

Chapter 37: Facilitating Agency and Equity in Generalist music teacher education in Norway

Kari Holdhus

Introduction

In this chapter, I refer to action research as a vehicle to achieve equity and agency in order to accommodate change in teaching methods and student approaches. The chapter's cultural backdrop is the subject of music for Generalist teacher education students (preservice teachers) in Norway. Research-wise, the text is based on the results of the project *Music Teacher Education for the Future* (FUTURED), which aimed to research possibilities for change in Generalist music teacher education (GMTE). In this project, we applied a normative approach to GMTE in Norway, trying to obtain change by exploring and promoting agency in GMTE preservice teachers. This chapter presents a meta study of publications from the project, exploring the possibilities for developing agency as a means of promoting change in Norwegian Generalist music teacher education.

The reason that FUTURED chose Generalist music teacher education as its research area instead of other music education structures stems from societal interest in music as a school subject. FUTURED researchers believed that the subject of music should be accessible to all children and taught by teachers educated in music. Since 95% of Norwegian children attend public school, questioning the aim, scope, and pedagogy of Generalist music teacher education can contribute to enhance pupils' access to music education. How can GMTE be recognised, and in what ways can the necessary transformation be achieved? These were the initial questions posed by FUTURED researchers.

This chapter starts with the information on the FUTURED project and its main methodological approach focused on action research as a means of exploring preservice teachers' agency. This is followed by a discussion of Norwegian schooling and teacher education, with a particular emphasis on music. It then shifts to a discussion on the results of FUTURED articles to answer the primary question of the chapter: What are the challenges

and possibilities to develop transformative agency in Norwegian music education preservice teachers and teacher educators when they engage in participatory action research?

The main sources of data in this chapter come from FUTURED’s records and reports (see Figure 1). FUTURED publications are not limited to the issues of GMTE, as some discuss other specific themes, such as utopias (Viig et al., 2023) or ideological processes in music teacher education. There were also more articles from school-based participatory action research under development at the time of my writing.

No	Publication	Focus
1	Nysæther, Christophersen & Sætre (2021)	Critical review and mapping of existing GMTE practices
2	Christophersen (2021)	The crafts of music education as concerning the facilitation of development and change
3	Bjørnevoll (2022)	Preservice teachers’ possibilities for agency in practicum
4	Holdhus, Christophersen & Parti (2022)	The complexity of collaborative action research comprising preservice teachers
5	Onsrud, Fredriksen, Rinholm & Lindgren (2022)	Preservice teacher and teacher educators’ reactions to ways of working agency-oriented
6	Christophersen, Holdhus & Kenny (under review)	Exploring a university-school partnership as third space
7	Fredriksen, Onsrud, Rinholm & Lewis (2023)	Teacher educators’ approaches to facilitating student activity and agency
8	Knudsen & Onsrud (2023)	How ideological values are represented in the national guidelines for generalist music teacher education in Norway.
9	Rinholm, Onsrud & Fredriksen (submitted)	Preservice music teachers’ critical reflections on future-oriented music education

Figure 1. List of FUTURED project publications in this chapter

The FUTURED Project

In 2020, FUTURED received NOK 12 million in funding from the Norwegian Research Council. The project was carried out by music education teacher-researchers at two of Norway's largest general teacher education institutions: Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet) and Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL). The project represented a critical and normative approach to Generalist music teacher education, and the research was based on the following claim:

Music teacher education programs [in Norway and the western world] seem to be designed with a focus on musical content and the transmission of such content. Scholars have pointed to music teacher education functioning as so-called “silos” reproducing and sustaining musical values, beliefs, and practices [...] thus also failing to prepare future music teachers for the diversity they will certainly meet later in their teaching careers. The preparation of preservice music teachers thus tends to ignore “young people’s changing needs in a society driven by a knowledge-based society and economy....” (FUTURED, 2022).

FUTURED aimed to challenge and change the status of GMTE in Norway, as well as to “develop innovative and collaborative practices that could foster students’ collaborative, critical and democratic capacities” (FUTURED, 2022), referring to “approaches that can cater for versatile musicianship and learning styles, as well as critical reflection.”

FUTURED adds to an international body of research criticising existing school policies for pushing music and arts subjects in general education and teacher education towards marginalisation (e.g. Aróstegui, 2016; Chapman, 2004) (Also see Powell’s chapter in this handbook). The project’s normative and critical perspective and quest for change in music teacher education was grounded in comprehensive research, and as such FUTURED adds to a large volume of Western music education philosophies and research promoting and discussing necessary changes in music teacher and music education (Jorgensen, 2003; Bowman, 2007; Allsup, 2016; Väkevä et al., 2017; Conway & Pellegrino, 2019; Schippers & Seeger, 2022).

Central pedagogical and philosophical groundings for FUTURED were those of Biesta (2013; 2007) and Giroux (2004; 2011), who both engage with education as politics, striving for education that forefronts critical approaches to methods, ethics, and content. Freire’s (2020) activist oriented pedagogical philosophy was strong in FUTURED research, and we further

relied on and discussed research approaching Freire's work in music education. (Allsup, 2003; Schmidt, 2005; Hess, 2019). Major parts of the studied research suggest a possible activist approach to obtain change and transformation in music education. As such, we were interested in research on teacher micro activism (Laes & Schmidt, 2016; Kallio, 2021). Activist researchers encourage music teachers to disturb and interrupt reproduction in music education by questioning and changing contents and practices according to micro-possibilities in their everyday teacher life (Schmidt, 2019).

Major parts of the research studied deals with inclusion, understood as enhancing diversity in music teacher education by acknowledging and building on diverse cultures (McCoy & Lind, 2022; Barton & Riddle, 2021). Research on inclusion connects to agency, which became a major concept in FUTURED findings (Stetsenko, 2019; Hapasaari et al., 2014). General theories on agency such as Emirbayer and Mische's three-dimensional model of agency (2015), emphasising past, present, and future as agency components grounded FUTURED researchers' approach to agency. However, we also studied research more specifically oriented towards teacher education (Priestly, Biesta & Robinson, 2015; Lund & Vestøl, 2020), and music teacher education (Tucker, 2020; Tucker & Powell, 2021; Espeland et al., 2021). We as well have been drawing on a growing body of research comprising preservice teachers' experiences of agency in their education. (Powell, 2019; Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, 2010a; Kenny, 2017; Kos, 2018; Rathgeber & Mantie, 2018).

Action Research and FUTURED

FUTURED emphasized action research as a means of gaining insight into everyday challenges of preservice teachers and music teacher educators.

Action research is a diverse and evolving field with a number of common characteristics, such as the imperative to improve practices important to research participants and the acknowledgment of these participants' ability to be fully engaged in all research stages (McNiff, 2013). Action research is practical, iterative, and solution-oriented towards problems recognised or raised by research participants including researchers, through collective reflection and discussions and a cycle of refining and retrying solutions. A frequent approach used in FUTURED was participatory action research (PAR), which enables participants to rethink and retry their practice, often through critical approaches and debate. In collaboration, participants investigate their actions as well as interactions. Kemmis et al. (2014) argue that "Only PAR creates the conditions for practitioners, individually and collectively, to transform

the conduct and consequences of their practice to meet the needs of changing times and circumstances by confronting and overcoming [...] *untoward consequences* of their practice” (p. 5) (emphasis mine). They recognise that such untoward consequences are the result of irrational, unsustainable or unjust practices, which they believe PAR can transform. During the FUTURED research period, PAR emerged as a research approach and a pedagogy which we believe represents a way forward for fair and attainable music teaching and learning (Onsrud et al., 2022).

Agency and Transformative Agency in FUTURED

Emirbayer and Mische’s (1998) ecological conception of agency comprises three components: Iterative (past), practical-evaluative (present) and projective (future). Pedagogical improvisation, which refers to being able to make decisions on the spur of the moment and to act on these, a skill fundamental to teaching situations (Sawyer, 2011; Holdhus, 2019), demands well-developed agency components to function. Agency is not value-laden but neutral, which means it can be used for both beneficial and detrimental purposes. The agency we pursued in FUTURED was also guided by values and ethics of equity and democracy (Tucker & Powell, 2021). Agency is acquired in the past for present use; however, decisions and actions have consequences that impact the future. Adding a critical dimension, agency depends on the ability to analyse and respond critically to discursively produced plans and practices. Espeland et al. (2021) emphasise well-rehearsed pedagogical improvisation as a practical grounding for teacher agency, which is also featured in the FUTURED research (Onsrud et al. 2022; Fredriksen et al. 2023).

Transformative agency will always be collective, as it is rooted in difficulties, conflicts and challenges experienced and countered by a group (Kenny, 2018). Adding the term ‘transformative’ to agency elevates its meaning towards “breaking away from the given frame of action and taking the initiative to transform it” (Virkkunen, 2006, p. 49). Through this transformation of discourses or artifacts, neither of the actors remains unchanged (Lund & Vestøl, 2020). The people involved will then be “transformed by their own transformative engagements, activities and social practices” (Stetsenko, 2017, p. 175).

Music’s Place and Space in Norwegian Schools and Teacher Education

Within the Norwegian state school system, music is the second smallest subject, receiving only four percent of allotted hours (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). Adding to an already precarious situation for music in schools, only fifty

percent of teachers of music are educated in the subject (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). Since music is optional in Generalist teacher education (GTE), far from all generalist teachers have studied music as part of their teacher education. Educating more generalist teachers with music in their portfolio therefore is a meaningful goal.

Music in GTE in Norway is provided at teacher education institutions as an optional subject in a five- year Bachelor-integrated Master's degree programme in teacher education launched in 2017. The preservice teachers choose between studying to be a teacher for primary (grades 1-7) or primary/lower secondary schools (grades 5-10). They also choose between a range of school subjects, including music. It is possible to choose 30 or 60 credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, ECTS) in music during the first three years of education. The music education subject at the Master's level (year 4 and 5) requires 60 ECTS music credits achieved during years 1-3 of the teacher education programme. Training is provided at the teacher education institution and at practicum schools. Music education is subject to the structures of GTE, which provides prescribed learning goals and activity according to the curriculum.

All students who are eligible for teacher education can choose music education as a subject in GTE, irrespective of their prior musical training or education. There is no entrance exam for music in general teacher education. This results in diverse teacher education classes in music when it comes to initial musical competence. This also means that GTE provides access to music education for students who have not had the opportunity to engage with music during their childhood and youth.

Apart from music education in GTE, music teacher training in Norway is also offered at conservatories, which concentrate on artistic practices with an emphasis on training in a primary instrument. These programmes are mainly provided at the Bachelor and Master's levels, often offering an optional 60 ECTS in pedagogy during the third and fourth years, extending the length of the Bachelor's programme to four years. This option qualifies students to teach music in compulsory schools, municipal schools of music and performing arts,¹ and in upper secondary school music specialist courses. Furthermore, there are musicology studies available at universities that can be completed with 60 ECTS in pedagogy, which also qualify for teaching in the same type of institutions as those taught with the conservatories' pedagogy option.

¹ These are extracurricular schools at the primary and secondary level that (though subsidised) demand enrolment and payment.

A new national curriculum for compulsory schools was launched in 2021 (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022a). This curriculum emphasises creativity and physical and practical activities as pedagogical strategies, and highlights practical and arts-based subjects and methods as core drivers. Three broad interdisciplinary and interconnected principles have been introduced: health and life skills, democracy and citizenship, and sustainable development (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022b). The curriculum demonstrates high expectations for the music subject: The teaching of music should take place in a manner that promotes cultural diversity, creativity, democracy and equality, among other values. In an evaluation of teacher education's work with the 2021 general curriculum in schools, Salvesen et al. (2022) observed that general teacher education needs curricular, structural, and pedagogical changes in order to implement and maintain the new curriculum in compulsory education and to produce suitable teachers. The intention with the new curriculum, in which subjects and themes are supposed to be more interrelated and thematically addressed, is difficult to pursue in the current teacher education because its structure is based on the segregation of subjects. FUTURED was an attempt to respond to such needs (Knudsen & Onsud, 2023).

The discrepancy between the current subject-focused teacher education and the new curriculum for compulsory education is evident. The main aims of the teacher education launched in 2017 can be traced back to the results of the first PISA test in 2001, known in Norway as the "PISA-chock" (Malkenes, 2015). In it, Norwegian pupils achieved average scores, which caused an outrage among politicians, who had imagined Norway to have the best school system. In response to the political debates sparked by the PISA results, changes were made to teacher education and the compulsory school curriculum towards enhanced subject-based, competitive, and goal-oriented learning. Under such a system, subjects and competencies that cannot be measured, such as music expression or empathy, are marginalised.

In contrast, the 2021 general school curriculum is rooted in James Heckman's comprehensive research (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001), which showed that emphasising feelings, senses, collaboration, creativities, and physical learning improved students' subject achievement. Heckman et al.'s publications were part of the basis for two Norwegian reports on in-depth learning and transdisciplinarity (NOU, 2014; NOU, 2015), which in turn contributed to the formation of the 2021 compulsory school curriculum, along with the focus on 21st century skills (Kereluik et al., 2013) as approaches to education. The discrepancy between the two curricula is significant. Investigating how such profoundly different

approaches to education could be proposed in a few years requires understanding the highly politicised nature of political decisions on educational structures (Lassnigg, 2016; Knudsen & Onsrud, 2023).

Challenging Traditions in Music

In addition to the challenges inherent to the GTE structure described above, music in GTE has its own internal problems, which are rooted in traditions, especially those derived from social and historical hierarchies in music. Sætre (2014) considers music in GTE curricula and teaching traditions in Norway to be based on a model inherited from the conservatory tradition of teaching classical instrument playing. This kind of musical training implemented in school education has been criticised for “teaching a tradition, not a student” (Allsup, 2016, p. 65). The conservatory model is characterised by a number of distinctive sub-subjects (e.g., major instrument, aural training, arrangement, composition, music history, music theory), which Väkevä et al. (2017) describe as a silo-based approach. Although this model dominates the curricula and teaching traditions (Sætre, 2014) in the Nordic countries, the hegemony of Western classical music is no longer as strong as before, either in schools or in teacher education (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, 2010 b). Thus, it is peculiar that the fragmented structure of the classical teaching approach still persists in the manner the music subject is organised and taught in music teacher education.

Nysæther et al. (2021, p. 42) present a list of ten different disciplines or thematic areas that are important in GMTE courses, such as aural training, music history, didactics, and composing, among them. Christophersen (2021) argues that musical diversity in such courses often are considered important. However, she claims that “musical diversity does not necessarily equal pedagogical diversity within a musico-pedagogical practice model because of the emphasis on prescriptive teaching and learning” (p. 65). This suggests that merely adding diverse musical content does not necessarily bring about a change in pedagogy if the existing structures and pedagogical approaches remain unchanged.

FUTURED’s Mapping of Norwegian GMTE

As part of FUTURED, Nysæther, Christophersen and Sætre (2021) conducted a national survey among preservice teachers enrolled in music courses and mapped “students’ backgrounds, experiences of the educational programme and visions for their future practice

as generalist music teachers in schools” (abstract). The authors found the preservice music teachers to be strikingly similar, meaning that most of them are middle-class, white and with a family background in education or other socially engaged professions. Many of the respondents had taken part in family-financed, extracurricular music training and informal music activities throughout their childhood. The gender balance indicated a traditional divide between women/girls as singers and pianists, while a large group of boys/men played band instruments. Preservice teacher values were pupil-centred, as well as oriented towards making music. The preservice teachers deemed the music education programme successful to a significant degree. However, they pointed at the following themes as more or less lacking: Critical reflection, to take pupils’ knowledge and preferences into consideration, promote diversity, and address future challenges such as migration, globalisation, climate change and technology (Nysæther et al., 2021, p. 42). Moreover, the researchers demonstrated that music teacher educators and preservice music teachers are part of the same sociocultural group: “Student teachers and educators seem to share some common values and beliefs about the performative side of music as a subject, which may lead to an undisputed cultural practice within generalist music teacher education” (Nysæther et al., 2021, p. 49). They claimed that these homogeneous views held by GMTE participants would constrain diversity and limit possibilities for the music and experiences of minority students to be included in music education.

As stated by Schippers and Seeger (2022), developing and sustaining diversity in music education and practice requires a form of deep inclusion and equity to value the inherent qualities and approaches of local music culture. The spirit of inclusion will be endangered by an educational culture built on similarity. The latter further leads to a double-sided problem. Firstly, the ongoing white, middle-class, classical music-oriented discourse of music in GTE hinders access to these courses for diverse individuals and groups. Secondly, this lack of equity and diversity can lead to conformity and thus educational stagnation. This threatens educational discourse because education hinges on transformation in order to function effectively (Ellsworth, 2005; English, 2013). As Rancière (2010) claims, including counter-voices and dissensus in any society or social group is crucial to a productive democracy.

Student Positioning and Possibilities for Agency

Inspired by Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2020), Onsrud et al. (2022) have conducted campus-based critical participatory action research (PAR) with GMTE preservice

teachers to address and develop agency. They observed that, “We were clear about our agenda to invite their [the preservice teachers’] perspectives, opinions, and suggestions. The preservice teachers responded to this initiative in various ways. Some found the invitation exciting, as one said, ‘No one has ever asked for our contribution before.’” (Onsrud et al., 2022, p. 5). This statement underlines Nysæther et al.’s (2021) finding that “taking the knowledge and preferences of the students into account” (p. 42) is lacking in GMTE and as such, is a profound problem when the goal is to develop agency.

Onsrud et al. conducted two different cycles of research aimed at promoting agency. In the first case, the students were granted teaching responsibility in terms of curriculum and assessment. Among other things, the teachers faced resistance to this approach because students expected the teacher to provide them with information that would help them pass the exam with ease. The second cycle was conducted outside of regular teaching settings in relation to views and reflections on music teacher education as a whole. The results of the study showed varying degrees of agency as the basis for possible activism, presented as three different positions: novices, not yet independent, and resource persons.

The *novice position* proposed by Onsrud et al. (2022) refers to students who felt, “It’s a bit scary,” “I don’t have real experience,” and “How can I reflect on [. . .] when I don’t know [. . .]?” (p. 6). These comments position the pre-service teachers as novices in the sense that they may not feel able to contribute relevant suggestions to develop their education. Despite student insecurities, however, Onsrud et al. find the novice position to contain “resistance, critique, risk-taking, and making suggestions” (p. 7).

Onsrud et al. proposed that the novice position should facilitate preservice teachers’ “resistance, critique, risk-taking, and making suggestions” (p. 7). Next, the researchers connected the position, *not yet independent*, to a prevailing attitude among students to view themselves as passive recipients of knowledge and expect teachers to deliver content knowledge to them. “While the novice position results from a lack of knowledge and being new to the field of practice, the positioning as not yet independent revolves more around attitude and a need for reassurance and acknowledgment” (p. 7). Onsrud et al. compare this position to Freire (2020)’s concept of *banking education* in which students are seen (and in this case, view themselves) as empty vessels waiting for the teacher to fill them with knowledge perceived to be relevant.

These two positions appear to be the characteristic of many GMTE preservice teachers. However, to trigger activism, it is clear that they need assistance in developing transformative agency, which is, according to Onsrud et al., the preferred state of student

agency. The student position of *resource persons* described by Onsrud et al. refers to transformative agency. According to Haapasaari et al. (2016), transformative agency evolves from the collective handling of “disturbances, conflicts and contradictions” (p. 233) and is directed towards change and possibility. Thus, preservice teachers can achieve “a more active and autonomous version of agency by assuming greater responsibility in their education” (p. 9).

When discussing their findings from activities conducted at the university, Onsrud et al. emphasised the need for ‘gaining spaces’ to develop agency. This involves challenging curricula, predefined learning outcomes, and discursively-based choices of music and teaching methods, as well as preservice teachers’ and teacher educators’ perceptions of and approaches to what it means to teach and learn music. Working to explore and attain a concrete agency-based pedagogy in music teacher education is a complex endeavour as it involves questioning all the societal, educational, and musical structures and traditions as explained in this chapter.

Conducting action research within the framework of practicum in a lower secondary school music class, Holdhus, Christophersen and Partti (2022) found it relevant to view the activities through complexity theory (Cochran-Smith et al., 2014). The eighth graders in the reported study composed music through the digital audio workstation *Soundtrap*, taught by their in-service teachers, preservice GMTE teachers, and a musician. The action research group included all these professionals along with two researchers. In this research, the opportunity for agency by all participants was found to be clearly framed by physical and organisational circumstances, such as a worn-out school building, few hours allotted to music and municipal ICT regulations. One major finding of this study was that the preservice teachers, when granted responsibility, were able to operate effortlessly in relaxed, improvisational and agentic manners within this complex framework. Thus, the researchers recommended facilitating preservice teachers in complex and versatile everyday school situations to learn how to create opportunities for music learning and develop their own professional agency.

Bjørnevoll (2022) addressed a number of challenges for preservice music teachers and factors that may limit their opportunities to act agentic, including experiences of 1) the school-based mentors making decisions for musical activities, 2) being assistant teachers in music lessons, and 3) being observers in music lessons (p. 7). The study indicated that even if the university teachers strive to facilitate student agency in campus-based teaching, the practicum schools and teachers may not support the students’ journey towards professional

agency to the same degree. These findings are in line with research conducted by Christophersen, Holdhus and Kenny (under review), who argued that partnerships in schools often maintain hierarchical and fixed educational discourses. Within their study context, they observed a tendency among experienced teachers to overrule and exclude preservice music teachers from full participation.

Together, FUTURED findings suggest challenges to the quest for student agency by GMTE students both in the university setting and during teaching practicum.

Transformative Teaching by Transforming Teachers?

Having addressed GTE music courses through PAR in various ways, FUTURED researchers (Holdhus et al., 2022; Bjørnevoll, 2022; Fredriksen et al., 2023; Onsrud et al., 2022) concluded that the development of transformative agency among both preservice teachers and music educators is crucial for facilitating necessary changes in GMTE courses. This is because participatory action research (PAR) in an educational setting redefines the notion of participation, and challenges the roles of both preservice teachers and teacher educators (Fredriksen et al., 2023). These authors illustrated how teachers' behaviors changed when they engaged in fostering transformative agency in such a way that the traditional student-teacher power dynamic (Freire, 2020) was constantly under pressure. The teacher, they argued, must be "able to recognise the generative themes offered by her students and to accompany the students in an exploration of these themes and their implications" (Fredriksen et al., 2023, p. 9). Drawing on Ellsworth (2005), they indicated that participation demands an openness towards uncertainty, to being fully unprepared for what might occur because it is new. Ellsworth calls this 'pedagogical anomalies', which means encountering something completely new and strange in the pedagogical setting. However, such encounters are chaotic and therefore uncomfortable and confusing for participants, who experience their prior knowledge and habits as being at stake.

Fredriksen et al. (2023) highlighted the accounts of the two teacher-researchers who described their teacher functions as they aimed to enhance student participation and responsibility. In teacher-researcher Bendik's story, one of the students suggested using the storyline method (Bell et al., 2007) for upcoming lessons. Eager to hand over decisions to the students, Bendik agreed to this suggestion. However, in the subsequent lesson, it became apparent that none of the students had sufficient knowledge of this method, nor did Bendik:

....my knowledge of storyline was insufficient, so we ended up not doing storyline at all but rather working with the material in classroom discussions (Fredriksen et al., 2023).

This example shows that following student suggestions requires an open discussion of relevant knowledge and how those suggestions could be realized in classroom activities. Through pedagogical improvisation, the teacher should clarify whose responsibility it is to ensure follow-up. Should Bendik have read up on storyline? Or should they have agreed on student responsibility to study storyline and to incorporate their topic into a storyline setting to prepare for the next lesson?

Another teacher-researcher, Silje, reflected on balancing her attention and actions, which was a rather new and unknown situation to her as a teacher.

I found myself in a situation where, on the one hand, I had to be careful not to maintain the typical teacher-student dyad while, on the other, I had to avoid taking on too much of an observer role so that I could be a participant on equal terms with the students (Fredriksen et al., 2023).

The teachers must be prepared to encounter resistance to their initiatives. An example of this in Onsrud et al. (2022) was the teacher who wanted student-led music history teaching, but the students preferred knowledge transmission from an experienced teacher.

Agency matures over time when deliberately encouraged and facilitated. However, as demonstrated in Fredriksen et al. (2023), GMTE educators need to rehearse their role as agency facilitators and accept criticism from students regarding their teaching approaches. This might mean using the students' own music as the starting point for discussion and musicking (Small, 1978) and facilitating conversations about their perceived educational needs. It also includes observing student development and providing customised tasks at the appropriate time.

In their search for ways to teach agency, Fredriksen et al. paraphrased Seale (2010), who suggested that teachers should concentrate on the following: “listening to and valuing students' views of their learning experiences, positioning students as equal partners in the evaluation of teaching and learning and, ultimately, utilizing their views to enact change” (Fredriksen, 2023). These elements are also crucial to the enacted research method PAR. Li and Ruppard (2021) identified five core aspects of teacher agency to be developed in teacher education: inclusive teacher identity, professional competence, inclusive professional philosophy, autonomy, and reflexivity. Seriously pursuing these objectives means a shift

away from the content-oriented and teacher-governed GMTE teaching practices, thus providing and demanding transformation for teachers and students involved.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed challenges and possibilities of developing agency among preservice music teachers and teacher educators in Norwegian teacher education. FUTURED researchers have described action research as an interruption to the ongoing discursive practice of GMTE, which continue to be largely unquestioned by its teachers, students and curriculum planners. Action research is not a solution to every problem but can be a means to move forward to equip future music teachers with important tools that can be of use in a complex future world. Establishing a contemporary, relevant GMTE and propelling its prompt changes requires active experiments with pedagogical approaches that facilitate agency development among GMTE preservice students and teacher educators. However, as elaborated on early in the chapter, General teacher education is an institutional structure within which neither teachers nor students can operate freely (Knudsen & Onsrud, 2023). The research presented in this chapter revealed the limitations to agency caused by fixed curricula, learning goals, structures, and examinations. Such problems are present throughout general teacher education and teacher training practice (Børte et al., 2020; Cochran-Smith, 2016) and thus should be addressed as a pressing problem throughout GTE. At the same time, the dispersed and conservatory-oriented organization and structure of music as a subject exacerbate the challenge for music in GTE. Together, these issues must be addressed in music teacher education programs at universities and throughout practicums.

References

- Allsup, R. E. (2003). Praxis and the possible: Thoughts on the writings of Maxine Greene and Paulo Freire. *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 11(2), 157-169.
- Allsup, R. E. (2016). *Remixing the classroom: Toward an open philosophy of music education*. Indiana University Press.
- Aróstegui, J. L. (2016). Exploring the global decline of music education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 117(2), 96-103.

- Barton, G., & Riddle, S. (2022). Culturally responsive and meaningful music education: Multimodality, meaning-making, and communication in diverse learning contexts. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 44(2), 345-362.
- Bell, S., Harkness, S., & White, G. (2007). *Storyline. Past, present & future*. UKLA minibook series. <https://ukla.org/wp-content/uploads/Mini39sample.pdf>
- Biesta, G. (2013). *The beautiful risk of education*. London: Paradigm Publishers.
- Biesta, G. (2007). The education-socialization conundrum or "Who is afraid of education?". *Utbildning og demokrati*, 16(3), pp. 25-36
- Bjørnevoll, S. M. (2022). "We Never Got to Try That Experience of Total Chaos": Exploring Preservice Music Teachers' Agency in Teaching Practicum. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 10570837221137075.
- Bowman, W. (2007). Who is the "we"? Rethinking professionalism in music education. *Action, criticism, and theory for music education*, 6(4), 109-131.
- Børte, K., Nesje, K., & Lillejord, S. (2020). Barriers to student active learning in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 8(3), 597-615.
- Chapman, L. H. (2004). No child left behind in art? *Arts Education Policy Review*, 106(2), 3-20.
- Christophersen, C. (2021). Educating Music Teachers for the Future: The Crafts of Change. In Holdhus, K., Murphy, R. & Espeland, M. (Eds.), *Music Education as Craft* (pp. 63-74). Springer.
- Christophersen, C., Holdhus, K., & Kenny, A. (submitted). Third Space Moments: Exploring a University-School Partnership through Collaborative Action Research. *submitted*.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2016). *Teacher Education in Times of Change: Responding to Challenges Across the UK and Ireland*. Policy Press.
- Cochran-Smith, M., Ell, F., Ludlow, L., Grudnoff, L., & Aitken, G. (2014). The challenge and promise of complexity theory for teacher education research. *Teachers College Record*, 116(5), 1–38.
- Conway, C., Pellegrino, K., West, C., & Stanley, A. M. (2019). Setting an agenda for music teacher education practice, research, and policy. In Conway, K., Pellegrino, A. M. Stanley, & West, C. (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of preservice music teacher education in the United States* (1st ed.), pp. 904–916. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190671402.013.46>
- Ellsworth, E. (2005). *Places of learning: Media, architecture, pedagogy*. Routledge.

- Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? *American Journal of Sociology*, 103(4), 962-1023.
- English, A. R. (2013). *Discontinuity in learning: Dewey, Herbart and education as transformation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Espeland, Å., Kvile, S., & Holdhus, K. (2021). Teacher agency and teacher improvisation: A study of experienced teachers and student teachers in music classrooms. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 43(3), 311-328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X19861003>
- Fredriksen, B., Onsrud, S. V., Rinholm, H., & Lewis, J. (2023). Who takes part in participation? Challenges to empowering student voice in music teacher education. *Music Education Research*, 25:3, 253268, DOI: [10.1080/14613808.2023.2210159](https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2023.2210159)
- Freire, P. (2020). Pedagogy of the oppressed. In *Toward a Sociology of Education* (pp. 374-386). Routledge.
- FUTURED. (2022). *Webpage*. Retrieved 20.08.22 from <https://prosjekt.hvl.no/futured/>
- Georgii-Hemming, E., & Westvall, M. (2010a). Teaching music in our time: Student music teachers' reflections on music education, teacher education and becoming a teacher. *Music Education Research*, 12(4), 353-367.
- Georgii-Hemming, E., & Westvall, M. (2010b). Music education—a personal matter? Examining the current discourses of music education in Sweden. *British Journal of Music Education*, 27(1), 21-33.
- Giroux, H. (2004). Cultural Studies, Public Pedagogy, and the Responsibility of intellectuals. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 1(1), pp. 59-79.
- Giroux, H. (2011). *On Critical Pedagogy*. New York: Continuum.
- Heckman, J. J., & Rubinstein, Y. (2001). The importance of noncognitive skills: Lessons from the GED testing program. *American Economic Review*, 91(2), 145-149.
- Hess, J. (2019). *Music education for social change: Constructing an activist music education*. Routledge.
- Holdhus, K. (2019). Pedagogical improvisation: Musical improvisation's little sister? In Johansen, G. G., Holdhus, K., Larsson, C., & MacGlone, U. (Eds.) *Expanding the Space for Improvisation Pedagogy in Music* (pp. 195-210). Routledge.

- Holdhus, K., Christophersen, C., & Partti, H. (2022). Soundtrapped? Socio-material perspectives on collaborative teaching within the music classroom. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X221115978>
- Haapasaari, A., Engeström, Y., & Kerosuo, H. (2016). The emergence of learners' transformative agency in a Change Laboratory intervention. *Journal of Education and Work*, 29(2), 232-262.
- Jorgensen, E. R. (2003). Western classical music and general education. *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 11(2), 130-140.
- Kallio, A. A. (2021) (Ed.). *Difference and Division in Music Education*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429278525>
- Kemmis, S., McTaggart, R., & Nixon, R. (2014). *The action research planner: Doing critical participatory action research*. Springer.
- Kenny, A. (2017). Beginning a journey with music education: Voices from pre-service primary teachers. *Music Education Research*, 19(2), 111–122.
- Kenny, A. (2018). Building Student Leadership Through a University-School-Community Children's Choir, *British Journal of Music Education*. 35 (2), pp. 203-216
- Kereluik, K., Mishra, P., Fahnoe, C., & Terry, L. (2013). What knowledge is of most worth: Teacher knowledge for 21st century learning. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, 29(4), 127-140.
- Knudsen, J. S., & Onsrud, S. V. (2023). Ideology, selective tradition, and naturalization in the music teacher education curriculum. *Nordic Research in Music Education*, 4, 1-22.
- Kos, R. P. (2018). Becoming music teachers: Preservice music teachers' early beliefs about music teaching and learning. *Music Education Research*, 20(5), 560–572. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808>.
- Laes, T., & Schmidt, P. (2016). Activism within music education: working towards inclusion and policy change in the Finnish music school context. *British Journal of Music Education*, 33(1), 5–23. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051715000224>
- Lassnigg, L. (2016). *Education as a hostage of politics: governance and knowledge in a bureaucratic-federalist system*. (Reihe Soziologie / Institut für Höhere Studien, Abt. Soziologie, 113). Institut für Höhere Studien (IHS), Wien. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ss0ar-46738-2>
- Li, L., & Ruppard, A. (2021). Conceptualizing teacher agency for inclusive education: A systematic and international review. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 44(1), 42-59.
- Lund, A., & Vestøl, J. M. (2020). An analytical unit of transformative agency: Dynamics and dialectics. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 25, Article 100390. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2020.100390>

- Malkenes, S. (2015). Da PISA-sjokket lamna nasjonen. [When the PISA-chock lamed the nation] *Agenda magasin*, 21.
- McKoy, C. L., & Lind, V. R. (2022). *Culturally responsive teaching in music education: From understanding to application*. Taylor & Francis.
- McNiff, J. (2013). *Action research: Principles and practice*. Routledge.
- Ministry of Education and Research. (2019). *Skaperglede, engasjement og utforskertrang. Praktisk og estetisk innhold i barnehage, skole og lærerutdanning. [Practical and artistic content in school and kindergarten]*.
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/c8bbb637891443fea7971ba8e936bca4/skaperglede-engasjement--og-utforskertrang.pdf>
- Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. (2020). *Fag og timestfordeling [Distribution of content and subjects] (Circular 01/2020)*. Retrieved 20.08.22 from <https://www.udir.no/regelverkstolkninger/opplaring/Innhold-i-opplaringen/udir-1-2021/vedlegg-1/2.-grunnskolen/#2.1.3fastsatt-timetall>
- Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. (2022a). Curricula in English, (2022b). <https://www.udir.no/in-english/curricula-in-english/>
- Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. (2022b). *Core curriculum - interdisciplinary topics*. Retrieved 20. 08. 2022 from <https://www.udir.no/lk20/overordnet-del/prinsipper-for-laring-utvikling-og-danning/tverrfaglige-temaer/?lang=eng>
- NOU. 2014. Elevenes læring i fremtidens skole. (Pupils' Learning in Future Schools). Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.
- NOU. 2015. Fremtidens skole. Fornying av fag og kompetanser. (The School of the Future — Renewal of subjects and competences). Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.
- Nysæther, E. T., Christophersen, C., & Sætre, J. H. (2021). Who are the music student teachers in Norwegian generalist teacher education? *Nordic Research in Music Education*, 2(2), 28-57. <https://doi.org/10.23865/nrme.v2.2988>
- Onsrud, S. V., Fredriksen, B., Rinholm, H., & Lindgren, M. (2022). The multiplicity of preservice music teachers' positioning in a participatory action research project. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 1321103X221089838.
- Powell, S. R. (2019). Structure and agency in novice music teaching. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 41, 206–218. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X18794514>
- Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2015). *Teacher Agency: An Ecological Approach*. London: Bloomsbury.

- Rancière, J. (2010). *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. Bloomsbury.
- Rathgeber, J., & Mantie, R. (2019). Markers of agency in preservice music teachers: A directed content analysis of written coursework. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 219, 27–46. <https://doi.org/10.5406/bulcouresmusedu.219.0027>
- Salvesen, G. S., Ruud, L. C., Gustavsen, T., & Hjørdemaal, F. (2022). EvaFag 2025: Evaluering av fagfornyelsen: Fra plan til praksis—lærerutdanningsinstitusjonenes arbeid med fagfornyelsen. Arbeidspakke 3, Delrapport 1. [Evaluation of teacher education’s work with the 2021 compulsory school curriculum]
- Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.). (2011). *Structure and improvisation in creative teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schippers, H., & Seeger, A. (2022). *Music, Communities, Sustainability: Developing Policies and Practices*. Oxford University Press.
- Schmidt, P. (2005). Music education as transformative practice: Creating new frameworks for learning music through a Freirian perspective. *Visions of Research in Music education*, 6(1), 2.
- Schmidt, P. (2019). *Policy as practice: A guide for music educators*. Oxford University Press.
- Seale, J. (2010). Doing Student voice work in higher education: the potential contribution of a participatory framework. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(6), 995-1015.
- Small, C. (1998). *Musicking: The meanings of performing and listening*. Wesleyan University Press.
- Stetsenko, A. (2019). Radical-transformative agency: Continuities and contrasts with relational agency and implications for education. *Frontiers in Education (Lausanne)*, 4, Article 148. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2019.00148>
- Sætre, J. H. (2014). *Preparing generalist student teachers to teach music: a mixed-methods study of teacher educators and educational content in generalist teacher education music courses. Dissertation*. Norwegian Academy of Music. https://nmh.brage.unit.no/nmh-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/226772/Saetre_Avhandling.pdf?sequence=1

Tucker, O. G. (2020). Supporting the development of agency in music teacher education. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 29(3), 24–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1057083719885868>

Tucker, O. G., & Powell, S. R. (2021). Values, agency, and identity in a music teacher education program. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 31(1), 23-38.

Viig, T. G., Onsrud, S. V., Lewis, J., Christophersen, C., & Kvinge, Ø. R. (2023). Developing Visions for the Future? A Reflection on Utopias in Music Teacher Education. *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 41(1), 3-17.

Virkkunen, J. (2006). Dilemmas in building shared transformative agency. *Activités*, 3(3-1).

Väkevä, L., Westerlund, H., & Ilmola-Sheppard, L. (2017). Social innovations in music education: Creating institutional resilience for increasing social justice. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, 16(3), 129–147.