Article

Under construction: Undergraduates' perceptions of their music teacher role-identities

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Abstract
The purpose of this research was to explore how participants perceived themselves as preservice music teachers. Bouij's (1998) salient role-identities in music education served as an a priori theoretical framework. By investigating participants' perceptions of role-identity, some of the socialization processes that contributed to identity development were also revealed. Multiple forms of data were collected including interviews, both individual and focus group, and field notes from peer teaching sessions. Analysis resulted in three themes: (a) Role-Identities, (b) Peers, and (c) Authentic Teaching Experiences. Participants believed they embodied a primary and secondary role-identity and perceived subtle expansions of their role-identities as they progressed through their undergraduate degree program. Participants discussed the importance of their peers and authentic teaching experiences in their development as music teachers. Suggestions for practice and further research are provided.

Keywords
field experience, preservice music teachers, role-identities, socialization, undergraduates

Introduction

McCall and Simmons (1978) describe role-identity as "the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position" (p. 65). A person has multiple role-identities that may change over time and in differing situations. Role identities are defined by culture (Stets, 2006). People derive meanings about a particular role-identity from two sources: their own personal understanding of the role and the cultural and social structure in which they have been socialized. Individuals employ both of these sets of meanings as they enact a role-identity. When enacting that role-identity, others are always claiming an alternative role-identity in the interaction (Stets, 2006). For example, the role of teacher is enacted in relation to the alternative role of student (Stets, 2006).

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In his work with music educators, Bouij (2004) identified three elements of identity: "what the individual actually is expected to master (the competence), what socio-culturally is expected of a person in a particular position, and what the individual for different reasons considers to be desirable and suitable" (p. 4). Identity development for music education majors, according to Bouij, is about negotiating position and value. His framework, Salient Role-Identities in Music Education (Bouij, 1998), serves as the theoretical basis for this exploration of undergraduate music education majors' role-identities; it is presented in detail in the following section.

Bouij's salient role-identities in music education

Using a grounded theory approach in his research with Swedish music teachers, Bouij (1998) developed a theory of salient role-identities in music education that included four identities plotted in quadrants formed by a horizontal and vertical axis: (a) all-round musician, (b) pupil-centered teacher, (c) performer, and (d) content-centered teacher. Bouij labeled the horizontal axis a continuum from left to right of musician to teacher, to indicate the professional role that an individual is striving for within the profession. The vertical axis represented a continuum of musical comprehensiveness, from broad at the top of the axis to narrow at the bottom of the axis. Each role-identity is placed within one of the four quadrants formed by the axes, beginning with all-round musician in the upper left (musician/broad) and moving counter-clockwise to performer (musician/narrow), content-centered teacher (teacher/narrow), and then pupil-centered teacher (teacher/broad).

According to Bouij, the all-round musician is well-rounded in music, and may be skilled in several genres or on several instruments. Music functions socially for the all-round musician. The performer has a much narrower focus. Performers actively cultivate a certain music tradition and their musicianship is central to their teaching. Student culture usually values the performer identity most highly. Content-centered teachers are masters of their subject and instrument and while primarily teachers, their role as musical models for their students is vital for being competent teachers. The content-centered individual typically teaches older students, usually high school and college. Pupil-centered teachers approach music teaching from a solid knowledge of pedagogy and child development. They seek to learn age-appropriate music and teaching strategies to become a master of the education process and typically teach younger students.

Socialization and role-identity

Socialization, a process through which individuals acquire and conform to the norms, values, and beliefs of a particular group may contribute to role-identity construction and changes (Froehlich, 2007). Role-identities are dynamic over time and most individuals have a primary and a secondary role-identity (Bouij, 1998). Shifts may occur when the individual's collectivity, or the group with whom one interacts or socializes, changes or expands. When individuals receive or fail to receive role support for a particular identity, a shift in role-identity may also take place.

Socialization is typically delineated into two types: primary and secondary. Primary socialization begins earliest and is dominated by parents or other caregivers. Woodford (2002) stated that secondary socialization begins post high school; others have posited that secondary socialization begins much earlier, once a person's collectivity expands beyond that of family and caregivers or once the individual's social structure extends beyond the home (Froehlich, 2007). Because of its relationship to identity construction, in the following section I discuss the

secondary socialization of undergraduate music education students as explored in the university setting.

Secondary socialization

Austin, Isbell, and Russell (2012) described secondary socialization "as the collective impact of people and experiences most connected to the individual or context" (Austin et al., 2012, p. 81). For music education majors this may include professors, peers, curriculum, and field experiences in the college or university setting. Music education majors have struggled during secondary socialization to develop a well-formed educator identity and commitment to their future work due to a focus on the development of musicianship for performance and the relatively little importance placed on the development of pedagogical skills (Bernard, 2005; Bouij, 1998, 2004; Froehlich & L'Roy, 1985; Mark, 1998; Roberts, 1991; Woodford, 2002). Bernard (2005) argued that music education professors contribute to these challenges as they place musician and teacher identities in opposition to one another by conveying the impression, through their sharp focus on teacher preparation, that music-making ceases to be important once teaching begins. Finally, institutions may play a role, particularly when social hierarchies emerge in which one discipline within music, usually performance, is emphasized or valued over others (Austin et al., 2012; Bouij, 2004; Roberts, 1991).

Some researchers have offered evidence that secondary socialization may affect the identity construction of music education majors more than previously revealed (Bouij, 2004; Isbell, 2008). In their international multi-site study, Ballantyne, Kerchner, and Aróstegui (2012) posited that "that music teacher education has a distinct and crucial role in the development of positive music teacher identities" (p. 222), with reflection and deconstruction of professional identity by preservice music teachers playing a key role in its development. Isbell (2008) found that people and experiences during secondary socialization contributed to occupational identity more significantly than primary socialization. Music education professors and field experiences offered as curricular components of music education programs were also revealed as key to music education majors' socialization (Austin et al., 2012; Conkling, 2003; Isbell, 2008). Peers within and outside of music education played influential roles as agents of socialization and influenced one another's identity development in positive, rather than negative, ways (Isbell, 2008). For an individual pursuing music education as a career path, the college or university setting becomes a principal place or agent of secondary socialization and therefore identity construction (Austin et al., 2012).

Purpose and theoretical framework

The purpose of this research was to explore how participants perceived themselves as preservice music teachers. I employed Bouij's (1998) theory of role-identities to explore those perceptions. Specific areas of inquiry were as follows: (a) Which role-identity did participants believe they embodied? (b) What experiences or people were influential in participants' perceptions of their role-identities? and (c) How had the participants' role-identities changed since their enrolment in the Introduction to Music Education course?

In addition to being the only known role-identity theory developed specifically for music education, Bouij's concept accounts for the potential of shifting identities, multiple identities, and multiple influences on identity construction. These qualities make it an appropriate framework with which to examine issues of identity. No known studies exist in which the Bouij theory is utilized to investigate identity construction in undergraduate music education majors.

I utilized the four role-identities of all-round musician, performer, pupil-centered teacher, and content-centered teacher as lenses to help the participants view and reflect upon their emerging identities. This served two purposes: (a) situating the research in an identity model developed specifically with music education majors and (b) applying a theory often referenced—although not employed as a theoretical framework—in articles by American music education scholars (e.g., Austin et al., 2012) to a different cultural context than the one in which it was developed (i.e., Sweden) in order to explore its appropriateness within this American setting. Finally, I hoped it might also provide a basis on which to build future studies using the same framework, therefore developing a logically connected body of research (Russell, 2012).

By investigating participants' perceptions of role-identity, I was also exploring some of the secondary socialization processes that contributed to identity development. The conception of secondary socialization "as the collective impact of people and experiences most connected to the individual or context" (Austin et al., 2012, p. 81) guided my inquiry as I sought to reveal those individuals and experiences that participants' believed had been most meaningful in their path to becoming a music teacher. As Roberts (2000) stated, "the complex identity construction of any individual will be much more global than any single specific society in which that individual operates" (p. 56), taking place for an individual within all social spheres of that individual's existence.

Method

This was a multiple case study bound by time and setting (Creswell, 2007). Data were collected during the Fall 2010 semester over approximately 8 weeks. Perception of identity was the core issue and I have chosen three cases or individuals to illustrate this issue. Participants (*N* = 3) were a purposeful sample selected from a Fall 2009 Introduction to Music Education course at a large Southwestern university, for which the researcher had served as instructor. Introduction to Music Education was offered as a sophomore-level course during Fall and Spring semesters; students typically enrolled as sophomores, although some students took the course during Fall semester of their junior year. The introductory course was the first one offered in the undergraduate music education major. Ten students, nine females and one male, were enrolled in the course during Fall 2009. The course content is discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

During the introductory course, we had discussed Bouij's theory and students had plotted their music teacher role-identity on the framework, including a narrative explanation of their choice. I used these frameworks as a tool for purposeful sampling, seeking participants who represented different role-identities in order to provide varying perspectives (Creswell, 2007). Two additional specified criteria for participation included successful completion, defined as a course grade of "C" or better, of Introduction to Music Education during Fall 2009 and formal admission into the music education program after passing a gateway examination. Of the 10 students enrolled, four females and one male met both of the additional specified criteria.

Three undergraduate music education majors, Caroline, Ellen, and Elizabeth,[1] agreed to serve as participants. All participants met the established criteria. Caroline, Ellen, and Elizabeth represented varying role-identities: all-round musician, content-centered teacher, and pupil-centered teacher, respectively, with no representation of the performer identity in the sample. Although having all female participants was a limitation of this study, gender variance among participants was not a criterion for participant selection. The importance of varying role-identities among participants was more salient; the participants who were willing to engage in the

study represented three of the four role-identities and this allowed for the collection of meaningful data in relation to the research purpose (Stake, 1995). Additionally, all participants had completed beginning and intermediate conducting courses and at the time of the research were enrolled in two other upper-level music education courses: elementary and secondary music methods.

Ten students were enrolled in Introduction to Music Education during Fall 2009, which is fewer than typical. Because of the small size, students had a unique opportunity during a weekly two-hour block to teach micro-lessons, 5–7 minutes long, to either a middle school general music or string orchestra class. They worked with the classroom teachers and instructors to develop their lessons, and taught two or three times during the semester. Each micro-teaching session was video-recorded; students received immediate feedback on their micro-teaching from either myself as instructor, graduate teaching assistant, or the classroom teacher, and completed a personal reflection after viewing their video. Students in the course participated in role-identity development activities congruent with those implemented by Teachout and McKoy (2010) that compelled students to "claim their professional title ... engage in activities with their professional reference group ... and engage in field observation, peer teaching, and self-reflection" (pp. 90–91).

Data collection

Consistent with case study research, I collected data in multiple forms: two individual interviews (see Appendix A) with each participant, one focus group interview (see Appendix B), field notes from video tapes of peer teaching, and two Bouij frameworks completed by the participants (Stake, 1995). The completed frameworks and narratives from the Introduction to Music Education course served as a prompt for the first formal individual interviews, which took place at the beginning of the Fall 2010 semester. I conducted a focus group interview with the three participants around mid-semester and the second individual interview took place at the conclusion of the semester. Individual interviews ranged in length from 23 to 41 minutes; the focus group interview lasted for approximately 1 hour.

Prior to the second individual interview, I viewed video of participants peer teaching in their current elementary music methods course and took rich, descriptive field notes. Peer-teaching sessions lasted approximately 7 minutes. I used issues that emerged from the field notes to develop some of the questions that I asked in the second interview; other questions in the second interview were formalized across all three participants. During the second individual interview, participants and I watched their peer-teaching videos together and engaged in a retrospective think-aloud protocol (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). In the think-aloud, I asked participants to explain to me their observations about their teaching, the particular choices they recalled making during the instructional time, and to express their thoughts generally about what they were viewing. Participants also plotted their music teacher identities again on the Bouij framework.

Data analysis

Interview transcriptions, field notes, and completed frameworks were analyzed both deductively and inductively. I coded data deductively using the four role-identities as a priori codes, as well as a code label of "shift," drawn from the third research question, to note any changes in role-identity suggested in the data. I also coded inductively, searching line-by-line for codes that emerged from the data (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Patton, 2002). While analyzing data I

wrote memos (Creswell, 2007; Emerson et al., 1995) as I read through the interview transcriptions. These memos, or analytic notes, written while working with the data, further informed and refined my examination.

I employed three trustworthiness measures to ensure credibility: member check, data triangulation, and peer review. Participants reviewed preliminary analysis of the data (Creswell, 2007), which included descriptions of (a) their individual role-identities, (b) their experiences as students and aspiring teachers, and (c) general comments regarding the collective experiences of the participants as summarized from the focus group interview. I used the multiple forms of data to search for confirming and disconfirming evidence (Patton, 2002) and reported any negative case evidence (Creswell, 2007). Finally, peer review of coded data by experienced qualitative researchers provided a critical examination of my coding procedures, allowing me to further hone my data analysis (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995).

Analysis resulted in three themes: (a) Role-Identities, (b) Peers, and (c) Authentic Teaching Experiences. In the following section, I introduce the participants, allowing the reader to hear their voices, present the three themes, and discuss the applicability of the Bouij (1998) model based on my findings. By providing a rich account of the experiences of the participants, readers may experience a sense of verisimilitude and transfer these findings to their own contexts.

Participants

The three participants were all women. Elizabeth and Ellen were seniors and Caroline was a junior.[2] Ellen was the only instrumental music education major in the group. Although Caroline was a vocal music education major, she had a substantial background in band from middle and high school and marching band during her freshman year in college. All desired a secondary ensemble job upon completing their degree program. The narrative descriptions that participants wrote in their completed Bouij frameworks from Fall 2009 follow:

> I want to be in the middle [of the framework], but I'm also drawn very strongly to the "jack-of-all-trades" "all-round musician" and have mixed feelings about the four categories and what I want or should be. (Caroline, vocal music education major, December 8, 2009)

> I think I fall right between pupil-centered teacher and content-centered teacher. I think that by mastering an instrument, students will be able to focus more on other parts of music. I hope that someday I fall more in the middle. (Ellen, instrumental music education major, December 8, 2009)

> I feel that I'm between A (all-around musician) & C (performer) but want to eventually be at D (content-centered) with lots of knowledge and focus on the students/kids. I think they should be the real focus. (Elizabeth, vocal music education major, December 8, 2009)

Themes

Role-identities

At the end of the introductory course, the participants expressed ambivalence in labeling themselves with one particular role-identity or identifying what role-identity they hoped to embody. This was perhaps an indication that they found the model limiting. Caroline stated that she had "mixed feelings" about all of the categories, settling herself at the time in the all-round musician category. A year later at the beginning of the study she seemed to feel more certain about the all-round musician label:

I feel like just as a musician I want to know as much as I can … I'm curious, and I feel like an all-around musician describes my current feelings about education in music. (Caroline, Interview 1, August 31, 2010)

Elizabeth identified herself as all-round musician and performer, while also aspiring to content- and pupil-centered identities. She explained her completed framework in further detail in our first interview:

I feel like my experience has made me more focused on being performance-based. But I did all kinds of genres in high school so I still have some of the broad musical comprehensiveness, so that's why I said I was between the two [all-round musician and performer]. (Elizabeth, Interview 1, September 9, 2010)

Ellen initially plotted herself between the content-centered and pupil-centered teacher, and by the beginning of the research, felt more strongly about that identity:

I really like the pupil-centered teacher-ness. I'm really interested in how students learn. … It's important to understand how your students learn. If you don't know how they learn you are not going to be able to teach them anything. (Ellen, Interview 1, September 3, 2010)

Participants experienced subtle changes or expansions of role-identity from the end of the introductory course through the end of the research, approximately 18 months later. At the final interview, Caroline plotted her identity exactly between all-round musician and pupil-centered teacher, where she had previously occupied the all-round musician quadrant:

Dr. Draves: So describe that for me. Tell me why did you choose that one?
Caroline: Because I currently feel like as a performer I need to amp up that sort of side a little bit. I feel like it's kind of decreasing.
Dr. Draves: Your performance side you feel like is decreasing?
Caroline: To a certain degree. I don't know. Because I am still very active in choir and I am taking voice lessons and everything and I have juries on Thursday. I don't know if I feel like that's just preparing me to be a choir teacher than preparing me for other performance venues and activities and things. Now I am watching when I am sitting in choir, thinking, "oh, I should be watching how Dr. Taylor conducts this." I feel like I have gone closer to the content-centered teacher too because of Dr. Allen's [elementary music methods] class. So I feel like I am getting closer to content-centered and pupil-centered. (Interview 2, December 7, 2010)

In her final interview, Elizabeth stated that she thought her identity was "a little less performance heavy and a lot closer to content-centered and probably a little bit closer to pupil-centered than I put myself" (Interview 2, December 9, 2010). As Elizabeth plotted her identity on the Bouij framework in the second interview, she described her choice and related it to her peer teaching video that we had viewed together:

So this is hard because I feel like I am between these two [pupil-centered and performer], but technically between would be in this area [center of axis] and that looks like all four but I am not between all four. I definitely am a little bit of content too, so [in the peer teaching video] I messed up the content and it is still hard for me to think about all of the content and plan it, but, and I wouldn't have thought this

in general, but as I teach, I seem to actually catch stuff pretty easily. At one point, I don't remember what I said, but something happened and they weren't answering, so I was like "let's try this." (Interview 2, December 9, 2010)

Ellen marked an "x" in the middle of the horizontal axis that divided pupil and content-centered identities during our final interview:

Ellen: [I am] kind of right there right now just because I am learning all this stuff and I am still figuring out how to apply it. We take in all this information and all the content and everything in our methods and techniques classes. I haven't really applied any of it yet, obviously. Also pupil-centered because, I don't know, I care about the students, especially in outreach band. (Interview 2, December 1, 2010)

I went on to ask Ellen about perceived changes in her identity:

Dr. Draves: Do you feel like that is a change since you started your degree, since I had you in Intro?
Ellen: I feel like it's the same.
Dr. Draves: Which is fine ... [tone to encourage Ellen to continue talking]
Ellen: I don't think it's changed that much yet. I think after I teach for a few years it'll maybe move around a little bit. I don't know where it would go or would stay the same. (Interview 2, December 1, 2010)

Present in these exchanges with Ellen was a temporal element. She referred to being "right there right now" and expressed an expectation that her identity might reshape once she begins teaching, reinforcing Bouij's (1998) assertion of identity as changeable over time. Generally, the participants expressed the view that an ideal music teacher identity was right in the middle of the framework.

Peers

Peers emerged as powerful agents of secondary socialization that manifested in several ways including role-support with regard to musician or teacher roles, peer teaching experiences, and peer mentoring. Participants valued their peers' acceptance of their career paths, although Ellen recounted that music education majors were more accepting than other peers in the school of music:

I think just because we are kind of in the same boat I feel like I connect more with the music ed. students. I think I've said it before, my studio doesn't really respect the fact that I'm an education major, so we kind of butt heads on that a little. (Ellen, Interview 2, December 1, 2010)

Despite her studio peers' lack of acceptance, Ellen seemed comfortable describing who she was *not* with regard to role-identity:

Ellen: I don't consider myself a performer.
Dr. Draves: At all?

Ellen:	At all.
Dr. Draves:	I know you had mentioned that before. Is it that you don't really have a desire to be or is it a confidence thing that you feel like you aren't good enough?
Ellen:	It's not that. Not to sound weird {laugh}, I think I am one of the better students in our studio and I am not saying that in a self-centered way. [Pause.] I don't know, I just think I am and I think my professors would agree … But I just consider myself a teacher and not a performer more than anything. (Interview 2, December 1, 2010)

Peer teaching was a situation rife with contradictions as discussed by the participants. They expressed having been extremely nervous during peer teaching because they were fearful of their peers' judgment. This concern over their peers' evaluation seemed to interfere with their ability to perceive themselves as embodying any of the Bouij (1998) role-identities while peer teaching. In the focus group interview the following exchange took place when I asked, "when do you feel most like a teacher?":

Ellen:	Not when I am teaching in front of my classmates {laughter}. At all.
Caroline:	Peer teaching, just … {trails off with a frustrated look on her face}.
Ellen:	For me it's because I know I'm getting judged by everyone and that thought terrifies me. In both secondary and elementary [methods] it does. You people are scary {laughter}…
Elizabeth:	I think it's exactly what she said, is you know that everyone in your classroom is sitting there thinking, "oh I wouldn't do that. Oh that's interesting. No I would not have done that." And with the students [in microteaching] they are just like, "oo, someone new…!"
Ellen:	I feel like I can go teach anyone if I can teach my peers.
Elizabeth:	That's true. I'd probably agree with that. (Focus Group Interview, October 29, 2010)

Despite these negative feelings towards peer teaching, peers' feedback had a different effect when it was a positive reinforcement of a music teacher identity:

Elizabeth:	Even if I am thinking, "oh that did not go at all how I planned" and someone else says, "oh you did really good, you have really good presence" and I say, "really, you got that out of that [lesson]" … I think that, the feedback when you are out of class and [a peer] just comes up to you and gives the feedback …
Ellen:	Yeah, that's a good feeling. (Focus Group Interview, October 29, 2010)

It seems that the impact of peers was magnified for the participants, whether positive or negative.

Elizabeth appreciated peers' sharing of their experiences as K–12 students. As she heard about other models of music teaching and learning, Elizabeth was able to begin critically examining her own experience and imagine her role as a music teacher in multiple ways:

Having all these courses and hearing of other people's experiences also has helped me be like "I don't necessarily want to do that." Hearing people talk a lot in the courses has made me realize that a lot of

programs are smaller and you end up teaching general music courses or piano rather than just strictly a full day of choir. ... [It] really made me realize I would have to think of different things and do different things completely than how I originally imagined. (Elizabeth, Interview 1, September 9, 2010)

Authentic teaching experiences

Various curricular experiences influenced students, such as field observations, and particular courses in general education and music education (e.g., Educational Psychology, Ensembles). However, authentic teaching experiences, in which participants taught K–12 students, emerged as most impactful. Introduction to Music Education was the only course in which students taught in a public school setting during the regular school day, although participants did engage in peer teaching in all of their music education methods courses (Introduction to Music Education, Secondary Methods, Elementary Methods). Ellen described the difference for her when peer teaching in secondary methods versus micro-teaching in the introductory course:

Ellen:	[For peer teaching in secondary methods] the band people were all on their major instruments, or their minor instrument, so it was a mix of actual instruments and then recorders. So for their lesson plan part I think everyone just asked the choral people to sing the parts they were given. So that is not at all like what a band classroom would be like. It was weird to me. ... The micro-teaching was so much easier.
Dr. Draves:	Simply for the judgment factor or was there more than that?
Ellen:	I think because it was authentic. And the students were real, I guess. When you are peer teaching it's still a really good experience it's just, I like the micro-teaching because we actually have to teach.
Dr. Draves:	Do you really feel like it's still a good experience or do you feel like peer teaching was okay in Intro but now that you are further along it would be better to work with real kids?
Ellen:	Oh, definitely. At this point I think it would be beneficial for us to do that. If we could do micro-teaching at an elementary, that would be great. But it just wasn't possible this year [in elementary methods], I guess. (Interview 2, December 1, 2010)

A component of the choral methods course that Elizabeth took was teaching in an outreach choir for high school students. The outreach choir served as a laboratory setting for the choral methods students. The choral methods instructor was the director of the choir and the university students practiced teaching and conducting with the choir, which met on Monday evenings on the university campus.

Elizabeth:	I really did enjoy the format and it was helpful to get to teach an actual full 20-minute chunk. And we rotated doing warm-ups, so that was nice too, so you got to see all aspects of the rehearsal. (Interview 1, September 9, 2010)

When I asked Ellen how she believed others might describe her music teacher identity, she found it difficult to answer:

Ellen:	I have no idea. That's a hard question … I hope they see that I focus on the needs of the students. How would you answer that question?
Dr. Draves:	Well, it's hard because you are trying to stand outside and look back in. What do your interactions with students that you teach tell you in that regard?
Ellen:	I think that I am focused on the pupil-centered a lot … I don't know. This is hard, Dr. D. Okay, so maybe both B [pupil-centered] and D [content-centered] in that respect. Especially in the outreach band, because they are young. (Interview 2, December 1, 2010)

During the focus group interview, participants agreed that they did not feel like a music teacher during peer teaching. I pursued this idea in the following exchange:

Dr. Draves:	So if the peer teaching experiences aren't necessarily making you feel like a music teacher, what are the things that do? You mentioned the micro-teaching—are you having other experiences with "real" students as it were in your classes?
Ellen:	Not in my classes, but I do outreach band so I see students once a week and I run sectionals.
Dr. Draves:	Do you feel like a music teacher then?
Ellen:	Yeah.
Dr. Draves:	You do?
Ellen:	Yeah. I think I am actually giving people knowledge and I am helping them grow as musicians and I think that is what we are all striving to do and it doesn't really come off like that in peer teaching. (Focus Group Interview, October 29, 2010)

After the focus group interview, Caroline sent me a message regarding our discussion about feeling like a teacher during an experience working with high school students in an honor choir. I followed up with her in our second interview:

| Dr. Draves: | Let me ask you, because you dropped me an email after our last focus group interview commenting on the high school honor choir and how you really felt like a teacher when you were getting to sit in with them and help them out. Will you tell me just a little bit more about that experience? |
| Caroline: | The honor choir was combined with [the college choir] for one specific song. The honor choir has their concert, they have three or four pieces prepared by themselves, and then we go up and join them for this song and intermix with them. So ideally we are standing in-between two of them so that the college students are interspersed with the high school students. … Helping the kids on either side of me and hearing the ones behind me … just being in that leadership role and standing back from it so that we are not all on the same level of performance practice and experience, it made me feel like a music teacher. Also because at the concert I heard how they had improved. (Interview 2, December 7, 2010) |

Discussion

In Fall 2010, Elizabeth, Caroline, and Ellen plotted their role-identities in the content-centered, all-round musician, and pupil-centered quadrants, respectively, showing little change since Fall 2009. Ballantyne et al. (2012) found that for preservice music teachers, "changes in identity are slow, and sometimes painful and confusing processes" (p. 223). They suggested that this process often continued into the early years of teaching, therefore these participants may have experienced such little change as to be imperceptible. Teachout and McKoy (2010) suggested that more activities across multiple courses might be needed to effect identity development. A similar argument, particularly with regard to the participants' few authentic teaching experiences, may explain the static nature of their role-identities.

Participants identified one role-identity overall and also pointed to a secondary role-identity (Bouij, 1998) they embodied in some way. Participants believed that occupying the center point on the axis would be most desirable. In fact, all participants hoped to move more toward the center and develop a role-identity that included what they believed were the best characteristics of all four role-identities. Participants' beliefs that they could potentially embody parts of all of the role-identities indicated an understanding, although perhaps unconsciously, of music teacher identity as multi-faceted (Bouij, 2004).

Another explanation for participants' desire to develop various aspects of each role-identity is that participants did not see Bouij's (1998) role-identities as realistic, or the clear delineation of roles as plausible. The four distinct role-identities may have been limiting to the participants as they explored their own beliefs about their music teacher identity and reflected upon their continued development. Both Ellen and Elizabeth responded to questions about the role-identities as "hard." Participants may have also been in the throes of the "confusing process" (Ballantyne et al., 2012, p. 223) of identity change and found it unworkable to reflect on their own identities at a more detailed level than that of musician and teacher. The meanings of role-identities are defined by culture (Stets, 2006); therefore using a framework developed within a different culture (e.g., Sweden) may have also contributed to this. One of the two sources from which a role-identity's meaning is derived is the cultural and social setting; these participants' cultural and social setting may have been different enough to make the Bouij role-identities not applicable.

Peers, certain courses in general education (e.g., Educational Psychology), and music education methods were influential components of the secondary socialization sphere in which the students lived (Roberts, 2000). Within the school of music setting, peers emerged as important to participants as mentors now and in the future. Haston and Russell (2012) discovered similar impact with regard to peers in their research. Isbell (2008) also found that peers positively affected music education majors during secondary socialization. Participants realized the influence of peers in regard to a musician or teacher identity, but not to a particular role-identity. Researchers have reported mixed findings about the impact of music education courses. In this study participants reported music education courses to be valuable, as well as courses such as educational psychology, when the participants were able to transfer knowledge across courses or recognize applicability to future situations (i.e., teaching).

Participants described feeling most like teachers when engaged in authentic teaching experiences, including teaching and field observation. These experiences played a prominent part in how participants perceived their professional identity, particularly shifting towards music teacher as they interacted more directly with students. Ellen and Caroline stated they felt more like music teachers when working with students in outreach band and honor choir, respectively, but that did not seem to affect their perceptions of a specific music teacher role-identity.

This suggests some movement across the horizontal axis of the Bouij (1998) framework from musician to teacher, a change Ballantyne et al. (2012) described as a "broadening effect" (p. 223). According to identity theory, a role an individual plays must also have an alternative role; one is a teacher in relation to having a student (Stets, 2006). Because relatively few of these alternative student identities were authentic (i.e., K–12 students rather than peers), even perceiving oneself as occupying the general role of music teacher may have been problematic. Distinguishing a specific role-identity within the role of music educator would be even more challenging.

Implications

Music teacher educators might consider carefully the quality, timing, and authenticity of experiences that they provide or require of their students. Findings from the current study suggest that authentic experiences provided early in the degree program might be effective in promoting identity construction. Expanding a student's collectivity early in a preparation program to include inservice teachers and K–12 students may provide two particular benefits. New norms and behaviors regarding the role of music teacher could be learned, therefore generating new cultural and social meanings for the student. Preservice teachers may also find that when enacting their music teacher identity, an alternative student identity that is not contrived, as in peer teaching, enriches and strengthens better their music teacher role-identity. Micro-teaching experiences in freshman and sophomore level courses, and micro-internships or half-time student teaching in junior and senior level courses may be an effective way to provide authentic teaching experiences. Ballantyne et al. (2012) described field experience and opportunities to practice being a teacher as central to the growth or expansion of preservice music teachers' identities.

Fostering positive peer interactions is another suggestion for practice. Music teacher educators can serve as role models in this regard by displaying their own collegiality with their peers. Encouraging peer mentoring among music education students might also be an effective way to capitalize on the impact of peers. Although peer mentoring may happen organically, a more structured, curricular approach to matching peers with one another and asking them to engage in specific peer mentoring activities such as providing one another with feedback on teaching episodes may prove beneficial. A NAfME[3] Collegiate chapter might also provide structured opportunities for peer mentoring among its members.

Finally, making students aware of their identity could help in its actual construction. Many music education majors may find validation in learning about conceptions of identity and the forces that contribute to it. This could be done throughout the music education curriculum as a pervasive thread in all of the methods courses and include reflective components for students to explore their own identity construction, a proposition supported by Ballantyne et al. (2012). By shedding light on the challenges they may be facing, we may actually contribute to a lessening of those challenges. Alsup (2006) suggested that teacher educators share their own personal stories of identity development as a way to connect with preservice teachers, assure them that the struggles are normal, and even perhaps prevent future attrition. Music teacher educators may find it useful for their students to engage in this discourse because it is "essential to identity formation and the making of a good teacher" (Alsup, 2006, p. 7).

Elizabeth, Ellen, and Caroline attended the same institution and were all white females. Diversity of participants in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender is recommended in future research, as well as research in other institutional settings. Variations in school culture and structure such as degrees offered and forms of curriculum might provide different results.

Findings from this study pointed to uncertainty regarding Bouij's (1998) Salient Role-Identities in Music Education as a suitable framework for exploring identity with these participants. Participants seemed stymied when choosing from Bouij's four role-identities to describe themselves. This could be due to the limitations of this research or could suggest that this model is not appropriate within this particular university or within an American setting at all. Therefore, additional research utilizing Bouij's role-identity model to investigate its efficacy with American music education students as well as within other social and cultural settings would be appropriate. Researchers might also include activities in which participants re-conceptualize Bouij's role-identities as a way of examining identity perception more deeply. Exploring preservice music teachers' perceptions of their role-identities may reveal information that helps us better prepare, nurture, and support them in their undergraduate years and as novice teachers.

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Notes

1. Pseudonyms are used for all individuals and places named in the study.
2. A senior is an individual in her fourth, and typically final, year of university study; a junior is an individual in her third year of university study.
3. The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) is the national professional organization for music educators in the United States.

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Author biography

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Appendix A

Formal individual interview questions

Interview 1

1. Please describe the identity that you most identified with on the model. Why did you choose that one?
2. How do you believe others would describe your music teacher identity?
3. Please describe any teaching experiences that you have had. How have those experiences influenced your music teacher identity?
4. Please describe any other experiences—formal or informal—or people who have influenced your music teacher identity.
5. How/Do you hope your music identity will grow or change?

Interview 2
1. Please complete the theoretical model.
2. Please describe the identity that you most identified with on the model. Why did you choose that one?
3. How is your music teacher identity different now than the last time that we talked?
4. How do you believe your music teacher identity has changed or grown? How do you know?
5. Which peers in the School of Music do you interact with most regularly?

Appendix B

Focus group interview process and questions

Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the participants is very important. When discussing others in the interview, such as your instructor or other students, please do not identify them by name. No information from this focus group interview may be collected and disseminated, in any form, elsewhere. Protecting the participants and information gathered is crucial to the integrity of this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Please describe your impressions of each of the four salient music teacher identities: (a) all-round musician, (b) pupil-centered teacher, (c) performer, and (d) content-centered teacher. Which do you identify with most?
2. Please describe an experience(s) or person(s) that has reinforced your music teacher identity.
3. When do you feel most like a music teacher?
4. What do you perceive that you need now and in the future to support you as a music teacher?