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## **Blurred Lines: Reconsidering the Roles of Teacher and Student in the Learning Process**

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to explore how a preservice music teacher constructed his own learning in a graduate-level independent study course with a music education faculty member as the facilitator. In this course, the student wanted to learn how to play the trumpet and improve his knowledge of jazz improvisation and style. Questions guiding this study included: How did the preservice music teacher direct his learning and construct knowledge in this course? How did the music education faculty member serve as a facilitator during this process? Data collection included journals, reflective sessions, and video recordings of classes. Data analysis involved coding with prompts from constructivist theory to assist with portraying the sequencing of teaching and learning during the semester. Findings suggest that allowing the preservice music teacher to construct his learning helped him reflect on what he had learned and plan for future teaching experiences. Recommendations include incorporating student input into coursework planning, and implementation for preservice music teachers provides opportunities for more in-depth learning of subject material. Integrating different musical styles into all coursework also helps prepare preservice music teachers for teaching a wide variety of musical styles.*

**Keywords:** constructivist learning, music teacher preparation, preservice music teachers, teacher as facilitator

While teachers at most educational levels use some constructivist strategies in the classroom, they traditionally see the practice to be in contrast to orthodox teaching practices. Constructivist theory, which holds that learning becomes more meaningful when the student actively participates in the process of planning and implementing what they are learning, has gathered increased support as researchers have looked into the success of students in this type of learning environment. According to Webster (2011) and Wiggins (2009), students play an essential role in constructing their learning based on their experiences and interactions in their surrounding environments. When the student actively constructs learning by drawing on their own experience (MacLellan & Soden, 2004; Ormrod, 2007)—in contrast to passively receiving information from a teacher functioning in an authoritarian role—their learning becomes dynamic.

Specifically, creating student-centered learning opportunities, which include dialogic interactions between preservice music teachers and music teacher education faculty, provides opportunities for enhanced learning that is meaningful for students (Colwell, 2006; Scheib, 2012). For adult students, “learning is enhanced when knowledge is shaped by the activities” (Wang, 2007, p. 36). Wiggins (1999/2000) argued that understanding shared through these interactions, where students can identify what they are trying to learn, helps them achieve a higher level of success in learning in music. At the very outset, faculty facilitating the process should value students' ideas and realize that this recognition is an integral part of student learning. Students then gain confidence in drawing on their existing knowledge and beliefs when learning new knowledge (Schunk, 2004).

One of the primary criticisms of constructivism is that learning environments cannot be student-centered all of the time (e.g., Liu & Matthews, 2005). Even when operating within a constructivist paradigm, teachers still play an active role in the learning process (e.g., Dewey,

1938; Wang, 2007). The teacher assumes the role of “guide and director” in student-centered learning experiences (Dewey, 1938, p. 140), and successful instruction depends upon the ability of the teacher to help students understand conceptually what they learn (Morford, 2007). As facilitators, teachers shepherd students through the process of making connections between course content and their meaning (Marlowe & Page, 2005). In an action research study, Becker (2011) investigated constructivist teaching practices used in a choral group where students assumed ownership of the rehearsal process and the music they created. Becker wanted to “meet the students where they [were]” in terms of identifying their prior knowledge as they interacted in creating new knowledge and even counseling students to learn music by ear on their own (p. 236). Wang (2007) recommended that with adult learning in higher education, both teachers and students are learners as they collaborate in the learning process. In the role of facilitators, teachers should reflect on their standard teaching practices as they support the learning process for students (Yimaz, 2008). Allowing students the option of contributing to their learning in addition to the "rights and opinions of both students and teacher" provides opportunities for music-making that is meaningful and self-reflective for the students (Allsup, 2003, p. 27).

Researchers have investigated the role of the learner in constructivist practices (e.g., Shively, 1995; Scheib, 2012). Shively (1995), for example, pointed out that active collaboration in music-making allows for the construction of knowledge that permits learners to reflect and use their own experiences for heightened learning. Student-centered learning can provide more opportunities for the development of higher-order thinking skills than teacher-centered approaches do (Sheldon, 2005; Torff, 2003). Swainston and Jeanneret's (2013) study of student-centered learning in higher education suggested that student-centered pedagogy should be included in preservice music education to improve engagement with music in the classroom. Scheib (2012) offered a similar viewpoint, emphasizing that faculty need to encourage dialogue

in classrooms where students participate in curriculum design and implementation that allows them to construct knowledge for what they want to learn. Issues may surface, however, when students design curricula that include difficulty with less structure (Smith, 1998), come from families where one is raised not to question authority (Scheib, 2012), or enter music teacher preparation programs with their own beliefs about teaching (Swainston & Jeanneret, 2013). Tyma (2009) found that nearly half of the class dropped a music literacy course when the students discovered that they would create the course, for they did not want to play an active role in learning.

Researchers have investigated student-centered learning in jazz and recommended that teachers may want to consider including more aural learning with improvisation and provide opportunities for students to self-direct their learning (e.g., Goodrich, 2008, 2005; Wetzel, 2007). Wetzel (2007) suggested that teachers avoid notated methods of teaching jazz improvisation to help students connect with how jazz musicians learn to improvise. Flexibility in delivering instruction can provide students with opportunities to engage their problem-solving strategies and allow them to direct their learning to elevate their musicianship when learning to improvise (Della Pietra, 1997).

In many school music programs, teachers make decisions about repertoire, pedagogical techniques, and how learning will occur (e.g., Allsup, 2003; Freire & Freire, 1997). Wiggins (1999/2000) argued that the music education profession has a history of teacher control. Morford (2007), however, pointed out that most music teachers learn to teach in university teacher preparation programs; therefore, these programs need additional ways of conceptualizing teaching. For example, Goodrich (2005) recommended that preservice music teachers should learn to perform jazz improvisation and style in all courses, instead of a stand-alone jazz pedagogy course. Further, teaching practices where the teacher is the sole authority of

knowledge needs to be reconsidered to produce graduates who can adapt to the rapidly changing environments of their future careers (Claxton, 2002; McWilliam, 2005). Lebler (2007) argued that conservatory faculty need to emphasize learning opportunities that help students self-monitor and self-direct their learning to prepare them for careers where they are flexible musicians able to perform in a variety of styles.

This study, which explored the collaboration between a preservice music teacher and a music education faculty member in a student-centered learning situation, provides insights for music teacher educators striving to make learning more meaningful for preservice music teachers. This collaboration could help prepare graduates of music education programs to more effectively “communicate the individual and cooperative knowledge and skills needed for K-12 students to function in the twenty-first century” (Colwell, 2006, p. 17). The purpose of this study was to explore student-centered learning during one semester in a graduate-level independent study course where the preservice music teacher concurrently learned to play the trumpet and experiment with jazz. During this process, we investigated the roles of student and faculty member in learning. The following questions guided this study: How did the preservice music teacher guide their learning and construct knowledge in this course? How did the faculty member serve as a facilitator during this process?

### **Method**

We selected a critical participatory action research design to examine the details and experiences of our educational practice and to explore the complexities of our roles as teacher and student. Critical participatory action research provides an opportunity “for practitioners . . . to transform the conduct and consequences of their practice to meet the needs of changing times” towards an understanding of how self-development can enhance future teaching and learning (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 5). As we gathered evidence during the semester of

instruction, we used the “self-reflective collective self-study of practice” (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 12). According to Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon, (p. 11), “the fundamental idea of action learning is bringing people together to learn from each other’s experience.” The course met once a week for an hour and was not a degree requirement. The student, Ben, had contacted the music education faculty member, Andrew, to teach him how to play the trumpet. During discussions before the start of the course, Ben also indicated he wanted to learn jazz-style improvisation. Andrew, the music education faculty member, was an assistant professor in the music education department at the institution where this study occurred; he had twenty-three years of jazz teaching experience at elementary, high school, university, and community levels and had taught courses ranging from jazz improvisation to big band jazz ensembles. Ben, the preservice music teacher, had earned an undergraduate degree in music theory and history and was now pursuing a master's level degree in music education with a licensure to teach. Ben was proficient in piano, guitar, drums, and voice but had no experience in playing brass instruments or jazz-style improvisation.

The emphasis in critical participatory action research is on "gathering evidence (as opposed to ‘collecting data’)" (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 176). To gather evidence, we maintained weekly journals during the semester. The journals provided us with an opportunity as participants to "make [our] own records as [we] go" (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 175) and allowed us to review and "reflect and compose [our] thoughts" on what went well in class sessions and what areas needed improvement in future class sessions (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 175). The journals enabled us to “steer the process of [our] own learning” and to “sustain awareness of [our] progress” during the study (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 175). For Andrew, reflection included what concepts he introduced to Ben, Ben’s progress, and monitoring what Ben wanted to learn. Ben's journals

included reflections on his progress learning trumpet and jazz, in what he wanted to learn in future class sessions, and in planning for future teaching experiences. As we reflected on our roles as teachers and learners, we met for two reflective sessions to discuss Ben's progress in learning to play the trumpet and jazz (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). We used these sessions as opportunities to reflect on our roles as facilitator and student, Andrew's insights on teacher as learner, what Ben learned, and what Ben wanted to learn next.

To further supplement our engagement in self-reflective collective self-study of practice, we video-recorded class sessions (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). We analyzed these transcriptions by collecting evidence that provided opportunities to have a record of what occurred in class sessions and to contextualize evidence from the journals and reflective sessions (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). Not only did this aid class organization, but it also helped to "prompt discussion of particular kinds of events or incidents" when we met to discuss our progress during the class sessions (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 183).

As we reflected, analyzed, and interpreted the evidence, we coded the evidence using the following prompts from constructivist theory: facilitator and student become active participants in the learning process; the hierarchy between facilitators and learners is eliminated; and the student is creating and guiding his learning (e.g., Wiggins 1999/2000). This process allowed us to use what we considered the most "compelling" evidence (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, p. 69) in portraying how we explored our roles as facilitators and learners in this study. Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2014) cautioned that in critical participatory action research:

it is not necessary to become a slave . . . or a hostage to the methodological claims of validity and reliability. It is necessary . . . to be careful about . . . interpreting and analyzing and interrogating evidence. (p. 70)

To help us with our interpretation and analysis of evidence, a qualitative researcher familiar in action research methods assisted us with our coding to help connect our findings to constructivist theory. This consultant helped us analyze our journal entries regarding the semester's class events, reflective sessions, and transcriptions of class sessions to determine how Ben constructed his learning during this study.

### **Learning Activities**

To accurately portray our roles as teacher, student, and learners during this study, we organized the learning activities in chronological order (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). This structure enabled us to account for the student-centered learning that occurred to mark Andrew's transition from teacher to the facilitator, and to document Ben's evolution from passive student to the architect of his own learning during the semester.

### **The Teacher Guides the Learning**

In the first class, Andrew explained to Ben how to hold the trumpet, how to identify all of the parts of the instrument, and how to buzz his lips using the mouthpiece. During the next three weeks, Andrew continued to guide Ben through the fundamentals of trumpet playing, including mouthpiece buzzing activities and playing long tones as a way to develop Ben's sound. Andrew often modeled sound with the mouthpiece first, with Ben repeating what he heard. By the third class, Ben led the warm-up routine; he found this helpful for it made him "think about the trumpet from a teacher's standpoint," which he considered "important for me in the future."

Andrew gradually incorporated more jazz playing into the class by using call-and-response exercises. These exercises focused on sound and style and involved playing one-to-two measure phrase patterns. During these exercises, Andrew integrated what he called "classical-type sound" and "jazz sound and style" into the patterns. In the third class, Ben began playing by ear the songs on which he had worked. (See Appendix). These included the spiritual *Amazing*

*Grace* and the jazz standard *Chameleon*. Although Ben sounded convincing on *Amazing Grace*, he struggled to play *Chameleon* because it exceeded his range on the trumpet. Andrew noted that “this tune is too advanced for Ben right now” but demonstrated how to play it down an octave so Ben could play along with the recording.

### **The Student Begins to Guide the Learning**

In the fourth class, Ben began to take on a larger role in directing his learning and said he wanted to learn the Miles Davis song *So What*. To facilitate his request, Andrew showed Ben how he could play some of the notes down an octave in a strategy similar to what they had worked on the prior week with *Chameleon*. Andrew then played through Miles Davis’s solo to check the range and make sure it was suitable for Ben at this point of the semester. Andrew noted that it “will definitely push him to practice, but that's what he needs.” Ben indicated that he wanted to learn more of the songs from the album *Kind of Blue*, and Andrew considered this “realistic” for Ben, given where his trumpet capabilities would hopefully be by the end of the semester. Ben continued to assume more responsibility for deciding what he wanted to learn and decided to play *Summertime* for the next class. He noted, “I expect *Summertime* will be a good challenge of my musicianship and also help to continue to build my jazz foundations on trumpet.” Andrew began to assume more of a role as facilitator and recommended that Ben learn the introduction and melody by ear as played by Chet Baker. Andrew supported Ben’s selection of this recording because “Chet’s an accessible player who has a limited range.”

Although, by this point in the semester, Ben was primarily guiding his learning, Andrew still stressed the importance of developing a good sound on the trumpet and continued to demonstrate ways for Ben to improve his sound. Ben continued this focus on sound during the first four weeks because Andrew was “persistent with every note until I achieve[d] a satisfactory sound.” Occasionally, Ben was frustrated with his limitations on the trumpet and noted that when

issues with his playing arose, “Andrew was able to adapt the lesson for the skill level that I had reached; he improvised the lesson fairly seamlessly.” One example of an improvised lesson involved introducing the concept of lip bends to help Ben in playing bended notes similar to Chet Baker. Andrew considered lip bends “the best way to develop the embouchure,” and Ben viewed it as an exercise that would “provide an excellent tool for practicing my control and intonation.”

By the seventh class, Ben had learned the melody to *Freddie Freeloader* and the introduction, melody, and the first chorus of Chet Baker’s solo on *Summertime*. After Ben led Andrew through some warm-ups, he played *Freddie Freeloader* along with the Miles Davis recording. Andrew noted that “Ben played the melody better than me.” Ben then played through Chet Baker’s solo on *Summertime* and made a few note mistakes. To help facilitate Ben’s understanding of how he could develop his embouchure to help with improvement in learning the Chet Baker solo, Andrew demonstrated how to play some of the notes with lip slurs to help build his endurance and accuracy with the notes. For Ben, the lip slurs “proved to be more difficult” and were frustrating for him to play at this point in the semester. However, he admitted that “practicing this technique is certainly helpful in developing my core sound.” Ben was also frustrated with playing along with the recording of Chet Baker and experienced issues with the groove and aligning his time with Chet Baker. Andrew was aware of these frustrations and explained to Ben how to listen to the bass and drummer to hear the groove. Ben noted that “[w]hen I played through *Summertime* again, Andrew reported that my timing [had] drastically improved. It will be good practice for me to develop my ability to listen consciously while playing the trumpet.” Ben struggled with his high range in these tunes and admitted that “both have passages that challenge my high range, but they are certainly achievable for me.” During this process, Andrew had a major development with his approach to teaching and noted that “imitating jazz players provides a direct link to pedagogical exercises” that allowed Andrew to

begin “to see a connection between trumpet pedagogy and jazz sound and style.” For example, Andrew wrote, “Chet was doing the lip bends that I had encouraged Ben to begin doing in his trumpet warm-up.” During this part of the semester however Andrew began to question whether he was effectively facilitating Ben’s role in guiding his learning, noting “Ben is struggling to reproduce Chet Baker’s sound, and in a sense, I am asking him to play like a professional trumpet player in his first two months of playing.” Despite these concerns, Andrew continued with his high expectations for Ben’s trumpet playing and learning to reproduce how the jazz masters performed.

### **The Student Guides the Learning**

By the middle of the semester, Ben began to play more consistently in line with his limited range on the trumpet and felt that he “gained a wider range of consistent notes.” As Ben continued to develop his range and control with his embouchure, he also began to construct more melodically advanced lines when improvising. Ben led call-and-response patterns with Andrew and used different styles, including swung eighth notes to lead these patterns. These patterns then segued into Ben’s playing simple songs, such as *Hot Cross Buns*; Andrew would join in, and they played them together. After that Ben and Andrew traded improvisation and melody. Ben appreciated this approach, for he was “able to explore new keys,” and doing so motivated him to “get to a point where I am moderately comfortable in any or almost any key.”

For the eighth class, Ben and Andrew engaged in call-and-response patterns but with a recorded rhythm section accompaniment of the blues in B flat. During this class, Ben had a breakthrough moment when he realized he had just improvised to a blues progression and was able to improvise with the chord changes. Ben expressed surprise at his ability to improvise with the blues, given that “all of my improvisation experience has been entirely self-driven up until this point.” Although Ben began to feel more comfortable with improvisation, he had some

difficulty finding time to practice due to conflicts with his coursework for licensure and noted, “I have been missing days here and there, and I think my mouth muscles suffer for it.”

In weeks ten and eleven Andrew's role as the teacher continued to diminish as he allowed Ben to guide his learning. Ben continued to guide warm-ups with lip slurs, long tones, and scales. When Ben selected the song *The Chicken*, however, it presented some difficulties for him to learn by ear for “it has so many quick notes where the pitch can be difficult to distinguish.” Although Ben selected the songs he wanted to learn for the semester, Andrew considered his role as more of an advisor, especially in fostering motivation. Ben noted that “all of his [Andrew's] praise has been centered around acknowledging my progress, and I feel more excited to play every week.” He also indicated that with the emphasis on learning songs by ear:

I am developing a different relationship with the trumpet than the ones that I have with other instruments. I am used to their being some kind of visual aid when I learn music, so there is interplay between my eye, my ear, and my muscles. With trumpet, I find that my ear wants to hear a certain interval, and my muscles are beginning to develop instincts to respond in certain ways. I feel that my overall musicianship is making great strides.

Although Ben guided his learning at this part of the semester, during the final five weeks of the semester, Andrew introduced music reading for the trumpet with songs from the *Tradition of Excellence* book. In reading music, Ben made the point that sometimes “the music moves too fast for me to always necessarily know what note I am playing.” During this time, Ben also sought out opportunities to “jam with my friends on trumpet” and felt that “my ear has improved enough to allow me to improvise more effectively.”

For the final two weeks of the semester, Ben and Andrew worked on *Blue Monk*, and Ben noted, “I was able to learn the entire head by ear in a matter of ten minutes or so. I feel like my

ear is improving.” Andrew noted that Ben’s sound “was becoming more focused,” and Ben felt that he was “producing a clearer and more consistent sound.” Ben led the class sessions, and after learning *Blue Monk* by ear, Ben led the call-and-response patterns based upon the melody. This activity provided another opportunity for Ben to develop melodic ideas with improvisation, and he noted that “I enjoyed this very much and felt rewarded in the sound that was coming out.”

### **Discussion**

During this course, we reconsidered our roles as teachers and learners, with Andrew transitioning from teacher to facilitator, and Ben assuming more responsibility in guiding his learning. Ben learned the fundamentals of playing the trumpet and jazz style and improvisation, learned songs by ear, and he practiced songs that he had chosen and wanted to learn. Wetzel (2007) suggested that teachers may want to provide opportunities for their students to engage in aural learning to aid in learning to improvise in jazz, and students who direct their learning can develop their musicianship to a higher level when learning to improvise (Della Pietra, 1997).

Although Ben’s confidence in playing the trumpet and jazz improvisation improved, some issues came up in guiding his learning during this course. For example, Ben encountered some issues when he selected songs, for he was not always able to connect his limitations on the trumpet (e.g., range) to the songs he wanted to learn. Despite the issues that occurred with guiding his learning, Ben indicated that taking ownership in constructing his learning helped him to improve his musicianship and to reflect on his teaching practice. Ormond (2007) believed that one constructs knowledge by experience, and Shively (1995) stated that knowledge construction and reflection on learning helps students to elevate their comprehension of what they learn. Except for the first class, Ben guided the warm-ups and selected repertoire, often with a particular jazz artist in mind (e.g., Miles Davis), so he could learn Davis' improvised solo. During this process, Ben used his journals and two reflective sessions as he reflected on his

learning. Each of us felt that the use of journaling aided our reflections on our roles as teachers and learners and on what we learned. For example, Andrew reflected on Ben's progress and commented about whether the songs he selected were suitable for his progress in learning. Ben also reflected on his progress and considered how he might teach these concepts to his future students. During this study, Ben also served as a researcher, in addition to guiding his learning. This additional layer of responsibility may have helped him guide the planning component of this process so that he could find success in constructing his knowledge as well as learning to play the trumpet and be able to do jazz improvisation.

One of the main tenets of constructivism is that teachers play an active role in guiding students through the learning process (e.g., Dewey, 1938; Wang, 2007), and Scheib (2012) argued that music teacher education faculty need to allow students opportunities to construct their knowledge through the process of creating what they want to learn. Although Ben selected repertoire and jazz solos, Andrew did have to make decisions about when to act as a teacher and when to act as a facilitator. Due to experience, for example, Andrew had a wider knowledge of appropriate musical choices available to Ben and occasionally provided suggestions to help Ben select those suitable for his skill level on the trumpet. Consideration of the role of teacher aligns with the thinking of Marlowe and Page (2005), who recommended that teachers should help students make connections between course content and their learning. In this class, though, the connections between content and learning extended beyond mere content, and included an extra dimension to this process with a synergy between learning to play the trumpet, learning songs by ear, and learning jazz style. Most notably was Andrew's breakthrough with realizing connections between jazz trumpet playing and trumpet pedagogy. For Ben, the aural aspects embedded within the connections between content, or repertoire, and learning by ear provided the most profound learning moments for him when he improvised a solo to a blues progression. It was the

combination of these seemingly disparate components of learning; learning fundamentals of an instrument and learning by ear concurrently with learning a particular style of music, that provided the platform for Ben to experience success with his trumpet playing as he guided his learning.

Critics of constructivism, however, argue that allowing students to control all of their learning in constructing their knowledge is problematic (e.g., Liu & Matthews, 2005). With the trumpet portions of this course, Andrew did take more control of the learning process to assist Ben with sequential learning. In this teaching role, Andrew introduced pedagogical concepts (e.g., how to form an embouchure). With the jazz portions of the class, however, Andrew served more as a facilitator who guided Ben in learning jazz, and he motivated Ben by providing affirmative feedback about his progress in learning. In this course, Andrew's role ranged back and forth from that of teacher to that of facilitator. As a result, then, Andrew's role was perhaps the most blurred and was not always easy to delineate, especially during moments when he had to interject his role as teacher to guide Ben's learning.

Ormrod (2007) emphasized that a variety of instructional practices can support students in constructivist learning. Even when Andrew assumed the role of the teacher during the trumpet portions of the course, Ben did guide some of his learning, a role he felt comfortable with, especially in expressing what he wanted to learn next. Hanrahan and Isaacs (2001) stated that in constructivism, teachers still play an essential role in guiding students through the learning process. Therefore while constructivism was not uppermost in this class all of the time, our roles as teacher and learner overlapped. Unlike the situation created by Tyma (2009), where the students constructed their learning for the entire course, Andrew still needed to provide structure and use his knowledge as a teacher to help guide Ben through learning how to play the trumpet and jazz improvisation. Yimaz (2008) stated that it is important for teachers to reflect on what

they know, how they deliver what they know, and when their role shifts to the facilitator for their students. As he would do in a traditional class setting, Andrew reflected upon his role as a teacher by assessing what worked well and what did not and continued to dialogue with Ben about what he wanted to learn throughout the semester. Reflection and dialogue in this class were similar to Allsup's (2003) argument that both students and teachers need to contribute to learning subject matter in order for music-making to be meaningful and self-reflective for students.

Contrary to some findings where students lack the desire to contribute to the learning process actively (e.g., Scheib, 2012), Ben in his role of learner, never experienced issues in telling Andrew what he wanted to learn. Ben was motivated to continue learning because of positive reinforcement from Andrew and Ben's own desire to improve his skills with the trumpet and jazz. In this weekly one-hour class and two reflective sessions, we discussed with each other what activities worked for Ben and what Ben wanted to learn. When coming to this process, however, Ben already had a conceptual awareness of what he wanted to learn based upon his prior experiences in learning new instruments in the licensure program. Therefore, he had a basic idea of what he knew and what he did not know. As Ben reflected on his past learning, he considered this class an opportunity to fill in perceived gaps in his musicianship. He was able to construct his learning by applying Schunk's (2004) suggestion that students use their existing knowledge and beliefs when constructing new knowledge and experiences.

### **Implications**

Although this study occurred in a once-a-week independent study course with Ben as the sole student, the process of how he guided his learning and how Andrew assumed his role as facilitator provides insights for music teacher educators and their students about how to structure student-centered learning opportunities. Morford (2007) pointed out that preservice music

teachers primarily learn how to teach in university-level coursework, and this is where additional ways of conceptualizing learning to teach need to be investigated. Ben guided his learning as he concurrently learned to play the trumpet and jazz, similar to Goodrich (2005), who argued that music teacher education faculty should consider infusing jazz improvisation and style into all methods courses. Based on the findings of this particular study, music teacher education faculty should consider incorporating musical styles that directly relate to student tastes and preferences. This practice can potentially aid in preparing preservice music teachers for rapidly changing teaching situations where they will be expected to teach varied musical styles, similar to practices espoused by Claxton (2002) and McWilliam (2005). In this class, the musical style was jazz; however, this model could extend into other styles, including popular music. This model can help preservice music teachers become flexible musicians, which is an important dimension of music teaching, according to Lebler (2007). When doing so, music teacher education faculty may want to reconsider their role as teachers and instead serve as facilitators, similar to Andrew's role in this class. In reconsidering their roles as teachers, music teacher education faculty would still serve an important role as guides who monitor the learning of preservice music teachers.

While music teacher education faculty could implement constructivist learning practices using a variety of music styles, they would have to possess the knowledge and ability to perform the different styles. As a facilitator, Andrew served as a gatekeeper of knowledge and was able to perform along with Ben to help him with learning jazz. When the music education faculty member does not possess in-depth knowledge or have performing experience with a musical style (e.g., rap), incorporating group learning opportunities, with a student or students serving as facilitators could be a way to incorporate a wider variety of musical styles into classes. Although we explored our roles as teachers and students in an independent study course with one student, a

model based on how Ben guided his learning provides insights for peer interactions in methods courses. For example, to assist with the facilitation of learning, preservice music teacher students, such as those who may possess more knowledge about a particular style than the teacher (e.g., hip hop), could help their peers construct and guide their learning and also engage in dialogic interactions with music teacher education faculty as recommended by Scheib (2012). During this process, these dialogic interactions could help provide a deeper comprehension of learning specific musical styles and aid in creating more meaningful learning experiences for preservice music teachers.

Although journaling was a part of gathering evidence for this study, it also served as an important tool for Ben when constructing his knowledge. For example, journaling helped Ben reflect on what he learned and helped him to articulate to Andrew what he wanted to learn. When providing opportunities for constructivist learning, music teacher education faculty should consider the use of journals to aid students in creating knowledge and as a means of communication between learner and facilitator. Doing so can increase understanding of the process of learning as it occurs, instead of focusing on the product (e.g., playing test).

A limitation of this study involved its size; this was an investigation of how one preservice music teacher student-constructed his knowledge under the guidance of one music education faculty member. Further research is needed to explore peer interactions in groups where preservice music teachers assist each other in guiding their own learning experiences. Additional research could contribute additional insight into how music teacher education faculty can serve in the role of facilitators as students guide their learning to provide more meaningful learning experiences for them as they prepare for their career as teachers.

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## Appendix

All Blues	Miles Davis
Amazing Grace	Hymn
Blue Monk	Thelonious Monk
Chameleon	Herbie Hancock
Freddie Freeloader	Miles Davis
Hot Cross Buns	Unknown
So What	Miles Davis
Summertime	George & Ira Gershwin
The Chicken	Pee Wee Ellis
Tradition of Excellence	Bruce Pearson & Ryan Nowlin