



Building Interdisciplinary Bridges Across Cultures

Heidi Westerlund

Visions for intercultural music teacher education: Sociological angles and cross-cultural lessons from Finland, Israel, Cambodia and Nepal

The presentation leans on recent research that argues that 21st century universities and teacher education should be re-thought as 'learning institutions', 'imagining universities' and 'mobilizing networks' that enable mobility, interactivity and cross-national collaborations. This urge for change and collaboration can be seen as standing in contrast with global expectations for teacher education programs to preserve local traditions (e.g. UNESCO Strategy on Teachers 2012-2015). With this troubling tension at the center, and by applying Manuel Castells' sociological categories of collective identities, this presentation examines the potential for intercultural identity to be considered as Project identity of 21st century music teacher education. Project identity, with its aim to change society by introducing new sets of values and redefine the actors' positions in society, is seen to infuse change into the entire music teacher education program. While not denying the value of musical traditions and sets of musical and pedagogical skills, thinking about music teacher education through collective intercultural identity forces our examination to move beyond them. The presentation uses examples from the Sibelius Academy's cross-cultural developmental research projects in Finland, Cambodia, Israel and Nepal to illustrate how collective Resistance identities can bring plurality to Legitimization identity. These identities, however, are limited when pluralism is taken as the core value in music teacher education. Intercultural identity could be seen to develop reflexive, activist cosmopolitan professional attitudes that can deal with ambivalence, social struggle and change. Consequently, such attitudes may change the still influential aesthetic tradition of depoliticizing music education and understandings grounded only on 'neutral' musical skills; they also challenge praxial and multicultural approaches that are mainly concerned with preservation and authenticity of the what's and how's of learning music. With intercultural identity as the driving force in music education, we may perhaps better learn how to deal with diversity, rather than simply about diversity.

Heidi Westerlund is Professor at the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. She has published widely in international journals and books and she is the co-editor of Collaborative learning in higher music education. She has served as an Associate Editor or reviewer in several international journals and she is the Editor-in-chief of the Finnish Journal of Music Education. Her current research interests cover teacher education, higher music education, collaborative learning, cultural diversity and democracy in music education. She is the leader of two research projects funded by the Academy of Finland: The arts as public service: Strategic steps towards equality (2015-2020) and Global visions through mobilizing networks: Co-developing intercultural music teacher education in Finland, Israel and Nepal (2015-2019).