



FIGURE 4.8

perspective of Ausubel's theory. For instance, Kermit might have developed a cognitive structure like the one in Figure 4.8 (please keep in mind that this is not my area of expertise!).

As he learns particular notes, particular rhythms, and so on, Kermit's cognitive structure would become progressively more elaborated. How might we account for the mistake that Kermit makes in playing "House of the Rising Sun"? Let's assume that under the anchoring idea "rhythm," Kermit subsumes different types of the 4/4 time signature, such as ballad, march, and beguine. These also correspond to different backgrounds on the keyboard, and it is only when Kermit selects beguine that he plays one note too long. That version of the song is now derivatively subsumed as an example of beguine, whereas the correct version of the song is subsumed under ballad.

From the standpoint of schema theory, Kermit may have developed a schema for "symphony" in which was instantiated for "music played in concert" the detail of "a small set of music pieces repeated over time." His schemas for types of music such as ballads and marches would also include the tempos and styles in which they are played (at least the schemas would come to include these attributes as Kermit learned them and instantiated their unique characteristics; both ballad and march would be instantiated as examples of the larger schema related to time signature). Because of this, the background he selected to play with "House of the Rising Sun" could activate a schema that might cause him to misinterpret how long the offending note should be played. Thus, he expected to see something different than what was actually written, and this expectation guided his action. Because the result still sounded fine, there was nothing to correct Kermit's mistake.