An Examination of the Transition from Primary to Secondary Socialization
of Music Educators

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Introduction

As part of the 2007 Symposium for Music Teacher Education, our group was asked to examine the existing literature in regard to the transition from primary to secondary socialization by preservice and inservice music educators. After our extensive review, this document will serve as our report to the ASPA and will be divided into the following sections: (a) Research into socialization in general teacher education; (b) Research into existing literature in music education regarding socialization (as prepared by the ASPA on Music Teacher Socialization in 2007); (c) A report of key issues and themes found in the abovementioned literature; and (d) Suggestions for future research and best practice inquires in preparation for the 2009 SMTE Symposium.

Research into Socialization in General Teacher Education

Before examining the socialization process of music teachers specifically, it seems appropriate to investigate the socialization literature within the broader realm of general teacher education. Until recently, there was a limited amount of research that examined the impact of the socialization process. Beginning in the mid-1980s research began to appear that attempted to investigate this phenomenon with regard to both preservice and beginning teachers.

The literature shows that preservice teachers enter teacher education programs with specific preconceived ideas about the profession (Hutchinson, 1990; Sweeney,

1984), and that these understandings influence their future actions in the classroom (Marks, 2002; Sweeney, 1984). These preconceptions regarding the profession and the student's role as a teacher are largely formed as a result of prior experiences as a student (Asam, 1999), which often affects whether they accept or reject future teacher education experiences (Steen, 1985). Even teacher education course work and field experiences are often not sufficient to overcome preservice teachers deeply held notions about the profession (Ross, 1986). What, then, affects preservice teachers' emerging perspectives? The literature suggests that these perspectives are a product of a process of professional socialization (Bozin-Mirkovic, 1997; Hengst, 1990; Ross, 1986), and during this process preservice teachers grow in confidence and begin to conceive of themselves as teachers (Marks, 2002; Sweeney, 1984).

Once teachers enter the profession, the socialization process continues in different ways and with different actors. In much the same way, inservice teachers are reluctant to change their preconceptions about the profession and are firm in their beliefs upon entering a new teaching community. New teachers begin their careers with norms and beliefs that do not necessarily fit their new professional community. This could cause them to leave the profession (Cook, 2002). While this may seem disappointing, the literature suggests that mentors can help beginning teachers through the socialization process (Cook, 2002; Daley-Peterson, 2001; Gehrke, 2006; Gratch, 1996). However, the benefits derived from mentors are most apparent when the beginning teachers freely chose their mentors (Gratch, 1996), and when the interactions are grounded in their day-to-day practice, e.g., grade-level collaboration, informal discussions with colleagues, and in-classroom support (Cook, 2002).

Daley-Peterson (2001) suggests that there are common experiences among beginning teachers that contribute to the socialization process, although teachers do not necessarily experience them at the same time, in the same order, or with the same degree of impact. These experiences center around not being fully prepared for all aspects of teaching, professional relationships with other adults and the impact their new job has on their social lives.

The socialization process for special education teachers can be different from that of other teachers partly because of the ways in which special education is conceptualized within each school culture (Burkert, 1999; Chapman, 2002; Pickard, 1989). These teachers are also often faced with a sort of dual teacher socialization, i.e., one of a teacher, and one of a special education teacher (Chapman, 2002). Gerhke (2006) found that beginning special education teachers most value their formal and informal relationships with veteran special educators, and most often seek assistance with procedures specific to special education. He also suggests that beginning special education teachers require a broader network of support than is typically offered by their induction programs. It seems conceivable that beginning music teachers as well might experience these phenomena, since both are specialty areas within general education.

An examination of the previous ASPA literature review document specifically looking at primary and secondary socialization

Researchers have identified primary socialization as an influential process in music teacher identity formation (Campbell, 1999; Conkling, 2003; Dolloff, 1999; Ferguson, 2003; Prescesky, 1997; Woodford, 2002). Though researchers have not directly studied primary socialization, they have discovered valuable information about it while investigating preservice music teachers during their secondary socialization years.

Using reflective practices, Dolloff (1999) asked preservice music teachers to create images of teachers and teaching. She found that preservice music teachers based their images of teaching on their experiences as students. Prescesky (1997) examined preservice music teachers' autobiographies and journals. School music teachers, private studio teachers, and family played prominently in the primary socialization process and impacted preservice music teachers' professional identity formation (Conkling, 2003; Dolloff, 1999; Prescesky, 1997; Woodford, 2002).

Specific curricular tools or models as a way to promote and appraise secondary socialization in preservice music teachers have received substantial attention. Using a Professional Development School (PDS) model and reflective practices, Conkling (2003) examined teacher identity formation in preservice music teachers. Conkling stated that teacher identify formed long before early field experiences and student teaching, but that reflective practices in secondary socialization may contribute to the formation of music teacher identity. Campbell (1999) reported similar findings in work with students during their first formal early field experience. Secondary school experiences had strongly influenced the teacher identities of the participants. Ferguson (2003) also looked at secondary socialization in an early field experience as part of a String Project. Participants filtered their experiences as teachers in the String Project through their lenses of experience as students.

Some researchers have focused exclusively on secondary socialization and professional identity formation. Broyles (1997) examined the secondary socialization process of student teachers using video analysis as a tool for promoting teacher identity formation. Increased teacher identities were reported in her research. Mitchell (1997)

analyzed portfolios for evidence of development of a teacher identity in senior-level music education students. Researchers have focused on specific models or curricular tools and their impact on secondary socialization (Broyles, 1997; Conkling, 2003; Ferguson, 2003; Mitchell, 1997). Further research into the influential processes and people in secondary socialization is necessary.

Conclusion

Key Issues, themes, and suggestions for future research

The further refinement of the definition of socialization (i.e. primary and secondary) is important for further research. In our investigation, these terms were often confused and difficult to navigate. However, the authors of this report have identified the following themes as important topics to consider in encouraging future research and best practice. First, in examining models used during secondary socialization, information about primary socialization in music education emerged as important. Further research is needed into primary socialization within music education.

Suggestions for inquires into curricular design and best practice

The preconceptions that undergraduates have about the profession of teaching came forward as an important issue in the examination in general teacher education (Asam, 1999; Hutchinson, 1990; Marks, 2002; Steen, 1985; Sweeney, 1984). In music education, these issues are further complicated within the identity construction process (Woodford, 2002). A detailed examination of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences that influence the socialization and identity construction of music teachers (both preservice and inservice) is important to the success and the retention of music teachers.

Specifically, a closer look into the curricular practices that encourage music teacher as well as music performer socialization and identity construction is needed in higher education. In examining literature in music education (Woodford, 2002) and special education (Burkert, 1999; Chapman, 2002; and Pickard, 1989) it appears as though music teach educators should look at other programs that have undergraduates that tend to struggle with this dual identity (i.e. athlete/physical education teacher; writer/English teacher). This would enable music teacher educators in identifying ways to adapt curricula to in these areas to promote music education identity construction.

Fieldwork surfaced as the main avenue for looking at secondary socialization and induction into the field of education. However, a further look into where student begin to identify as a musician or a future music teacher is important in understanding the primary socialization process. For example, studying the Tri-M program (MENC) or district sponsored cadet teaching programs maybe a start in finding where the primary socialization process begins for future music teachers. Finally, a look into how other programs, possibly in other professions, aid young professionals in their introduction into the professional environment may prove valuable.

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