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CRITICAL EVALUATION OF  
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES,  
RESEARCH DESIGNS, AND METHODS FOR  
DATA COLLECTION IN COMPLEX WORK-  
BASED SETTINGS WITH ETHICAL AND  
INSIDER RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

In this assignment, I will critically evaluate a range of methodologies, research designs, and methods within the context of voice-related work-based research. I will explore their relevance and applicability to voice work settings by examining quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies. While acknowledging the value of quantitative and mixed methods, this study places a premium on qualitative approaches, which are seen to offer rich insights into the nuanced, subjective experiences of voice research (Goffman, 1967; Burnard et al., 2008; Dodgson, 2017; Omodan, 2022; Scott, 2022; Forbes, 2024). These insights will ultimately inform the foundation of my future studies. I will outline the need for a personal research paradigm, considering the epistemological and ontological perspectives influencing the research process. Specifically, I will examine interpretivism, positivism, and post-positivism, assessing their value in shaping meaningful and contextually relevant research.

The objective of the assignment is to evaluate fundamental research designs and methodologies, emphasising the significance of aligning methodologies, methods, and outcomes to ensure coherence. Research ethics, including issues specific to insider research, will be defined and discussed, focusing on challenges such as maintaining objectivity, confidentiality, and informed consent in work-based contexts.

Research is a process that requires a balance between structured planning and adaptability, wherein paradigms significantly influence the approach and interpretation of phenomena (Singh, 2019; Scott, 2022). For vocal practitioners, research connects artistic practice with scientific inquiry, often challenging arts-led practitioners who lack formal academic training (Scott, 2022). Engaging with evidence-based methods, voice anatomy, and acoustics refines teaching practices, addresses misinformation, and meets diverse student needs (Callaghan, 2014; Oram, 2015; Ecker et al., 2011). Practitioner research fosters self-awareness, professional growth, and collaboration, enhancing pedagogy and ensuring relevance in an ever-evolving discipline (Lewandowsky et al., 2020; Sansom, 2017). Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods each offer distinct advantages and drawbacks (Ponterotto, 2005). Quantitative research, aligned with positivism,

uses numerical data, large-scale sampling, and statistical analysis to explore causal relationships (Cacioppo et al., 2004; Ponterotto, 2005). Qualitative methods, rooted in constructivist paradigms, emphasise understanding human experiences in context using interviews, observations, and thematic analysis (Scott, 2022). Mixed methods combine quantitative and qualitative approaches, offering a more comprehensive perspective, though they require significant resources (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

As a vocal coach specialising in contemporary singing and worship styles, I aim to develop a research approach that aligns with my professional context. This involves identifying opportunities to investigate and improve pedagogical practices and performance outcomes through a deeper understanding of research paradigms and methodologies. Ultimately, this assignment aims to develop a critical awareness of the key issues involved in conducting research in work-based settings, offering a reflective and structured foundation for future inquiry.

## 2. PARADIGMS AND OVERARCHING METHODOLOGIES

Research paradigms, initially introduced by Kuhn (1962), are frameworks of assumptions that influence a researcher's worldview and methodological decisions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Guided by ontology (beliefs about reality), epistemology (ways of knowing), and axiology (values that shape research), paradigms help define the nature of knowledge, its acquisition, and the ethical implications involved (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2015; Redman-MacLaren & Mills, 2015). A researcher's worldview influences their positionality, the scope of inquiry, and the chosen methods, thus shaping both the process and the outcomes (Annells, 1996; Kovach, 2009). Explicitly articulating these assumptions helps clarify how frameworks inform the approach (Clarke, 2009).

Researchers' ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions shape how they design studies, collect data, and interpret findings (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2015; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Siddiqui, 2019). These assumptions influence what is considered valid evidence and guide how researchers interact with participants. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and transparency, ensure fairness and participant well-being (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This positionality directly affects research by informing methodological decisions, influencing data analysis, and guiding how power dynamics are addressed. It also determines which perspectives are prioritised, how findings are interpreted, and the extent to which researcher bias is recognised and managed.

Understanding paradigms and their constructs allows researchers to navigate complex inquiries more effectively, generating rigorous, meaningful knowledge. Reflexivity is crucial for researchers to examine how their assumptions, paradigms, and values shape research and sustain perspective (Scott, 2022). Neglecting reflexivity can lead to biases, unreflective choices, and compromised findings (Biedenbach & Jacobsson, 2016). Reflexivity requires an ongoing awareness of underlying frameworks for transparent, ethical, and rigorously grounded inquiry (Biedenbach & Jacobsson, 2016). For example, in voice pedagogy research, a researcher's personal beliefs about "correct" vocal technique might influence how they interpret participants' vocal performance. Reflexivity allows the researcher to

recognise and account for these biases, ensuring that diverse vocal styles and techniques are valued and represented fairly in the analysis (Biedenbach & Jacobsson, 2016; Scott, 2022).

Positivism, post-positivism, and interpretivism offer distinct ontological, epistemological, and axiological stances, presenting both strengths and limitations.

### **Ontological Perspectives**

Positivism adheres to a naïve realist ontology, positing that reality exists independently of perception and can be observed through empirical observation (Scotland, 2012; Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). This paradigm emphasizes replicable, generalizable findings through controlled, quantitative methods. However, it struggles with addressing the complexities of human experience in socially nuanced contexts (Giddings & Grant, 2007; Walker, 2021). Post-positivism refines this view with a critical realist ontology, acknowledging that reality exists but is influenced by the observer's interpretation (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Post-positivists believe that reality can never be fully understood due to the limits of human cognition. Interpretivism, grounded in a relativist ontology, asserts that multiple socially constructed realities exist (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2015). This view allows for a more nuanced understanding of human interactions, though it carries the risk of subjectivity bias resulting from researcher immersion (Mertens, 2005).

### **Epistemological Positions**

Positivism stresses objectivism, asserting that researchers must remain detached to uncover universal truths through systematic observation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Ponterotto, 2005). While this ensures replicability, it overlooks psychosocial factors and contextual nuances, making it less suitable for research involving human behaviours in complex settings (Baker, 2017). Post-positivism incorporates reflexivity into the objective stance, improving adaptability while retaining empirical foundations (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Scott, 2022). In contrast, interpretivism adopts a subjectivist, transactional epistemology, co-creating knowledge through interactions between researchers and participants (Schwandt, 2000; Maulana et al., 2022). While inspired by Husserl's phenomenology, interpretivism requires careful navigation of researcher bias (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

## **Axiological Implications**

Positivism pursues value neutrality, striving to eliminate the researcher's beliefs to ensure impartiality (Ponterotto, 2005). While supporting objectivity, it limits the researcher's engagement with societal and ethical nuances (Corry et al., 2019). Post-positivism introduces ethical reflexivity, balancing objectivity with subjectivity and ensuring ethical transparency (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Interpretivism embraces the value-laden nature of research, recognizing subjective insights as central to knowledge creation (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). However, it risks personal biases influencing the outcomes (Savin-Baden & Fisher, 2002).

## **Evaluation of Research Approaches**

Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods each offer distinct benefits and challenges in research, including voice pedagogy. Quantitative methods, aligned with positivism, provide objective data, useful for measuring vocal performance aspects. However, they may overlook the nuanced, subjective experiences of vocal training (Scott, 2022). Qualitative approaches, which focus on understanding personal experiences through interviews and observations, offer deeper insights into teaching methods and vocal identity but can be difficult to analyse and may not be easily generalisable (Burnard et al., 2008; Scott, 2022).

Mixed methods offer additional versatility by combining the strengths of both paradigms while understanding one's paradigm ensures methodological coherence and robust knowledge contributions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). While this approach enhances the depth of research, it requires more resources in terms of time and personnel (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Shorten & Smith, 2017; Scott, 2022). Despite its advantages, mixed methods can be impractical in some settings due to the additional demands on researchers (Somekh & Lewin, 2005; Scott, 2022). The choice of method should be guided by the specific research question and the need to balance objective measurements with subjective insights (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Scott, 2022).

## **Application to Vocal Coaching**

For vocal coaches, qualitative research is especially valuable for exploring singers' complex experiences, including learning processes, emotional states, and

performance dynamics (Omodan, 2022; Forbes, 2024). The multifaceted nature of singing, encompassing physical, psychological, and emotional dimensions, renders qualitative methods particularly efficacious in capturing these complexities (Burnard et al., 2008; Scott, 2022). While quantitative methods are crucial in assessing the physical aspects of vocal performance, such as vocal range, qualitative methods allow for a deeper exploration of personal experiences, emotions, and artistic expression (Omodan, 2022; Forbes, 2024). For instance, Waters (2023) utilised life history interviews to explore hormonal changes experienced by professional dramatic sopranos, illustrating how qualitative methods can reveal the embodied and psychological dimensions of vocal performance that extend beyond physical measurements. Constructivist and interpretivist paradigms, which emphasise subjective experience and co-created knowledge, align with these methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Singh, 2019). Research in the field of vocal coaching frequently concentrates on personal development, artistic expression, and performance, which are all fundamental components of the practice (Forbes, 2024; Omodan, 2022). The adaptability inherent in qualitative methods allows for flexible data collection and analysis as new insights emerge, thereby fostering a more profound understanding (Burnard et al., 2008).

### 3. RESEARCH DESIGNS: METHODOLOGIES

A methodology refers to the overarching framework and approach that guides a research study, shaping how the research will be conducted and analysed (Scott, 2022; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It involves selecting specific research strategies based on the nature of the research question and the philosophical assumptions about the world (Scott, 2022; Ponterotto, 2005; Forbes, 2024). A methodology provides the rationale for using specific data collection and analysis methods, ensuring the study remains focused and aligned with the researcher's objectives (Sloan & Bowe, 2014; Dodgson, 2017; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

In qualitative research, different methodologies offer distinct ways of engaging with human experiences, significantly influencing data interpretation (Ugwu, Ekere, & Onoh, 2021; Forbes, 2024). Three widely used methodologies—descriptive phenomenology, hermeneutics, and generic qualitative inquiry—differ in their philosophical underpinnings and approaches, offering unique insights into human experiences (Sloan & Bowe, 2014; Dodgson, 2017; Scott, 2022).

| Methodology                      | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                          | Strengths                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Weaknesses                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Descriptive Phenomenology</b> | Grounded in Edmund Husserl's philosophy, this approach seeks to describe the essence of lived experiences by capturing phenomena as they appear to individuals (Sloan & Bowe, 2014; Dodgson, 2017). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provides detailed descriptions of lived experiences</li><li>- Uncovers common themes in participants' experiences</li><li>- Minimizes researcher bias through</li></ul> | Requires bracketing to minimise researcher bias, which may be difficult to fully achieve (Smith et al., 2009). |

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | bracketing<br>(Creswell,<br>2007).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Hermeneutic<br/>Phenomenology</b>       | Inspired by Heidegger and Gadamer, emphasises interpretation and meaning-making, acknowledging both the participant's lived experiences and the researcher's role in interpreting them (Lavery, 2003; Sloan & Bowe, 2014). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhances understanding of meaning-making and relational aspects of lived experiences (Paterson &amp; Higgs, 2005; Scott, 2022).</li> <li>- It recognises the reflexive nature of research, ensuring researcher bias is acknowledged and incorporated (Paterson &amp; Higgs, 2005; Scott, 2022).</li> </ul> | Relies on researcher interpretation which introduces potential biases (Lavery, 2003; Sloan & Bowe, 2014).                                                            |
| <b>Generic<br/>Qualitative<br/>Inquiry</b> | A general approach used when specialised methodologies, like phenomenology, are unsuitable. It explores subjective                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Useful for understanding outward reflections and real-world experiences without delving</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lacks depth in exploring internal cognitive structures or deeper meanings</li> <li>- Not suitable for uncovering</li> </ul> |

|  |                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | opinions, attitudes, and beliefs but lacks deep structural analysis (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015). | into inner cognitive or experiential processes (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015).<br>- Useful and practical for collecting opinions, attitudes, and beliefs (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015).<br>- Allows for descriptive exploration without deep structural analysis (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015). | complex, embodied experiences.<br>- Less structured, potentially leading to less rigorous analysis (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015; Dodgson, 2017). |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### Application to Voice Research:

**Descriptive Phenomenology** is particularly valuable for examining the internal, subjective nature of human experiences, such as emotions and thoughts (Creswell, 2007; Sloan & Bowe, 2014). However, the traditional approach to phenomenology demands that researchers maintain objectivity and separate their own experiences, a requirement that may not always be feasible for insider researchers in vocal pedagogy (Scott, 2022). While acknowledging these methodological concerns, recent perspectives have emphasised the value of reflexivity in acknowledging and managing insider influence, as opposed to the more radical approach of attempting to remove it entirely (Scott, 2022).

**Hermeneutic Phenomenology** is a theoretical framework that integrates interpretation, acknowledging both participant perspectives and researcher influence (Laverty, 2003; Sloan & Bowe, 2014). It is particularly relevant in vocal coaching, examining student-coach interactions and the role of feedback in vocal development (Paterson & Higgs, 2005; Scott, 2022). The hermeneutic circle fosters continuous reinterpretation of data, though this iterative process requires significant engagement with reflexivity, which may not appeal to all researchers (Scott, 2022).

**Generic Qualitative Inquiry** offers flexibility when other methodologies may not be suitable (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015). In vocal pedagogy, it can help explore students' perspectives on vocal techniques, performance practices, or pedagogical strategies. However, its descriptive nature limits the depth of analysis, as it lacks a guiding conceptual framework (Dodgson, 2017). Without established methodological guidelines, researchers must explicitly detail data collection and analysis to ensure rigour (Dodgson, 2017). The absence of a structured approach can also affect trustworthiness, making it essential to critically assess the study's reliability (Dodgson, 2017). While useful for collecting accessible data, it may lack the depth and interpretive insights needed to explore complex vocal experiences.

Each methodology has distinct strengths depending on the research aims (Sloan & Bowe, 2014; Dodgson, 2017). For vocal coaching research, descriptive phenomenology could explore students' experiences of vocal training, identifying shared meanings of learning. Hermeneutic phenomenology could interpret the interactions between students and coaches, providing insights into how these shape vocal development within cultural contexts. Generic qualitative inquiry might focus on practical aspects, such as students' views on specific techniques or practices.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

Research methods refer to the tools and techniques used to collect, analyse, and interpret data within a study (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). The overarching methodology shapes them and is essential for aligning data collection with the study's objectives (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020; Igwenagu, 2016). While methodology pertains to the design and process, methods facilitate the practical application, ensuring the study's rigour and consistency. The researcher's engagement with the data is key to deriving meaningful insights (Scott, 2022), making the selection of appropriate methods crucial for credible results.

### **Sampling Strategies**

Effective sampling is vital for ensuring valid findings, particularly in vocal coaching research, where participant diversity can significantly influence results (Kemper, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2003; Scott, 2022). The sampling method must align with the research objectives, accounting for available resources, which affect the depth of data collected (Scott, 2022). Nonprobability sampling is common in vocal coaching studies, where generalisation is not the primary aim (Scott, 2022). However, it requires careful consideration due to its subjective nature (Scott, 2022).

Purposive sampling, by selecting participants based on relevance to the study, is more appropriate for targeted research (Scott, 2022). Snowball sampling, relying on participant referrals, is useful for accessing hard-to-reach vocalists but risks respondent-driven bias, limiting diversity (Etikan, Alkassim, & Abubakar, 2015; Parker, Scott, & Geddes, 2019).

### **Interviews**

Interviews are a valuable method for exploring how vocalists perceive and interpret their experiences (Berg, 1989; Scott, 2022). Available in structured, semi-structured, and unstructured formats, they require verbatim transcription to preserve contextual nuances (Burnard et al., 2008; Scott, 2022). A structured interview utilises a predetermined set of questions meticulously arranged in a predetermined sequence, thereby ensuring consistency across interviews while concomitantly restricting flexibility (Simply Psychology, 2024). A semi-structured interview combines a set of guiding questions with the flexibility to explore topics in

greater depth (Simply Psychology, 2024). Conversely, an unstructured interview is characterised by its open-ended nature, whereby the interviewee is at liberty to direct the conversation according to their discretion. Semi-structured interviews, a cornerstone of qualitative research, balance a guiding framework with the flexibility to explore complex phenomena through open-ended questions (Forbes, 2024; Rogo, 2024).

For instance, Oakland et al. (2012) used semi-structured interviews to investigate opera choristers' vocal challenges during redundancy, revealing significant emotional and professional identity shifts (Forbes, 2024). Careful preparation, including pilot testing, is essential to ensure that questions are relevant and elicit meaningful responses (Matta, 2022). Sharing questions in advance can further improve the quality of responses. Despite their advantages, interviews can be labour-intensive, particularly during transcription and analysis (Burnard et al., 2008). Researchers must also consider cultural and situational contexts, as overly rigid frameworks may hinder authentic responses (Scott, 2022). The researcher's personal views, expectations, or interpretations may unintentionally influence the direction of the interview or the way questions are posed, which can impact the quality and objectivity of the data (Scott, 2022).

### **Surveys and Questionnaires**

Surveys and questionnaires are efficient tools for collecting large amounts of data and can enhance honesty in responses due to the anonymity they provide (Goffman, 1967). Scott (2022) highlights that participants may feel more comfortable answering without the presence of a researcher, potentially improving the accuracy of their responses. Closed-ended questions allow for structured and easily quantifiable data, making them useful for statistical analysis (Scott, 2022). Conversely, open-ended questions facilitate richer qualitative insights by allowing respondents to express their thoughts in their own words; however, as Scott (2022) also notes, the structure of surveys can influence responses, potentially limiting the amount of detail collected and introducing potential bias in the data. Additionally, while open-ended questions are valuable for qualitative research, they do not allow for real-time clarification as would be possible in an interview.

## **Observations**

Observations enable the capture of participants' behaviours in real-world settings (Ugwu, Ekere, & Onoh, 2021; Scott, 2022). Observations can be structured or unstructured, depending on the level of focus required (Bell, 2005; Scott, 2022). Structured observations follow predefined criteria, ensuring consistency in data collection, while unstructured observations allow for greater flexibility in capturing behaviours as they naturally unfold (Bell, 2005). Coding can help organise observational data, though managing and interpreting it may still be challenging (Bell, 2005). Participant observation, particularly valuable in vocal coaching, fosters rapport and deeper insight (Bailey, 1994). However, observations are subjective and can be shaped by the researcher's vested interests, so reflexivity is essential to maintain objectivity.

## **Reflexivity in Data Collection**

Reflexivity is central to qualitative research, requiring researchers to reflect on how their backgrounds and values shape interpretations (Matta, 2022). Reflexive practices, such as journaling, enhance the credibility of findings by fostering self-awareness (Forbes, 2024). Field notes document contextual details, ensuring accuracy (Dibley, 2010; Scott, 2022), though their presence may alter participant behaviour due to the Hawthorne effect (Oswald, Sherratt, & Smith, 2014; Scott, 2022). Trust-building and non-intrusive behaviour can mitigate this (Scott, 2022).

## **5. ETHICS AND INSIDER RESEARCH**

Ethics in voice pedagogy research presents several challenges due to the personal nature of the subject matter and the dual roles often held by researchers as both educators and investigators (Scott, 2022). Insider researchers who share professional or personal connections with participants must navigate the complex balance between their professional obligations and research objectives (Mercer, 2007; Scott, 2022). This duality complicates ethical considerations such as trust, objectivity, and bias (Mercer, 2007; Scott, 2022). Moreover, the emotional and physical dimensions of vocal practice, such as vocal health and performance anxiety, require ethical sensitivity to ensure participants' well-being throughout the research process (Scott, 2022).

Institutional ethical frameworks are designed to provide guidelines; however, they have been shown to overlook the complexities of real-world contexts (Warnick and Silverman, 2011). Warnick and Silverman (2011) posit that these frameworks have the potential to marginalise vulnerable groups by imposing standardised models that fail to address individual needs. Ethical perspectives vary based on lived experiences, with some emphasizing values like right or moral, and others focusing on policy or professionalism (Davies & Harre, 2001). In voice pedagogy, this diversity necessitates the establishment of flexible guidelines that uphold dignity and autonomy to address participants' varied vocal needs (Davies & Harre, 2001; Mathur & Corley, 2014). The incorporation of methods such as triangulation, peer review, and transparency is instrumental in ensuring research integrity (Schwandt et al., 2007; Scott, 2022).

### **Practical Ethical Protocols (BPS, 2018):**

- Informed Consent
- Right to Withdraw
- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Data Protection
- Risk Assessment

## **Insider Research**

Insider research, where the researcher simultaneously acts as both practitioner and investigator, introduces ethical challenges related to personal bias and potential data distortion (Scott, 2022). As Mercer (2007) contends, insider research exists on a continuum between insider and outsider perspectives, with researchers adapting their approach based on contextual factors. In the domain of voice pedagogy, the insider researcher's practical expertise and personal investment in outcomes, such as vocal performance or teaching strategies, render this balance particularly crucial. The researcher's immersion offers deeper context-specific knowledge but also raises the risk of overlooking nuances, especially with sensitive topics like vocal injuries (Mercer, 2007; Scott, 2022).

While insider researchers provide valuable insights, their embeddedness requires rigorous self-reflection to maintain objectivity (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011).

Reflexivity helps assess how personal beliefs, professional codes, and prior experiences shape research outcomes (Bullough, 2011). Mercer (2007) warns that insider familiarity can lead to assumptions distorting data interpretation, particularly when ingrained pedagogical techniques or biases influence analysis.

Maintaining continuous rapport may blur boundaries, risking data integrity, especially in voice research where embodied experience shapes interactions (Mercer, 2007). To preserve authenticity, insider researchers must establish clear ethical boundaries (Scott, 2022).

In education, teachers use the ethic of critique to challenge systemic issues (Giroux, 2003). In voice pedagogy, this includes questioning standardized techniques that may not suit all voice types. Insider researchers must balance these insights with methodological rigour, ensuring transparency and careful handling of incidental data, such as informal conversations, which require prior consent (Scott, 2022).

In conclusion, insider research in voice pedagogy provides valuable insights but also presents ethical challenges. Addressing these challenges through self-reflection, methodological rigour, and flexible ethical frameworks ensures an ethical approach, yielding rich, authentic perspectives that enhance academic understanding and pedagogy.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The research undertaken for this module has provided significant insights into the researcher's positionality, both as an educator and a researcher. This process has prompted profound reflection on the ethical dimensions of insider research, particularly in voice pedagogy, and the role of reflexivity in maintaining integrity and rigour. It is now evident that the nature of the research question should inform methodological decisions, the balance between objective and subjective insights, and the overarching research objectives (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Scott, 2022).

In the course of my research, I have come to understand that my alignment with a specific paradigm is contingent on the nature of the research and the questions being investigated. The interpretivist approach, which emphasises the co-creation of knowledge and the documentation of the complex, subjective experiences of vocal coaches and students (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), is undoubtedly of great value. It is my opinion that all of the qualitative methodologies investigated in this essay are well-suited for research in vocal pedagogy. The potential value of semi-structured interviews for gathering nuanced perspectives is also recognised (Forbes, 2024), while the use of surveys and questionnaires could be useful for broader data collection (Goffman, 1967).

This research has reinforced the significance of ethical considerations in insider research. The challenges posed by researcher bias and the necessity of reflexivity to uphold ethical integrity have become increasingly apparent (Mercer, 2007; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). The necessity of establishing clear ethical boundaries and incorporating flexible frameworks has become evident, particularly in the field of voice pedagogy (Warnick & Silverman, 2011).

In future research, it is anticipated that a deeper exploration will be undertaken into qualitative inquiry, with particular attention being paid to methodologies that are aligned with the research interests in voice pedagogy and performance. However, it is acknowledged that methodological flexibility is paramount and that the approach will be adapted based on the unique demands of each study. This research has resulted in a more profound comprehension of how reflexivity, ethical awareness, and methodological rigour are indispensable for the generation of meaningful and

impactful scholarship in voice pedagogy.

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