

MODULE 2:UNDERTAKING RESEARCH IN WORKPLACES

Discussing voice-related practitioner-researcher (VPR)
research in the workplace with due consideration to research
ethics and insider research

Word Count:3987

BMPF7323D, Vanessa Eve Hirsch, 2327695

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
LAYER 1: RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY - PARADIGMS	3
ONTOLOGY – What is real.....	3
EPISTEMOLOGY – What is knowledge	4
AXIOLOGY – The role of values in research.....	4
<i>Selected Paradigms</i>	4
Positivism.....	5
Post-Positivism	6
Interpretivism/Constructivism.....	6
<i>Mixed Paradigms</i>	8
LAYER 2: REASONING.....	8
Inductive.....	8
Deductive	8
Abductive	8
<i>Applications in VPR Research</i>	9
Inductive.....	9
Deductive	9
Abductive	9
LAYER 3: METHODOLOGIES	10
Quantitative.....	10
Qualitative	10
Mixed Methods.....	10
LAYER 4-6: MIXED METHOD DESIGNS and METHODS.....	11
Designs.....	11
Methods.....	12
ETHICS.....	14
INSIDER RESEARCH	15
Benefits.....	16
Limitations.....	16
CONCLUSION.....	17
REFERENCES	18
APPENDICES	24
Glossary of Acronyms.....	24
Tables	25

Which research approaches are most appropriate for voice-related practitioner-researcher (VPR) research in complex work-based environments, and what ethical and insider research considerations should be addressed?

INTRODUCTION

As a voice-related practitioner-researcher (VPR), my interests lie in exploring:

- The effect of singers' facial expressions on their experience, vocal quality, and listener perceptions.
- The influence of teachers' and conductors' facial expressions on the singers with which they work.

By undertaking future research in my workplace, I hope to deepen the understanding of vocal emotional communication and the complex interactions between performers, listeners, teachers, and environments.

Acquiring accurate knowledge necessitates researcher reflexivity, involving ongoing self-awareness of how the researcher's personal thoughts, feelings, biases and viewpoints may influence the research process (Salzman, 2002; Watt, 2015).

Furthermore, research requires the adoption of a well-structured and appropriate research framework (Näslund et al., 2010; Watt, 2015). This essay is guided, therefore, by the Saunders, Lewis and Tornhill **Research Onion** (2024). Using this pictorial framework for research design (Tengli, 2020), each layer will be discussed sequentially. It is not possible to cover everything in the scope of this essay; therefore, a selection of topics most relevant for VPR studies will be explored:

- Research Philosophy: Post-positivist and Constructivist/Interpretivist Paradigms
- Reasoning
- Methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods)
- A selection of mixed method designs and qualitative methods
- Ethics and Insider research.

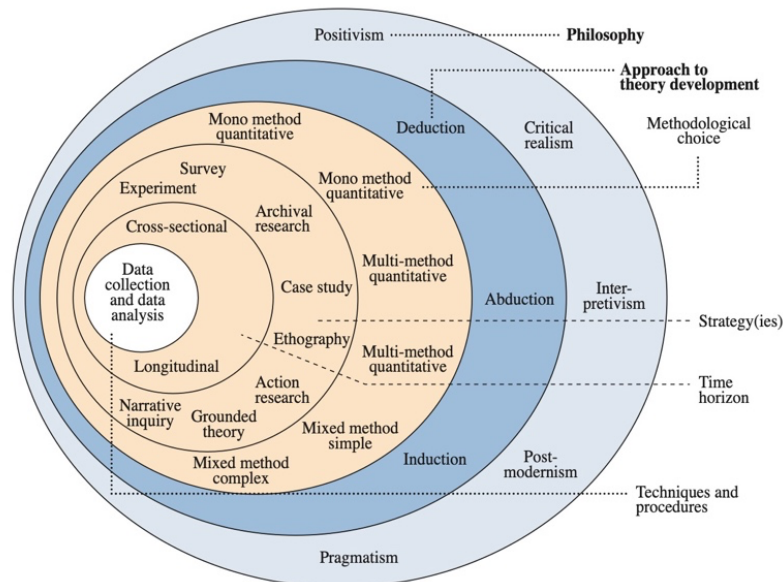


Figure 1. The Research Onion (Melnikovas, 2018).

LAYER 1: RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY - PARADIGMS

Paradigms, influenced by ontology, epistemology and axiology, serve as philosophical frameworks aligning with a study's research objectives (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017). Selection of a paradigm, shaping and reflecting a researcher's worldview, requires reflexivity on personal beliefs and values (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Pretorius, 2024). Early researcher positioning fosters *"methodologically sound, ethically informed and practically relevant research"* (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017; Pretorius, 2024, p. 2298). Subsequently, the paradigm chosen guides the entire research process, including policy, methodology, data collection, analysis and interpretation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Bracken, 2010).

ONTOLOGY – What is real

Derived from the Greek word *ontos* meaning "being", ontology refers to beliefs about the nature of reality (Sol and Heng, 2022). Ontology was described in 1660 by Gideon Harvey, an esteemed physician and influential critique of societal attitudes and medical practices (Muñoz, 2014), as *"the metaphysical science or study of being and the essence of things"* (Harper, no date). It addresses how things are and how they work (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2017).

When designing research, researchers should consider their positionality along an ontological spectrum between two primary perspectives:

Realism/Objectivism

The belief in one universal truth which is quantifiable.

Relativism/Subjectivism

The belief that reality is subjective, with multiple interpretations influenced by social, historical and cultural factors.

(Ryan, 2018; Pretorius, 2024)

In VPR research, where participant and practitioner/researcher psychology and experiences influence the design and outcomes (Scott, 2024), alignment would be more likely be to the latter.

EPISTEMOLOGY – What is knowledge

Epistemology, from the Greek *episteme* (knowledge) and *epistania* (to know or understand), concerns the connections between the knower and the known (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Sol and Heng, 2022). It explores the sources of knowledge – perception, memory, reason, and testimony – and key components such as truth, belief and justification (Sol and Heng, 2022). Epistemology influences the researcher's choices of sources, and methods of inquiry and data collection (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017; Scott, 2024).

AXIOLOGY – The role of values in research

Derived from the Greek word *axios* (value), axiology explores how values, beliefs and ethics shape what we know and deem valuable (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017; Sol and Heng, 2022). Reflexivity on axiological positioning helps ensure research integrity and transparency by acknowledging personal biases (Pretorius, 2024).

Selected Paradigms

Although numerous paradigms exist, this essay discusses four key ones which lie at opposite ends of the ontological and epistemological spectrum. Understanding these will help me to define my own VPR positionality.

Positivism

Positivism is a realist, objective and value-free research paradigm (Pretorius, 2024). Aiming to eliminate researcher bias, it asserts that one objective reality exists, unaffected by the researcher or participant (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Pretorius, 2024). Viewing reality as measurable, predictable, and controllable through observable facts (Melnikovas, 2018), it employs empirical, replicable methods (Hammersley, 2013), and relies on random sampling, statistics and large participant numbers (Sol and Heng, 2022). Though primarily associated with quantitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Feilzer, 2010; Pretorius, 2024), Positivism can also incorporate qualitative approaches (Hammersley, 2013) which aids understanding of causal mechanisms (Lin, 1998).

Suitability for VPR Research

In social sciences, Positivist approaches are commonly employed to support validity, rigour and replicability of research (Berkovich, 2018; Lin, 1998). Positivism, nevertheless, has numerous limitations for VPR research. Primarily, it disregards the subjective influences of students, teachers, and researchers on both the research process and its interpretations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017; Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017). Bracken (2010, p.3), argues that positivism “*negates the role of human agency or trivializes it to an extent it becomes meaningless*”.

Guba and Lincoln (1994), highlight further limitations of Positivism which could hinder VPR research:

- ***Context stripping***
May overlook the importance of the studio context, e.g. teacher’s language, culture or pedagogical approach.
- ***Exclusion of meaning and purpose***
Risks missing meaningful improvements and disconnects practical goals from those of the teacher, student or studio.
- ***Theory-practice gap***
Grand theories may fail to address individual needs within specific studios.
- ***Limited Applicability to Individuals***
Generalised data may be less useful for individual students.
- ***Lack of Discovery***
Reduces opportunities to uncover new knowledge, teaching methods or vocal techniques.

Post-Positivism

Post-Positivism (PP) addresses the limitations of Positivism by incorporating situational context, natural settings and discovery (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017). Developed partly in response to the dominance of Constructivism in education research, it posits that reality is uncertain and complete objectivity is unattainable (Pretorius, 2024). Unlike strict Positivism, PP seeks to falsify hypotheses, considering those that are not falsified as probable truths (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Ryan, 2018). Panhwar, Ansari & Shah (2017) argue that it strikes a balance between positive and interpretive approaches, making it ideal for educational research and offering a more “scientific” alternative to the predominance of qualitative methods.

Advantages for VPR

Panhwar, Ansari and Shah (2017) suggest several benefits of a PP paradigm which support its application in VPR studies:

- Reduces researcher bias.
- Enhances reliability.
- Employs flexible methods (primarily quantitative, but with qualitative reinforcement).
- Acknowledges subjectivity.
- Enables innovative triangulation.
- Research can be conducted in natural environments.
- Promotes exploration from multiple perspectives.
- Generates recommendations for further research.

Interpretivism/Constructivism

Interpretivism, particularly in social sciences, challenges Positivism and quantitative methods (Hammersley, 2013). It views truth and knowledge as subjective and only partially known, shaped by individual interpretation and influenced by culture, history, experiences, values and understanding (Ryan, 2018; Pretorius, 2024).

Constructivism, similar yet distinct, asserts that reality is constructed, filtered through subjective lenses, and allows for multiple, simultaneous interpretations by individuals (Hammersley, 2013; Pretorius, 2024). In this paradigm, both researcher and subject co-create findings as the research unfolds (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Interpretivism and *Constructivism* typically use smaller, non-generalisable samples and employ qualitative methods (Ryan, 2018; Sol and Heng, 2022). By acknowledging subjectivity, research can be enhanced to gain a deeper understanding of complex social phenomena (Pretorius 2024).

Benefits and Limitations for VPR

There are several benefits which make Interpretivism and Constructivism particularly appropriate for VPR research, but there are also limitations:

Advantages	• Honours the individuality of teachers, students and audiences, respecting participants’ voices. • Fosters empathy and understanding. • Considers emotions, motivations, and subtle cues. • Accounts for the influence of social, cultural and historical experiences on individual perceptions. • Aligns with student-centred, holistic, and personalized teaching. • Recognises language as a research method. • Encourages collaboration between practitioners, researchers, and students in co-creating knowledge. • Encourages practitioner/researcher and participant reflexivity.
Disadvantages	• Potential for bias and subjective interpretation of results. • Challenges in replicating findings. • Research may be influenced by researcher’s perspective. • Findings may lack generalizability, limiting practical applications.

Table 1. Benefits and Limitations of Interpretivism/Constructivism (Ryan, 2018; Ahmad et al., 2019; Sol and Heng, 2022; Pretorius, 2024).

Mixed Paradigms

Bracken (2010) supports the concept of mixing paradigms, suggesting research can span a continuum from Positive to Interpretive. Cresswell (2009) concurs, suggesting tensions from mixed paradigms can foster new knowledge through opposing ideas. I propose, therefore, that combining Post-positivist/Interpretivist (PP/I) paradigms could be a particularly appropriate framework for VPR research. By applying a mixed paradigm, a detailed view of voice-related phenomena could be created. For example, qualitative data of singer/receiver or teacher/student experiences could be compared with “*scientific*” (Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017) quantitative data of physiological or acoustical changes. This approach would value the subjective, nuanced interpretations of participants, acknowledge the role of the researcher and context, while reducing bias and increasing objectivity (Gough and Madill, 2012).

LAYER 2: REASONING

Understanding inductive, deductive and abductive reasoning, how theories and conclusions emerge from data, is essential for grasping philosophical research concepts (Ryan, 2018).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2017) define the approaches as follows:

Inductive

Starts with observations, experiments and measurements to identify patterns in the data, with results subsequently leading to the development of a theory.

Deductive

Starts by identifying a theory from individual cases and works outwards to form a hypothesis.

Abductive

Starts with an observation and then forms a hypothesis. Subsequently, the most likely explanation is clarified based on the evidence.

Applications in VPR Research

The choice of which reasoning model to employ depends on the individual research question and context. Below are practical examples of how each might be practically applied in VPR studies:

Inductive

- 1) Observation: A teenage student displays a breathy tone.
- 2) Patterns: Most teenage students sing with breathy tone.
- 3) Theory: Breathiness is a characteristic of the pubescent voice.

Deductive

- 1) Theory: Facial expressions affect vocal tone.
- 2) Hypothesis: Smiling brightens vocal tone.
- 3) Test: Acoustic measurements of vocalisation while smiling or frowning.
- 4) Results: Confirm or falsify the hypothesis.

Abductive

- 1) Observation: A student sings flat.
- 2) Hypothesis: Teacher suspects causes like poor breath control, jaw tension, or fatigue.
- 3) Best explanation: After ruling out other causes, teacher concludes fatigue is the cause as student reports insomnia.

A deductive approach could be particularly useful in VPR research when seeking confirmation of the validity of specific practices. However, in more complex VPR research, an abductive approach, allowing testing of several hypotheses, could be more appropriate.

LAYER 3: METHODOLOGIES

Methodology – shaped by the paradigm, nature of the research question and data type collected – is a broad strategy for research that ensures valid, reliable results aligning with the research aims (Thakur, 2021; Scott, 2024). Three common methodologies are Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods.

Quantitative

Common in Positivist and PP paradigms, this methodology aims to identify trends and relationships between variables (McLeod, 2024). Gathering numerical, statistical and measurable data, it answers questions such as “How many?” and “How often?”. Expressed in numbers, it reduces bias and tests hypothesis and controlled variables, producing objective generalisable results from large samples (Hammersley, 2013; Gerring, 2017).

Qualitative

Qualitative research seeks to address the limitations of quantitative methodologies, which, according to Bracken (2010), often miss the socio-cultural depth of human experience. It aims to answer the questions of why and how things happen. Using flexible designs which generate and develop descriptions, it collects subjective, unstructured data (observations, interviews, recordings, diaries and drawings) from small sample sizes or case studies (Hammersley, 2013). Expressed in text, it often involves verbal analysis of data and data comparison across sources (Hammersley, 2013; Gerring, 2017).

Mixed Methods

Emerging in the mid-1990's and growing in popularity in social and behavioural sciences, Mixed Methods Research (MMR) connects qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive view of data (Creswell, 2009; Timans, Wouters & Heilbron, 2019). It allows comparisons of trends in the data with individual experiences to achieve a unified research goal (McLeod, 2024). Creswell (2009) suggests MMR supports multiple perspectives rather than just differing ones. MMR combines various methods of analysis, employing abductive reasoning of both

objective/subjective and internal/external data, thereby reflecting real world complexities (Feilzer, 2010).

Mixed Methods is often associated with a Pragmatist paradigm, which advocates for the use of the most appropriate methods, techniques and procedures, and is independent from a fixed philosophical stance (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Thakur, 2021). However, mixed methods can be applied to any paradigm, allowing researchers to avoid constraining their inquiry (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017). It is, therefore, ideally suited to my personal preference of a mixed PP/I paradigm.

LAYER 4-6: MIXED METHOD DESIGNS and METHODS

Designs

A well-considered design, developed early in the research process, can make the difference between the success or failure of a study (Congdon & Dunham, 1999). In choosing an appropriate mixed method design, conceptual and logistical factors, the research question and the context, must be considered (Congdon & Dunham, 1999; Schoonenboom and Johnson, 2017).

Mixed method designs are often complex and sometimes emergent, arising from or changing during the research process (Schoonenboom and Johnson, 2017). Cresswell (2009) and McLeod (2024) describe various possible designs: *Concurrent/Triangulation* involve collecting data simultaneously from multiple methods, thereby allowing comparisons. *Explanatory/Exploratory*, alternatively, use a sequential approach, which creates a deeper explanation or exploration of initial findings. *Embedded* on the other hand, sequentially or concurrently integrate one form of data within another. Including pretrial, trial and posttrial stages, Embedded designs aim to provide deeper understanding of a research question by linking methods across different stages. *Complex* consist of multiple stages and combines sequential and concurrent phases, often blending unconventional methods. Finally, *Convergent Parallel* design allows for simultaneous collection of various sets of qualitative and quantitative data, thereby providing a balanced perspective.

Mixed method designs, allowing balancing of nuanced qualitative with scientifically robust quantitative data and analysis, offer distinct advantages for VPR research (Monnot et al., 2004; Jamshed, 2014). Furthermore, they enable clarification of results

across different methods and tests, support comparisons, and produce deeper insights into a phenomenon (McLeod, 2024).

In the field of VPR research, *Explanatory or Exploratory Sequential* design could be successfully employed under a PP/I paradigm. For example, studying the effects of facial expressions, quantitative acoustical data could be compared with qualitative decoder self-reports. Conversely, encoder experiences could inform causal interpretation of acoustical changes.

Methods

Research methods must align with research goals, context and overall methodology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Hammersley, 2013). Selecting methods, however, often involves trade-offs between ideal approaches and practical limitations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017).

In my field of vocal and communication research, quantitative methods are often employed for data collection and analysis. Perhaps, preferred by researchers to increase reliability and validate subjective experiences (Engwall, 1983; Joshi et al., 2015) or to reduce the time and complexity involved in data collection and analysis (Scott, 2024). For example, Sundberg, Salomão & Scherer (2021) and Monnot et al (2004), choose to narrow emotion categories into fixed quantifiable categories and combine these with quantitative tools (for example flow glottograms and acoustical analyses of F_0 variations). Likewise, Baart and Vroomen (2018), researching facial expressions, employ quantitative methods of a 7-point Likert scale. This scale facilitated quantification of the emotional valence continuum (happy to fearful) with neutral forming the middle of the scale between two extremes (Joshi et al., 2015).

However, Gerring (2017, p.19) argues that while “*no qualitative observation is immune from quantification*”, something is generally lost in the process. For example, oversimplify the complexity involved in vocalising emotions would ignore psychological subtleties from singer, listener or researcher (Banse & Scherer, 1996).

Qualitative approaches, while deepening this understanding, are not without challenges. These include gaining consent, respondent difficulty in expressing their perceptions, over generalisation of results, researcher influence, and the duration and complexity of data collection and analysis (Engwall, 1983).

A mixed methods approach could, therefore, provide some solutions and enhance VPR research under a PP/I paradigm. Quantitative data, using methods such as: tests,

questionnaires, surveys, structured observations, experiments or biological measurements, could be collected (Ahmad et al., 2019; McLeod, 2024). Additionally, qualitative collection of subjective data, through observations, interviews, questionnaires/surveys (open-ended), focus groups, case studies, expert opinions, archival research, narrative inquiry, and recordings from natural settings, would enable comparisons and enrich the research (Saunders, Lewis, Tornhill, 2024; Ahmad et al., 2019; Thakur, 2021; McLeod, 2024).

Questionnaires and Surveys

Questionnaires, as noted by Roopa and Rani (2012), are useful for gathering individual opinions from a broad sample, but they must be carefully designed to avoid misunderstandings. Questions should follow a logical order, beginning with general inquiries and moving towards more personal ones, and in quantitative surveys must employ appropriate scaling. Different types of questions include *Closed-ended* (limited set of responses), *Open-ended* (where respondent answers freely in their own words), *Matrix* (same responses for several questions), or *Contingency/Cascade* (where the respondent only answers if the previous response was positive). A mix of open- and closed-ended questions, followed by text analysis, could provide deeper insights in VPR studies (Jamshed, 2014).

A survey, which can include questionnaires, aims to collect information from large samples (Glasgow, 2005). Engwall (1983) distinguishes between *Highly structured* surveys, which provide reliable data with predetermined questions, and *Unstructured* surveys, which collect more unexpected information but may sacrifice reliability. To increase reliability responses can be divided and quantified, however, this strategy may overlook the whole picture (Engwall, 1983). In VPR research, where subjective experiences are valued, Unstructured surveys would provide nuanced results, but this would have to be carefully planned to ensure manageability of data collection and analysis (Scott, 2024). Ideally a survey would be refined after a pilot study was conducted prior to large-scale research (Glasgow, 2005).

Interviews

Interviews are widely used method for qualitative data collection and can be either *Unstructured* (allowing the respondent to freely express themselves) or *Semi-structured* (using preset open-ended questions but guided by interviewer) (Jamshed, 2014). The detailed qualitative data recorded helps understand the experiences of participants

(Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Accuracy and objectivity of data can be increased by recording the process (Jamshed, 2014).

Observations

Observations can provide valuable insights into feelings and experiences, helping to confirm or clarify findings (Jamshed, 2014). There are two different types: *Structured* focused on recording specific physical and/or verbal behaviours or *Unstructured* where the researcher is open to unexpected observations allowing for context and collaboration (Mulhall, 2003). Structured observations promote objectivity (Mulhall, 2003) and could therefore be attractive in a PP/I paradigm. Once again, recording the process will increase reliability of data (Jamshed, 2014).

ETHICS

Ethics, stemming from the Greek word *ethos* (meaning character or custom), is central to research design and aims to ensure the protection of participants, non-participants, and researchers (Reese and Fremouw, 1984; Asiedu et al., 2021). Shaped by societal values (Reese and Fremouw, 1984), it questions whether research is morally justifiable, and its benefits outweigh potential harms (Lincoln and Guba, 1989). Researchers must balance potential benefits against risks to individuals, communities and society (Baumrind, 1985; Lincoln and Guba, 1989; Asiedu et al., 2021).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1989), unethical research can cause psychological or physical harm, stress or loss of rights. In VPR, where teachers act as student models, and trust and loyalty are essential, ethical considerations are particularly important (Baumrind, 1985). Furthermore, the close interpersonal nature of this relationship, often lacking built-in protections, creates unique risks for both researcher and participant including, potential physical, verbal, or psychological harm (Asiedu et al., 2021; Lincoln and Guba, 1989).

Approval from an Institutional Review Boards is mandatory before starting research. However, researchers' ethical responsibilities extend beyond approval, continuing throughout the study to how results are presented, applied and feedback/debriefing given (Asiedu et al., 2021).

Often legally protected, ethical considerations involving data integrity, the prevention of unethical practices, and the protection of human rights (Reese and Fremouw, 1984) include:

- Obtaining informed consent.
- Informing of and ensuring participants' right to withdraw.
- Safeguarding data storage.
- Protection of personal data.
- Preventing harmful procedures or depriving groups of beneficial interventions.
- Avoiding the objectification of participants.
- Minimising deception.
- Protecting trust relationships.
- Deciding on data inclusion/exclusion.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest from funding bodies, employer or researcher personal interests.
- Protecting researcher reputation, and professional relationships.

(Keller, 1983; Reese and Fremouw, 1984; Baumrind, 1985; Lincoln and Guba, 1989; Asiedu et al., 2021). (See *Appendix, table 1.*)

INSIDER RESEARCH

As a practitioner-researcher, I work in various environments – schools, a voice studio and as president of an association – each with different roles and status. In all I belong to a group of participants and colleagues. Research in this type of setting is called *Insider Research*, and is defined by Kanuha (2000, p. 439) as “*Research in which scholars conduct studies with populations, communities and identity groups of which they are also members*”. This is opposed to *Outsider Research*, where researchers are not part of the group being studied. Some researchers argue, however, that these labels can represent a fluid continuum rather than a strict dichotomy, shifting based on the research context (Breen, 2007; Mercer, 2007).

In recent years, there has been a rise of small-scale practitioner research in education, aimed at improving practices and benefiting the workplace or community (Costley and Gibbs, 2006; Mercer, 2007). However, Insider research has both advantages and disadvantages. Mercer (2007, p. 3), however, argues it is a “*double-edged sword*”, where “*what is lost on swings is more than compensated for on roundabouts*”.

Benefits
• Easy access and no travel required. • Flexible scheduling for interviews. • Blends in with the group. • Established rapport encourages openness. • Natural interaction & deep cultural/contextual understanding. • Insight into cultural/political dynamics. • Avoids culture shock. • Access to privileged information. • Minimal social disruption. • Efficient data collection. • Supports collaborative research.
Limitations
• Loss of objectivity and potential bias. • Risk to confidentiality and sensitivity. • Intrusiveness. • Organisational ethical constraints. • Conflicts of interest between researcher and stakeholders. • Balancing insider and researcher roles. • Assumptions complicating data interpretation. • Influence of shared background on interpretation. • Preconceived notions about researcher and research. • Power imbalances, especially with vulnerable subjects. • Limited disclosure due to fear of judgment. • Concerns over objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity.

Table 2. Benefits and limitations of Insider research

(Kanuha, 2000; Bonner and Tolhurst, 2002; Costley and Gibbs, 2006; Breen, 2007; Mercer, 2007; Saidin, 2016).

Ethics is crucial to Insider research and researchers must evaluate how their projects align with the interests of the organisation, profession, or their own (Costley and Gibbs, 2006; Mercer, 2007). Furthermore, Insider researchers must decide how much to disclose to colleagues before and after the study while maintaining objectivity and avoiding misuse of data within the organisation (Mercer, 2007). Costley and Gibbs (2006) advocate for an ethics of care, involving constant reflexivity, to balance caring and knowledge. As the role of the Insider research extends beyond the typical researcher-subject relationship, power imbalances and prevention of exploitation should be addressed (Gibbs, 2004; Costley and Gibbs, 2006).

To mitigate disadvantages, Mercer (2007) suggests improving data collection by avoiding sharing personal opinions or experiences and using structured or semi-structured interviews to minimise bias. Kanuha (2000) recommends separating the researcher's perspective from the participants' and probing for clarification when participants omit information assuming the researcher already knows.

CONCLUSION

When preparing and conducting my own VPR studies within a complex work-based setting, I will be guided by the *Research Onion* model (Saunders, Lewis, Tornhill, 2007). This will support the execution and planning of quality research which contributes to the development of knowledge in my field and safeguards the integrity of the field of vocal pedagogy.

Adopting a PP/I paradigm will enable me to subtly research phenomenon, considering participant/researcher roles, and the influence of context on results while remaining "scientific" and producing valid, rigorous, repeatable and unbiased results (Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017). Currently, I plan to employ a mixed methods methodology, deductive or abductive reasoning and an Exploratory or Explanatory Sequential design. To efficiently manage this research process, further personal research is required into methods of data collection analysis.

Additionally, I will carefully consider the implications of ethics and the advantages and challenges of Insider research. Employing reflexivity throughout the process, I will ensure that my research minimises harm to participants, myself as researcher, the university, the organisation in which I work, and the communities to which I belong.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, S., Wasim, S., Irfan, S., Gogoi, S., Srivastava, A., Farheen, Z. (2019) 'Qualitative v/s. quantitative research- A summarized review', *Journal of Evidence Based Medicine and Healthcare*, 6, pp.2828–2832. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.18410/jebmh/2019/587>
- Asiedu, E., Karlan, D., Lambon-Quayefio, M., Udry, C. (2021) 'A call for structured ethics appendices in social science papers', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences U.S.A.*, 118 (29) e2024570118. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2024570118>
- Baart, M., Vroomen, J. (2018) 'Recalibration of vocal affect by a dynamic face', *Experimental Brain Research*, 236, pp. 1911-1918. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00221-018-5270-y>
- Banse, R., & Scherer, K. R. (1996) 'Acoustic profiles in vocal emotion expression', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(3), pp. 614–636. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.3.614>
- Baumrind, D. (1985) 'Research using intentional deception: Ethical issues revisited', *American Psychologist*, 40(2), pp. 165–174. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.40.2.165>
- Berkovich, I. (2018) 'Beyond qualitative/quantitative structuralism: the positivist qualitative research and the paradigmatic disclaimer'. *Qualitative Quantitative*, 52, 2063–2077 (2018). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0607-3>
- Bonner, A., Tolhurst, G. (2002) 'Insider-outsider perspectives of participant observation', *Nurse Researcher*, 9, pp. 7–19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2002.07.9.4.7.c6194>
- Bracken, S. (2010) 'Discussing the importance of ontology and epistemology awareness in practitioner research', *Education and Philosophy*, (July). Available at: <https://rte.worcester.wp.worc.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/brackenpractitionerresearch.pdf> (Accessed: 23 December 2024)
- Breen, L.J., (2007) 'The researcher 'in the middle': Negotiating the insider/outsider dichotomy', *Special Edition Papers*, 19(1), pp. 163-174. Available at: [http://groups.psychology.org.au/assets/files/acp_19\(1\)-incomplete.pdf#page=154](http://groups.psychology.org.au/assets/files/acp_19(1)-incomplete.pdf#page=154) (Accessed: 26 December 2024)

- Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016) 'Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework'. *Qualitative Report*, 21(5). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2337>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K. (2017) *Research methods in education*. 8th edn. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539>
- Cogdon, J.D, Dunham, AE (1999) 'Defining the Beginning: The Importance of Research Design'. Research and Management Techniques for the Conservation of Sea Turtles, *IUCN/SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group Publication* , 4. Available at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e4c290978d00820618e0944/t/5e503455f0e85a5f4784d69f/1582314581999/14-defining-the-beginning.pdf> (Accessed: 04 January 2025)
- Costley, C., Gibbs, P. (2006) 'Researching others: care as an ethic for practitioner researchers', *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(1), pp. 89–98. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070500392375>
- Creswell, J.W. (2009) 'Editorial: Mapping the field of mixed methods research', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3(2), pp. 95–108. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689808330883>
- Creswell, J.W (2009) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 3rd edn. Los Angeles: Sage. Available at: https://www.ucg.ac.me/skladiste/blog_609332/objava_105202/fajlovi/Creswell.pdf (Accessed: 02 January 2025)
- Engwall, L. (1983) 'Research note: Linguistic analysis of an open-ended questionnaire in an organizational study', *Organization Studies*, 4(3), pp. 261–270. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/017084068300400304>
- Feilzer, M.Y. (2010) 'Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 4(1), pp. 6-16. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689809349691>
- Gerring, J. (2017) 'Qualitative Methods', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20, pp.15–36. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-092415-024158>
- Glasow, P.A. (2005) *Fundamentals of survey research methodology*, Virginia: Mitre. Available at: https://www.mitre.org/sites/default/files/pdf/05_0638.pdf (Accessed: 04 January 2025)

- Gibbs, P. (2004) 'The exploitative nature of work-based studies: a sketch of an idea', *Journal of Education and Work*, 17(4), pp. 467-477. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363908042000292047>
- Gough, B., & Madill, A. (2012) 'Subjectivity in psychological science: From problem to prospect', *Psychological Methods*, 17(3), pp. 374-384. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029313>
- Guba, E.G., Lincoln, Y.S. (1994) 'Chapter 6: Competing paradigms in qualitative research', in N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, California: Sage Publications Inc, pp. 105-117. Available at: <https://ethnographyworkshop.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/guba-lincoln-1994-competing-paradigms-in-qualitative-research-handbook-of-qualitative-research.pdf> (Accessed: 22 December 2024)
- Hammersley, M. (2013) *Methodological philosophies*, in: What Is Qualitative Research? London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 21-46. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781849666084.ch-002>
- Harper, D. (n.d.), *Etymonline, Ontology*. Available at: <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=ontology> (Accessed: 22 December 2024)
- Jamshed, S. (2014) 'Qualitative research method-interviewing and observation', *Journal of Basic and Clinical Pharmacy*, 5(4), pp. 87-8. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4103/0976-0105.141942>
- Joshi, A., Kale, S., Chandel, S., Pal, D. (2015) 'Likert scale: Explored and explained', *Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, 7(4), pp. 396-403. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9734/BJAST/2015/14975>
- Kanuha, V.K. (2000) "Being" Native versus "Going Native": Conducting Social Work Research as an Insider'. *Social Work*, 45(5), pp.439-447. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/45.5.439>
- Keller, E.F. (1983) 'Feminism as an analytic tool for the study of science' *Academe*, 69(5), pp. 15-21. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/40249060>
- Lincoln, Y.S., Guba, E.G. (1989) 'Ethics: The failure of positivist science', *The Review of Higher Education*. 12(3), pp. 221-240. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.1989.0017>
- Lin, A.C. (1998) 'Bridging positivist and interpretivist approaches to qualitative methods', *Policy Studies Journal*, 26, pp. 162-180. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.1998.tb01931.x>

- Mackenzie, N., Knipe, S. (2006) 'Research dilemmas: paradigms, methods and methodology', *Issues in Educational Research*, 16(2), pp.193-205. Available at: <http://www.iier.org.au/iier16/mackenzie.html> (Accessed: 22 December 2024)
- McLeod, S. (2024) *Mixed methods research guide with examples*, Simply Psychology. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/mixed-methods-research.html> (Accessed: 02 January 2025)
- Melnikovas, A. (2018) 'Towards an explicit research methodology: Adapting research onion model for futures studies', *Journal of Futures Studies*, 23(2), pp. 29–44. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.6531/JFS.201812_23\(2\).0003](https://doi.org/10.6531/JFS.201812_23(2).0003)
- Mercer, J. (2007) 'The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas', *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(1), pp.1–17. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980601094651>
- Monnot, M., Orbelo, D., Riccardo, L., Sikka, S., Rossa, E. (2004) 'Acoustic analyses support subjective judgments of vocal emotion', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1000(1), pp. 288–292. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1280.027>
- Mulhall, A. (2003) 'In the field: notes on observation in qualitative research', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 41(3), pp.306–313. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2003.02514.x>
- Muñoz Celina, (2014) 'The plague, the poor, and the problem of medicine' (Western Libraries Undergraduate Research Award. 2. Western Washington University. Available at: https://cedar.wvu.edu/library_researchaward/2 (Accessed: 09 January 2025)
- Näslund, D., Kale, R., Paulraj, A. (2010) 'Action research in supply chain management – A framework for relevant and rigorous research', *Journal of Business Logistics*, 31(2), pp. 331–355. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2158-1592.2010.tb00155.x>.
- Panhwar, A.H., Ansari, S., Shah, A.A. (2017) 'Post-positivism: an effective paradigm for social and educational research', *International Research Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 45(45) p253-259. Available at: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2044301228?sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals> (Accessed: 22 December 2024)
- Pretorius, L. (2024) 'Demystifying research paradigms: Navigating ontology, epistemology, and axiology in research', *The Qualitative Report*, 29(10), pp. 2698-2715. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2024.7632>

- Reese, H. W., & Fremouw, W. J. (1984) 'Normal and normative ethics in behavioral sciences', *American Psychologist*, 39(8), pp. 863–876. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.39.8.863>
- Roopa, S., Rani, M. (2012) 'Questionnaire designing for a survey', *Journal of Indian Orthodontic Society*, 46(4), pp. 273–277. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5005/jp-journals-10021-1104>
- Ryan, G. (2018) 'Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory', *Nurse Researcher*, 25(4), pp. 14–20. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.2018.e1466>
- Saidin, K. (2016) 'Insider researchers: challenges and opportunities', *Proceedings of The ICECRS International Seminar on Generating Knowledge Through Research*, ISSN. 2548-6160. Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia. 25-27 October. 1, pp. 849-854. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21070/picecrs.v1i1.563>
- Salzman, P.C. (2002) 'On reflexivity', *American anthropologist*, 104, pp. 805–811. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2002.104.3.805>
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Tornhill, A. (2024) *Research Methods for Business Students*, 9th edn. United Kingdom: Pearson Education Ltd. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240218229_Research_Methods_for_Business_Students (Accessed: 22 December 2024)
- Schoonenboom, J., Johnson, R.B. (2017) 'How to construct a mixed methods research design', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 69, pp.107–131. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-017-0454-1>
- Scott, S. (2024) 'Insights, considerations, and suggestions for the practitioner-researcher in voice studies', *Voice Speech Review*, 18(2), pp. 146–165. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2022.2137972>
- Sol, K., Heng, K. (2022) 'Understanding epistemology and its key approaches in research', *Cambodian Journal of Educational Research*, 2(2), pp. 80–99. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.62037/cjer.2022.02.02.05>
- Sundberg, J., Salomão, G.L., Scherer, K.R. (2021) 'Analyzing emotion expression in singing via flow glottograms, long-term-average spectra, and expert listener evaluation', *Journal of Voice*, 35(1), pp. 52–60. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2019.08.007>

Tengli, M.B. (2020) 'Research onion: A systematic approach to designing research methodology', *Agricultural Extension in South Asia*, 123 August. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357284560_RESEARCH_ONION_A_SYSTEMATIC_APPROACH_TO_DESIGNING_RESEARCH_METHODODOLOGY (Accessed: 09 January 2024)

Thakur, H.K. (2021) *Research methodology in social sciences*, New Dehli: Corvette Press, Chapter 1, pp. 1-18. Available at: <https://www.studocu.com/row/document/pan-african-university/research-methodology/resaearch-design/78686856> (Accessed: 02 January 2024)

Timans, R., Wouters, P., Heilbron, J. (2019) 'Mixed methods research: what it is and what it could be', *Theory Society*, 48, pp. 193–216. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-019-09345-5>

Watt, D. (2015) 'On becoming a qualitative researcher: The value of reflexivity', *The Qualitative Report*, 12(1), pp. 82-101. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2007.1645>

APPENDICES

Glossary of Acronyms

VPR	Voice-related practitioner-research
MMR	Mixed methods research
PP	Post-positivist/ism paradigm
PP/I	Post-positivist/Interpretivist mixed paradigm

Tables

<i>Informed Consent</i>	Obtaining informed consent involves ensuring that participants have been fully informed of the study's purpose, risks, and benefits prior to participating. For children, legal consent must be provided by their parents or guardians; however, parental permission is not the same as consent. Therefore, children should still be consulted and their assent sought whenever possible to respect their autonomy (Reese and Fremouw, 1984).
<i>Right to withdrawal</i>	Participants must be made aware of their right to withdraw from the study without facing consequences at any time. This includes the right to withdraw their data. Clear communication about the withdrawal process is essential to uphold this right (Reese and Fremouw, 1984).
<i>Privacy, Anonymity, and Confidentiality</i>	Protecting participants' privacy is a fundamental responsibility of researchers and their teams (Asiedu et al., 2021). Protocols must be in place to ensure data is managed, stored, and protected responsibly, and used exclusively for the study (Reese and Fremouw, 1984). Even when participants waive certain rights to confidentiality, efforts must be made to safeguard their privacy as much as possible (Lincoln and Guba, 1989). Poor data management or breaches of confidentiality can have far-reaching consequences, affecting not just the participant but also their family (Asiedu et al., 2021).
<i>Avoiding Harmful Procedures</i>	Researchers must avoid any procedures that could cause physical or psychological harm to participants (Reese and Fremouw, 1984).

Avoiding Objectification of Participants	Depersonalizing or devaluing participants should be avoided. Instead, researchers should treat participants with respect, recognizing them as active contributors with dignity and autonomy (Keller, 1983; Baumrind, 1985). Reese and Fremouw (1984) advocate for using the term “participant” instead of “subject” to foster mutual respect. Lincoln and Guba (1989, p. 26) emphasize building a collaborative relationship based on <i>"mutual exchange, preservation of human dignity, privacy and confidentiality, and joint negotiation of research purposes, strategies, and interventions"</i>. Additionally, participants should have a voice in the interpretation and sharing of the results. Researchers must be aware that potential harm can extend beyond physical injury to include psychological stress, loss of trust, and erosion of autonomy (Lincoln and Guba, 1989).
Avoiding deception	Deception, defined as <i>"the deliberate withholding of information or misinforming about important details"</i> (Reese and Fremouw, 1984, p. 866), should be avoided due to its potential to violate participants' rights to informed consent and autonomy. Guba and Lincoln (1994) warn that the social, personal, and professional costs of deception can be significant. While deception is sometimes used to prevent bias, obtain realistic responses, or create uniform experiences, it must only be employed when absolutely necessary and with the participants' agreement to be fully debriefed later (Lincoln and Guba, 1989). Researchers are responsible for detecting and alleviating any resulting stress and must provide debriefing sessions to help participants process their experience (Baumrind, 1985). Participants must also retain the right to withdraw their data after learning the true nature of the study (Reese and Fremouw, 1984).

Table 1, Ethical Concerns in Detail.

