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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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A freckled third grader approaches the music teacher in the corridor and hands her a stack of 3 x 5 cards. "Thirty-six," he announces proudly. Back in her office Rebecca Grant puts the cards in an envelope on which she neatly writes, "Daniel Wang, 36," and posts it on the wall near three other envelopes. This latest is Daniel's entry in the Composer's Facts competition, this week featuring Aaron Copland. Were curious eyes to pry, they would find information about Copland's birthdate, milestones, compositions, and books. Winners will get musical handbags, musical rulers, musical paraphernalia which Rebecca orders (and pays for with her own money) from a mail-order firm specializing in music items.

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Public Act 84-126, effective August 1, 1985, amended The School Code of Illinois to include, for the first time in state history, a requirement that the goals for learning be identified and assessed. The fine arts were one of the six primary areas designated. Broad goals for Illinois school children include understanding the sensory, formal, technical, and expressive qualities for each of the arts; demonstrating the basic skills necessary to participate in the creation and performance of the arts; and identifying significant works in the arts from major historical periods and how they reflect societies, cultures, and civilizations, past and present.

Achievement of the goals would be assessed by paper and pencil tests. Music specialists, classroom teachers, and principals expressed anger and frustration about these new mandated tests. Among the main complaints were the loss and redirection of instructional time, the lack of empathy about teaching within existing constraints, the lack of responsiveness to teacher concerns, and the lack of financial support to help the teachers learn new skills. Mark Denman, principal in East Park, reacted as follows:

"It is not fair for the state to dictate this. Unless they teach us how to teach these areas it's not realistic. You can't just legislate improvement. You can't just say we are going to raise test scores. You've got to build the groundwork. You can't impose change from the top. You've got to ignite the interest of the staff. Oftentimes people in the

State Department of Education will say: 'Do this, this, and this.' But we have no money to do it. We were not asked if we wanted to do it. We were not asked how we could do it. We work for years to improve something, then funding runs out and nothing further happens. So people are discouraged [shaking his head]. I know the intents of legislators are very good, but . . ."

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It is a chilly Tuesday morning when Ms. Casleri and myself (in the role of observer, and not a very experienced one) are sitting in a half-full bus, with a group of third and fourth graders, on the way to the Civic Center to hear Humperdinck's *Hansel und Gretel*. When we are seated, a blue light is turned on, a series of Shhh's spreads in waves. The chaos subsides, an intense diminuendo, with some uncontrollable giggles as leftovers. The striking silence makes me uneasy, seems to invite a reaction. But no. The lights go down. The piano sounds.

Today's performance is a shortened version of the opera, 60 minutes rather than the 2 original hours. It is performed by a junior group of opera members, the orchestra parts transcribed to piano. An accomplished young woman plays flawlessly the difficult virtuoso part—rhythm and notes, articulations and phrasing, matching dynamics. There is much humor and jest as Hansel and Gretel tease and chase each other. Children laugh *with* the singers, an honest laugh. A good channel to release the tension of the unfamiliar—singing culture, the new form.

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In this chapter we review the basic theory and method of qualitative research in music education. Qualitative approaches come with various names and descriptions: case study, field study, ethnographic research, naturalistic, phenomenological, interpretive, symbolic interactionist, or just plain descriptive. We use "qualitative research" as a general

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term to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics: (1) *noninterventionist* observation in natural settings; (2) emphasis on *interpretation* of both emic issues (those of the participants) and etic issues (those of the writer); (3) highly *contextual description* of people and events; and (4) *validation* of information through triangulation. These constructs will be developed later in this chapter.

Educational researchers in America have increasingly come to value what researchers elsewhere have long emphasized: the personal and political nature of education. Part of the awareness is reflected in an increased interest in the unique circumstances of school programs and performances. The study of uniqueness can be handled in a disciplined and scholarly way with qualitative inquiry. The classroom community and societal contexts become more than abstract variables.

Our chapter begins with an overview of the intellectual and methodological roots of qualitative research, its basic assumptions and goals, plus identification of kinds of research questions of central interest. In the next section, we examine qualitative research in music. First, we examine models in pedagogy, ethnomusicology, and musical biography. Then we review key studies, focusing on their unique contributions to the field, their aims and objectives, and their primary issues and findings. Of special interest is the compatibility of research methods to the training of musicians regarding teaching as art form and classroom interaction as kinetic performance. We then focus on methods and criteria of qualitative studies. We conclude by pointing to some future directions and possibilities offered by qualitative research to the field of music education.

ROOTS OF QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Just as music and education can be traced back across the centuries ultimately to the crude and custom-driven habits of primitive societies, qualitative inquiry has its roots in the intuitive and survivalist behavior of early peoples. For ages we have operated on hunches and emotions, increasingly using those that brought us safety and satisfaction. Gradually we saw the wisdom of what we already were doing by observing, questioning, keeping records and interpreting, respecting the experience and rumination of elders. Gradually we formed rules for study and names for our sciences. Music educators, too, increasingly drew from philosophers and social scientists to codify research procedures.

Intellectual Roots

The intellectual roots of qualitative methodology lie in the idealist movement—in particular, William Dilthey (1900) and Max Weber (1949), who found their philosophical origins in Kantian thinking. Immanuel Kant (1969) distinguished objects and events as they appear in experience from objects and events as they are in themselves, independent of the forms imposed on them by our cognitive faculties. The for-

mer he called "phenomena"; the latter, "noumena." All we can ever know, Kant argued, are phenomena. Rather than knowing the world directly, we sense, interpret, and explain it to ourselves. All experience is mediated by mind, and all human intellect is imbued with and limited to human interpretation and representation.

Phenomenologists follow Kant in the claim that immediate experiences and sensory observations are always interpreted or classified under general concepts. Their appeal to phenomena is therefore not an appeal to simple, uninterpreted data of sensory experience. Meaning is the target of phenomenology. Phenomenologists do not assume they know what things mean to others. Emphasizing the subjective aspects, they attempt to gain entry into the conceptual world of themselves and others. Giving accounts of their reality construction, phenomenologists believe that these inward construals derive from a developing understanding of self, others, and things. The relationships between these are not "givens" but dialectical, context bound, and processual.

Qualitative researchers tend to be phenomenological in their orientation. Most maintain that knowledge is a human construction. They reason as follows: Although knowledge starts with sensory experience of external stimuli, these sensations are immediately given meaning by the recipient. Though meaning originates in outside action, only the inside interpretation is known. As far as we can tell, nothing about the stimuli is registered in awareness and memory other than our interpretations of it. This registration is not necessarily conscious or rational.

In our minds, new perceptions of stimulation mix with old, and with complexes of perception, some of which we call generalizations. Some aspects of knowledge seem generated entirely from internal deliberation, without immediate external stimulation—but no aspects are purely of the external world, devoid of human construction.

Concepts of Reality The aim of qualitative research is not to discover reality, for by phenomenological reasoning this is impossible. The aim is to construct a clearer experiential memory and to help people obtain a more sophisticated account of things. Sophistication is partly a matter of withstanding disciplined skepticism. Science strives to build universal understanding. The understanding reached by each individual will of course be to some degree unique to the beholder, but much will be held in common. Though the comprehension we seek is of our own making, it is a collective making. Each of us seeks a well-tuned comprehension, one bearing up under further human constructions: scrutiny and challenge.

The qualitative researcher chooses which realities to investigate. For researcher data or interpretation of findings, not every person's personal reality is of equal use. Society deems some interpretations better than others. People have ways of agreeing on which are the best explanations. Of course they are not always right. There is no reason to think that among people fully committed to a constructed reality all constructions are of equal value. One can believe in relativity, contextuality, and constructivism, without believing

all views are of equal merit. Personal civility or political ideology may call for respecting every view, but scientific study does not.²

Researchers interested in the uniqueness of particular teaching or learning find value in qualitative studies because the design allows or demands extra attention to physical, temporal, historical, social, political, economic, and aesthetic contexts. Contextual epistemology requires in-depth studies, leaving less time for the refinement of theme and construct. It is true that naturalistic and phenomenological case studies are likely to be undertaken by researchers with constructivist persuasions. Why this is is not clear, but it probably would be a mistake to conclude that more than a realist logic, a constructivist logic promotes contextualist epistemology or case-specific study. It is not uncommon to find case study researchers espousing a constructivist view of reality, but the two persuasions are not one and the same.

Cultural sciences need *descriptive* as well as explanatory and predictive powers. At the beginning, middle, and end of a program of research, the researcher at times needs to concentrate on interpretive understanding (*verstehen*). The process of *verstehen* involves the ability to empathize, to recreate the experience of others within oneself.

Dilthey and Weber perceived understanding as hermeneutic, resulting from a process of interpretation. The hermeneutic experience (encounter with a work of art) is historical, linguistic, dialectical. Understanding the meaning of any particular part of a text (a word or a sentence) requires an understanding of the meaning of the whole and vice versa. Thus, achieving a meaningful interpretation requires back and forth movement between parts and whole. Understanding cannot be pursued in the absence of context and interpretive framework. The hermeneutic perspective means that human experience is context bound and that there can be no context-free or neutral scientific language with which to express what happens in the social world. At best we could have laws applying to only a limited context for a limited time.

Ethnography and Biography

The roots of qualitative research methods can be traced to ethnography and sociological fieldwork as well as literary criticism, biography, and journalism. From the end of the nineteenth century, anthropologists advocated and practiced spending extensive periods of time in the natural setting, studying cultures with the intent of learning how the culture was perceived and understood by its members (cf. Boas and Malinowski). Bronislaw Malinowski, who found himself in New Guinea and unable to return to Poland because of the outbreak of World War I, was the first social anthropologist to spend long periods in a native village to observe what was going on. He was also the first professional anthropologist to dwell on how he obtained his data and what the fieldwork experience was like. Malinowski maintained that a theory of culture had to be grounded in particular human experiences, based on observation, and inductively sought.

Case study and ethnographic methods have been part of sociology's history since the 1920s and 1930s when University of Chicago sociologists, under the influence of Robert Park, W. I. Thomas, and Herbert Blumer, were trained in the interpretive approach to human group life (Bogdan and Biklin, 1982; Denzin, 1989). Sociologists in succeeding generations turned away from the method, giving their attention to problems of measurement, validity, and reliability; survey methodologies; and laboratory experiments. Educational researchers recently have witnessed a surge of interest in interpretive approaches to the study of culture, biography, and human life. Central to this view has been the argument that societies, cultures, and the expressions of human experience can be read as social text, that is, the structures of representation that require symbolic statement (Denzin, 1989).

Literary models provide another important model for qualitative methodology. Eisner (1979, 1991) advocates the paradigmatic use of qualitative inquiry found in the arts and the world of art critics. Artists inquire in a qualitative mode both in the formulation of ends and in the use of means to achieve such ends. The art critic's task is to render the essentially ineffable qualities constituting works of art into a language that will help others perceive the world more deeply.

Thomas Barone (1987, 1990) follows Eisner in referring to works of art as relying on a continuum of scientific texts. All texts, claims Barone, are modes of fiction (borrowing the Geertz meaning of fiction—something fashioned). Each brings with it researcher/author subjectivity and personal bias, ideology, and visions, but with fictional works these are more visible, explicit. Barone reminds us that novelists do not spin their imaginary webs from within a world of pure illusion and fantasy, but that "since Henry Fielding, they also have relied upon observation of the minutiae of human activity, observing social phenomena" (1987, p. 455). Often a novelist will construct a story out of the qualitative phenomena confronted in everyday experience: Sometimes they will intentionally transport themselves into the field to investigate facets of their emerging story's milieu, as did Dickens who, in preparation for *The Life Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, gained admittance to a notorious Yorkshire boarding school by assuming the false identity of someone seeking a school for the son of a widowed friend. The fictionalization process of the novelist, says Barone, is a rigorous and disciplined undertaking, a qualitative problem-solving process that even proceeds through several identifiable stages. A thesis, or central insight, is gradually constructed from patterned relationships between qualitative phenomena. A similar relationship between thesis and particulars exists in accomplished worlds of literary-style fiction such as autobiography, new journalism, and educational criticism. The crafting of an educational criticism closely resembles the dialectical problem-solving process of the novelist.

Rorty (1982) believes that all qualitative inquiry is continuous with literature. For Rorty, books serve the important role of advancing social and political goals of liberalism by promoting a genuine sense of human solidarity (Rorty, 1989).

Literature has been a methodological force. Biography

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and autobiography have become a topic of renewed interest in literary criticism (cf. Elbaz, 1987; Cockshut, 1984), as well as in sociology (cf. Denzin, 1989) and anthropology (cf. Geertz, 1988). Feminist views have had an important influence in this discussion (cf. Jelinek, 1980; Spacks, 1976; Grumet, 1988). Jean-Paul Sartre recognized the force of literature in the preface to *The Family Idiot, Gustave Flaubert, Vol. 1, 1821–1857* (1981):

What, at this point in time, can we know about man? It seemed to me that this question could only be answered by studying a specific case. . . . For a man is never an individual; it would be more fitting to call him a *universal singular*. Summed up and for this reason universalized by his epoch, he in turn resumes it by reproducing himself in it as singularity. Universal by the singular universality of human history, singular by the universalizing singularity of his projects, he requires simultaneous examination from both ends. (pp. lx–x)

Biography has always been an important part of musicology and music history, with oral history gaining interest. While sociology focuses on *interpretive biography*—the creation of literary, narrative accounts and representations of lived experience (Denzin, 1989)—the traditional use of biographies in music centers around life-events, especially family, patrons, and mentoring, a written account or history of an individual.

A second kind of biography (e.g., Von Gunden, 1983) is essentially a musical analysis, where biographical information of the composer and philosophy are brought in to interpret the music. Here, listening to musical works itself provides data, extending the examination of archives (e.g., documents, letters) and in-depth interviews of author and composer. Immersed in the music, the interviews, or observation data, the music education researcher attempts to find new patterns and meanings.

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

The quantitative research tradition, grounded in the positivist urge for a science of society, fostered adaptation of the methodology of the physical sciences to investigate social and human worlds. From the theological to the metaphysical, twentieth-century positivism saw culmination of progress and human knowledge through scientific methods. Objects of study in the social sciences are to be treated in the same way that physical scientists treat physical things. The role of the social scientist is that of recorder and theory builder for a reality existing outside human experience.

Another assumption in positivist thinking was that in regard to values, social investigation can and should be a *neutral* activity. Hence, social scientists should eliminate all bias and value-laden preconception and not be emotionally involved with their subject matter. Knowledge derived from social investigation would eventually result in the same sort of technological mastery over the social world as physical science had for the physical world. The aims of practical application would be achieved by the discovery of social laws that point at relationships among social objects, aiming, like

physical laws, at context-free social laws (Hempel, 1966; Popper, 1969).

Dilthey and Weber challenged the positivist point of view, arguing that social studies has a different ontological and epistemological status. They claimed that there we are both the subject and the object of inquiry: The subject matter concerns the product of human minds and as such is inseparably connected to our minds, bringing along all our subjectivities, cognitions, emotions, and values. Furthermore, the complexity of the social world and cultures makes it impossible to discover laws as in the physical sciences. Rather than a series of overarching causal laws, they said, emphasis must be on understanding the individual case or type.³

Philosophically, we are dealing here with two paradigms. The *quantitative paradigm* supports investigation of how reality exists independently of us. Ontological questions concerning what is can be kept separate from the epistemological questions about how we come to know "what is." According to that paradigm, knowledge and truth are questions of correspondence—what is true is what corresponds to reality. Done well, the activity of investigation does not affect what is being investigated.

In the *qualitative paradigm* there is a range of positions, from the idealist belief that social and human reality are created, to the milder conviction that this reality is shaped by our minds. But all the positions posit a degree of mind involvement with subject matter not acceptable to the quantitative, positivist, realist tradition. The idea that the process of investigation can be separated from what is being investigated is possible only within that realist perspective. In the realist view, an investigation is directed toward an external referent. In the idealist view, the process is external as well as internal, a part of the investigator's active participation in shaping the world (cf. Peshkin, 1988).

In actual life, no research study is purely qualitative or quantitative. In each qualitative study, enumeration and recognition of differences in amount have a place. And in each quantitative study, natural language description and interpretation are expected. The distinction as we see it is an epistemological distinction that can be identified as the distinction between inquiry for making explanations versus inquiry for promoting understanding. This distinction has best been developed by the Finnish philosopher of science Georg Henrik von Wright (1971), who emphasized the epistemological distinction between formal explanations and experiential understanding.

Quantitative study was nourished by the scientific search for grand theory seeking generalizations that hold over diverse situations, trying to eliminate the merely situational, letting contextual effects "balance each other out." Quantitative researchers try to nullify context in order to find the most general and pervasive explanatory relationships. Research in education, including music education, has been dominated by this universalist approach, this grand search for explanation. Quantification occurs in order to permit simultaneous study of a large number of dissimilar cases, in order to put the researcher in a position to make formal gen-

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eralizations about teaching and learning. Proposition-shaped knowledge obviously can be important.

It is apparent that much important knowledge about education (e.g., the calendar, the practice facilities) is situational. Qualitative researchers have a great interest in the uniqueness of the individual case, the variety of perceptions of that case, and the different intentionalities of the actors who populate that case. These interests force the researcher to find easy-access situations for repeated observations, to limit attention to small numbers of teachers and students, to rely little on objective measurement, and to probe in unexpected directions. Fixed designs are less necessary and can be less productive for providing understanding of particular cases. Still, in a discipline governed strongly by an existing composition or score, the musician may find the structures of quantitative research attractive and the open-field behavior of the qualitative researcher too improvisational.

Qualitative researchers are not devoid of interest in generalization but it does not dominate their thinking. Often the qualitative researchers' commitments to multiple interpretations become manifest in a desire to assist practitioners to interpret the situations for themselves. The intent of research then may become the provision of vicarious experience for report readers who will draw their own generalizations, combining previous experience with new. It often is research specially designed to assist practice. The choice of epistemological role for research and the immediacy of its assistance to practice should be part of our distinction between quantitative and qualitative inquiries.

Qualitative researchers too have interest in frequency, typicality, and generalizability (cf. Stake, Bresler, and Mabry, *in press*). Still, their craft is distinguished by a too-holistic viewing of phenomena. They examine multiple situations but each at close quarters, not forcing them into comparisons, not fixated on common variables. It is not uncommon for a qualitative researcher to ask in midstudy: "Of all things, what is it that is most important to be learned from this case?" In music education, we have need for formal generalizations and need for experiential understandings of particular situations. We need high-quality research, both quantitative and qualitative.

CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

1. It is holistic. Its contexts are well studied. It is case oriented (a case may be a student, a teacher, a classroom, a curriculum, any "bounded system"). It is relatively non-comparative, seeking more to understand its case than to understand how it differs from others.
2. It is empirical. It is field oriented, the field being the natural settings of the case. Its emphasis is on observables, including observations by informants. It strives to be naturalistic, noninterventionistic. There is a preference for natural language description. The researcher is the key instrument. For qualitative research, researchers

typically spend considerable time in schools, homes, neighborhoods, and other locales learning about educational concerns. Data are collected on the premises. Qualitative researchers go to the particular settings because they are concerned with context. Action can be better understood when it is observed in the natural setting.

3. It is descriptive. Data take the form of words and graphics more than numbers. The written results of the research contain quotations to illustrate and substantiate the presentation.
4. It is interpretive. Its researchers rely on intuition with many important criteria not specified. Its on-site observers strive to keep attention free to recognize problem-relevant events. It is attuned to the fact that research is a researcher-subject interaction. Qualitative research is concerned with the different meanings that actions and events carry for different members.
5. It is empathic. It attends to the presumed intentions of those being observed. It seeks actor frames of reference, value commitments. Though planned, its design is emergent, responsive. Its issues are emic issues, progressively focused. Its reporting provides vicarious experience.
6. Some researchers emphasize working from bottom up (e.g., Glaser and Strauss's term "grounded theory," 1967). Indeed, the direction of the issues and foci often emerge during data collection. The picture takes shape as the parts are examined.
7. When done well, its observations and immediate interpretations are validated. Triangulation, the checking of data against multiple sources and methods, is routine. There is a deliberate effort to disconfirm one's own interpretations. The reports assist readers to make their own interpretations, as well as to recognize subjectivity.⁴

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN MUSIC EDUCATION

The first decades of research in music education, much as in general education, were characterized by adherence to quantitative models. Little research employed qualitative strategies to illuminate education problems. The late 1960s affected research mores too. National foci on educational equity and back-to-basics curricula swung concern to values, feelings, and minority perspectives. Many recognized that we did not know enough about the educational experience of children "not making it." In general education, qualitative emphasis on understanding the perspective of all participants challenged the idea that the views of those in power are worth more than others. Student perspectives (Jackson, 1968) and the viewing of school as a system of discipline (Dreeben, 1968; Foucault, 1977; Henry, 1966) were widely considered. Concern about student achievement yielded some to concern for what students were actually doing in school. All this stimulated the need for different content,

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goals, and methods. It opened up educational researchers to qualitative approaches.

Music education, too, followed that route, perhaps delayed by a decade or so. The emphasis in formal music education research on quantitative methodology is reflected in books, reports, journal papers, and dissertations. But researchers and practitioners, teachers and conductors, have always used qualitative observations. To establish pedagogy requires illusive observation of students in order to pinpoint problems and suggest remedies. In an ancient example considered to be the first music pedagogy book, *L'Art de Toucher le Clavicin*, Francois Couperin expressed pedagogical assertions based on observations of student behavior: "It will be necessary to place some additional support under the feet of young people, varying in height as they grow, so that their feet not dangling in the air, may keep the body properly balanced." "With regard to making grimaces, it is possible to break oneself of this habit by placing a mirror on the reading-desk of the Spinnet or harpsichord" (p. xx). "It is better and more seemly not to beat time with the head, the body, nor with the feet" (p. xx). The discipline of Couperin's observations and analysis is not known. Should we consider his writings research based?

As Couperin's book illustrates, pedagogical books on performance and conducting are designed to foster learning and remedy problems more than to arrive at causal explanations or understandings of the situation. Use of pictures to express good and bad technique is quite common (Kohut and Grant, 1990). Performance, like some aspects of pedagogy, involves a self-synchronous process of constant listening (either in one's own playing or in ensemble) and comparing it to the score. Through score preparation, the performer not only knows individual details—parts and sections of the score—but also develops a conception of the complete work. The style of performance best suited to any given work; a sound knowledge of music theory, harmonic analysis, and musical form; musicological knowledge to relate the piece to the composer's other works, as well as to other works of the period; all of these shape a performance.

Ethnomusicology is a field in music that draws its intellectual roots and methods from anthropology as well as from musicology. Merriam (1964) and Nettl (1983, 1987) discuss two major approaches in ethnomusicology. The first, a comparative study of musical systems and cultures, is standardized musicology, aiming to record and analyze music in order to produce an accurate structural analysis of the music investigated. Here, the study is primarily based upon a fact-gathering descriptive approach, dealing with such questions as the modes of Persian or Indian music, names of instruments, how they are made, and who owns them.

The second approach, aiming to understand music in the context of human behavior, is an anthropological speciality. Here, the field-worker tries to approximate the anthropologist, for the concern is with much broader questions of the use and function of music, the role and status of musicians, the concepts that lie behind music behavior, and other similar questions (Merriam, 1967; Nettl, 1987). The emphasis is

on music but not on music divorced from its total context: The investigator attempts to emerge from the study with a broad and generally complete knowledge of both the culture and the music, as well as the way music fits into and is used within the wider context (Merriam, 1964, p. 42). This second approach is typically a field-oriented naturalistic study. The researcher stays at the site for a considerable amount of time, getting immersed in the culture. The issues, a combination of emic and etic, are progressively focused. The direction of the issues and foci often emerge during and after data collection.⁵ With few exceptions (Keil, 1966; Oliver, 1960), ethnomusicological studies typically examine other cultures. Few ethnomusicological studies examine familiar music in familiar settings.

Even though these kinds of knowledge have not, until recently, entered the established domains of music education research, the methods of observation, the interview, the use of archival material, and immersion in the case have long been important tools in music education, and in performance and musicology as well. A pioneering work that drew upon these methods, done within the formal boundaries of music education research, was the Pillsbury Foundation Study (Moorhead and Pond, 1941, 1942, 1944, 1951). Initiated by people outside the field of music education (conductor Leopold Stokowski and composer Donald Pond), the Pillsbury Study was dedicated to the discovery of children's musical development through analysis of free, unhampered musical play. Amazed at the spontaneous outpouring of music in young children, Pond wanted to understand how and why children become musically expressive. Thinking along Deweyan lines, he wanted to provide them with opportunities and materials so that they might function in their own ways as musicians. In the study, Pond made a conscious attempt to set aside adult notions about elements of music, processes of learning music, and ways of assessing musical development.

The Pillsbury Study was conducted with 3- to 6-year-old children attending a kindergarten designed specifically for research into musical creativity: an environment full of enticing instruments (e.g., sarong, Chinese and Burmese gongs, Indian drums, and tom-toms) and supportive, musically knowledgeable (but not intrusive) adults. The methods of study involved in-depth observation and analysis. Since the context of sound was of major importance, the observations included such activities as speech and physical movement. All sounds produced were considered musical or "embryonically of musical value." In his reports, Pond provided such examples as when a child calls from the sandbox, "I want a red spoon," in a rhythmic and tonal pattern or a child riding on a tricycle sings over and over to himself in unvarying rhythm, "I ran over a whole basket of cherries." The final report (Moorhead and Pond, 1951), was a set of three short case studies of individual children selected for individual differences and approaches. Data included biographical information such as age, personal, family, and school history.

Some naturalistic studies are taxonomic; others are not. Moorhead and Pond worked toward classification of the mu-

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sical products. A classification of instrumental music, for example, included flexible and asymmetrical measures, exploring wide intervals, tone colors, and pitch contrast. Another category of sonic physical activity, "insistent and savage," was based on rigid and symmetrical rhythms, indifferent to melody and color variety. Pond distinguished between two types of spontaneous vocal utterances: "song," private rhythmically and melodically complex entities, and "chant," a more public utterance, often spontaneously improvised by groups of children. Social-personal context was seen to be highly relevant; most chants were developed first by one child, continued by that child or undertaken by others to form repartee series. Pond raised issues such as: Are these rhythmic patterns fundamental to the child's musical consciousness? What are the relationships between rhythmic patterns and physical rhythms?

The Moorhead and Pond study was holistic, case oriented, noncomparative. The authors sought more to understand each child than to understand how children differ from each other. The natural setting was stressed, with an emphasis on observables. Moorhead and Pond did not try to intervene but rather to observe, describe, and understand.

The Pillsbury Study set a new direction for investigation of free musical activities and improvisation. For music education research, it provided methodological direction and legitimation of the use of naturalistic methods. In the late 1970s and 1980s, music education saw a spurt of qualitative works, independently done in different locations and universities across the country. Jean Bamberger of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1977) examined two subjects' perceptions of a melody, noting the strategies used by each to compose a melody and the relationship between perceptions, models, strategies, and the completed melody. A protocol analysis employing an innovative computer-based recording system to study compositional process was included.

Most reported qualitative studies have been dissertations, works of solitary, inexperienced researchers, backed by little financial resource (cf. Gerber, 1975; Freundlich, 1978; Cohen, 1980; Lewers, 1980; L'Roy, 1983; Thiel, 1984; Garrison, 1985; Krueger, 1985; Uptis, 1985; Bresler, 1987; DeLorenzo, 1987; Harwood, 1987). Observing spontaneous musical behavior of children, Douglas Freundlich (1978) of Harvard explored two fifth-grade children's musical thinking, especially focusing on spontaneous solutions to musical problems. Students were to improvise on a simple diatonic xylophone within a traditional musical frame of standard 12-bar blues. The data were collected in the context of a structured "jam session." The research was qualitative not because the situation was loosely structured but because the researcher was refining his interpretation with every observation. Freundlich found that development proceeded down from the chorus-as-a-whole and up from a self-generated two-bar motif. Addressing improvisation's pedagogical value, Freundlich pointed out that the child can generate authentic musical ideas without reference to notation, and that musical concepts furnished by the improvisation procedure are logically organized.

Veronica Cohen (1980) of the University of Illinois also examined the generation of musical ideas in a loosely structured situation. Discussing her methods, Cohen noted the following:

This is not a conventional study in which the researcher set up a plan and then followed it, reporting in what ways it was successful or not. Instead, borrowing on the naturalistic, exploratory and yet scientific tradition exemplified in some of the most important of Piaget's studies, it searched through observations over many years . . . focusing finally on a few of two children's musical productions that held the most promise for revealing the underlying structure and dynamics of children's spontaneous music. (p. 1)

Data collection included a 3-year period of general background observation and immersion in children's free musical play in the kindergarten, followed by a rigorous and detailed study of videotaped data involving two kindergarten children. Cohen discussed the role of intuition and accumulated knowledge of the whole field of music in making the thousands of decisions in data collection in the field. "The researcher becomes the chief instrument who selects, interprets and synthesizes evidence in order to break through to the mind of the child" (p. 2). Engagement in musical dialogues with children was a focus. Descriptors included the role of kindergarten music, teacher special interest, and the *participant-observer* role of the researcher. Cohen reported that she was constantly involved in planning the music curriculum, taught demonstration classes for university students, demonstrated ways of interacting with children at the music center, and discussed and analyzed children's work for classroom teachers, parents, and university students.

Cohen investigated musical gestures, noting how the children organize sounds into "musical ideas." Using videotapes for data collection, Cohen found that such behavior could be nicely placed into three broad categories: exploration, mastery, and generation of musical gestures. She speculated that even at this early age children tended to specialize: some almost always engaged in "mastery" activities (reproduction of known melodies) whereas others "improvised" their own gestures.

Influences of culture and society on the musical behavior of children is a relatively sociology-based area studied by qualitative researchers. In Israel, Devorah Kalekin-Fishman (1981, 1986) investigated the nature of music in kindergartens, examining it from teacher as well as from child perspectives. A kindergarten was chosen as the case because it is here the child encounters society as officially organized by educators and is exposed to conceptual frameworks deliberately arranged to fit at least a dozen years of life in educational organizations. Kalekin-Fishman made intensive observations and conducted semistructured interviews. An analysis of sonal patterns in kindergartens in Germany and Israel showed that with minimal framing (intended pitch and intended rhythm), children produced varieties of typified music making. The framing, however, was not that most commonly employed by kindergarten teachers, who usually have a relatively narrow field of musical knowledge.

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Ethnomusicology provides an important model for music education research. At the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Virginia Garrison (1985) examined the transmission process of folk music, a process that is as vital to that tradition as is its product, the music. If folk music is to be included in formal music educational settings, then it is important that those social and musical aspects of the folk music tradition that are essential to that tradition are identified. In order to investigate the transmission process and the effect of changed instructional context on that process, Garrison used ethnomusicological methods of extensive and intensive naturalistic observations of 72 practicing fiddlers and 49 beginning fiddling students in a variety of contexts for a period of 6 years, as well as open-ended interviews and photography.

In a similar vein, Eve Harwood (1987) of the University of Illinois opened her dissertation discussing the difficulty researchers have studying music of a culture different from their own. Whereas at one time it was considered sufficient to analyze musical artifacts in the form of tape recordings and transcriptions, using terms appropriate to traditional Western musicology, modern ethnomusicology holds that understanding and describing the cultural context in which music making occurs is a necessary part of understanding the music of a given group. An outsider's analytical tools and observations are not necessarily invalid, but an insider's view of what is significant about the music are thought to illuminate our understanding in a unique way.

In the case of North American children, folklorists and musicians were collecting children's repertoires before 1900, but little scholarship had been directed toward the singers themselves. Harwood's study was based on the assumption that children's music and musical world are distinct from adult counterparts, that what is considered beautiful, attractive, or good to sing and is cherished by children may be different. Not a naturalistic study, Harwood's procedures included semistructured interviews in which the 15 children sang all the songs they could remember, discussed how they had learned each song, and described their singing habits and preferences. A parent of each child answered questions regarding the child's singing habits and preferences and the musical life of the family. Interviews and singing were taped and transcribed, and a fieldwork journal of impressions and visual observations was kept. In conclusion, Harwood once again asserted the need to study children's music as one would that of any outside culture, attempting to appreciate both the insider's and the outsider's view of the material.

In the studies just reviewed, researchers examined relatively uncharted territories in order to understand musical activities in context. The study of innovation is another such uncharted territory. Qualitative methodology not only allows but features the study of contexts. One innovation has been the introduction of instructional computer programming that many music educators claim dramatically affects the music education scene. Case studies are one of many ways to examine accommodation of computers into music classes.

At Stanford, Liora Bresler (1987) studied the integration of computers into a college-level introductory music theory class. The learning environment into which the computer is integrated is far too complex to be condensed to one or even several variables. Complications ranged from implicit and explicit curricula of the music theory class to multiple goals and values of instructors, program designers, and students, all interacting with beliefs, musical aspirations, and perceptions of the innovation. Intensive observations of student work at the computer and unstructured and semistructured interviews with the participants provided the main data, supplemented with questionnaires, computer logs, and collection of materials (e.g., syllabi, tests, and students' composition answer sheets).

Even though initially the class seemed an ideal setting for the use of computers for education (e.g., perfect match between contents of software and curriculum-individualized instruction for a musically heterogeneous population; stable teaching over a number of years), the results fell well short of expectations. Many important issues such as the relevance of music practice to the computer program and the aesthetics of music in the computer program emerged at the site.

Focusing on social and cultural contexts, Saville Kushner (1985) of the University of East Anglia studied an innovative, 3-year course for third- and fourth-year students at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. The course, a response to fundamental misgivings about the education of musicians in conservatoires, arranged student performances and workshops in a range of unconventional community sites. Rather than judging the merits of the training, Kushner was commissioned to collect information that participants would find useful in making such judgments. His report was rich in description of program development over time, noting student and teacher perception and audience response. Through vignettes and vivid pictures, it conveyed conservatory life, its inside rivalries, competitions, participant experiences, implicit and explicit goals, and values. The personal debates about destination, the dreams, the dilemmas—so personal, yet so common to performance-oriented people—captured a reality pertinent to musical lives, innovations, and experiences. The portrayal of student perspectives, including those at the lower social strata, captured personal and cultural meanings of music, confusion over what the role of the professional musician should be, as well as the social context of repertoire.

Case studies are typically confined to one setting. A series of eight case studies portraying ordinary arts instruction in the United States was conducted by the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation (CIRCE) at the University of Illinois under the auspices of the National Arts Education Research Center, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (see Stake, Bresler, and Mabry, *in press*). Described in detail were the fundamental differences in program offering for music education specialists and general classroom teachers, not only in curricula and pedagogy, but in impact on scheduling, resources, and use of curricular organizers as well. One etic (original design) issue was the role

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of community resources and performances. Classroom observations brought out the "hidden curriculum"—art as relief from schoolwork and the regularity with which music was presented without background or interpretation, whether for class participation or as background activity to eating, doing worksheets, or reading. As usual, the emphasis was not on what ought to be, but the study did provide researcher interpretation as to what is needed.

In another federally funded project, the Elementary Subjects Study (funded by the U.S. Department of Education) at Michigan State University, music and the visual arts were studied along with mathematics, science, social studies, and literature. The program focused on conceptual understanding, higher order thinking and problem solving in elementary school teaching through a series of case studies of music and visual arts instruction (May, 1990). Research questions included the following: What content is taught when teaching for conceptual understanding and higher level learning? How do teachers negotiate curricular decisions? How do teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources best? In what ways is good teaching subject matter specific?

Some research in music is done by nonmusicians, where music is but one subject among several others, chosen to highlight larger patterns. Such was a study by Benjamin Bloom (1985), who was interested in the development of talent in a variety of domains—music, math, sculpture, athletics—and the roles of families, teachers, and schools in discovering, developing, and encouraging unusually high levels of competence. The commonalities of music with other domains, as well as its unique properties, were presented by Sosniak (1985).

Music Concepts to Aid Qualitative Study

Extensive use of observation in natural settings with little intervention encourages us to discern the complexity of music education. Taped interviews can capture participant voices, views, and struggles. Qualitative methodology promotes the pursuit of questions like, What music do teachers cherish and participate in outside of school? How are school reform and the accountability movement affecting how teachers perceive the teaching of music? What are children's assumptions about music, about what is beautiful, attractive, or well formed? What musical events are to be found in pre-kindergarten settings? In school settings? In jam sessions? Are there ways that teachers are using MTV for legitimate music instruction? Qualitative researchers can examine events that reflect latent as well as manifest learnings. They can study interrelationships of school, home, media, and culture as they shape musical skills and attitudes. They do this by studying individual cases, problems, settings.

Capturing reality in its complexity opens up research studies to additional modes of representation: vignettes, photographs, audio and videotapes, films, and various artifacts of performing and teaching music.

Using tapes to capture musical nuances and qualities in performances as well as intonations of "everyday speech" is useful for musicians, for whom intonation, rhythm, and pitch are specially meaningful.

Having discussed the content and representations that qualitative methodology offers music education research, we now want to draw attention to the symbiotic relation between musicianship and intellectual inquiry—noting that much can be developed along qualitative lines. Musical approach can be an asset in qualitative research in general education. Music educators who turn to research in education can use their musical background to contribute to structural conceptualizations and analysis of school life and teaching.

Teaching and classroom life should sometimes be regarded through aesthetic lenses (cf. Eisner, 1979; Goodman, 1968; Brophy and Good, 1986; Kagan, 1989). Here, it is important to make the distinction between an artwork and a phenomenon analyzed through aesthetic parameters (Dewey, 1958). As Eisner has stated, we can pay attention to the aesthetic qualities of a teaching performance in order to perceive what is later described as its qualitative aspects or its feelingful character. The performance itself may not be artistic; that is, it may not have coherence and unity and might not be particularly inventive. Nevertheless, it still can have aesthetic properties. The opposite of aesthetic is anaesthetic, the thwarting of feeling. Objects, situations, or events that are aesthetic evoke or elicit feeling. Whether the situation of performance is artistic, it can be argued, is another matter (Eisner, private communication, 1990).

Art affords us the unique experience of apprehending the result of one individual's (the artist's) inquiry into the structure of reality and the structure of a medium (Olson, 1978; Arnheim, 1986; Eisner, 1988). Teachers, like artists, create articulated, planned experiences⁶ and the portrayal of experience can be disciplined by qualitative methods. Analysis of a lesson, like a work of art in general and a musical work in particular, can benefit by allusion to arts' structural properties: rhythm, line, orchestration, texture, form. Lessons can create drama—introduction, building of tension, and resolution. Formal qualities play a major role in the educational communication, interacting with specific messages and contents to create the impact. These properties help provide standards for teaching, drawing attention to coherence, sequentiality, and comprehension.

Let us examine some musical parameters that we have found helpful for conceptualizing qualitative research, particularly in examining curricula and pedagogies. (1) *Form* relates to the organization of parts and whole, arrangement of repetition and variation, unity and variety. Teaching uses and builds on these. A number of educational models point to the importance of form in teaching: setting up introductory anticipation, development and closure, or the creation of suspense, a dramatic climax and resolution as the summing up of the lesson, of a topic. Every lesson has a form, created by the interplay of new and old material, repetition and variation. A lesson may be conceptualized as a Baroque suite—a series of little, related movements (except for pa-

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rameters like tonality and orchestration)—or as a classical sonata form, tightly organized, fully developed, and well balanced. (2) *Style*. Just as categorization of musical style⁷ is useful for perception and analysis, so is the categorization of teaching style. Parameters of style are qualitative lenses for classroom life, pedagogies, and curricular materials.

Form and style are broad categories, referring to complexes or syndromes. The qualities of melody (or line), tempo and rhythm, orchestration and texture, are more specific. (3) *Tempo* is the pace, quick and slow and all the gradations in between. *Rhythm* refers to relationships of tempi over time as well as to temporal patterns. What are the paces of the lesson? How fast do the ideas flow? How rapidly does the teacher change topic, focus, and assignment? How does this pace raise anticipation, or a sense of development and evaluation? (4) *Orchestration* refers to the character of the interplay among players or participants. What is the character of interplay between teacher and students? How does the teacher get the students to take more initiative? Presentations can be didactic, the teacher assuming the soloist's role, dominating the presentation. Alternatively, the teacher assumes the conductor's role, facilitating student dialogue, yet maintaining control over content and form. Classroom life can take the form of chamber ensembles, a measure of student leadership and autonomy. Orchestration reveals the "colors" of voices in the classroom, for example some extroverted (brass v. string instruments) in higher registers, intense, and interacting. (5) *Melody* refers to the "plot line," its direction ascending, descending, or flat. Is the unit of thought a long one or are there many shorter units? What are the interrelations of the shorter idea units to the whole lesson? Are they complementary, autonomous, or unified? What is the inner form (in terms of anticipation and drama) within each of these plot lines? (6) *Texture* refers to the interrelations of simultaneous lines and their development over time during the lesson. Under the category of texture, the presentation of topics, such as at a board meeting, can be homophonic or contrapuntal, several voices echoing, confronting, ignoring each other.

These music concepts, as well as special concepts of education, are expected content and representation in qualitative music education research. Most important are their contributions to expressivity. Though unobtrusive, the researcher interacts with teaching and learning phenomena, bringing unique experience and scholarship into interpretation. Along with relatively uncontested descriptions, traces of the researcher's deepest personal understandings are presented. The character and the art form of the researcher are not hidden.

METHODS AND CRITERIA

The primary task of the researcher is interpretation (with interpretations presented eventually not just as findings but as assertions; (Erickson, 1986). The most obvious work of the qualitative researcher is data gathering in the field. The

ethic of qualitative research calls for abundant description, sufficient for readers to participate in verification of the researcher's interpretations and to make some of their own (Stake, 1978). Thus, most of the methodological advice in the literature has to do with data gathering. If we were limited to a single recommendation we would name Schatzman and Strauss (1973), *Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology*.

Data Collection

The examples of music education research described earlier identify the main methods for qualitative research: intensive observation in natural settings, examination of documents and other artifacts, and interview. Even when audio- or videotaped, the principal "instrument" is the researcher, a constant arbiter of what is important, of the need for further data, for probing, and for small or large redesign of the study. The design of the study is said to be emergent or progressively focused (Strauss, 1987). The design is based not only on a strong sense of the research questions or issues at hand (Smith, 1978) but on the growing body of interpreted observations in the classroom or wherever.

When assuming the more common nonparticipant role, the researcher observes ordinary activities and habitat, the people, the exercise of authority and responsibility, the expression of intent, the productivity, and especially the milieu. Believing that important understandings are situationally rooted, the researcher carefully describes the contacts, noting not just space and time characteristics, but social, economic, political, historical, and aesthetic contexts. The nonparticipating observer is as invisible and nonintrusive as possible, often even refraining from appearing to record what is going on.

In a participant-observer role the researcher engages in the ordinary activities of the group or program being studied but tries not to redirect those activities. Participation may be marginal, perhaps the role of helpmate with some sharing of interests and problems (Spindler, 1982), or more extensive, such as the teacher as researcher in her own classroom or the researcher as consultant providing inservice training to teachers (Cohen, 1980; Stake and Easley, 1978; Stanley, 1990; Wagner, 1990). The growing interest in action research (teacher as researcher; Carr and Kemmis, 1986) is apparent in recent meetings of the American Education Research Association. Here especially, but even in the more passive roles, as interpreter, the researcher is seen as an interactive force in events.

Document review is an essential component of data collection (Andre, 1983). Needed data on inspiration, obligation, and constraint on personal or group action are often disclosed in formal and informal documents. Many useful documents are fugitive records, stored in places no one can remember, making it necessary for the researcher to look through countless papers to find a useful one. Often the information needed is a marginal notation or not even a document at all, such as an inscription on a trophy or notes on a

calendar. Browsing is a common activity for the researcher, with half a mind for the research question but another half just trying to comprehend what sort of place it is.

Interviews are conducted not as surveys of how people feel but primarily to obtain observations that the researcher is unable to make directly, secondly to capture multiple realities or perceptions of any given situation, and, finally, to assist in interpreting what is happening. When standardized information is needed from large numbers of people, the written survey is more efficient, but most qualitative researchers want to probe more deeply than is possible with questionnaires. With a structured interview the researcher assumes questions are comprehensible and consistent in meaning across respondents. Semistructured interviews, with topics or questions predetermined, allow latitude for probing and following the interviewee's sense of what is important. Unfortunately, they are costly to administer and time-consuming in analysis. The degree of structure for individual questions, for the interview as a whole, or for the project as a whole are key decisions to be made and remade (Mishler, 1986).

The qualitative researcher seeks to be unobtrusive, knowing that the more attention is drawn to the study, the more posturing there will be and less ordinary activity available for observation. Even interviewing and testing are interventions, drawing attention to the presence and purpose of the research. The researcher takes advantage of indications of accretion and use, such as graffiti on walls or repair records for tape recorders. Gene Webb and his Northwestern colleagues provided many examples of unobtrusive measures (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest, 1966), but one of the authors, Don Campbell, later expressed the concern that heavy use of such methods persuade readers that social scientists are covert and deceptive, undermining the credibility of all research. Researchers, often in effect guests at the work space and in the private spaces of others, should be considerate. With its probing orientation, qualitative research easily intrudes into the personal affairs of others. Making the report anonymous is often insufficient to avoid the risk of harming people. Handling data is an ethical as much as a technical matter (Rainwater and Pittman, 1969).

Data Analysis

Techniques vary widely. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses of data are used by the qualitative researcher. Quantitative analysis is used more to work toward generalization across specifics observed in the field. It proceeds largely by coding, classifying, and aggregating observations (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Thus, for example, teaching episodes are increasingly seen to be of perhaps three kinds, and the length of student deliberation in choosing a musical instrument is treated statistically. Uniqueness of each particular situation is given little attention: the typical, aggregate, and generalizable are given more attention. Such an approach is often followed in policy analysis (Yin, 1984).

Qualitative analysis is organized more around the notes

and stories the researcher keeps, increasingly focused on a small number of issues or themes. The researcher selects the most revealing instances, identifies vignettes, and composes narratives from day to day, then uses an even smaller selection of them in the final presentation (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). The choice of what to report is subjective, evolving, emphasizing more what contributes to the understanding of the particulars observed than relating to cases and situations elsewhere, usually giving no more than minor attention to comparisons, not worrying much about typicality or representativeness. Thus, the integrity, complexity, and contextuality of individual cases are probed. Readers fit them in among cases they have known. If theory building is the ultimate intent of the researcher here, qualitative analysis paces it not by years but by decades.

Multiple case studies require a kind of analysis that remains largely unformalized. One tries to preserve the uniqueness of the individual case, yet produce cross-site conclusions. The usual reporting procedure is to present a long or short summary of each case, then chapters on understanding the aggregate (Huberman and Miles, 1984). Panels of interpreters, some of whom may not have observed at any sites, are often useful for enriching and challenging the interpretations—but require more comprehensive site summaries than site-visiting researchers usually provide for themselves. For self-use, panel, or instructional purposes, such summaries provide a synthesis of what the researcher knows about the site, tentative findings, and quality of data supporting them, even indicating what is still left to find out, and perhaps indicating an agenda for the next wave of data collection (Bogdan and Taylor, 1984).

For most qualitative projects, data analysis is an informal and often overwhelming task. There are too many data to keep records of and too few that support prevailing impressions. The researcher works with those seeming most likely to advance understanding, describing them in detail, and frequently restating the issue being pursued. Data analysis is an art form.

Criteria of Quality

The characteristics of quality in quantitative studies are widely agreed upon: representativeness of the sample, reliability and validity of measurement, objectivity in interpretation, and the probabilities of Type I and Type II errors, to name several (Campbell and Stanley, 1966). No such summary of characteristics of quality has been developed for qualitative research. Many of the same concepts are worthy of consideration, but when purposes are different (e.g., a low interest in broad generalization), then the criteria will be different. Whether the alternative purposes are legitimate is a question that researchers continue to debate (Smith and Heshusius, 1986).

The most important criterion for any research is that it is about something important, important to readers as well as to researchers. Researchers are given great respect for recognizing what needs to be studied, and they should not abuse

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that privilege. Perhaps an overly large share of music education research is the psychological study of musical skills and knowledge; perhaps too little is the study of curriculum change and that of music teaching. Still, the health of any research enterprise depends more on intellectual curiosity, studying what needs to be better understood, rather than on what can be funded or will be pleasing to patrons and readers.

In a response to critics of naturalistic inquiry, Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1988) asked methodologists and philosophers of science for evidence that well-crafted research grounded in qualitative and phenomenological traditions *could* be judged and found (1) systematically congruent with the context, that is, valid; (2) not subject to aberrations in research process or instrumentation, that is, reliable; and (3) not open to charges of bias, prejudice, or political advocacy of the investigators. Lincoln and Guba rejected these more quantitative or positivist criteria on grounds that they were incompatible with the axioms of naturalistic research. They saw the naturalist's criteria to be (1) credibility (rather than internal validity), (2) transferability (rather than external validity or generalizability), (3) dependability (rather than reliability), and (4) confirmability (rather than objectivity). These alternative terms were advocated primarily to make clear the inappropriateness of conventional criteria for qualitative research (House, 1980).

To illustrate these criteria, consider a naturalistic case study of a program for training teachers of introductory band. As does a quantitative researcher, the qualitative researcher unconsciously or deliberately takes into account the experience, sophistication, curiosity, and concerns of the eventual audience and seeks to say mostly what will be credible to them. But unlike the quantitative researcher, the qualitative researcher intends to build upon the uniqueness of personal understanding, offering for each reader a credible account and a vicarious experience for substantiation or modification of existing generalizations.

Transferability refers to the extent to which the research facilitates inferences by readers regarding their own situations and responsibilities. Such are petite generalizations rather than the grand generalizations of the theory builder, relatively context free, and a basis for general policy. Good transfer is based on similarity of situations, intuitively weighted as to what is important and unimportant in the match.

Our campus researcher seeks to describe band director trainees meaningfully to readers, with observations transferable to their situations. Rather than measuring with instrument or frequency count, he observes and portrays the band teacher training experience, clearly describing people, dialogue, settings, expressions of intent and frustration, and so on so as to enable the reader to associate this new vicarious experience with previous experience, recognizing ordinary use of both reasoning and intuition in clarifying views and improving understanding.

Confirmability is a sophisticated way of suggesting accuracy. With qualitative data we seldom have an accurate impression the first time we look; we have to confirm or triangulate⁸ (Denzin, 1970), and when we can we have others,

including our readers, confirm the finding. The researcher is not content to note available confirmatory evidence but deliberately seeks new facts that might refute the present facts (Popper, 1969). What are facts? It always happens that several important facts are in some degree interpretations (e.g., a professor's apparent lack of interest in band appearance, particularly synchronous movement—whether or not she confirms it), the meanings differing from observer to observer. The researcher triangulates the observations, working toward some common perception, but expects and reports on certain differences in perception (for example, between male and female faculty members) and goes out of his way to relate certain ways he, with background and value commitment showing, interacted with the scene and arrived at assertions. With different backgrounds, the readers too interpret the account differently. Confirmability is an aim, not an ideal, to be tempered by the indefiniteness of reality and by sticking with questions that matter.

Drawn by his persuasion toward constructed reality, our quantitative researcher finds it of little use to hypothesize some "true account" of the band director training program, an account independent of human observers, an ideal to which actual accounts might be compared. Even those parts of the account most agreed upon are not good grounds for considering "validity"—for many of those easily confirmed facts are of little interest and one way to get confirmation is to omit things, even important things, that people see differently. The account should be dependable among relatively neutral readers, portraying much of what they would have seen, had they been there, and omitting most of what they would have found irrelevant and distracting. The researcher is greatly privileged in what to attend to, but the audience can invalidate, at least for their purposes, the account as off-the-mark and incomplete.

Complete objectivity is unattainable and unsought in this research paradigm (Dilthey, 1900; Barone, 1990). The researcher seeks to diminish subjectivity that interferes with comprehension and to exploit subjectivity for deeper interpretation (Peshkin, 1988). He exposes himself, preferably with grace. Although most readers have little interest in reading the researcher's track record, autobiographical and opinion statements are useful footnotes for deliberately revealing lack of experience, alliances, and value positions. And to carry the handling of subjectivity further, the competent qualitative researcher finds ways of including contrary views and alternative explanations.

The criteria for high-quality inquiry and for high-quality reports are not one and the same. The inquiry process belongs largely to the researcher. Each of the data gathering and analysis methods has its own criteria, sources for which we have footnoted. The criteria for reports (reports being communications requiring both a sender and a receiver) lie in the hands of both the researcher and the user of the research. With quantitative measurement, it is not the test or instrument that has validity, it is each use of the measurements that is valid or invalid (Cronbach, 1971). Similarly with qualitative research, the meanings arrived at by individual readers and the applications to new practice are the ultimate indexes of validity of the reports (Howe and Eisenhart, 1990). A final as-

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section might be that in the program studied here, band directors are reconsidering their roles in protection and perpetuation of local culture. If readers misinterpret this as indicating the graduates thus are hostile to change, the finding should be considered invalid. The researcher can do much to increase the quality of his work, but it serves no more than to facilitate cautious and insightful use of his accounts.

Strengths and Weaknesses

As summarized by Miles and Huberman (1984), the weakest aspect of qualitative research is its contribution to basic research generalizations and policy study—but such is not its intent. Its purpose is to facilitate understanding of the particular. Still, by charging the researcher with spontaneous responsibility in the field, it lacks good protection against

1. excessive subjectivity in observations,
2. imprecise language in descriptions,
3. vague descriptions of the research design,
4. unwieldy and voluminous reports,
5. implication of generalizability when little is warranted,
6. cost and time overrun, and
7. unethical intrusion into personal lives.

But the strengths of qualitative study are impressive as well. We would summarize those strengths as

1. a holistic, systemic purview, emphasizing inner workings and contexts;
2. a strong, empirical commitment to triangulated description of teaching;
3. an obligation and opportunity to get the most from field-work interpretations; and

4. a sense of empathy enhancing the utility of use for applied practice in education.

These features have not characterized the majority of the music education research in our journals. Certainly it would be a mistake were all the issues and developments of music education to be studied naturalistically—but that imbalance is far away.

To close this chapter we would like to quote from Kushner's (1985) case study, his final words:

As can be read throughout this report, the participating students are formidable critics and evaluators—and no one has been spared their scrutiny. MPCs offers a rare occasion in music training for trainees to support each other in a discussion forum and they use it with effect. Guildhall tutors, guest speakers, professional collaborators, prospective employers, those who seek to advise and the principal himself, have all found themselves having to defend statements they have made to MPCs groups in the face of often considerable pressure. There is no evidence on this course, at least, for the often-heard assertion that music students are inarticulate or reticent. This may be both heartening and worrying for the conservatoire facing the prospect of trying to integrate an educational curriculum with a training curriculum. The implications of curriculum integration go beyond finding appropriate slots on a timetable for optional sessions. If there is a vision of new practice enshrined in the Project then it might prove increasingly hard to protect other teaching areas in the School from the consequences of that vision. . . . To date the Project has undoubtedly enjoyed many successes—but it is still a curriculum 'fledgling' enjoying the attention and tolerance needed to nurture it. Its musical products are of a quality which still worry Peter, in educational terms its aims and outcome are still hit-and-miss. There is no certainty that the course will interest conservatoire students other than those (still small) numbers who opt to join and remain on the course. And, of course, MPCs has not had to withstand confrontation with critics one of the few experiences so far denied it.

Notes

1. Vignettes quoted herein are from Stake, Bresler, and Mabry, *Custom and Christing*, to be published by the Music Educators National Conference.
2. Guba and Lincoln (1981) have identified gradations of belief in an independent versus a constructed reality. One's belief is linked to belief in how we come to know what we know—but ontology and epistemology are not interdeterminate. Belief in independent reality does not fix one's belief in a simple world, the worlds of Stravinsky's *Firebird* or seasonal fund drives. Nor does belief in constructionism fix belief in a heterogenous, particularist world. Realists too believe that generalizations are regularly limited by local condition. "Do teachers always prefer authoritarian milieus or only under certain conditions?" Though idealists, relativists, situationists, contextualists, and other champions of local knowledge often resist broad generalizations and are found to support constructivist ontology, their support for a contextualist epistemology is a correlate, not a derivative, of that ontology.
3. Rorty's perspective on both idealism and positivism moves us toward the role of literature in qualitative methodology. Kant and Hegel, claims Rorty (1989), went only halfway in their repu-

diation of the idea that truth is "out there." They were willing to view the world of empirical science as a made world, to see matter as constructed by mind. But they persisted in seeing mind, spirit, the depths of the human self, as having an intrinsic nature, one that could be known by a kind of nonempirical superscience called philosophy. Thus, only half of truth, the bottom, scientific half, was made. The truth about mind, the providence of philosophy, was still a matter of discovery rather than creation. The idealists confused the idea that nothing has intrinsic nature with the idea that space and time are unreal, that human beings cause the spatiotemporal world to exist. Claiming that truth is not out there, Rorty says that where there are no sentences, there is no truth, that sentences are elements of human languages, and that human languages, as whole vocabularies, are human creations.

4. See naturalistic generalizations, Stake and Trumbull (1982).
5. According to the emic approach, the issues, concepts, and meanings are of the people under study. In the etic approach, researchers apply their own concepts to understand the social behavior of the people being studied (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). The emic categories of meaning are called first-order

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- concepts. The etic categories are called second-order concepts, since they are "constructs of the constructs made by actors on the social scene" (Schultz, 1962).
6. The fact that some teachers teach artistically does not necessitate that they articulate it. We find teachers who provide meaningful aesthetic experience in their lessons, yet seem unable to articulate it, just as some musicians create excellent music but find it difficult (and unnecessary) to talk about it. Time and again we are confronted with the difference between "know how" and "know about."
 7. Pathos/Dyonian/Romantic versus Ethos/Apolonian/Classic is a distinction of musical idiom prominent since Plato. Ethos, associated with restraint and serenity, canon and norm, implies belief in absolute, unalterable values. Pathos, associated with strong feeling, motion, and action implies the personal quest (cf. Sachs, 1946).
 8. The term "triangulation" was coined by Webb et al. (1965), an internal index to provide convergent evidence, "the onslaught of a series of imperfect measures." Triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures (checking with different sources, applying different methods, corroborated by different researchers, and examined through different theories) of it agree with it, or at least, don't contradict it.

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