before listening and reason: _____
Task and expected learner response: _____
Language or cultural check and appropriate contributor: _____

Worked documentary example

Resource: Yang (2010, p. 5), a written description of *tiaotao*. Focus: the relationship between the presiding ritual master's chanting, the specialists' vocal contributions and masked dance. Proposed title: 'Voices and masked dance within *Feitao*'. Objective: explain how one vocal contribution relates to an action or introduced role. Task: annotate the description and identify the sentence supporting the explanation. For an audiovisual version, add the recording's provenance, timestamps and checked identification of voices before using the note.