

## **Abstract for submission to NNRME 2023, Rinde**

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## Abstract

This study explores the role of musical engagement in helping foster an inclusive school environment for newly arrived children. The design is an ethnographic case study of a Norwegian primary school with an introductory class for newly arrived children. The main data collection instruments were participant observation, interviews with pupils, teachers and school leaders, and field conversations.

In the articles I applied theoretical lenses of interculturality (Rinde & Christophersen, 2021), musical participation (Rinde & Kenny, 2021) and inclusion (Rinde, 2022). In the thesis I combine all three concepts in the notion of *inclusive socio-musical spaces*. I investigate how newly arrived children's musical participation plays out in socio-musical spaces in school: what happens in these spaces, how they are facilitated, and on whose terms; what characterises inclusive practices in such spaces; and obstacles to such spaces being inclusive.

The findings show that while musical engagement in school *can* serve inclusive purposes, this is not a given. Music activities can have exclusionary effects through tacit majority-culture notions of what music *is*, or of acceptable ways of responding to music in the classroom. While music can act as a marker of belonging in school, the study illustrates how music can also signal non-belonging and be a marker of outsider status.

The study highlights a number of potential obstacles at individual, organisational and discursive levels to the facilitation of inclusive socio-musical spaces. Discursive obstacles can lead to blind spots in practice linked to tacit knowledge, majority privilege, and teachers' construction of the concepts of music and inclusion. Intercultural competence and cultural humility were found to be necessary to the facilitation of inclusive socio-musical spaces in culturally diverse classrooms. For socio-musical spaces in schools to realise their inclusive potential, teachers need to be aware of how certain music activities can reinforce markers of belonging and non-belonging, and to complement reproductive music activities with collaborative, creative music activities not tied to specific cultural categories.

## References

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