

# **PRESCRIPTIVE OR EMERGENT? AN EXPLORATION OF THE USE OF PRESERVICE TEACHER GENERATED QUESTIONS AS THE BASIS FOR MUSIC CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS**

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Music education researchers (Miranda et al., 2005; Miranda et al., 2006; Miranda & Cooper, 2007) have examined the use of ethnographic techniques (e.g. field notes, memos, informal interviews) during preservice teacher observations (Frank and Uy, 2004). In these studies, Schwab's 1983 curricular commonplaces (milieu, subject matter, teachers, students) served as a guiding framework for analysis. Findings indicated the efficacy of the ethnographic approach, framed within the Schwab curricular model. Informed by the literature on constructivist pedagogy, this researcher wondered what might occur if a less prescriptive model focused on student-generated questions served as a guiding framework (Faulk and Blumenreich, 2005), while retaining use of the ethnographic techniques.

Fifteen preservice teachers generated questions, applied ethnographic techniques during 10 hours of observation in elementary general music classrooms, and reflected on findings. Data (assignments, projects, discussion comments, exit interviews) were analyzed for question categories and recurrent themes. Consistent with prior research, reflections indicated shifts away from criticism, multi-layered perspectives, and emergent teacher identity. In this study, question analysis indicated focus on administrative tasks, instructional effectiveness, and educational content. Additional themes included integrated views, application of university coursework methods, and focus on student needs. Areas for further research include use of emergent questions during university methods courses, practicum observations, and student teaching experiences.