

Instrumental teachers' boundary repertoires

Main instrumental teachers in higher music education enjoy a high degree of freedom in shaping their one-to-one teaching practices. This freedom, however, also means that the teachers themselves must enact the boundaries of their practice. This paper reports on an ongoing doctoral project investigating how teachers construct and negotiate the boundaries of their teaching practice's mandate and purpose, of the content and activities in their lessons, and of their relationship with their students. Boundaries are here understood as symbolic, and as discursively created and (re-)negotiated through the teachers' continuous boundary-work, which is explored through the lens of critical discursive psychology. Approximately ten instrumental teachers from four different higher music education institutions in Norway have been interviewed, with six of the teachers also having had one or more lessons videotaped. This paper presents preliminary results from the study. In line with critical discursive psychology, it discusses some of the teachers' key repertoires, including repertoires concerning the teachers' relationship with their students, their roles, power, and the purpose of their teaching, focussing especially on the teachers' ideological dilemmas and the subject positions made available in their speech. Further, it explores how these repertoires can function as boundary-work, both in creating boundaries around different actors, alone or together; in bounding the teaching practice in itself; and in demarcating it from other, similar practices. The paper aims to provide insight into the different repertoires that teachers utilize when asked to talk about the less technical or artistic aspects of their practices.

Keywords: Instrumental teaching, higher music education, boundaries, boundary-work, critical discursive psychology.