Notice of the Final Oral Examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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MEd (Tecnológico de Monterrey, 2016)
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“Building appreciation for Indigenous cultures in Mexico via music education”

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Thursday, April 22, 2021
12:00pm (PDT)
Remote Defence

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Anita Prest, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Kathy Sanford, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. María del Carmen Rodríguez de France, Department of Indigenous Education, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Brent Talbot, Sunderman Conservatory of Music, Gettysburg College

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Martha McGinnis, Department of Linguistics, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

The Mexican educational system has systematically marginalized Indigenous ways of knowing in schools and curriculum, which contributes to discrimination against Indigenous perspectives both within the system and in society at large. The purpose of this study was to provide potential ways to envision the embedding of Indigenous Huasteco music in Mexico’s educational system. In this dissertation, I present the findings of a 6-month qualitative study in which I collected stories, experiences, and reflections from Huasteco Music Culture Bearers (HMCBs) regarding the ways in which they learned and currently transmit Huasteco music and the worldviews that are deeply connected to their music making practices. During interviews, HMCBs reflected on the possibilities, challenges, and potential ways of embedding Huasteco music making in Mexico’s national curriculum for basic education (grades 1-9). I collected data through Sharing Circles and open-ended interviews with 16 HMCBs and one Huasteco culture promoter. Decolonial and Indigenous theoretical frameworks informed this research. I used Indigenous methodologies and narrative inquiry for this study. Findings and analysis of the information show that HMCBs teach music using pedagogical approaches similar to those used by the HMCB who had originally taught them how to play Huasteco music. Nevertheless, all of the HMCBs acknowledged that in their teaching practices they also include their own pedagogical approaches, which are informed by their own lived journeys with Huasteco music. HMCBs expressed that the worldview of the Huasteco people is intrinsically connected with music making since music serves both secular and ritual purposes throughout their lives. HMCBs expressed that they are in favour of embedding Huasteco music making in the educational system so long as this music making is embedded in cultural values and practices; otherwise, there is a risk that the music will be transmitted without acknowledging the importance of keeping it rooted in the Huasteco worldview. Finally, HMCBs expressed that it is important for school administrators, educators, and music educators to seek Culture Bearers’ support in order to foster collaborative initiatives to bring Huasteco music into schools. A contribution of this study is a concept that I coined, *Indigenous Epistemic Resilience*, which acknowledges the importance of Indigenous ways of knowing in current times, avoiding the depiction of Indigenous perspectives located solely in a static past.

*Keywords*: Music education, Huasteco music, Indigenous perspectives, Mexico’s national educational system, decolonization, Indigenization