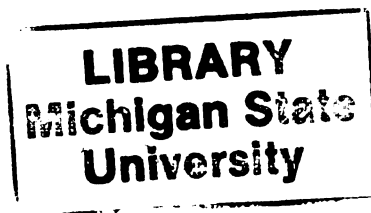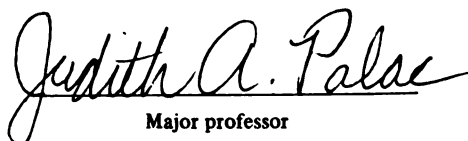This is to certify that the

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A CASE STUDY

presented by

JENNIFER MARIE PARKER

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THE MOTIVATION TECHNIQUES OF AN EXEMPLARY ORCHESTRA TEACHER:
A CASE STUDY

By

Jennifer Marie Parker

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

THE MOTIVATION TECHNIQUES OF AN EXEMPLARY ORCHESTRA TEACHER: A CASE STUDY

By

Jennifer Marie Parker

The purpose of this study was to examine the motivation techniques of one exemplary orchestra teacher. Specifically, the research questions were: (1) How does the exemplary teacher's choice of literature affect the motivation of his students? (2) How does his use of competition in the classroom affect the motivation of his students? (3) What kinds of feedback does he provide to his students? (4) How does he use class time in order to motivate his students? and (5) How does he make each of his students feel valued and respected in and out of the classroom?

A qualitative case study research design was used to document the teacher's interactions with his seventh-grade orchestra students. Data sources included: a) an audio-taped initial interview with the teacher, b) video-taped individual and group student interviews, c) video-taped classroom observations, and d) a personal journal, which the researcher used to record informal conversations and notable occurrences.

The results of the study suggested that the exemplary teacher's unique personality and genuine care for his students are the underlying formula for his success in motivating his seventh grade orchestra students. Noteworthy elements of his teaching were his lack of competition in the classroom in order to avoid student comparison, his sense of humor, and his ability to make his students feel valued and respected in and out of the classroom. Implications for music teaching and research are included in the Conclusions and Recommendations chapter.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completing this masters thesis was not a solitary endeavor; rather, this thesis was accomplished due to the assistance, dedication, encouragement, influence, self-sacrifice, and support of many persons, to whom I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude.

First and foremost, I am grateful for a supportive and loving family who have encouraged me throughout my pursuit to become a music educator. Words cannot express my gratitude for the love and support that I received from my husband Jon throughout the last three years. My parents, Leonard and Sue Ruggles, have sacrificed countless hours and given generously in order to insure that I received the best music education possible. My brothers, Brent and Jeff, have endured concerts and hours of practicing with great patience and only a minimal amount of complaining. I love you all very much!

Second, I would like to thank Dan Long for graciously allowing me to enter his classroom and delve into his teaching with interviews and observations. He welcomed me wholeheartedly and made my project enjoyable and educational. He has given me several invaluable tools that I know will be used throughout my teaching career. I would also like to express my appreciation to Dan Long's seventh grade students who participated in this study. Their honesty and candidness provided me with great support for my research.

Third, I would like to thank my advisor and mentor, Dr. Judy Palac, who has encouraged and supported me from the moment I entered Michigan State University. I am grateful for the many discussions we had and for her part in helping me to become a more effective music educator.

Fourth, I would like to express my appreciation to the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Colleen Conway and Dr. Anna Harwell Celenza. Dr. Conway sacrificed her own time to read and critique several revisions, and I am grateful for the extra advice

and guidance that she gave. I enjoyed immensely every class I took with Dr. Celenza. She is an extremely talented teacher, and I am appreciative of her role in my music education.

Finally and most importantly, I would like to thank my Creator, Who is the most perfect Creator of music and without Whom I would not have any of the talents and abilities that I do. He is my one true source of strength and without Him, I can do nothing.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The topic of motivation has become of primary interest to music educators in the past twenty years. In view of research that shows that students lose interest as they mature (Asmus, 1986), music teachers want to know what will keep their students' interest and how to help them develop into competent musicians. The ability to motivate the students in a musical ensemble and aid them in achieving success is a goal most exemplary music teachers have attained. They have discovered the key to bringing out the best in their students.

Motivation is the ability to provide incentives and motives for sustaining an activity. Because every person is motivated differently, a teacher "needs to assess each [student's] motivation and goals, and [should] adapt the teaching strategy accordingly" (Parsons, 1983, p. 37). Different theories of motivation have been proposed by several different authors.

Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory stated that motivation and achievement are influenced by students' beliefs about the causes of successes and failures in certain tasks. There are four attributions associated with this theory—two internal and two external. The internal attributions are ability and effort, and the external are task difficulty and luck. This theory has generated several studies in music through which researchers have sought to understand to what students attribute their success and failures (Asmus, 1985, 1986; Legette, 1998; Ames & Archer, 1988; Medway & Lowe, 1980).

The step-path theory (Raynor, 1982, 1983) states that motivation can be viewed in terms of early, middle, and late stages as a person goes through a series of steps in reaching a certain goal. Each stage is necessary and determines how a person is motivated to accomplish his or her goals.

Understanding how students are motivated helps teachers to stimulate interest in the classroom activities that will enable the students to achieve the goals of the curriculum (Ames & Ames, 1985; Reeve, 1996; Brophy, 1998). Music educators have added to the research by conducting studies concerning the motivation of music students and the factors that influence them to achieve musically (Sandene, 1997; Asmus, 1985, 1986; Legette, 1998).

Students place value on the activities in which they participate. They determine the value of each activity based on their perceptions. The reasons students give for participating in an activity reflect their interests and motives for continuing (Parsons, 1983; Raynor, 1983).

The research Asmus (1985, 1986) conducted concerning the Attribution Theory and students' beliefs about the causes for success and failure shows that students attribute success and failure in music to the internal attributions of Weiner's (1972) theory of ability and effort. Austin and Vispoel (1992) researched the topic of motivation by investigating the effects of failure attribution feedback (ability, effort, strategy) and classroom goal structure (competitive, individualistic-standards, individualistic-progress) on motivation response and decision making.

Exemplary teachers are those who have received recognition for their accomplishments in the classroom. Studies have been conducted that involved the investigation of successful music programs and teachers (Kerley, 1995; Iida, 1991; King, 1998). Mudrick (1997) and Sandene (1997) went even further in their investigation of successful programs to look specifically at the motivational techniques utilized within the programs.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to examine the motivational techniques of an exemplary orchestra director. Specifically, I conducted a case study examining E. Daniel Long and his interaction with his seventh-grade orchestra class.

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Research Questions

After completing a pilot study (see chapter 3) in April and May of 2000, I compiled my research questions. They were: (1) How does the exemplary teacher's choice of literature affect the motivation of his students? (2) How does his use of competition in the classroom affect the motivation of his students? (3) What kinds of feedback does he provide to his students? (4) How does he distribute class time in order to motivate his students? and (5) How does he make each of his students feel valued and respected in and out of the classroom?

Theoretical Orientation and Personal Perspective

This study uses qualitative methods of investigation. Merriam (1988) places importance on the theoretical orientation of the researcher as an integral part of qualitative research. She states that "how the investigator views the world affects the entire research process—from conceptualizing a problem, to collecting and analyzing data, to interpreting the findings" (p.53). Stake (1995) explains that interpretation is the foremost characteristic of qualitative study and that the results are not really "findings", but "assertions" made by the researcher (p. 42). He continues, "Given intense interaction of the researcher with persons in the field and elsewhere, given a constructivist orientation to knowledge, given the attention to participant intentionality and sense of self, however descriptive the report, the researcher ultimately comes to offer a personal view" (p. 42). My experiences as an orchestra professional influenced my interpretations and subsequent assertions regarding the phenomena I observed.

From the time I began to study the violin at age eight, I received private instruction. However, the schools I attended did not have orchestra programs. In order to receive experience in that area, I participated in three different orchestras (depending on my age) sponsored by the Flint School of Performing Arts (FSPA). Everyone who wished to participate in these orchestras was required to audition and had to be studying privately. Because I never participated in a public school orchestra program, I bring no

pre-conceived notions from a student's perspective to this research about the manner in which an orchestra program should be directed.

My undergraduate studies took place at a small liberal arts college in rural New York. My music education consisted of becoming certified to teach any music in grades K-12. It gave me a broad overview of teaching music in a school program, with specific emphasis on teaching strings and orchestra. After I graduated, I moved to North Carolina where I taught grades 6-8 orchestra and chorus in an inner city middle school for two years. My experience there gave me the desire to learn how to more effectively motivate my students. I was frustrated throughout those two years because I found it difficult to motivate my students to want to learn music. It helped me to recognize that motivational skills are a necessity for my teaching to be truly effective.

I chose to pursue a graduate degree in music education in order to learn more about motivating students and becoming a more effective teacher. Throughout the two years it took for me to complete my degree, I taught in three different schools on a part-time basis. Those experiences helped me to apply what I was learning in the classroom to my teaching and allowed me to work with three very different groups of students who had varying backgrounds and with whom I needed to utilize different motivational tools.

The topic of research in motivation is so significant in the field of music education that the Music Educators National Conference included motivation in its publication of the Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning (1992). Thomas (1983) wrote an entire chapter on motivation research in music education. She makes several recommendations for further research in motivation and suggests that "it seems crucial that the relationship between students' achievement and teachers' practices be explored" (p.428).

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature most relevant to my study is categorized into two main
strands: (1) studies that focused on the examination of successful music programs and
teachers and (2) studies that emphasized motivation in music classrooms.

Successful Music Programs

The description of successful high school band programs was the focus of Iida's
(1991) research. The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the characteristics
which may affect the success of high school band performance. The research questions
were: (1) What are the characteristics of a successful high school band program? and (2)
In what ways and to what extent do characteristics of less successful programs differ
from those of successful programs?

Five high school band programs were chosen as having an outstanding record of
musical excellence in festivals, parades, and field shows over a seven year period. They
comprised Group A. Five other high schools were identified as having moderately
successful band programs. They were called Group B. This was a descriptive study of
instrumental music programs at the high school level. Characteristics of highly
successful groups were identified and became the variables to be examined.

Students and teachers from all ten schools were interviewed by the researcher
using the same procedures. Interviews were conducted with a questionnaire with 12
members from each of the five bands in Group A and 12 members from each of the five
bands in Group B. The teachers from the ten schools were also given a questionnaire
with open-ended questions. The comparisons were statistically analyzed to provide the
results.

The questionnaire for the students included questions about why they were
participating in music and what they thought about their teachers and the music

programs. Questions for the teachers asked about their musical background and to what they owed their success as music teachers.

This study found that the teacher was the single most influential factor contributing to the success of the program. Some of the characteristics of the teacher that contributed to the successful band program were: (1) a personality which was friendly toward students, including a sense of humor and a caring attitude, (2) the ability to build and maintain a positive attitude with the students, including having motivational and inspirational skills, (3) the ability to maintain a strong and fair sense of discipline, (4) having a strong musical background, and (5) having an organized system of teaching and having the confidence to use the system.

Kerley (1995) examined the decision-making processes, the leadership styles and behaviors, and the musicality of two master choral music teachers. This dual case study explored the relationship of personal and professional qualities to the success of two teachers of elementary-aged children's choirs. This qualitative study examined three stages of the decision-making process: preactive planning; interactive, spontaneous planning; and evaluative, reflective planning.

Three questions guided the researcher's approach to the two case studies: (1) In what ways does this teacher's musicality contribute to her choral success? (2) In what way does this musician's ability to teach effectively contribute to her success? and (3) In what way does this teacher's personality and her ability to relate to children contribute to her choral success?

Data collection included: audio-taped pre-observational focused interviews with the two teachers, pre-rehearsal interviews and written and/or verbal choral rehearsal plans, video-taped rehearsals, the researcher's field notes based on rehearsal observations, and stimulated recall interviews. The data were analyzed to determine common as well as idiosyncratic themes that emerged in the two case studies.

Kerley found that the teachers' success was due to the teachers' high level of musicality, the musicians' ability to utilize effective teaching strategies, and the teachers' ability to relate to children in a positive manner. Kerley (1995) particularly emphasized the teaching strategies that she found to be the most effective: (a) employing diverse and innovative teaching techniques while considering the individual needs of all students, (b) preparing a rehearsal plan that suggests she has a preconceived idea regarding precisely what she wishes to accomplish in each choral selection, (c) sensing when and how to react to musical and behavioral stimuli, (d) making split-second decisions regarding student behavior and determining whether or not to react to a particular behavior, and (e) engaging in reflective analysis of rehearsals in order to determine which teaching strategies worked effectively and which ones did not.

Kerley's (1995) in-depth investigation into two exemplary teachers' choral work was rich with description and evaluation of the effective strategies used by the two teachers. She suggests further study of different teachers' strategies in other programs.

King (1998) described a 10-month naturalistic study of a band teacher who has gained an international reputation as an exemplary music educator in a single setting for more than 25 years. "The purpose of this single case study was to examine, through the use of participant observation, ethnographic interview, and artifact collection, a rich, thick description of the personal and professional qualities of a well-respected music educator in the hope that we may better understand what it means to be an exemplary music educator" (p.57).

The study delineates the background, education, and teaching career of David I. Dunnet, a band director in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. The article does not go into detail about the methodology or procedure. Four major themes emerged as a result of this study: (1) excellent command of high level verbal and non-verbal communication skills are essential to becoming an exemplary teacher, (2) routines and organization

provide the framework for artistry in teaching, (3) humor is essential for exemplary teaching, and (4) a quality environment is conducive to quality teaching and learning.

King (1998) suggested the need for further case studies to "gain in-depth analysis of the realm of exemplary teachers" (p.70). The Kerley (1995) and King (1998) studies provided an excellent framework in which to place my own case study of one exemplary teacher.

Motivation in the Music Classroom

Asmus (1986) studied achievement motivation by examining students' beliefs about the causes of success and failure in music. He based his research on Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory in order to better understand the motivational elements in the reasons students cite for why some people are successful in music and others are not. The Attribution Theory cites four causal categories that represent the majority of reasons students give for success and failure: ability, task difficulty, luck, and effort.

The subjects in the Asmus (1986) study were 589 students enrolled in music courses in grades 4 through 12. The music courses included instrumental, vocal, and general music subject areas. Eight different public schools were represented. The students received a form that was designed in an open-ended format. The subjects were to state five reasons why some students do well in music and five reasons why some do not do so well in music. Three judges were trained to categorize each statement according to the four keywords: ability, task difficulty, luck, and effort.

The music students attributed the causes of success or failure in music to internal reasons (ability and effort) approximately 80% of the time. Females tended to provide more internal reasons than males. The older students tended to attribute success or failure more to ability, while the younger students attributed it more to effort. Because of this, Asmus (1986) suggests that teachers recognize that the older students get, the less likely they are to put forth the effort to achieve proficiency in music. He emphasizes a

need for further research concerning the teacher's influence on student motivation and their attributions for success and failure.

Austin and Vispoel (1992) examined the motivation of music students by investigating the effects of failure attribution feedback (ability, effort, strategy) and classroom goal structure (competitive, individualistic-standards, individualistic-progress) on motivational response and decision making. This quantitative study focused on 107 instrumental music students in grades 5-8. The students were randomly assigned to one of nine treatment conditions and presented with a scenario describing the failure experience of a fictional band student named "Bill".

The students were given different contest award criteria for "Bill". The contest was presented in three different ways: "Special performance awards will be given to...(1) the three students who receive the highest scores at the contest" (competitive); (2) "...all students who receive a score of 20 points or more at the contest" (individualistic-standards); or "...all students who improve their performance score by five points or more at the contest" (individualistic-progress) (p. 9). In all conditions, "Bill" failed to achieve the goal of receiving a reward.

Following the situational description, the students were given a questionnaire that was prefaced with the heading, "Below are statements about 'Bill', his feelings and his future behavior" (p. 10). Students placed their responses into seven categories: (a) Future Performance, (b) Future Effort, (c) Future Strategy Use, (d) Future Risk Taking, (e) Future Support, (f) Attribution Feedback Affect, and (g) Goal Failure Affect.

On average students believed "Bill" would perform better, try harder, use more effective strategies, and receive support from the teacher and other students in the future. The results of this study indicate that students who attribute failure to strategies or effort, rather than ability, anticipate significantly greater improvements in future performance, future effort, and future strategies. These findings suggest that music students would

respond more constructively to failure if instructors emphasized strategic effort more and ability estimates less.

Austin and Vispoel (1992) found that although competitive classroom arrangements may work to boost music interest or performance in the short term, it may actually undermine music teachers' long-term efforts to produce musicians who are appreciative consumers of music. The authors suggest further research to determine whether competition promotes or hinders music learning. This study influenced my interest in studying competition and its effect on student motivation.

Sandene (1997) conducted a study in which he gathered information on variables associated with motivation in instrumental music over the period of one school year. This was a quantitative study focusing on middle school woodwind, brass, and percussion students in grades 5-8. The purpose of his study was to investigate associations between student backgrounds, selected individual difference variables, selected classroom practices, and student levels of motivation in instrumental classrooms.

Sandene (1997) addressed five primary research questions: (1) Is there a relationship between students' task and ego goals for participation in instrumental music classes, students' attributions for success or failure in music classes, students' self-esteem in instrumental music, students' perceptions of the teacher's goals and students' levels of motivation for instrumental music? (2) What factors are associated with changes in motivation in instrumental music classes during one year of instruction? (3) What practices of classroom organization and instruction are associated with high levels of motivation? (4) What variables related to student motivation can predict student dropout in instrumental music study? and (5) What is the relationship between positive feedback during classroom instruction and variables related to student motivation?

The programs of five experienced instrumental music teachers teaching in three schools in the Midwest were chosen for this study. The schools were selected to include

diverse student populations, methods of program organization, and school settings. 672 students participated in the study. The researcher videotaped eight classrooms throughout the year, student questionnaires were distributed to the students, and the teachers were interviewed once during the school year.

Five different scales were used to measure the students' self-esteem levels, their attributions for success or failure in instrumental music, their classroom task goal perceptions, their personal task goal orientation, and their motivation in the instrumental music classroom. The students also provided information about their socio-economic status and their musical demographic information.

The teachers were asked to supply the researcher with a rating of the motivational level of each student enrolled in their classes. The teachers' verbal statements and behaviors were noted during the researcher's observations and classified as either positive or negative feedback. All student questionnaire and teacher feedback data were coded and entered into a data file. All statistical analyses were then computed.

Sandene (1997) found that teacher behaviors had a great influence upon the development of student perceptions, self-esteem, and motivation for learning. Classrooms high in student motivation tended to have authority structures that allowed the students some degree of authority and choice without being entirely permissive. Motivated classrooms were those in which the teacher's expectations were neither too high nor too low, and those in which the teacher placed less emphasis on differentiation among students by ability.

Most students tended to attribute internal reasons (effort, ability, affect) for success or failure in music as more important than external attributions (background, environment). Classrooms in which there were more rules, competition, and in which students perceived ego goals as being more prominent tended to have relatively larger percentages of non-motivated students.

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Sandene (1997) recommended that "qualitative research in the area of motivation could yield especially illuminating information for the design of classroom environments, classroom activities, and methods of organizing programs" (p. 185).

Mudrick (1997) studied student motivation in four successful high school choral programs. This was a qualitative study that investigated and identified specific factors that influenced student motivation in four successful choral programs in south central Pennsylvania. The researcher identified: (1) the extent to which each director's criteria for repertoire selection motivated students, (2) teaching goals and effective teaching skills demonstrated by each director, and (3) actions of each director that motivated students to rehearse effectively and perform on a high level.

The four successful choral programs were chosen on the basis of their being featured performers at Pennsylvania Music Educators Association In-Service Conferences within the past five years. The researcher utilized persistent field observations, ethnographic interviews, and unobtrusive clues in order to collect his data. He noted rehearsal procedures and techniques, teacher effectiveness, student reactions and behaviors, and general characteristics of the setting. After having established informal rapport with students to determine a potential pool of interview candidates, Mudrick (1997) selected forty specific student informants who he speculated would provide him with rich, credible information. He also interviewed each of the four high school choral directors. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. The content of the interviews was compared to observation notes regularly throughout the data collection process.

Based on his research questions, the content of the interviews consisted of open-ended, yet direct conversations in which Mudrick sought to identify characteristics of directors and students in each program, acknowledge specific factors of motivation, and elicit opinions about repertoire selection—as espoused by the directors and as perceived by the students.

Mudrick (1997) found that students were motivated by dedicated, rigorous, energetic, and charismatic leadership exhibited by their director. Students were motivated by honest, appropriate assessment from their director and by integrating their director's rules and values. Learning challenging and eclectic repertoire highly motivated the students in the successful programs. Above all, students were motivated by their director's sense of humor and genuine sense of concern for them.

Mudrick's (1997) examination of student motivation was valuable in helping me design my research. His research questions and results aided me in determining the specific areas which I would focus on concerning motivation.

While Kerley (1995), King (1998), and Iida (1991) provided me a research context in which to place my study, Asmus (1986), Austin and Vispoel (1992), Sandene (1997), and Mudrick (1997) provided me with the specific focus of motivational techniques of an exemplary teacher. Since I found no case studies on an exemplary orchestra teacher, my study will provide insight into that area of music instruction.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

"A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). As Stake (1995) suggests, a case study provides thorough detail of one situation, which gives a clear and detailed description of that particular situation. Examining the complexities of motivation in a classroom requires the researcher to explore all of the factors involved in a teacher's motivational skills. Data sources included a formal interview with Dan Long, observations of his teaching, and interviews with his students.

Merriam (1998) describes this type of study as being phenomenological and descriptive in design. "The focus would be on the essence or structure of an experience (phenomenon)"(p. 15). By choosing one exemplary teacher in order to research his methods of motivation, I focused on describing one phenomenon--the exemplary teacher in his unique surroundings. The teacher was studied in his surroundings with his students, and I researched them in the light of what happened right then, in that time and that space. Secondly, this is a descriptive case study in design. Merriam (1998) explains that it provides a detailed account of the phenomenon under study.

Participants

Exemplary Teacher. E. Daniel Long agreed to be the primary participant in this study. He is a nationally-recognized orchestra teacher who has been teaching at Slauson Middle School in Ann Arbor, Michigan for 34 years. He received degrees from Chadron State College, Nebraska and the University of Colorado. Long has been the president of the Michigan American String Teachers Association. He was named the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Teacher of the Year in 1989, and he received the Chadron State College Distinguished Service Award in 1994. In 1997, Long was given the American String Teachers Association Elizabeth A.H. Green School Educator Award (Wilson, 2000). His bands and orchestras have performed at the prestigious Midwest

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Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois. In addition to his many awards throughout his career, he has been extremely successful with his retention rate of students in the orchestra program.

Dan Long teaches grades five through eight at the elementary and middle school. He teaches the brass and woodwind instruments in addition to the string instruments at the fifth grade level. During the fall, Dan teaches the string instruments only at the middle school level. During the spring semester, he adds winds, brass, and percussion instruments once a week in order to have a symphonic orchestra.

Seventh Grade Students. I chose his seventh grade orchestra class in particular because the students at that stage in their development are difficult to motivate (Asmus, 1986). It is also at this point that several students determine whether or not they want to continue in the orchestra program at their school. From my own experience as a teacher, I found the seventh graders to be the most challenging to motivate because playing their instrument was no longer a novelty, and they hadn't decided how much they truly enjoyed participating in an orchestra class. "It is interesting that the shift between effort-related and ability-related attributions occurs during the sixth and seventh grades. These are grades when teachers often have trouble keeping students involved in music" (Asmus, 1986, p.275).

Because it is a particularly difficult age to motivate, I have chosen to focus on Dan's techniques with his seventh grade orchestra. Dan averages 45 students in the seventh grade string orchestra. According to him, he only loses an average of five orchestra students between the sixth and seventh grades. In order to obtain their perspective on Dan's teaching, I interviewed ten students (representing violin, viola, cello, and bass) about their attitudes toward orchestra class and their feelings of success or failure in orchestra.

Access to the Participants

Prior to data collection at Slauson, I received approval for my research from Michigan State University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects in June 2000. I also received consent from the Ann Arbor Public Schools' Research Services in February 2001.

Research Site

Slauson Middle School is situated in an urban setting and the students come from a variety of backgrounds. Slauson is the second oldest middle school in the city. Although it is an urban setting, Ann Arbor is home to the University of Michigan and has a higher cost of living than many other cities in Michigan. Students at Slauson represent all types of economic backgrounds. An average of 30% of Dan's students take private lessons, and an average of 60% own their own instruments.

Pilot Study

The pilot study began in April 2000 when I met Dan and conducted an initial interview with him. The questions I asked him were about his views on motivating his students, both intrinsically and extrinsically. I asked him which students he felt were the most difficult to motivate and some of the strategies he would use to foster motivation in those students. I asked him about his choice of literature, his use of competition and his means of assessment concerning his ability to motivate his students.

After the initial interview, I observed and video-taped Dan teaching his seventh-grade orchestra six times over the course of a month. Those observations allowed me to develop emergent themes in his teaching that I knew I would want to explore further. During one of those observations, Dan put me on "the hot seat", as he calls it. He had me sit in the conductor's chair and answer questions about myself and my research from his seventh-grade students. They were encouraged by Mr. Long to ask thought-provoking questions that would distinguish them as well-developed musicians.

After the classroom observations, I asked Dan to choose ten students from the five sections of the orchestra for me to interview on an individual basis. Each interview consisted of just myself and one student. I video-taped the students' responses. I asked the students questions about their musical background and about their orchestra class with Mr. Long. I asked them what they thought of their orchestra class and the reasons for their responses. I asked them what they thought about Mr. Long's teaching and whether or not they thought they were making progress under him.

The initial interview with Dan, the classroom observations, and the individual student interviews that I conducted during the pilot study helped me to determine the research questions I would ask and the data collection procedures that would assist me in answering those questions with the greatest amount of accuracy.

The pilot study did not include interviewing the students in a group setting. The individual student interviews that I did in the pilot study were somewhat awkward because the students didn't know me and seemed guarded in their responses. Based on that experience, I chose to conduct two group interviews of five students each prior to conducting the individual interviews.

Merriam (1998) states that pilot studies are essential to trying out the data collection procedures. "Not only do you get some practice in interviewing, you also learn...which questions yield useless data, and which questions, suggested by your respondents, you should have thought to include in the first place (pp. 75-76)." As a novice researcher, the pilot study helped me to improve upon my data collection procedures.

Data Collection Procedures

Initial Interview. Data collection began with an initial interview in January 2001 with Dan Long. The questions derived from the pilot study. My research questions provided the foundation on which my questions were formed. (See Appendix A for the interview questions.)

Dan signed a consent form (see Appendix C) agreeing to participate in this research with the understanding that his responses and teaching would be video or audio-recorded. The interview was audio-recorded on a Sony TCM-20DV Cassette-corder. After the interview, I transcribed all interview dialogue.

Classroom Observations. After the initial interview, I observed and video-recorded Dan teaching his seventh grade orchestra five times. These observations occurred in March and April 2001. These observations allowed me to compare Dan's answers in his interview to his actual teaching habits. It also provided me the opportunity to observe other aspects of his teaching that might have remained unmentioned in the interview. I noted motivational techniques utilized throughout the course of the lessons. The observations were video-recorded on various VHS cameras.

Student Interviews (Group and Individual). Dan chose the students by selecting representatives from each section in the seventh-grade orchestra with varying seating placements in those sections. In March 2001, I asked the students the same questions in the group interviews as I did in the individual interviews to see if the students would respond the same in a group setting as they did in the individual interview. The questions that I asked the students were based on the five research questions mentioned earlier. My goal was to obtain the students' perspective on Dan's ability to motivate and the techniques he uses in motivating his students. (See Appendix B for the student questions.)

All of the students involved, as well as their parents or guardians, signed consent forms (see Appendix D) agreeing to participate in this research with the understanding that the interviews would be video-recorded. The interviews were video-recorded on various VHS cameras.

By video-recording the student interviews, I could note facial expressions and level of enthusiasm that the students might have expressed—both of which represented clearly the attitudes and opinions of the students.

The two group interviews were conducted in March 2001. I observed Dan's class two more times before conducting the individual student interviews, which occurred during the end of March and the beginning of April 2001.

Personal Journal. Throughout the time I collected the data, I kept a personal journal in which I kept record of significant events and conversations. When something stood out as being of particular interest and importance to my research, I documented it in my personal journal. This allowed me to have a clearer picture as I went back and analyzed the data.

Validity/Trustworthiness

Establishing validity/trustworthiness is very important to the qualitative researcher. Two methods I used to ensure that was through triangulation and member checks. Throughout the data collection process, I assessed carefully the effectiveness of my methods and questions to guarantee that the procedure provided validity for this research. Firestone (1987) describes the qualitative researcher's goal by stating that validity is attained when "the qualitative study provides the reader with a description in enough detail to show that the author's conclusion 'makes sense'" (p. 19).

Data Collection Triangulation. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of collecting data to insure that the data is accurate and valid. Methodological triangulation combines the dissimilar methods such as interviews, observations, and physical evidence to study the same unit (Merriam, 1988). When those devices produce congruent results, the study gains validity. I used four separate procedures for data collection: an individual interview with Dan Long, observations of the seventh-grade orchestra, and group and individual interviews with members of his seventh-grade orchestra.

Member Check. One of the methods I utilized in order to ensure validity/trustworthiness was to give Dan Long the opportunity to do a member check on the interview I transcribed. I gave him a copy of the transcription along with a copy of the research questions. I asked him to check to see that his answers were stated accurately. I also

asked him to refer to the research questions to determine if they were accurately covered in the interview.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend member checks as a valuable step in the analysis process to insure validity of the study. "The member check can serve as a useful purpose in addition to that of commenting on data already collected: it can help the evaluator to confirm the existence of categories implied by the original data set but that had not yet emerged" (p.316). Dan read my transcript of his initial interview and agreed that his responses were accurately recorded.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

I began transcribing the interviews during the data collection process. Because Dan Long was the primary subject of this research, his responses will be explored first, and his students' responses and the classroom observations will serve to substantiate his responses. I chose to begin with my initial interview with Dan Long because he was the main source of data, and I would look at the other data to either support or contradict Dan's responses.

I transcribed verbatim my initial interview with Dan Long. After he reviewed the transcript, I coded his responses based on the five research questions. I took five colored pencils and assigned a color for each research question. The reason I chose to code according to the research questions was because they were developed after my pilot study, and the questions in the interview coincided with the research questions. If a response answered a certain research question, I underlined it with the corresponding color. Occasionally, there were responses that received more than one color because it related to more than one research question.

I reviewed the videotapes from the group and student interviews. I did not transcribe these interviews word-for-word because they were not my primary source of data collection. However, I did record exact quotes from the students as they applied to my research questions. Again, I used the same color coding system that I used for the initial interview and coded the students' quotes according to their relevance to the research questions. As I analyzed the data, I compared the student interviews with Dan's interview and found the categories to be the same.

I compared the students' responses in the group interviews to their responses in the individual interviews to determine if the students were consistent in their responses between the two interviews. I discovered that they were consistent from one interview to

the next. The students' responses did not change when they were interviewed individually as opposed to being interviewed with their peers.

I reviewed the classroom observations from my videotapes and took notes about what I observed. In accordance with my color coding system, I underlined noteworthy events and quotes with the colors corresponding to the research questions.

Finally, I took into account the notes I made in my personal journal throughout the data collection to provide more validity and trustworthiness to the data analysis. For example, I recorded in my journal informal conversations with Dan Long that I later used to help validate my formal data collection.

Through the analyzing process, I noted some interesting trends in the responses that both Dan and his students gave. The absence of competition emerged as being a distinguishing characteristic in Dan's classroom. Most teachers of performing instruments that I have observed utilize competition in order to encourage practice and to foster motivation in their students. However, Dan Long's response to competition in the classroom was that it creates bad feelings among the students and makes some students feel less valued than the ones who won the better chairs.

Other emergent themes that I noticed in the analysis process was the effectiveness of Dan's humor in motivating his students and his ability to make every student feel valued and respected by him. Both of these areas were evident in my interviews with Dan Long and his students, as well as my observations of Dan in his classroom.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Merriam (1998) addresses the issue of transferability/generalizability in relation to case study research. The question arises whether or not it is possible to generalize from a single case. Because each case is unique and involves so many different factors, it might seem impossible to provide transferability to other teaching situations. However, Erickson (1986) states that generalizable knowledge provides "concrete universals arrived at by studying a specific case in great detail and then comparing it with other cases studied in equally great detail" (p. 130). Erickson continues this example in regard to teaching:

> *When we see a particular instance of a teacher teaching, some aspects of what occurs are absolutely generic, that is, they apply cross-culturally and across human history to all teaching situations. this would be true despite tremendous variation in those situations...Each instance of a classroom is seen as its own unique system, which nonetheless displays universal properties of teaching [p. 130].*

As I describe the findings of my research, I will provide discussion on each of the five research questions separately. In doing so, I will explain how generalizability and transferability can be provided for this research. The responses from the teacher and his students overlapped among some of the questions, but I will categorize them as specifically as possible.

The research questions of this study were: (1) How does Dan Long's choice of literature affect the motivation of his students? (2) How does he use competition in motivating his students? (3) What kinds of feedback does he provide to his students? (4) How does he use class time in order to motivate his students? (5) How does he make each of his students feel valued and respected in and out of the classroom?

Because Dan Long was the primary subject of this research, his responses will be explored first, and his students' responses and the classroom observations will serve to substantiate his responses.

<div align="center">Choice of Literature</div>

When asked what role the choice of repertoire has in the motivation of his students, Dan responded enthusiastically, "Everything! Everything!" He compared the choice of literature to that of diet:

We know that we have to eat this, this, this, and this because it's good for us, but, at the same time, we also know there is dessert at the other end. Students want to play the pieces of music they know from movies or shows...they love to do that. And, at the same time, you have to give them what's good for them. The composers they don't necessarily know or are familiar with.

Dan explains that when it comes to playing the less-familiar pieces from the past, it is the teacher's responsibility to present the music in an exciting way.

Sometimes we just have to bite the bullet and say, "We're going to play Brahms or Beethoven or Bach...because it's important for you to learn that." Our job is to have, to some degree, a balance of the music that we believe is good for them. A lot of it has to do with the way you present it. If you just pass out a piece of music and say, "All right, here we go, first measure." You have lost all kinds of opportunities of hooking the kids on the music you want to work on. Because you're approaching it from a note standpoint, rather than from a music standpoint. And if you pass out music and say, "Oh, Mr. Rossini! Oh, just wait until you hear this music! Does anyone know anything about Rossini?" Nobody responds. "Anyone know anything about the story of William Tell?" A student responds, "Oh, that's the guy who shot the apple off someone's head!" And then one thing leads to another. All of a sudden, kids are going to start to know something about the music. You have to lead them into directions they haven't

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gone by what you ask and how you present the music. Rather than F#'s and down bows, you start talking about operas. All of a sudden, kids start connecting all kinds of stuff that is within the world that has to do with music.

When I asked the students about Mr. Long's choice of music, they reflected mostly on the level of difficulty of the pieces.

Anna (viola): *"We move at the pace we should be moving at right now. The pieces that we play...we have to work to be able to play them."*

Pouya (violin): *"I like a lot of the songs we play. He picks out music so we can learn something new, but it's not too hard and not too easy. We always have to learn things to be able to play it."*

Michael (violin): *"The songs are exciting. He has a big variety. We did a jazz piece, sad ones, and an Irish Dance song."*

Pierce (violin): *"We shoot farther ahead than we can actually do, but when it comes to the performance, we can do it."*

Brian (cello): *"I like the enthusiastic pieces. He tries to challenge us, but not beyond our capabilities. He knows us—he's been doing this for so many years—he knows what music to pick."*

The statements made by the other students were similar to the above, commenting on either the difficulty level of the pieces or the variety of songs they played throughout the school year.

The literature Dan Long chooses to perform throughout the year seems to be a major factor in the motivation of his students. They were enthusiastic in their responses about the music they performed. They expressed pride in the concerts they had performed under the direction of Mr. Long and commented that the pieces were an important reason for the success of their concerts.

This implies that teachers who are most effective at motivating their students choose literature that is at the right level of difficulty for the students' stage of

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development and that provides a variety in programming that will make learning more interesting. This idea is supported in the studies by Kerley (1995), Sandene (1997), and Mudrick (1997).

<div align="center">Competition in the Classroom</div>

One of the most distinguishing characteristics [Refer to in Chapter 4.] in Dan Long's classroom is his view of competition. In almost every instrumental music classroom that I have known, competition has been a central motivator that the teacher would have used to motivate his or her students. However, when I asked Dan Long, "What is your opinion on the use of competition in the orchestra classroom?", his response was not typical of most instrumental music teachers:

> *No competition. I am the most uncompetitive person in the world. I have no challenges, no down-the-lines, no try-outs, nothing! I think competition is a bunch of "foof", and you can quote me on that!* [Laughs] *I want the kids to play well because they want to play well, not because, "I might lose my chair."*

Dan continued by explaining his method of deciding where the students sit in orchestra. He tells the violins at the beginning of the year that he needs eight first violins and eight second violins. He explains the type of music that the first violins will be required to play (i.e., third position). He then tells all sections that the students in the first stand of each section will be in a leadership role in the orchestra in which they will be called upon to play alone more often than others to demonstrate the music. He does not label one person as the best and another as the worst. At the beginning of the year, the students choose where they will sit in the section. As the year progresses, Dan moves the students around to give each the opportunity to sit in various parts of the section. As he explains, "Everyone knows who is the best in the section. Nobody has to label the child and say, 'You are the worst—you have to sit in this chair.'"

During an informal conversation with Dan, I asked him if he had always been so uncompetitive in his classroom. He explained to me that when he first began teaching,

he was a competition-oriented teacher. He said he took his band to the Rose Bowl and worked to have the best uniforms and the best band in the parade. However, after a few years of being so highly competitive, he gave his students a questionnaire asking them about their experiences in band. He said that not one of his students had anything to say about music. Instead, they talked about their trips and uniforms. Dan decided then and there that it was more important for his students to learn to love and appreciate music than it was to have the best band in the nation.

From an observational standpoint, I can concur with the fact that Dan's classroom now revolves around the teaching and learning of music (focus on the process), rather than on the sorting of students by skill level (focus on the product). And it is obvious that Dan's number one goal is for his students to leave his classroom with a respect and appreciation for music and their abilities to participate in making wonderful music.

When I asked the students about Mr. Long's method of seating and the lack of competition, they confirmed the fact that competition was not necessary because everyone knew everyone else's ability. I asked them if competition would make them practice more or help them as an orchestra. The responses I received were that some might practice more if they wanted first chairs, but in general, the tone of responses from the students was that competition would lower the students' self-esteem and make orchestra less enjoyable.

> E.J. (violin): *"I think most everyone agrees with where they're seated. I wouldn't like orchestra as much if we had competition because we'd have to sit apart from [our] friends."*

> Pierce (violin): *"I like not having competition because I can enjoy the music better, and I don't have to worry about beating someone else."*

Some of the students who currently sit near the front of their section said competition might help them practice more, but they did not think they would enjoy the music as much.

My findings in this area were surprising to me. Dan's complete lack of competition in his classroom made me skeptical at first. However, the students were so obviously content not to compete against each other, that I realized it was highly motivating for them not to have to be compared with one another. Seventh graders are already insecure because of the stage in their social and physical developments, and it only seems logical that they would be more motivated to play well on their instruments when they don't have the pressure of being labeled "better" or "worse" than the other students.

There is little research on the effects of competition on music student motivation. However, based on the majority of music classrooms that I have observed, it seems to be the norm for most music teachers to use chair auditions to get their students to practice. Thomas (1992) suggests that "we still need to ask what effect such practices [competitive structures] have on the very young, the shy, the talented but insecure, the ordinary, the less aggressive, or otherwise 'noncompetitive' student" (p 431).

The research conducted by Asmus (1986) confirms that students in the middle school years are the most likely to drop out of music classes because they are insecure about their abilities and often become frustrated.

Feedback Provided to the Students

Dan's response concerning the feedback he offers his students had to do with the way he views his role in the classroom. He talked to me about his ultimate goal of "teaching myself out of a job". He explained what he meant was that the students would be so internally motivated to learn that his job would become much easier. "Students should come to the point where they come into the classroom, sit down, and play the music because they want to do it, because it's from the heart, because it's on the printed page, and because they want to connect the two together."

This principle applies to the issue of classroom management in Dan's classroom. I asked him about a student who might act up in class and what his response would be.

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This just happened last week. The student was in the back of the classroom causing some problems, and the kids around him were saying, "SHHH! Be quiet!" I didn't get involved! The students were solving the problem themselves. It came from within the class, and not from me! Because the students wanted to get to the music—it was distracting them! It was an example of my being removed from the classroom, teaching myself out of a job. And I smile to myself, "Oh, yes! It's beginning to happen!"

In one of my classroom observations, I noted some particular feedback Dan provided for his students. He told the class, "You just played 57 measures of a piece you've never seen before. Why could you do that? Because you are getting better at music reading." In the same class, he asked the students how they could make a section sound more like bagpipes. A student responded by saying they could try screeching. Dan laughed and said, "Screeching! We don't want to screech!" But, he was very light-hearted about the student's response and all the students laughed together.

I wanted to find out from the students what Mr. Long said to them in the classroom that helped them want to become better musicians. They provided me with some excellent answers about the kinds of feedback that Mr. Long provides in the classroom.

Bizzy (viola): *"He makes you want to be a better player. He's so determined to make you love your instrument that you just want to be better. We want to practice because he tells us we'll like our instruments better if we can play the music. If someone's frustrated, he'll say, 'Go home and bake cookies with your stand partner, so you can practice with them to make it better.'"*

Pouya (violin): *"He's always enthusiastic. He's always trying to get you to do better. He knows when you need a lot more practice. If we do mess up, he won't yell at us. He'll just say, 'Your bowing was real good. Maybe you need to work on the notes.'"*

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Pierce (violin): *"He can relate to you, and he puts everything in different ways. He tells stories, and he uses emotions to get his point across."*

E.J. (violin): *"He makes you guess what you're doing wrong."*

Brian (cello): *"If we do something wrong, he doesn't get on our case about it. He just says, 'No wrong notes!' He has a way to keep you practicing, but not in a way to make you hate it more. He gives you lots of compliments if you do well."*

The videotapes of the student interviews demonstrated facial expressions and examples of what Dan does in his classroom that cannot adequately be described in words alone. Some students demonstrated how he got the whole class dancing in order to understand a rhythmic pattern, and other students impersonated Mr. Long singing in order to make a point. There is no question, according to his students, that Dan Long loves music and wants his students to love it just as much as he does.

One of the central themes of Dan's teaching has to do with his sense of humor. He uses humor to correct a problem in a creative way. For example, one student told me that she was caught by Mr. Long for chewing gum ("No Gum" is a well-established rule in their orchestra class). Rather than telling her to throw away her gum, he simply said to the class, "I smell something kind of minty." Another student related that he would tell someone they were chewing too quickly. Although gum-chewing is not directly related to the teaching and learning of music, it is an example of Dan's creative attempt to help the students to learn while keeping their self-esteem intact.

My observations support previous research that humor is a vital element in student motivation (King,1998; Sandene, 1997; and Mudrick ,1997). Dan's ability to use humor in providing feedback to his students keeps them comfortable with him and helps them want to accomplish his classroom goals.

In addition to his humor, Dan's expertise in providing creative kinds of feedback was noted by the students as helping them want to be better musicians. Whether his

feedback was having the students guess what the mistake was or simply using body language, the students were always attentive to what Mr. Long expected of them.

<u>Use of Classroom Time</u>

Both Dan and his students spoke with me about Dan's use of classroom time in order to teach the students music. The main theme that ran throughout the interviews was that Dan uses the music as a tool to teach a concept. Very rarely does he play a piece from beginning to end (especially when first introducing a piece).

I noticed throughout the classroom observations that Dan had a tremendous ability to begin with one idea and then let it grow until the students in the classroom were able to grasp the concept. Even when he worked with only one section at a time, he often found a way to make it significant to the other students in the orchestra. One example of this was a class in which Dan was teaching the students about arpeggios. He began the class by playing some chords on the piano. He then explained that arpeggios are the notes of a chord played separately. Next, Dan played an arpeggio on a violin and asked the students to figure out the notes on their instruments. After the students successfully played the arpeggio, he brought their attention to a section in one of their pieces where arpeggios are played. He started with the violins who began the section with arpeggios, and then he added the other sections of the orchestra who eventually continued the · arpeggio section.

One particular use of class time to make note of is Dan's invitation of visitors into his classroom. One of my classroom observations featured two violin performance students from the University of Michigan. They prepared duets for the students to listen to, and they and Dan asked the students questions about what they heard and about the composers of the pieces. During my interviews with students, they mentioned the people who have played for them and commented that it made them want to work harder at their instruments in order to be able to play like the visitors they heard.

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In my observations, the vast majority of class time was spent focusing specifically on making music. However, I also observed a class in which Dan spent the majority of the class focusing on a non-musical discussion about drugs (I will discuss this conversation in greater detail below). When talking with me about the discussion after the class, Dan explained to me that music is the subject he teaches, but it is more important for him to help the students to learn how to play a significant, positive role in the world around them.

Every part of the classroom time has a specific purpose for Dan. Whether it be learning a new warm-up exercise, meeting a visitor, or having a discussion on drugs, every activity is intended to allow the students to grow both as musicians and as individuals. Dan Long is not one to let a "teachable moment" pass. He will take every opportunity he has to give his students the type of music education he believes they deserve.

The research of Kerley (1995), Mudrick (1997), and King (1998) substantiates the importance of the teacher using the classroom time wisely and effectively. Those studies demonstrated that the students were more likely to enjoy their music class when the teachers came to the class prepared and with a plan for the goals to be accomplished during the class period.

Making the Students Feel Valued and Respected

Dan's number one response regarding the motivational tools he uses in his teaching was that of making his students feel valued and respected in and out of his classroom. Any casual observer would note how he looks each of his students in the eye and gives him or her his complete attention. Dan's own words say it best:

> *Positive reinforcement. Positive feedback. A non-threatening*
>
> *environment. Building a bridge that allows the child to be comfortable enough*
>
> *that they can do their best. Making students feel important in the group, no*
>
> *matter where they sit. Making sure that I look at them as individuals, and not as*

musicians. Making sure that I take the time to ask kids' opinions. Making

sure that I involve them in every way possible...so that they feel that they are part

of the group, in a way that they are contributing individually to the success of the

program. You must look at a student as not somebody who comes in and sits

down in your class and becomes a musician; they are that person. Teach the

person. Teach the person.

Dan's students gave several examples of his making them feel valued and respected.

Lauren (violin): *"If I couldn't get a part, I would not be afraid to go to*

him after class and ask for help because he's willing to take time outside of class

to help someone. He's really accepting."

E.J. (violin): *"He's more like a friend than a teacher because he tells us*

stories in class and talks to us after school.."

James (bass): *"I like that Mr. Long is very interactive, and he's someone*

you can talk to when you have a problem with the music."

During my final classroom observation, I became a firsthand witness to Dan

Long's respect for his students as important people who deserved to be acknowledged for

their contributions to the classroom. Dan began the class by teaching arpeggios that were

featured in one of their pieces. After the students accomplished Dan's musical goal, he

sat down on his stool and talked to them about that morning's announcements. It was

revealed that some seventh grade students had been caught having drugs in their

possession on the school property. Dan began by saying that he was shocked by what he

had heard that morning. He then asked certain people how they felt about the

announcement. This began a discussion that lasted for the remaining thirty minutes of

class time. Dan allowed the students to share their thoughts and suggestions concerning

the problem.

Dan's willingness to spend orchestra time to discuss a drug problem in the school

demonstrated his priorities of respecting them as people. I witnessed a caring teacher

who allowed his students to discuss a very disturbing topic in a safe, trusting environment. In establishing that environment, he creates an atmosphere in which his students are motivated to learn.

Teachers who work to know and respect their students as individuals have students who are more motivated to learn (Kerley, 1995; Mudrick, 1997; King, 1998).

Additional Findings

Throughout the course of my research, additional findings emerged that I feel are necessary to discuss. Based on a pilot study in Dan Long's classroom, the five research questions that I chose to focus upon were five areas I perceived initially as being fundamental to Dan's success in motivating his students. However, near the end of my initial interview with Dan, he brought up and emphasized the importance of longevity in one school system as an essential ingredient in motivating his students.

Sometimes the motivational stuff can be built into your job. And by that I mean, when you've been in a spot as long as I've been here, 34 years, you have students coming in who you had their parents as students. There is already a built-in factor that the motivational success rate is much, much higher simply because the child comes in and says, "Mr. Long, you had my mom or my dad." Well, that can only happen if you stay in a spot long enough to let it happen. So, the motivational input and factor of success is, oh, much, much, much better.

In addition, Dan commented on his longevity and its impact on the community over the years.

When you're in a spot as long as I have been here, people come. People come and visit and observe, and [the students] see this. And kids come back from years ago and say, "I'm playing in this orchestra. I'm doing this, I'm doing that..." And students, sitting in your classroom, are seeing this in and out stuff and it rubs off on them. They see that and say, "Wow! Here are kids who were

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here 'X' number of years ago, and they really liked it and boy, I guess I better

buckle down and start doing things too!" It's an expected thing. It's built in!

It was obvious throughout my interviews and observations that Dan's longevity does indeed contribute to the motivation of his students. However, any teacher's longevity is only as effective as the foundation on which his or her teaching is laid. Dan's motivational and teaching skills are that foundation.

Another important motivational tool that was not addressed in my research questions has to do with Dan's sense of humor. Every interaction that I had with Dan and his students reflected his ability to make someone laugh. He has a smile that lights up the room, and he can find humor in almost any situation. In Wilson's (2000) article featuring an interview with Dan Long, Shirley Strohm Mullins says of him: "He could probably have been a successful comedian, but his humor is gentle, tasteful, and appeals to young and old alike" (p.14). Iida (1991) and King (1998) both found a sense of humor to be an essential ingredient to a positive interaction with students.

Dan Long's unique personality and genuine care for his students are the ingredients of the underlying formula for his success in motivating his students. The results of this study show that many different elements combine to contribute to the motivation of his seventh grade orchestra class. Dan's choice of repertoire, his lack of competition in the classroom, the feedback he provides to his students, his use of class time, and his ability to make each of his students feel valued in and out of the classroom work together to provide a motivating atmosphere in which his students come to class anticipating the learning of music.

Among the research questions, the one concerning Dan's opinion of competition in the classroom stands out to me as a researcher as one of the most noteworthy. This observation agrees with Sandene's (1997) findings in which he found that students were more motivated in the classroom where teachers placed less emphasis on differentiation among students.

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Dan Long simply does not think that competition will help his students to be more motivated. The students agreed that the lack of competition allowed them to focus more clearly on the music without having bad feelings toward another person based on the comparison of ability.

The other theme in this study is Dan's genuine effort to help each of his students feel valued and respected by him. He looks each of his students directly in the eye and gives them his undivided attention, sending them the message that what they have to say is important and he is listening. Every student that I interviewed told me they could go to him for any reason, in and out of the classroom, and knew that he would help them in any way he could.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research was to examine the motivational techniques of an exemplary orchestra director. The research questions were: (1) How does the exemplary teacher's choice of literature affect the motivation of his students? (2) How does his use of competition in the classroom affect the motivation of his students? (3) What kinds of feedback does he provide to his students? (4) How does he distribute class time in order to motivate his students? and (5) How does he make each of his students feel valued and respected in and out of the classroom?

Personal Growth

Jordan (1989) says that "case studies should become the central educational design in both undergraduate and graduate music education programs. The minimum requirement for the granting of a masters degree in music education should be the completion of case study in the candidate's discipline. Such a procedure would then begin to provide each institution and the emerging profession at large with a knowledge base for teaching others how to teach" (p.58).

Based on my own experience with this particular case study, I have to agree with Jordan that case study is an invaluable way to learn from teachers who have achieved success in their classrooms. My lack of experience was what prompted me to research an experienced and successful orchestra teacher. In examining his methods of motivation, I was able to glean tremendous ideas about motivating middle school orchestra students.

As a new teacher, I felt as if I had to start from the very beginning and discover by myself how to become an effective teacher. However, case study research has shown me that new and inexperienced teachers can learn from experienced teachers and become more effective teachers more quickly as they learn from others' mistakes, rather than just their own.

I knew motivation was an area I needed to improve upon as an inexperienced teacher. Therefore, I approached this thesis with the goal in mind of learning from a successful orchestra teacher the ways in which he motivates his students. Now that I have completed my research, I have received some essential tools that I believe will improve my ability to motivate my students musically.

Of the five research areas I examined (choice of repertoire, use of competition, kinds of feedback, use of classroom time, and making the students feel valued and respected), each one held significance in helping me to become a more effective teacher. But, most especially, the areas of competition and making the students feel valued and respected were the most meaningful for me.

As a student, competition always bothered me and did little to motivate me except to make me practice out of fear of embarrassment. After seeing Dan Long successfully motivate his students without the use of competition, I am willing to explore those methods in my own middle school orchestra classroom.

Dan Long also helped me to understand that producing excellent musicians should not be my only goal as a teacher. In seeing the students as unique individuals, I will be adding so much more to their education than if I merely see them as students trying to perform perfect music. That is not to say that my musical standards will be lowered; rather, it means that the music product will not be the end, rather the music learning process will be the focus of my teaching.

Transferability

As implied earlier in this study, music teachers may interpret these conclusions in connection with their own experiences in their particular settings. These conclusions may encourage music teachers to examine their own personal motivational effectiveness with greater scrutiny. In addition, these conclusions may encourage music teachers to develop motivational strategies that are in closer harmony with their students' needs.

Music teachers in all settings may transfer the conclusions from this study into their own situations to improve student motivation.

<center>Implication for Teachers</center>

It would be impossible for any other teacher than Dan Long to duplicate everything that he does in his classroom to motivate his students. However, teachers can use Dan's example as a catalyst in their own classrooms to motivate their students.

Teachers at the middle school level might find that de-emphasis on competition during that developmental stage might provide greater confidence and motivation for their students. Thomas (1992) notes that competition forces the students to be labeled as "winners" or "losers"; therefore, causing the students' achievements to be negatively interdependent.

Teachers could also make an effort to interact with their students in a more personal way. Just as Dan Long makes every effort to see his students as people who are coming to him to learn music, teachers should strive to look beyond the subject they are teaching in order to see the students' individual needs for value and respect.

Dan Long's sense of humor was a significant factor in the motivation of his students. King (1998) and Sandene (1997) recommend that teachers use humor in order to more effectively relate to their students. As stated previously, by approaching a situation from a humorous or lighthearted perspective, teachers could creatively provide feedback to their students that research has suggested to be more effective in motivating students.

<center>Suggestions for Teaching and Further Research</center>

Exemplary teachers earn their reputation over several years of practicing excellent teaching. Further case study research of exemplary teachers may provide less-experienced teachers examples of those who have already achieved success in their field from which to learn. Other exemplary teachers in different areas of music could be

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explored. A few of the possibilities could include case studies of high school orchestra teachers, middle school choral directors, and general music teachers.

In addition to case studies, other methodological designs could be utilized in examining how the teachers in those arenas of music education use competition in their classrooms and what kinds of feedback they provide for their students. The teachers' use of humor and their use of class time could be other areas of focus. Survey designs and experimentation could provide students with opportunities to gather more generalizable information about competition in the music classroom and the other motivational techniques used by their director.

The words of Dan Long himself provide the best summary of my research concerning his ability to motivate his students:

> If you are enthusiastic in what you do, this rubs off on students. Make sure that a sense of humor, humanness, and care for every child is at the forefront of each decision...After you have built a bridge of trust with students, they will accept your help and support. If you are enthusiastic in your love for being a music teacher, students will enjoy learning from you (Wilson, 2000, p.15).

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APPENDIX A

Example Interview Questions for Dan Long

1. I am a student in your seventh grade orchestra, and I am frustrated with my level of ability in comparison to the other students. What would you say to me or recommend for me to do?

2. There are two types of motivation--intrinsic and extrinsic. What types of extrinsic motivation do you use in your seventh grade orchestra? What ways do you initiate intrinsic motivation for your students?

3. What role do you think the choice of repertoire has on the motivation of your students?

4. What do you consider when choosing the repertoire?

5. What role do you think classroom management skills has on the motivation of your students?

6. What is your opinion on the use of competition in the orchestra classroom?

APPENDIX B

Examples of Interview Questions for the Seventh Grade Students

1. How long have you been studying orchestra with Mr. Long?

2. How much longer do you see yourself in orchestra?

3. What made you want to join orchestra?

4. What do you like about your orchestra class? What don't you like?

5. Do you think Mr., Long is a good teacher? Why or why not?

6. Does Mr. Long encourage you to become a better musician?

   7. Explain to me Mr. Long's method of determining seating in orchestra.

APPENDIX C

Consent Form for Dan Long

Dear Mr. Long:

My name is Jennifer Parker, and I am currently working on my masters degree in music education at Michigan State University. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research for my masters thesis. The focus of the thesis will be to study the motivational techniques of an exemplary orchestra teacher. Based on recommendations, your experience, and your many recognitions, I feel you would be an ideal teacher to study. Specifically, I would like to study your work with the seventh grade orchestra. My purpose for this research is to provide practical applications to the classroom for myself and other teachers. The majority of the data I will collect will be interviews and observations of you and your students in the classroom.

With your consent, I will document your teaching by video recording five seventh grade orchestra classes. I will begin with an initial interview with you that would take up to an hour to complete. The interview will be audio recorded. After the interview, I will observe approximately five classes. In addition, ten of your seventh grade students will be selected to be interviewed concerning their opinions about your teaching. This process will also be video recorded. The entire student interview will take between 10-15 minutes to complete. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent of the law. The interviews and classroom observations will only be observed by myself. Please understand that you have every right to refuse to participate. If you choose to participate, you may refuse to answer any of the questions asked of you.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me at (517) 351-8326. You may also contact the chairperson of the International Review Board, David E. Wright, Ph.D. at (517) 355-2180.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Jennifer Parker

_____

I have read the above procedures, and I give my consent to participate in this study. I am aware that I will be video and audio recorded in the process.

                                            _____

                                                        Signature

APPENDIX D

Consent Form for Parents and Students

Dear Parent or Guardian:

My name is Jennifer Parker, and I am currently working on my masters degree in music education at Michigan State University. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research for my masters thesis. I have chosen to study the motivational techniques of an exemplary orchestra teacher in the classroom. Mr. E. Daniel Long has agreed to allow me to study his teaching at Slauson Middle School. The majority of the data I will collect will be interviews of Mr. Long and his students.

I will document his teaching by video recording five seventh grade orchestra classes. In addition, ten of his seventh grade students will be selected to be interviewed concerning their opinions about his teaching. This process will also be video recorded. The entire student interview will take between 10-15 minutes to complete. Because your child may be in either recording, I need to receive both your and your child's consent to video record your child. Your child's participation is strictly voluntary. He or she may choose to answer all, part, or none of the questions. Your child's privacy will be protected to the maximum extent of the law. The interviews and observations will only be observed by myself. If you choose not to give consent for your child's participation, I will position the camera so it will not include your child in the picture during classroom observations.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me at (517) 351-8326. You may also contact the chairperson of the International Review Board, David E. Wright, Ph.D. at (517) 355-2180.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Jennifer Parker

_____

I have read the above procedures, and I give my consent for my child,
_____, to participate in this study. I give permission for my child to be video recorded.

Please check the area(s) in which you are willing to have your child participate:
____The classroom observations
____The student interview   _____
                                              Signature of Parent or Guardian

I have read the above procedures, and I give my consent to participate in this study. I am aware that I will be video recorded in the process.

                                              _____
                                              Student's Signature