

MAKING STRING EDUCATION CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE:
THE MUSICAL LIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN

By

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To Jeff and Clara

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand and explain the violin experiences of African American students at Lincoln Elementary School in northern Florida in order to consider the potential for culturally responsive string education. A hermeneutical approach was used to answer these broad research questions: (1) What are the personal musical lives of these African American children? (2) How do these children perceive the violin program at Lincoln? These will help answer the study's overall research question: how do the individual perceptions of the violin program and the sociocultural musical backgrounds of these students relate.

The interview guide contains two sections that pertain to two dimensions of the children's musical lives: (1) musical background and (2) experience with the violin. Each section contains carefully prepared sequential questions. The questions helped the researcher uncover the details of the children's musical lives and laid the groundwork for an analysis of how their experiences with and perceptions of violin at Lincoln interact with their other—non-violin, non-academic—experiences. The data were analyzed using Spradley's (1979) four-step "Ethnographic Analysis Model." The main activity in this model is to organize the data into domains of similar events. With the help of the interview data and the terms found in the data,

the researcher constructed two detailed taxonomies representing the musical lives and experiences of the violin students.

Analysis of the data revealed that the participants share certain perceptions of musical function; in particular, that music functions to tell stories and has a distinctive beat. These perceptions were deeply ingrained through their experience of music outside of school. The data also revealed that their musical lives and perceptions of playing violin affect each other. For instance, the children discussed playing violin at church, and tried to hear violin music in their favorite songs at home. They also expressed a desire to generate beat on their violins and play familiar songs. Their narratives suggest that they attempt to make the violin experience in school one that is personally meaningful and culturally relevant.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Background

I started teaching violin at Lincoln Elementary School in northern Florida in October 2003. When one of my professors at the University offered me the possibility to assist the violin program there, I was excited, despite the fact that I had very little knowledge of teaching violin to very young children. Eager to prepare myself for the experience, I read some fundamental writings on the Suzuki teaching method. Aware that I needed help, before each class I studied basic ideas on how to incorporate the teaching ideas of Suzuki. Finally, my teaching discovery started. I met with approximately twenty-five students for two days a week. Gaining a better understanding of the Suzuki teaching procedure, and having more practice, my focus began to change from my professional concerns to the quality of the relationship between my students and me. I became more interested in who my students were, where they came from, and what studying violin meant to them. I wanted to learn more about them. Unfortunately, by the end of December 2003, some of my students moved away from town and never returned to Lincoln. Later, I learned that this was a common situation. In search of steady employment to pay the bills, parents had to move to find jobs. After witnessing more of these same types of incidents, I decided to collect more information about my students, focusing on these two questions: what are their life conditions, especially in relation to how they perceive and process their musical lives, and how do these perceptions and processes affect their violin experience at school?

Teachers should always be engaged in the critical evaluation of pedagogy if they hope to remain alert to the needs of students in a changing world. This is part of what it means to have a critical pedagogy: to remain critically engaged with the issues that students face both inside and outside of the classroom. Frank Abraham (2005) states, “The goal of teaching and learning is to

effect a change in the way that both students and their teachers perceive the world” (p. 3). The world is changing and students’ lives change along with it. The world of the Lincoln children is a world of their own, built from their own culture and location. Poverty and sometimes a lack of parental support impact the social reality of my teaching experience at Lincoln. In three years of working with my students at Lincoln, I realized that knowing more about them—better understanding their lives—would broaden my view of their reality, which is not fixed and universal. My own perceptions about Lincoln Elementary and my students, which developed gradually over the course of my first year there, constituted my first awareness of the possibility of creating a dialectic relationship between the students and their teacher.

“Conscientization,” a term coined by Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, means “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (p. 17). Freire continues, “To no longer be prey to oppressive realities’ force, one must emerge from it and turn upon it. This can be done only by means of praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 33). My experience at Lincoln altered how I perceive the world, taught me that education is largely political, and displayed the impact of social and economic realities within the classroom. As a result, I am now, as a teacher, trying to effect positive change in student learning. It is about expanding possibilities in this teaching-learning dialogue by acknowledging who my students are, what their realities, strengths, and needs are, and who I am (what role I play and *can* play) as their teacher and as a figure in their lives.

I am currently in my fourth year at Lincoln, and though I have gained much experience, I continue to make discoveries. I also find that I am more structured, conscious, and deliberate in improving my teaching. I want to interrogate the lived experiences of both my students and

myself. In doing so, I seek answers for these questions: (1) Who are my students? (2) How are their lives different from my own? (3) Why am I teaching the violin? These are not research questions, but they are the questions that initially motivated me as I began to think about a more focused study.

Statement of the Research Problem and Research Questions

Why was a string program created at Lincoln Elementary School? When I asked the administrators this question, they told me that five years ago the principal of the school went to the Florida Music Educators Association Conference. There, she went to the youth orchestra concert and was overwhelmed with disappointment because she didn't see anyone in the orchestra who was black. The experience provoked her to ask: "Why aren't we in this organization?" "Aren't we smart enough?" With these questions, they confronted the dangerous assumption that a school like Lincoln, in an impoverished section of town, has no need for a string program. She also rationalized the situation that there were no African American children playing in the orchestras by concluding that many of their families can't afford private lessons. Aside from these economic factors, the principal's realization of the lack of African American violinists in school orchestras claims several historical, social, and cultural explanations. This research will try to uncover some of these explanations from a local and particular perspective, but first a broader historical perspective should be noted.

The continuous growth in America's minority population is well documented, and affects classroom demographics. Hamann and Walker (1993) write that, as minority classroom enrollment grows, problems arise. Most ethnographic studies after the 1970s paid particular attention to minority education and school failure among predominantly African American, Latino, and American Indian students. Banks (1999) notes that some educational researchers and

theorists tried to understand the experiences of these students (many of whom were and continue to be low-income) and formulate special pedagogies for them. They believed that low-income students could find academic success, but that their “socialization experiences in their home and communities [did] not enable them to attain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that middle class children acquire and that are essential for academic success” (Banks, 1999, p. 15). The educational literature notes that studies focusing on minority and black students’ academic failure are based on the assumptions that (1) there are differences in the communication styles of minority students stemming from their cultural and musical background and school culture; (2) these differences create a cultural discontinuity between minority home culture and the “Anglo culture of the school”; and (3) this cultural clash leads to “conflicts, misunderstandings, and, ultimately failure for those students” (Ledlow, 1992, p. 2).

The great majority of the students at Lincoln Elementary is African American and most come from low socio-economic backgrounds, with ninety-seven percent of the students on the free or fee-reduced lunch program. The historical reality has been that only children from the upper middle class and beyond have had the opportunity to receive private violin lessons. Lucy Green (2003) states,

Since knowledge and skills in Western classical music are often supported by private instrumental lessons, children from families that could not afford to pay the fees missed out on the lessons. Therefore, both for cultural reasons concerning access to musical value, and for economic reasons concerning access to musical tuition, working-class children were less likely to select music courses, and even when they did select them, they tended to be disadvantaged. (p. 267)

Historically, the city where Lincoln is located was quite segregated; integration of the public schools began in the late 1960s. In a poor community like the eastern section of the town where Lincoln is located, however, the fact is that many parents cannot provide their children the same kind of opportunities that wealthier families can. Many of them work and have basic needs that

limit their time at home. Yet, even though many of my students struggle to find family and financial support, the Lincoln Elementary Fine Arts Academy works hard to maintain the violin program in the school curriculum. When I asked Mrs. Hall (Lincoln's Fine Arts facilitator) about how the students' social backgrounds affect their violin experience, she explained:

We realize that their backgrounds affect their violin experience because of the kinds of homes that they come out of. Most of them have parents who have to work more than one job. They have a day job and a night job, so they don't have the family support at home that a lot of other kids perhaps would have. So a lot of times they don't get to practice. They don't get to own their own instruments because of their economic status. And so all of this affects a good violinist and of course here at Lincoln we try to furnish as much support as we can but in a realistic point of view we realize that it takes the family and the school supporting the kids in order for them to get top quality. (Personal Communication, March 12, 2005)

Angeline Powell (2000) points out the growing body of research on the academic achievement of African Americans (p. 4), especially in the fields of science and literature. Most research describes the reasons for the academic failure of these students in economic terms, yet fails to explore the ways in which "successful practices for school success of African Americans provide viable solutions to the discrepancies in academic achievement," (Powell, p. 4) and transform existing and ineffective teaching practices. This is also the case in the field of music education. Most urban schools and minority schools not only lack well-supported and well-funded educational environments, they also lack quality music education and effective and culturally responsive teaching. In addition, many students who attend urban elementary schools come from families with very limited financial and cultural capital.

Why are there so few African American children playing instruments in school orchestras as compared with white children? Historically, African Americans have not been the creators of dominant mainstream culture and ideology in America. They have not been in powerful positions from which to do so. For decades, they were mostly excluded from intellectual projects in

society. White and upper middle class sectors of society have been dominant in most cultural, artistic, and intellectual fields favored by the academy. Since most critical educational theorists would argue that schools are the social and cultural reproducers of the dominant ideology and impart the knowledge and skills needed to maintain the political and economic power structures, there exists a close link between what is taught in the classroom and social class structure. Pierre Bourdieu argues that, through the school system, the dominant class reproduces its own culture and imposes it on other classes. The school system works to reproduce the culture of the dominant class in subtle ways. Its knowledge, teaching approaches, and materials are produced and practiced in ways that have become neutral and “valued.” In other words, they have come to be perceived as natural, even universal. For example, European classical music has been systematically taught in schools, but not popular music, jazz, blues, and popular literature. This ideological pattern reproduces a closed educational system where only certain kinds of music are valued—where European classical music is equated with music itself. A lack of culturally relevant and responsive music (string) teaching might be one of the reasons why there are so few African American children playing in school orchestras as compared with white children. One of the purposes of this research project is to understand the reasons for their under-representation from a critical perspective and to argue for the legitimacy of teaching popular music, jazz, and blues in the classroom.

With this research, I have arrived at a clearer understanding of my own particular, local experience, and have connected it to a more global context. I have researched the violin experiences of African American students and revealed their voices through interpretive analysis in order to gauge the potential for culturally responsive teaching. Interacting and participating musically with the students at Lincoln for four years has led me to understand cultural difference

and seek commonalities between my own cultural and musical history and theirs. Because I believe that music is a socially constructed cultural phenomenon, I have sought to explore the construction of string music at Lincoln, focusing on the musical experiences of children as they relate to their elementary school violin education. Two questions guided my research:

- (1) What are the personal musical worlds of these African American children?
- (2) How do African American students perceive the current violin program at Lincoln and their experience in it?

The findings of this study offer insight for educators interested in culturally responsive string education. The last four years have also caused me to question my own understanding and experience of music and making music, which includes my teaching style, materials, and activities, most of which are based on European and American approaches. I have learned that my way of experiencing music and teaching music is neither the only way nor the best way. It is the same for my students. In order to mediate our different backgrounds and orientations to music, I have created a dialogue among my students, their parents, their school environment, and myself. It is my belief that this dialogue has led me to gain a deeper understanding of African American culture, which is necessary for me if I am to transform my own string teaching pedagogy and make it culturally responsive—in multicultural contexts beyond the African American.

In a qualitative study, the researcher seeks to discover, understand, and describe social and cultural phenomena. Qualitative research describes how something works rather than quantitative research which seeks to answer how well something works (Borg, Gall, & Gall, 1993). Qualitative researchers aim to illustrate their participants' cultures, beliefs, and practices in detail. The qualitative research questions that guided this study were designed to illustrate the

children's cultural background, beliefs, and practices as they relate to their musical lives: (1) to what music are they exposed? (2) in what contexts does this exposure take place? (3) with whom are they exposed to this music? and (4) through what activities are they exposed to this music? Answering these questions helped me better understand the children's personal musical worlds. The other primary question was: how do they perceive the violin program at Lincoln in relation to the musical culture outside of school? Answering these research questions has helped me confront the ultimate purpose of the research, which is to consider how string pedagogy in an African American elementary school could be culturally responsive, how it could be sensitive to and consistently take into account the culture of the children, especially their rich, multidimensional musical lives.

Definitions of Terms

Critical pedagogy refers to a set of educational principles that involve questioning the notion of who holds power in the educational system, how mainstream beliefs disempower and silence historically marginalized communities, and how individuals may be able to take control of their lives.

Culturally responsive teaching refers to practices that aim to help students make connections between the subject to be taught and their history, culture, community, and national and global identities (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Hermeneutics “derives from the Greek word *hermeneuein*, which means ‘to interpret’ or ‘to understand’” (Crotty, 1998, p. 88). Hermeneutics originated as a way of interpreting the Bible but has come to be a method for understanding and interpreting texts and experiences. Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), at the beginning of the twentieth century, extended the idea of hermeneutics to the epistemology and methodology of the human sciences (Schwandt, 2001). From the very beginning, a main theme in hermeneutics has been that the meaning of a part can

only be understood if it is related to the whole (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000; Geertz 1979). Any meaningful action can be considered or read as a text. As Titon (1997) argues, a musical performance (or a musical experience) can be understood as the equivalent of a text.

Hermeneutical research differs from phenomenological research owing to hermeneutical research's emphasis on reflectivity. Analysis of data requires careful interpretation and reflection (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000). Interpretation refers to the fact that "all references to empirical data are the results of interpretation by the researcher" (Alvesson et al., p. 5). Reflection, on the other hand, means that in the research process, there is an ongoing "critical self-exploration" of the researcher's own interpretations of the empirical material. Additionally, it emphasizes the social dimension of being, one's relation to others, and one's embeddedness in a culture.

Phenomenological studies attempt to uncover the essence of the particular experience. The goal of phenomenologists is to understand "the everyday lived experience from the point-of-view of those who live it, for grasping a sense of Being-in-the-world for them" (Chandler, 1996, p. 118). Although phenomenology does not provide the methodological framework for this study, phenomenology and hermeneutics do fall under the interpretivist tradition, and there is some overlap between the two traditions. For instance, as in phenomenology, hermeneutics also focuses on consciousness, experience, and the uniqueness of individuals (Moustakas, 1994).

Reflective/reflexive¹ research refers to "the launching of critical self-exploration of one's own interpretation of empirical material" and paying attention to "the way different kinds of linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements are woven together in the process of knowledge development, during which empirical material is constructed, interpreted and written" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, pp. 5-6).

¹ Based on my readings, researchers use these concepts synonymously. Throughout the study, I will use them similarly.

Significance of the Study

Despite the extensive research on multicultural music education and integration of the music of underrepresented cultures into the music curriculum, research focused on the pedagogy of culturally responsive music teaching is limited in the literature. For instance, I have found no research focused exclusively on the experience of African American children in string programs. Therefore, we do not have data on how African American children's experience playing string instruments and how the classroom pedagogy is accommodated and teachers' perspectives are shaped based on the distinct culture of the children. An important objective of this project was to generate discussions among string and music educators to provoke a search for alternative teaching approaches based on the cultural context of the classroom, and to think beyond one-dimensional understandings of multicultural music education (for example, playing or singing a song from a different culture).

Schools do not exist in a vacuum; they are living organisms. To elaborate on Nieto's (1999) argument, schools reflect our communities, beliefs, and habits, as well as the inequalities and problems of the larger society. For instance, a music classroom is not free from what musically, artistically, and politically happens at home, church, on the street, or in the media. Music teachers—and their students—bring their cultural subjectivities and experiences to the classroom. The research findings confirmed that students are involved in music in a number of environments outside of the classroom, including home and church. Even though they attend a magnet arts school enriched with musical curricula, they rarely talk about school music or music that they experience at school.

The experiences of minority students (especially African Americans) have been well documented in the music education literature. For instance, successful music teaching and learning in urban classrooms (which are culturally, ethnically and socio-economically complex

environments) have concerned music teachers because the materials, teaching techniques, and philosophical perspectives with which they were equipped to teach music generally do not prepare them for unfamiliar or culturally different music classrooms. The review of literature will address the paucity of culturally diverse pedagogies in music graduate schools.

Three questions that I confront in this study focus these concerns: Are there culturally defined and constructed ways and styles of learning in music? Why is there a need for culturally responsive teaching in music education? Can culturally responsive music teaching (vocal/instrumental/general) affect learning and instruction? The questions that drive this study have concerned scholars for decades, but can best be confronted in the context of the children's specific music experiences in and out of the classroom as conveyed in their own narratives.

This study contributes to research on string education, and examines its role in an African American elementary school. Qualitative researchers are not concerned with the generalizability of their results; instead, they are concerned with comparability and translatability (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Therefore, the results of this research might be applicable and transferable to similar school environments and string classrooms that share similar characteristics with the phenomenon and groups studied—predominately non-white classrooms.

Limitations of the Study

Besides the inherent limitations of small sample sizes and the inability to generalize that stem from using a qualitative research design, there are other limitations related to the researcher's cultural background. Even though the researcher has access to the research field and has gradually become an insider and gained acceptance there, she does not share the same racial, ethnic, and historical heritage as the participants of this study. Although this difference might be seen to limit her understanding and interpretation, most qualitative researchers would argue that this aspect might enrich and elevate the quality of and reliability of the study. Since the

researcher does not share the same racial and cultural heritage as the participants, she might be able to approach the issues from a less biased and, perhaps, fresher perspective.

Interviewing children also presents challenges. Eder and Fingerson (2003) state that children may not feel as comfortable in interview settings as adults. Children have their own worlds and it is often difficult to enter them. There are unique techniques, however, that may help children to engage in interview conversations. As mentioned in the data collection procedures section, interviews were conducted during activity time to minimize the artificiality of the interview process. Eder and Fingerson also write, “There are aspects of children’s culture that are difficult to put into words” (p. 41). Conducting interviews during activity time allowed the children to express themselves not only with words but also with the language of music making (violins were provided) and physical motion. The researcher tried to create a comfortable setting in which the children could easily express themselves.

Subjectivity Statement

I grew up in Istanbul, a bustling, vibrant city of twelve million people. Growing up in such a culturally diverse and cosmopolitan city provided me the opportunity to experience various artistic, musical, and social activities. My involvement with Western Art Music—besides listening to popular European and American musicians in the 1980s—began when I was in the eighth grade. I sang in the school choir and really enjoyed singing with other vocal parts. After graduating from middle school, I decided to study music formally. My journey with music continued and intensified when I entered Istanbul Fine Arts High School. I had my best years at Istanbul Fine Arts. We had the best artists-teachers in Istanbul, and they were ready to share their musical wisdom with us. I studied viola, piano, and *solfege* there. We also had a school choir and orchestra. I admired my teachers and was enthusiastic about learning.

These early experiences helped me understand some of the injustices performed—and wrong messages given—by the school system and some of its elitist professors. First of all, most of my friends and I were given the message that we should not consider Turkish Classical, folk, and popular music legitimate curricular material. They also stressed Western art music as the universal ideal for musical training. Turkish music was marginalized and seen as inferior to Western Art Music. The theoretical foundation for their beliefs was strange; they argued that, in traditional Turkish music, for instance, notation is different and improvisation and personal expression (key components of this music) requires a master teacher. A rarely stated rationale for keeping traditional Turkish music out of the curriculum is that, in much of the country's scholarship, it is equated with entertainment. None of our music teachers considered incorporating musical materials that we listened to at home or with our peers. Later, this understanding shaped my future career plans and philosophical stance in music teaching. Slowly, I built my teaching philosophy on the idea that music is a universal phenomenon with distinct localities in terms of music making and reception.

I entered college at Marmara University in Istanbul and studied music education. My observations there remained the same. Turkish music (Classical and folk) was part of the curriculum, but only for a couple of hours a week. Ironically, my friends and I played and sang Turkish music during the lunch breaks and had great fun and pleasure. I love Western Art Music. It is a big part of my musical identity; however, it is sad that I cannot play a Turkish musical instrument and I know little about it theoretically and historically.

Although the modern Republic of Turkey was founded after a war for independence against the West, social reformists turned to the West. They believed that being part of a universal civilization represented by the West was necessary for the new democratic Turkish

Republic. After the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the dominant music style performed and created was Western Art Music. According to the new ideology, Western Art Music had to be accepted because it was associated with the prestige of Western science, technology, political thought, and progress. Turkish Art Music, which became equated with Ottoman ideology, had to be rejected, and the new Turkish nation had to create its own national music. But of course the music of a culture cannot be erased. Like an unchangeable unique identity, it remained in the social and artistic fabric of the nation. Even though Turkish musicians encountered difficulties during this period of reform, they experimented with combinations of both Western and Turkish Art music. For instance, they composed music in the tradition of Western Art Music while incorporating folk and traditional Turkish tunes into them. Finally, it is generally safe to say that traditional Turkish Art Music was not completely neglected, but rather synthesized into a new type of national music. I have grown up with that music.

With this study, I have sought new understandings and perspectives in teaching music (the violin) in terms of how culture can be systematically addressed in music classrooms (especially the violin classroom) to motivate and engage diverse students. I believe that my experiences in Turkey give me a unique insight into the challenges facing music educators today in America, a country that is becoming more and more culturally diverse. My past has taught me a lesson. One cannot pretend that the musics of the home, the church, the street, and the dance hall do not exert great influence upon our students of all ages, especially perhaps our elementary students. Finding ways to synthesize and utilize all types of music in a classroom environment can only make our students more deeply engaged.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the study is to understand and explain the violin experiences of a select group of African American students at Lincoln Elementary School in northern Florida. More specifically, I examine students' perceptions toward and experiences in the violin program and the factors that impact their perceptions and experiences, particularly their accounts of their musical lives outside the classroom. These questions lay the foundation for this study's overall research inquiry, which involves the interactions between their musical lives in and outside of the classroom. To better interpret and understand the collected interview data, a review of the literature will be conducted before, during, and after the data collection process.

The present study is fundamentally related to several central debates in the field of multicultural music education and cultural pedagogies, including the discussion as to whether or not, how, and in what ways culture can be systematically addressed in music classrooms (especially the violin classroom) to motivate and engage diverse students. This literature review focuses on frequently cited research studies on the constructs of culture (especially in sociology and anthropology), multicultural education, and music education.

Since this study incorporates anthropological ideas, perspectives, and methodologies, the concept of culture as “the foundation stone of the anthropological approach” (Masemann, 2003, p. 116) opens this discussion of culture and its role in education. At the same time, I present critical perspectives regarding culture, school, and curriculum as a way of framing the particular experience at Lincoln. An examination of music as a dimension of culture follows this section. In addition, I discuss key concepts and debates about multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogies and present selected contributions from sociological perspectives in education. To maintain focus on the primary goal of this research—to offer insight as to how cultural

understandings will benefit string programs and music education in general—I include critical concepts in this chapter that are repeatedly illustrated and debated in various sections of this work, especially those related to social class and cultural capital. African American students and their musical culture are examined and integrated into this established body of scholarship.

Culture and Education

Cultural studies combines various disciplines such as cultural anthropology, sociology, philosophy, literary theory, film, and music to study a particular cultural phenomenon in societies (Giroux, 1988, p. 143). Cultural studies researchers analyze and connect particular cultural phenomena to broader issues such as ideology, social class, power, race, and gender without overlooking their political and historical context (Sardar, 2005). Kincheloe (2004) states,

Unlike traditional humanistic studies, cultural studies questions the equation of culture with high culture; instead, cultural studies asserts that numerous expressions of cultural production should be analyzed in relation to other cultural dynamics and social and historical structures. These expressions include but are not limited to popular culture. (p. 56)

This research tradition appears in many studies in education and music education. The research based on cultural studies in the field of education and music education owes a great deal to cultural anthropology. The research methods, theories, definitions, and notions that were and are borrowed from cultural anthropology impact studies in those disciplines. As mentioned earlier, culture is one of the primary concerns of any anthropological approach. When education (especially arts education) and educational issues are embedded within cultural values and practices, the difference between education and culture collapses. As Masemann (2003) claims, “Education can be seen through a quite different lens from the anthropological perspective than from the perspective of other disciplines” (p. 115). Anthropology attends to culture and cultural diversity by unveiling the cultural aspects of communication, language, education, religion, socialization, music making, and the arts among the members of various cultures. America has

many cultural variations and subcultures. How do these impact education, teaching, learning, and curriculum? It is crucial for educational researchers to answer this question as a way to understand cultural variety in the classroom. This perspective lies at the heart of this study; this chapter's major themes and arguments should be read through this perspective. What, then, is culture? How is it learned and taught? How do culture and schooling interact? What aspects of culture are embedded in school curricula and pedagogy? Before answering these questions, let me begin with some common definitions of culture.

In European thought, the term “culture” traces its roots to German Romanticism and the idea of the *Volksgeist*, meaning the “spirit of a people.” The term was later adopted for anthropological use (Culture, n.d.). British anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (1871-1958) defined culture “in its broad, ethnographic sense [as] that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (p. 1). Other anthropologists and researchers define culture in similarly totalizing ways. In *Culture: Critical Concepts in Sociology* (cited by Clyde Kluckhohn in *Mirror for Man*), Jenks (2002) argues that culture is “the total way of life of a people”; “the social legacy the individual acquires from his group”; and “a way of thinking, feeling and believing” (p. 174). Clifford Geertz (1973), the most influential American anthropologist of the past four decades, offers one of the most popular definitions of culture in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, where he defines it as “a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which people communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (p. 89). For Geertz, the concept of culture is a semiotic one, meaning that it should be seen in symbolic forms (“socially established codes”) and that a culture's members interact and understand each other through semiotic codes (p. 6). Such members construct these symbols

with social significance and meaning, particularly in the form of language use, art creation, and music making. The meaning of symbols is shared among a community, so the meaning is social. An illustration of this concept should clarify. Curtis (1988) observed that during a collegiate gospel choir performance at a high school, some black students showed their appreciation by standing up and clapping “during a particularly spirited rendition of a music section” (p. 23). Because the audience behavior clashed with mainstream expectations, teachers approached the students and told them to sit down. Curtis argued that the “teachers involved failed to understand the black aesthetic experience as it relates to music. In church, gospel choir selections are frequently accompanied by standing, dancing, and clapping. Audience participation is a normal, desirable part of the black aesthetic experience” (p. 24). Many of these practices, such as dancing and unique emotional and musical expressions during worship, characterize the African American gospel music experience. This example shows the importance of realizing a culture’s symbolic forms and meanings in their historical context, and then welcoming them in practice.

Geertz (1973) writes:

Believing Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (p. 5)

His hermeneutical approach provides a reason to engage in qualitative research. Throughout his work, Geertz emphasizes interpretation, arguing that the analysis of any culture should be like reading a text, “sorting out the structures of signification [...] and determining their social ground and import.” His work offers paths for locating meaning through the study of a culture’s symbol systems. Since Geertz understands culture to be “a context, something within which [meaning] can be intelligibly described,” such an understanding can be achieved through “thick description”—also called ethnography (p. 14). When we study musical behaviors—or a

particular cultural phenomenon related to musical behaviors—we can observe what people listen to, how they make music, how music functions in their lives, and we can ask them questions. In Geertz’s understanding, this immediate observation would be “thin description.” On the other hand, efforts to understand the meaning(s) behind particular musical behaviors (phenomena) and how members of a culture interpret those phenomena, communicate through it, and finally locate it in its social and historical context would be called “thick description.” Decoders of culture should remain aware that “symbolic systems are historically constructed, socially maintained and individually applied” (quoted from Timothy Rice who originally cited from Geertz, p. 473).

In this study, the analytical method used to understand and explain the violin experiences of some African American students employs “thick description”; it is interpretive and based on the lived experiences of the students. Inspired by Geertz’s ideas, I have not sought to become my students or to mimic them; instead, I have sought to establish a dialogue: “to converse with them” and “to enlarge the universe of human discourse” by documenting and describing their musical experiences (Geertz, pp. 13-14). Even though ethnography is not the main methodology of this work, to understand the possible meanings of students’ past and current musical experiences and how they relate to violin, I use my recorded observations and notes during teaching and interview sessions as a guideline for analysis. During the analytical process, I also try to isolate important elements in students’ responses, find connections among them, and describe their experiences to connect them to a larger context. In doing so, I use interpretation based on students’ real accounts to search for possible meanings behind the experiences.

Wagner (1981) has a different understanding of researchers who attempt to understand and interpret cultures. According to him, they themselves invent culture. Wagner (1981) believes

that what we call “culture” is actually an anthropological search for the “phenomenon of man”

(p. 1). He continues,

We might actually say that an anthropologist “invents” the culture he believes himself to be studying [...] Yet this explanation is only justified if we understand the invention to take place objectively, along the lines of observing and learning, and not as a kind of free fantasy [...] It is only through “invention” of this kind that the abstract significance of culture (and of many another concepts) can be grasped and only through the experienced contrast that his own culture becomes “visible.” In the act of inventing another culture, the anthropologist invents his own, and in fact he reinvents the notion of culture itself. (p. 4)

Wagner’s argument about interpreting and re-creating cultures resembles what Chandler (1997) states with a quote from Max Van Maanen: “each academic sees and interprets the world through her/his own particular tunnel of vision” (p. 83). Wagner’s argument raises important questions concerning objectivity. When we study a particular culture, to what extent can (or should) we be objective toward that culture or particular cultural phenomenon? Should we position ourselves as insiders or outsiders? What distance, if any, should a researcher maintain from the culture? As a researcher in the hermeneutical tradition, I do not hesitate to bring my subjectivity to the research site, but that does not mean that I interpret and analyze the participants’ responses through my cultural perspective. In the hermeneutical process, both researcher and participants are given opportunities to learn. Wagner (1981) states, “If culture were an absolute, objective ‘thing,’ then ‘learning’ would be the same for all people, native as well as outsider, adult as well as child” (p. 8). When I spend time with my participants, I learn about them and they learn about me; mutual learning is a valuable research goal.

Wasson, Stuhr, and Petrovich-Mwaniki (1990) posit that culture has four characteristics: “(a) It is learned through enculturation and socialization, (b) it is shared by most of its members, (c) it is adaptive, and (d) it is dynamic” (p. 3). Most knowledge that is transmitted through generations in our homes and classrooms has strong social and cultural implications. When

children start to perceive the world around them and to interact with their parents and siblings, they begin to imitate and process culture. This process, often called “enculturation,” is “the process of learning how to be a competent member of a specific culture or group” (Masemann, p. 116). Barrett (1984) posits that in almost every society people learn specific behaviors and norms from members of previously encultured generations. The learning is not random; it occurs “in accordance with prescribed rules and norms established in their social systems” (p. 63), and constitutes the only way that one may become an accepted member of society.

Musical behaviors are learned and transferred similarly. Welch and Adams (2001) report that one of the key elements in learning music is musical enculturation. According to them, individuals are born with “genetic dispositions to attend to sound and to differentiate the sounds that they hear” and that “this predisposition is shaped by the actual sounds from the culture and the ways that music is organized within the culture” (Welch et al., p. 7). Later, individuals develop an appreciation toward “what counts as music in [their] home culture.” Welch and Adams (2001) further state, “Music learning is shaped and influenced by a particular set of contexts [such as] learning as an individual, in a group, in a formal school context, and within the wider community and culture” (p. 4).

What happens, however, to individuals who do not live in homogenous cultural environments? Even though they might live in homogenous neighborhoods or study in homogenous classrooms where what they learn, read, or sing is familiar, cultural interactions and transmissions from other cultures will inevitably occur. Moreover, what happens to societies with established cultural systems that are increasingly exposed to modernization, globalization, and technological change? This process is often referred to as “acculturation,” which involves “cultural transfer from one group to another” (Masemann, 2003, p. 116). Acculturation may

occur through a “transfer of knowledge, skills or attitudes,” and can occur between two or more societies or between various cultural groups in the same society (like urban cultures or youth sub-cultures). The multicultural classroom in America has recently become a focal point of acculturation owing to a pair of factors. We must first consider geographical and geopolitical shifts, or what Wasson et al. (1990) refer to as “recent continental and intercontinental migration patterns” (p. 2). More importantly, there has occurred a broadening of the curriculum, teaching methods, and approaches in music education itself. Debates on multiculturalism have led the field to adjust itself and introduce other musical cultures and musical expressions into its pedagogy. This subject will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Culture, School and Curriculum: Critical Perspectives

Education and culture are linked. As Masemann (2003) suggests, education is more than information transfer. It contains a cultural component. Cohen (1971) defines education as “the inculcation of standardized and stereotyped knowledge, skills, values and attitudes by means of standardized and stereotyped procedures” (p. 22). Most cultural researchers would agree that education involves cultural transmission; the direction of the cultural transfer, however, is critical in terms of power relations between and among different cultural and ethnic groups. Critical theorists in education such as Paulo Freire, Michael Apple, Henry Giroux, and Peter McLaren argue that schools are social and cultural producers of mainstream social beliefs and practices, and provide knowledge and skills that support the dominant political and economic powers. Their works often address issues of educational theory and the practices, politics, and culture of schooling. Giroux (1988) argues that

critical educational theory set itself the task of uncovering how domination and oppression are produced within the various mechanisms of schooling. Rather than accept the notion that schools are vehicles of democracy and social mobility, educational critics make such an assumption problematic. (p. xxix)

Critical educators believe in analyzing and transforming the school system, addressing inequalities in the system, curriculum, and its forms of knowledge. For such a transformation to happen, teachers need to critically review, confront, and challenge the political issues in schooling.

Critical theorists also believe that teachers should engage in constant dialogue with their students so that they can understand students' problems in their communities and at school. In *Ideology and Curriculum*, Apple (1979) argues that teaching is a form of cultural transmission. In his definition of enculturation, "Educational institutions are usually the main agencies of transmission of an effective dominant culture, and this is now a major economic as well as cultural activity; indeed it is both in the same moment" (p. 6). Schools equip individuals with skills such as critical thinking, technology use, and communication so that they can compete for critical positions in the workforce. During his speech at the U.S. Chamber Education and Workforce Summit in Washington, D.C., Chairman of the Federal Reserve Benjamin Bernanke (2007) remarked:

I don't really need to convince you that, as an investment, education provides excellent returns, both for individuals and for society. As executives accustomed to making hard cost-benefit decisions, you doubtless assign a high priority to the quality of your business's workforce because you know that a key—perhaps the key—to your success is the capabilities of the people you employ [...] Economists have long recognized that the skills of the workforce are an important source of economic growth. Moreover, as the increase over time in the returns to education and skill is likely the single greatest cause of the long-term rise in economic inequality, policies that lead to broad investments in education and training can help reduce inequality while expanding economic opportunity.

While education has cultural values and benefits, it obviously plays an important role in supporting economic growth. Spring (2001) argues that the well-known rhetoric of "equality of educational opportunity" means that everyone has an equal chance to receive a quality education. Since most public schools in America are funded by local property taxes, there is a discrepancy

between schools in wealthy and poor communities. This real inequality in education has been documented. In *Savage Inequalities*, Kozol (1991) reports, “Average expenditures per pupil in the city of New York in 1987 were some \$5,500. In the highest spending suburbs of New York funding levels rose above \$11,000, with the highest districts in the state at \$15,000” (pp. 83-84). These economic inequalities are clear. Kozol clearly demonstrates that students from rich communities have greater access to the knowledge, skills, and cultural capital needed to compete in the workplace. Little has changed since the publication of his book.

What about cultural and social inequalities in our schools? How do critical educators and theorists view the interaction between culture and education? If one of the important roles of education is cultural transmission, then it is important for teachers to question, analyze, and understand the dynamics and direction of this transmission. Teachers should ask these questions: Education for what purpose and for whom? Whose knowledge and culture is transmitted and why? Why is it organized and taught in a particular way to particular groups?

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu developed and introduced important concepts and theoretical perspectives into the field of sociology. His major concepts—“cultural capital,” “habitus,” and “social and cultural reproduction”—resonate beyond the field of sociology. In education and especially music education (recently), his concepts have assisted researchers in analyzing schooling from the point of view that education is a field in which the dominant culture can produce and reproduce its own values and norms. Bourdieu argues that “The way in which the school legitimates the dominant culture, by presenting as a ‘natural’ form of pedagogy [...] belongs, in fact, to only the dominant groups in society” (Gordon, 1984, p. 107). Children who are socialized within the dominant cultural values and norms at school will most likely be more successful than children who are not socialized within this culture, forcing us to think about

knowledge as power (and specifically, whose knowledge as power) in cultural production.

Bourdieu argues that individuals can be mapped in various fields in the social life. These fields are the places where they perform various actions consciously or unconsciously. They lose, gain, profit, and/or acquire the power of cultural capital during those interactions. In the social life, their resources decide their locations and impact how and what kinds of cultural capital they acquire.

Bourdieu (1986) suggests that these resources take the form of wealth, privilege, and cultural and social capital. He also believes that the dominant groups control these resources (Bourdieu, 1986; Harker, 1984; Johnson, 1993). Johnson (1993) comments on Bourdieu's important notion of "cultural capital" as "a form of knowledge, an internalized code or cognitive acquisition which equips the social agent with empathy towards, appreciation for or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artifacts" (p. 7). If knowledge is power and cultural capital as a form of knowledge is controlled by the dominant group, then "schools take the cultural capital of the dominant group as the natural and only sort of proper capital, and treat all children as if they have equal access to it" (Harker, 1984, p. 3). For instance, the majority of music sources used in classrooms in America include "valued" and "serious" music literature known as "canons" that reflect the cultural capital of Western (Anglo-American) society. The Euro-American musical canon is the only one with valued cultural capital. The music curriculum is also taught in a way that does not reflect a diversity of teaching and musical styles. Do all students come to school with the same amount of cultural capital? More pointedly, are some more familiar with the teaching materials and the way they are taught in the first place? One of the purposes of the current study is to address questions such as these.

Belz (2006) argues that music teacher training institutions in America lack multicultural perspectives and that students are “being [taught] in a vacuum, resulting in music educators seemingly not interested in or unaware of the varied traditions of music making in our world” (p. 42). Most music schools in higher education train music teachers to teach the Euro-American canon without understanding that an artwork, musical work, or pedagogical approach is embedded in culture, society, history, and politics. The majority of music graduates are hence unaware of the various social categories that affect children’s musical learning; such groups include gender, family, peer networks, social class, and ethnicity (Welch & Adams, 2001). This is not a new discovery. In the 1940s, Charles Seeger, a well-known American musicologist, drew attention to the assumptions that American music educators reflected in their teaching practices (McCarthy, 1995). According to McCarthy (1995),

Seeger discussed the assumption that music progressed from lower to higher stages, from folk to art music. Traced by the “advanced” culture, a fixed, one-directional evolutionary pattern led somewhat naively to itself as representing the highest stage. Second, he warned teachers to “be careful to avoid the fallacy that music is a ‘universal’ language.’ He explained it by pointing out that ‘what music we know, we know only in the frame of our own culture, in which a certain place and function is allowed to it by custom.’ He urged teachers to learn more about various idioms of American music culture, while acknowledging the difficulty of moving beyond their own. (p. 275)

Every society tends to naturalize and universalize its own cultural values and systems and believe that they are superior (Turino, 1989), but the history of European and American colonialism and the plight of American Indians, Black Americans, and various immigrants in the U.S. educational system force academics and researchers to examine cultural issues and the implications of history. The examples that follow are designed to illustrate the influences of European cultural colonialism at the intercontinental level. In the postcolonial world, it is crucial to realize the great influence of European (especially Western European) and American culture in every corner of the world. The economic, political, cultural, technological, and social

influences are impossible to miss. For all its good, “globalization,” according to Arnove (2003), “[or] the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” tends to reproduce inequality in terms of resources (p. 3).

Even though globalization promotes world music and the distribution of non-western musics worldwide, the influence of American pop music and culture and European musics during the period of European colonialism (Jones, 2007) have tended to overwhelm this diversity. Jones, in his discussion of the effects of globalization on music making and music education, argues that growth in digital technology and increased access to recorded music has changed how people engage music and make music in new and different ways. Jones frames these effects in terms of the objectification and commodification of music, a process whereby musical traditions shifted from “expression[s] of a traditional collective identity to ‘the mass culture of technical reproduction and industrial commercialization’” (p. 4). Perhaps these trends influence music at the local level most heavily.

Ross (2004) provides an example of the influence of colonialism on the traditional arts of Ghana and how this influence creates conflicts in the current educational system. She investigates Ghana’s contemporary educational system, especially arts education and the policies that represent Ghana in the midst of modernization. Ross (2004) describes Ghana’s modern educational system as a “British/missionary model inherited from the colonial era, Western science, urbanization, cultural commodifications, and Christianity” (p. 1). Ross observes the conflicts between that traditional educational system and newer trends. Supporters of the traditional system—ironically—view traditional (indigenous) arts education as valuable. According to them, this tradition must be protected and transferred to future generations owing

to the country's unique cultural heritage. On the other hand, supporters of the contemporary system associate the artistic artifacts and performances of indigenous art with African "primitivism," and want to follow "modern and progressive" countries and their educational materials and methods (i.e. the "dominant value" educational system of the West). Ross examines how postcolonial conflicts in culture manifest themselves in education.

Similar to the work of Ross, Herbst, de Wet, and Rijdsdijk (2005) analyze two major areas in South Africa's music education system. First, they pinpoint the absence of indigenous knowledge systems in music education as a result of colonization; some Western scholars even worked on the assumption that "music education was only introduced to the African continent with the arrival of Western teaching ideologies and methodologies" (p. 264). Second, they discuss the institutionalization of music education. One of the strongest influences of Western cultural values is Christianity. Herbst et al. (2005) found that "Christian beliefs led to the decline of many indigenous cultural practices. Drumming and dancing, for example, were deemed pagan activities and were therefore banned" (p. 262).

Jacobs and Goodman (2006) state:

Education "as a field of distinctions and identities" forms one of the sites in which class practices are negotiated and reformulated; a site in which the borderlines of class are realized and reproduced to distribute unevenly and unequally forms of social and cultural capital. Like culture, which Bourdieu sees both as transformative and as a means of social distinction, education is a site of complex processes of inclusion and exclusion; a locus of social reproduction that also contains the potential to be a liberating force for personal self-expression and fulfillment. (670)

Critical ideas in education keep our minds fresh; constant questioning can create pessimism and offer productive solutions. The studies from Africa noted above are important because they illustrate how classrooms can be places where children with different backgrounds and identities can express themselves freely. Music education, especially, can be a "liberating force" by

offering an environment where children can express themselves in culturally appropriate manners. During the last half of the twentieth century, educational scholars and researchers offered creative, humanistic, and constructive formulations toward the negotiation of “local and global” and “dominant and silenced” in education. In the next section, I will address these progressive formulations: multiculturalism, multicultural education and music education, and culturally responsive teaching.

Multicultural Education: An Overview

Following the civil rights movements of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, an “alternative ideological solution for balancing unity and diversity in America” was offered in the form of multiculturalism (Citrin, Sears, Muste, & Wong, 2001, p. 247). The main purpose of the multicultural movement was to preserve ethnic and minority cultures and protect them from assimilation. Citrin et al. (2001) state,

Proponents of multiculturalism hold that membership in a “societal culture” with its own language and history is necessary for the individual’s dignity and self realization. They are convinced that “the universal, *individual* rights promised by liberalism are insufficient protection for the survival of minority cultures.” (p. 247)

Jay (1997) suggests that the movement of multiculturalism has two distinct directions. The first is pluralistic and is often associated with “identity politics,” which is meant to celebrate cultural and individual differences and acknowledge the importance of protecting the cultural practices of various ethnic and cultural groups. The other direction is more critical and “oppositional rather than pluralist” (Jay et al., p. 104). Often called “radical multiculturalism,” this direction of the movement “targets the unequal distribution of power in society and insists on analyzing how cultural divisions are constructed historically through racist policies or other institutionalizations of oppression” (p. 104). To elaborate on Jay’s distinction: the first grouping of multiculturalists would be satisfied with celebrating Black History Month and “teaching the appreciation of

African American cultural forms” (p. 105) and musical genres; radical multiculturalists, on the other hand, would think that taking a month to celebrate cultures does no more than scratch the surface. They would possibly see it as little more than a placation or a way to make power interests “feel good about themselves” (p. 105). They would rather seek the historical (and perhaps political) reasons why African Americans sing blues and spirituals (p. 105). Both directions are valuable, and music educators should work to apply both in their teaching practices. It is important to acknowledge and incorporate important cultural events in the music classroom. Sometimes music teachers may find celebrating specific cultural events beneficial as a way of introducing unfamiliar concepts to students. These events can serve as warm-ups for further multicultural curriculum practices. The scholars in the field of education and music education also address the multiculturalists’ concerns, a primary one being an “overemphasis on ethnic divisions and the lack of the ‘other’ types of perspectives” (Chandler, 2003, p. 131), such as individuality, personal agency, and identity. These scholars demand that multiculturalists emphasize and address differences within the same cultural groups and avoid stereotyped representations of entire groups of people (Jay, 1997).

Banks (1995) explains that African Americans, the primary participants in the civil rights movements, saw schools as ideological battlegrounds and sought changes in educational institutions. Since the 1960s, the scope and definition of multicultural education have been constantly expanded based on the needs of the society. An authority in the field, Banks (1995) defines multicultural education as the need “to reform the school and other educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups will experience educational equality” (Banks et al., p. 3). Multicultural practices and modifications have included ethnic studies courses in schools, bicultural and “bilingual classes, cultural heritage months, the

inclusion of minority and women authors in anthologies, and the revision of history textbooks” (Chandler, 1997, p. 138). As Gay (1995) writes, it is not easy to define multicultural education because it is a “metadiscipline” (p. xii), meaning that it reflects a wide variety of perspectives from diverse disciplines and theories. For instance, Nieto (1999) defines multicultural education in a sociopolitical context. According to her,

multicultural education is a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism that students, their communities, and teachers represent. Multicultural education permeates the curriculum and instructional strategies used in schools, as well as the instructions among teachers, students, and parents, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning. Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change, multicultural education promotes the democratic principles of social justice. (p. 3)

Scholars approach multicultural education from different paradigms. Chandler (1997) argues that Banks’s most valuable contribution to the field is his emphasis on deconstructing the myth of white homogeneity and allowing students to explore an ethnic group with which they might identify. On the other hand, Nieto (1999) points out that multicultural education should be for all students—not only students of color. Instead of using multicultural education and its approaches as an alternative formulation for children “at risk,” or children who are poor and from inner-city schools, Nieto (1999) insists that all students should benefit from multicultural education, as it focuses on school reform such as changing the curriculum, the environment, school structure, and instructional strategies. Most leaders in the field would agree that multicultural education “recognizes the need for meaningful knowledge construction and the especial need of minority and urban youth for equal opportunity education” (Chandler, 1997, p. 129). As such, multicultural education is as interested in the cultural forces at work behind pedagogy as in pedagogy itself.

Banks (1999) offers eight benchmarks toward achieving an effective multicultural school and classroom. Three of them are related to teaching practices and the knowledge construction process (curriculum), which is closely related to the purposes of the current study. Banks states that in a multicultural classroom, the curriculum should be transformational and action-focused. As opposed to transformational curriculum, some curriculum approaches—such as the contributions approach or the additive approach—are concerned with adding multicultural concepts and materials into the mainstream curriculum activities. Banks advocates that there must be fundamental changes in the curriculum and curriculum activities so that students can see and understand common and familiar concepts and experiences from different ethnic and cultural perspectives. He believes that such a change in the curriculum can only achieve developing students' understanding of knowledge construction and foster critical thinking and ultimately lead to a social change. Banks also supports the idea that teaching strategies should be personalized, constructivist, and empowering.

Children come to school from different cultural groups and bring their cultural learning and resources. Teaching strategies should help children to use their pre-learning and cultural resources in classroom activities. Some teaching strategies might be used to modify students' negative attitudes toward different racial and cultural groups, their art, history and life styles. Teaching materials should also represent diverse, ethnic, and cultural works and ideas. Banks states that in order to bring effective changes in schools, multicultural curriculum must be conceptualized more than a content integration. To be able to have a multicultural education for cross-cultural understanding, a dynamic and pluralistic curriculum must represent the differences, challenges and diversities among cultures thorough teaching and learning materials.

Multiculturalism and Music Education

Studying music in a cultural context is not a recent phenomenon. For a long time, musical behaviors and experiences have been understood (if only implicitly) in cultural (multicultural/multiethnic) perspectives. As Elliott (1995) maintains, “all forms of music making and music listening are embedded in specific contexts: relevant social networks of musically significant people, productions, and beliefs” (p. 10). After the second half of the twentieth century, many researchers in ethnomusicology attempted to investigate musical behaviors in different cultures and analyze them in their social and cultural contexts. The field of music education has finally begun to benefit from such work. Before then, most musical scholars approached music from the standpoint of technical analysis. While they did collect musical examples from other cultures, their analysis did not involve understanding the particular musical performance or product in its social and cultural contexts. Additionally, their analyses and evaluations of music from other cultures were often constructed from the point of view of Western culture. This form of ethnocentrism remained the norm in music studies for centuries.

Multiculturalism in music education began developing in the 1970s. Even earlier, in 1967, music education specialists articulated in the Tanglewood Declaration the necessity of integrating music of other cultures into the curriculum. Volk (1993) notes that between 1967 and 1992, the *Music Educators Journal* began devoting numerous articles and book reviews to multicultural music education. After the 1980s, the articles began to focus on instructional strategies and teacher training in multicultural music education. When the standards were written for arts education as a core curricular subject in 1994, the National Standards in Music Education stated the need to incorporate diverse styles of music in music curricula in *The School Music Program: A New Vision*.

In *Music, Education, and Multiculturalism: Foundations and Principles*, Volk (1998) defines multicultural music education as the “teaching of a broad spectrum of music cultures in the music curriculum, primarily focusing on ethnocultural characteristics rather than the larger definition of multiculturalism accepted in education today” (p. 4). In fact, scholars of multicultural music education approach their work from different perspectives. One approach to multicultural music education derives from the notion that music is not a universal language, but, rather, activity that takes place worldwide in different manifestations; Eurocentric scholars might use the phrase “universal language” to convey what they consider the supremacy of Western music. Scholars who adopt this approach emphasize the different ways of music making throughout the world, and they approach multicultural music education either as “world musics” education or studying and teaching the “world of musics” in America (the various musical traditions found in the United States). For instance, Nettl (1992) states, “each people has its own musical system which reflects and expresses the fundamental values and cultural structures of its society” (p. 3). For this reason, it is important to emphasize diversity in making music, and to integrate world musics into the instructional context (Campbell, 2004; Volk, 1998; Wa Mukuna, 1997).

The rising interest in ethnomusicological research among music education researchers is another development that helped them to see music making as a world phenomenon and to advance their perspectives through multicultural music education. The ideas and theories of Alan Merriam, John Blacking, Mantle Hood, and Bruno Nettl rank among the most influential in the field. Merriam, a pioneer in ethnomusicology, defined ethnomusicology as the anthropological study of music. In *The Anthropology of Music* (1964), he emphasized cultural and social factors in research. Blacking, an influential figure in anthropology and ethnomusicology, followed

Merriam's tradition with a unique way of understanding and analyzing music. His analysis of world musical cultures has influenced music researchers who try to transform music education in "schools and communities and in academic and applied studies at the university level" (Campbell, 2000, p. 337). Blacking (1973) saw music making as a universal human behavior as well as a sound system. In *How Musical is Man*, he defined music as "humanly organized sounds" and analyzed the concepts of "musical," "musicality," "musical ability," and "musical creativity" in cultural contexts (p. 32). He offered critiques of most studies that dealt with the psychology of music, as these studies are set within the context of Western musical and cultural traditions. He believed that music is "something people do" as individuals and parts of larger communities, pointing out that musical ability is a defining characteristic of being human and that music constitutes part of daily human life; it does not belong to the privileged elites. Blacking supports his arguments with his fieldwork observations done in the Venda musical culture of South Africa. There, the function of music making is more than the preparation of a final product, such as giving a concert or playing a concerto. It is more a shared, continuous, and pleasurable experience. For instance, "The Venda say: 'man is man because of his associations with other men.' Venda music is not an escape from reality; it is an adventure into reality [...] It is an experience of becoming" (p. 28). With his analyses of Venda music, Blacking shows—as a characteristic of Venda music making—the different ways that one, two, or three Venda players might produce the same surface structures of music. Not only is music a shared experience, but it is also a space for expressing individuality. To make fair value judgments, Blacking proposes that we need to look for relationships between "patterns of human organization and the patterns of sound produced as a result of organized interaction" (p. 32). A great deal of music research explores how culture shapes the cognitive processes of music making. While contexts surely

vary, music teachers who are willing to construct a multicultural music classroom may benefit from the work initiated by Blacking.

Over the last several decades, leading North American ethnomusicologists and music educators have collaborated to produce materials on teaching world musics. Patricia Shehan Campbell (1999), one of the leaders in multicultural music education, states:

In the flood of public school music practices in this century, perhaps no other tidal wave trend has been as significant as multi-cultural music education [...] Multicultural matters loom large in music education practices today, relative to both the musical repertoire for performance, listening and analysis as well as the curricular approaches that frame its transmission and acquisition in schools. (p. 358)

Demographic changes in America have impacted music education (Volk, 1998). For example, schools with high Latino student populations, especially in Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California, involve mariachi band activities in curricular practices (Campbell, 2002). From the multicultural perspective, awareness of diversity should be heightened, and demographic changes should be reflected in music classrooms. We tend to romanticize the notion that schools are innocent places, or the problems there are limited to class size or lack of funding. While these issues are important, working from an awareness of cultural (and socio-economic diversity) can help foster better learning environments. The question as to whether a multicultural classroom is a *better* one reaches beyond the scope of the current study. Elliott (2005b) argues, however, that music is inherently multicultural.

In “From Herscher to Harlem: A Subjective Account,” Allsup (1997) writes of cultural difference in the music classroom: “it was not possible to teach [music] in New York City the same way it was taught in Herscher, Illinois” (p. 33). He continues: “during six years of teaching music in New York’s poorest neighborhood, I have gone from traditional ‘master/apprentice’ philosophy of music education to one focused on and designed around an understanding of my

students' lives" (p. 33). Allsup (1997) summarizes some strategies that worked in his instrumental teaching and in his formation of an orchestra at a school in Harlem, the foremost of which are the establishment of nontraditional class groupings, starting with material that students know, teaching through rap, and the use of keyboards for popular rhythm to integrate what students hear on the radio and TV at home.

Philosophical Perspectives on Music Education

The philosophical turn in music education in the early 1990s augments the world musics approach discussed above. Before the 1990s, the dominant philosophy in music education was "music education as aesthetic education." Abraham Shwadron and Bennett Reimer were the well-known proponents of this approach. They sought to establish a sound philosophy to emphasize and advocate music education in the school curriculum. According to Reimer (1989), "the most important concept in the history of music education [is] the concept of aesthetic education" (p. 24). Reimer's (1989) philosophy of music education is based on the premise that "the essential nature and value of music education are determined by the nature and value of the art" (p. 1). His philosophy of music education is built on "absolute expressionism," which insists that the artistic meaning and value of an artwork are internal to its structure. If students are to have an artistic experience, they must search for meaning and value in the artwork. According to absolute expressionists, even though "nonartistic references [such as lyrics and historical and political influences] in a work of art" have importance, they are [and should be] "transformed and transcended by the internal artistic form" (Reimer, 1989, p. 27). According to Reimer, the role and major function of music education should be to educate human feeling "through the development of responsiveness to the intrinsically expressive qualities of sound" (p. 53). Reimer (1989) argues that such an intrinsic artistic quality can be observed in "timeless monuments of art" (p. 27) and that musical materials used in the classroom "should be good music which means

genuinely expressive music” (p. 53). On the other hand, in what may be considered a nod toward multiculturalism, Reimer (1989) states that some musical materials (for example, jazz, rock, and folk), which reflect the music of various ethnic and cultural groups in American society, can be considered as “proper sources for finding expressive music” (p. 54).

McCarthy and Goble (2002) write that music education as aesthetic education “focuses on preparing students to perceive and respond appropriately to musical works as forms of art—especially great works or ‘master pieces’—in order to ‘educate their feelings’ and to evoke in them ‘aesthetic experience’” (p. 21). To the contrary, for some scholars such as Thomas Regelski and David J. Elliott, music education as aesthetic education “cannot be beneficial in organizing and rethinking the realities of contemporary music education” (as cited in Westerlund, 2003, p. 45). They believe that approaching music teaching and learning aesthetically may fail to capture the multiplicity of musical practices worldwide and may neglect various sociological, political, and cultural dimensions of music (McCarthy & Goble, 2005). In various musical traditions, the musical experience cannot be understood as an aesthetic experience the way it is in Western societies (Westerlund, 2003). As she argues, “Aesthetic refers to a directly contemplative, abstract, and intellectual experience. Since this contemplative ideal for artistic experience can be traced to a particular historical period [the Romantic period] in Western thinking...there are enough reasons to suspect that a pluralistic music education cannot simultaneously be aesthetic” (p. 45). The primary reason involves the fact that Romantic artistic philosophy was essentially the articulation of white, male elites who were able to equate the Euro-American aesthetic with some notion of a universal aesthetic.

Elliott (2005a) further explains that aesthetic theory cannot be easily divorced from Romantic ideology, nor its social phenomena such as “the decline of the European aristocracy

and the rise of the middle class” (p. 23). According to Elliott (1995) the new Romantic ideology imposed “the autonomy of the individual and, therefore, the irrelevance of an individual’s background” and acknowledged the individual and “inner worth” (p. 23). The main goal of this aesthetic ideology was to create a new aesthetic realm in which audiences of the century would distance themselves from the social and practical contexts of musical sounds for the purpose of entering the “quasi-religious” world of aesthetic experience (p. 25). Elliott (1995) criticizes music education philosophers who embrace this aesthetic concept of music (and music education) as uncritical and unaware of the contextual and historical realities of this aesthetic theory, especially its tendency to divorce itself from the lived experiences of human beings.

An opponent of Reimer’s philosophy of aesthetic music education, Elliott (2005a) advances the notion of praxial music education, building his philosophy on the idea that “music is not simply a collection of products or objects”; music is something people *do* (p. 39). In this context, music is a form of intentional human activity that involves four dimensions: “a doer, some kind of doing, something done, and the complete context in which doers do what they do” (Elliott, et al., p. 40). Bowman (2005) states that even though praxial orientations are new in philosophical debates in music education, the word “praxis” can be traced back to Aristotle. In Aristotle’s philosophical paradigm, “movement and change are always directed to a goal” (Määttänen, 2002, p. 6) and “praxis designate[s] ‘right action,’ human activity that is goal directed and carried out with close attention to norms and standards” (Bowman, 2005, p. 52). Aristotle’s “right action” in Elliott’s praxialism refers to “active engagement in productive music making” (Elliott, 1995, p. 175). In his exploration of Aristotelian praxis, Regelski concludes that music is “good time” (Määttänen, 2000, p. 11). Regelski (2005) explains that his theory of praxis accounts for all kinds and uses of music and finds musical value not in disembodied, metaphysical hypotheses concerning aesthetic meaning, but in the constitutive sociality

of music and the functional importance of music for the human processes that govern social and thus individual consciousness. (p. 234)

The premises of Elliott's philosophy of music education are (1) "the nature of music education depends on the nature of music," and (2) "the significance of music education depends on the significance of music in human life" (Elliott, 1995, p. 12). Elliott (2005a) believes that his philosophy of music education offered in *Music Matters* is a praxial one because it requires "a full understanding of the nature and significance of music [that] involves more than an understanding of pieces or works of music" (p. 14).

Praxialists consider "not only the cognitive operations of musical agents, but also the ways their musicing is informed by specific social and cultural conditions" (Szego, 2005, p. 214). Pedagogically, praxial music education "focus[es] on involving students in the musical practices of different cultural groups and helping them to understand the intensions of those who undertake them, as well as the social, historical, and cultural conditions in which they organize, exist and have meaning" (McCarthy & Goble, 2002, p. 21).

In his discussion on praxial multiculturalism in music education, Elliott (2005a) maintains that music is about more than sonic events. Elliott (1995) uses the term MUSIC to designate music as "diverse human practice consisting in many different musical practices or Musics" (p. 44), thus "MUSIC is inherently multicultural, then music education ought to be multicultural in essence" (1995, p. 207). He states,

Musical practices, and the products and events they produce, are saturated with personal and collective values and meanings. Multicultural music education allows us to develop students' understandings of these values and meanings; 'teaching music' with a multicultural mindset allows us to deepen students' knowledge and 'feel' for the ways in which 'music' is deeply social, cultural, ideological, political, and personal ... limiting students to one musical practice counts as an extraordinary form of cultural and creative censorship. (Elliott, 2005a, para. 3)

Elliott (2005b) argues that giving students opportunities to experience other musics will enable them to be more creative and critical in music making and listening. Music teachers will also benefit from linking the “primary values of music education to the broader goals of humanistic education” through teaching music multiculturally (Elliott, 2005b, para. 6). Elliott (2005b) calls multicultural music teaching and learning “musical risk-taking,” which will cause disorientation but will activate “self-examination and personal reconstruction of one's relationships, assumptions and preferences” (Elliott, 2005b, para. 6).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: An Overview

Supported by strong multicultural theoretical backgrounds, the scholars of culturally responsive pedagogy have formulated educational practices for culturally and ethnically diverse classrooms (especially for African American students) in America. Demographic changes, which have increased ethnic and cultural diversity in American classrooms, have made teaching and learning more challenging. These challenges often have been perceived as “problems” which have led experts to label some students coming from different racial, ethnic and language backgrounds. Ladson-Billings (2001) argues that the term “at-risk” has become a code word for students who are understood by teachers and the public to be “problems” in the schools (p. 15). Ladson-Billings (2001) asks if “status characteristics such as race, class, and linguistic diversity become equated with ‘at-risk-ness,’” then who will teach these children, and how?

After the 1970s, some American educational researchers began to focus on school ethnography. Understanding and analyzing social, economic and cultural components of education became very critical. These cultural researchers were motivated by their desires to study: (1) minority and ethnic groups in the school system and the reasons for their academic failure in the classroom (based on their social class and cultural background) and, (2) critical analysis of the politics of schooling and curriculum. Ogbu (1981) argues that not going beyond

the classroom and trying to address issues of schooling and connect them to a wider society and its institutions is problematic. Such studies, Ogbu (1981) says, are simplistic and while they might help teaching in action, “cannot lead to any significant social change that would eliminate the need for such remedial efforts in subsequent generations of minority group children” (p. 10).

According to Gay (2000), teaching through a “blaming the victim” paradigm does not bring success. She offers a new paradigm called culturally responsive teaching, “which is needed to improve the performance of underachieving students from various ethnic groups” (p. 24). Gay (2000) argues that culturally responsive teaching means “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches *to and through* the strengths of these students” (p. 29). Cultural identity and heritage are keys in culturally responsive teaching. Gay (2000) defines major characteristics of culturally responsive teaching: (1) it acknowledges the legitimacy of cultural history and background of different ethnic groups, and its integration to the formal curriculum, (2) it accepts the existence of different learning styles and necessity of using different instructional strategies, (3) it teaches students their own cultural heritages and how to value theirs as well as others, and (4) it involves multicultural materials, instructions and skills in all subject areas.

Most research concerned with culturally responsive pedagogy reveals serious implications for curriculum and instruction in terms of understanding the cultural diversity of the classroom. Allen and Boykin (1992) discuss African American children and their educational process, suggesting that common dimensions of African American culture can be observed in African American youth, such as: spirituality; movement expressiveness through an interplay of movement, rhythm, percussiveness, music, and dance; verve or responsiveness to high levels of

stimulation and variability; affect; an emphasis on emotions, communalism, or social connectedness; expressive individualism; a development of distinctive personality and spontaneous behaviors; orality; and perspectives in which time is contextual and social. Allen and Boykin (1992) maintain that these cultural characteristics of African American youth affect learning and instruction, and hold that incorporating these characteristics in daily instruction would help students connect their cultures and identities with what and how they learn.

In *Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, Ladson-Billings (1994) builds an antithesis of the assimilationist teaching theories and practices that perpetuate the slogan of poor academic achievement among black children. Throughout the book, she reports the observations, conversations, and interpretations that she gained through her study of eight successful teachers of African American students. Ladson-Billings argues that

culturally relevant teaching as a pedagogy of oppression [is] not unlike critical pedagogy but specifically committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment. Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order. (p. 160)

While Ladson-Billings's claims reside beyond the scope of the present study, this work may constitute the foundation whereby future scholars may approach questions of oppression.

Villegas (1991) provides several examples of successful culturally responsive teaching practices. One of them is Chicago teacher Marva Collins's success with African American students. Villegas (1991) states that Collins's teaching success comes from her ability "to establish cultural congruence between teaching activities and the experiences of the students at home and in their communities" (p. 25). For instance, Villegas (1991) reports that Collins' classroom atmosphere is similar to that found in a traditional African American family environment, such as "cooperation, flexibility, collective responsibility, autonomy, and strong

adult leadership” (p. 25). During the classroom activities, Collins helps her students to master standard English by correcting their grammar but she also lets her students use “community patterns” in the classroom (p. 25). Villegas (1991) reports that through using students’ language and cultural sources, Collins can engage students to focus on academic tasks.

These pedagogical changes and formulations have also been reflected in music education literature. In “African American Music Education: Reflections on an Experience,” Lundquist and Sims (1995), themselves African American performers and educators, reflect on their musical development in a particular musical tradition. They converse with each other about how their understanding of the strong link between music and culture led them to advance a culturally responsive music program in the late 1960s—Lundquist as a music teacher and Sims as a Master Drummer in the African Percussion Ensemble. Even though their particular study originated in the late 1960s, they frame it in terms of Ladson-Billings’s *Dreamkeepers* and the findings represented in that work. Lundquist and Sims (1995) share similarities in their initial musical experiences in the community, which were informal, family-based affairs. They describe these experiences as fun, playful, and “creative in an ambiance that was positive and supportive” (p. 316). Their parents supported them with private and group instrumental instructions, which became more demanding and challenging over time. They write, “These experiences encultured us in the knowledge and skills to use the technology expected of music makers in that tradition” (p. 316). Later, as they began exploring their identities—linked with the African American music tradition, they found that “the tradition provided the structure [for their] continuing study and development of personal musical expression” (p. 316). As growing musicians, they committed themselves to experiencing unfamiliar musical genres and traditions. They state, “It was difficult for us to understand and internalize verbal descriptions of the music or its cultural context” (p.

316). Experiencing the unfamiliar stands as a goal for both researcher and participants in this study.

In the late 1960s, Lundquist (1995), a leader among culturally responsive music educators, planned a culturally diverse music program for junior high school children. She states that the program “seemed to be successful for African American students, as well as students from other ethnic groups” (pp. 317-318). The program was designed “to address the balance of repertory in American music education by focusing on the African musical heritage of all students in the U.S. [...] and to have a positive effect on the expansion of traditional music education curricula and instructional practices in the United States” (p. 318). In that project, she formed a traditional school choral ensemble, an African-based performance ensemble, a people’s music or “music appreciation” class, and a Philippine-Hispanic music lab. She writes, “We wanted not only to affirm our African American heritage, we also wanted to be sure that African-based musics were the focus of our study and were not being used as a bridge to any other repertoires” (p. 319). The program was successful and gained much attention in music circles. Campbell (2002) recalls that at the 1968 MENC National Conference, Lundquist led three hundred junior high school students in an African song with an African drumming ensemble, a performance that was received by conference participants with great surprise. The Tanglewood Symposium one year earlier focused on similar concerns, but more steps needed to be taken in the field. With the Goals and Objectives Projects in 1968 and 1969, music scholars included “Music of non-Western Cultures” into the school music curriculum (Campbell, 2002).

Tanglewood Symposium II was held in June 2007, four decades after the first one. The organizers of the symposium at Boston University stated the need for such a symposium because “global perspectives have become a paramount issue in its effects on musical styles, value

transfer across cultures, fusions and amalgamations [...] An international group of thirty-two music educators and distinguished scholars germane to the field, selected by invitation, [met] to take up the challenges posed by the new century” (Tanglewood 2, 2007).

Toward a Synthesis: Culturally Responsive Teaching in Music Education

Several problems and misconceptions persist regarding the integration of multiculturalism into music education theory, research, and practice. First, the concepts continue to be narrowly represented and perceived among some music educators and researchers. Music education researchers seem slow to expand the scope and definition of multicultural music education as compared to their counterparts in education. Most music educators and pre-service music teachers see multicultural education only as “content integration.” For them, multicultural music education means adding activities for special days and occasions. Banks (1995) wishes to focus on fundamental curriculum change rather than superficialities: a “reconceptualized” curriculum would “help students understand how knowledge is constructed and how it reflects human interests, ideology, and the experiences of people who create it” (p. 19)

There also exist common concerns expressed by music educators and researchers regarding multicultural music education. One of them is the problem of competency among instructors in other musics. According to Nettl (1992), students who are willing to gain some level of competency in another music can take “a year’s course of world music or two or three semester courses, each dealing in an introductory but reasonably comprehensive way with a major culture area, or short-term hands-on workshops given by teachers from the various societies of the world” (p. 5). This ideal calls for curious teachers who are willing (in the spirit of Ladson-Billings, 1994) to expand their knowledge, compromise their cultural identities, and reflect it in their musical instruction. We must, however, understand the opposite reality: there are students in our music classrooms “who are required to engage in music whose inherent

meanings ranged from being affirmatory for some of them, to being wholly alienating for others; whose delineations corresponded or conflicted with the students' social class and family backgrounds, self-images, public or private identities, values and desires" (Green, 2005, p. 87). Like my students at Lincoln Elementary, many of these students are African American.

Another concern is the time needed to cover information about different musics. Elliott (2005b) suggests that, over a period of time, students should learn a diversity of musics. He proposes that teachers begin with examples that are most familiar to the student and encourages music teachers to engage "works and projects from even a few different musical style-practices—e.g., a Bach piece (Baroque practice), a blues piece (a Jazz practice), and a Zulu song (an African traditional practice)," (para. 4). Such an engagement, he believes, would allow "teachers and students to realize many similarities and differences, back-to-back, on the way to deeper and deeper musical-cultural understandings. This kind of curriculum holds rich possibilities for deepening students' understandings of each and all these practices, assuming that teachers deliberately and systematically cause students to compare and contrast what they are learning within and across different practices" (Elliott, 2005b, para. 4).

In *Music Education in a Time of Cultural Transformation*, Campbell asks "Are we there yet?" and answers, "we are not there yet, multiculturally speaking" (p. 31). She points out that "it is easier and far more economical to publish instructional packages complete with fully notated melodies than it is to run institutes for teachers in which culture-bearers transmit the music—and not incidentally, cultural constructs, too—in a traditional time-honored manner" (p. 31). Every aspect of music teacher training is crucial. It is more crucial when the time comes for preparing music teachers for diverse and multicultural classrooms. Critical educators and writers advocate "various forms of critical teaching [that] recognize the importance of understanding the social

construction of student consciousness, focusing on motives, values, and emotions” (Kincheloe, 2004, *Critical Pedagogy*, p. 20). Kincheloe (2004) calls such a teacher a “teacher-researcher” who studies her students as “living text[s] to be deciphered” and who “approaches them with an active imagination and a willingness to view [them] as socially constructed beings” (p. 20). In their article, Wasson et al. (1990) offer several position statements for teaching art in the multicultural classroom. First, they emphasize the subjective position of a teacher who brings her own cultural beliefs, values, and biases to the classroom. In their argument, it is impossible and inevitable for a teacher not to impose her own culture and the culture of the curriculum on her students.

A teacher whose students are of a different culture than her own must be committed to reflect upon her biases and how those biases influence her teaching. Quoting from Chalmers (1984), Wasson et al. (1990) suggest that a reflective teacher should constantly pose questions: “How does society influence what individuals and groups perceive as art (and music)? How do members of different groups determine their standards for judging art forms (musical forms)?” (p. 4). They state that a culture’s aesthetic production and experience should be seen in context. They believe that artistic perception is a social phenomenon and that art teachers should understand and experience their students’ culture and how art exists and lives in that particular culture. Wasson et al. (1990) posit that teachers should be willing to identify sociocultural groups in the classroom and “their accompanying values and practices which influence aesthetic production” (p. 6). For this to happen, they recommend “anthropologically based methods” that are applicable in a regular classroom (p. 6). First, they believe that most children in American schools “participate in at least three or more sociocultural milieus,” such as “their peer group and its resulting popular culture, their ethnic group or groups, and the dominant Euro-American

dominant ideology.” According to them, the most ignored sociocultural milieu is the students’ popular subculture, which is shared among peer groups (p. 5). It is a difficult yet important task for music educators to take their students’ “socio-cultural milieus” into account while they teach and construct their curricula.

British philosopher Charles Taylor (1994) discusses the importance of identity and recognition in contemporary societies. In his estimation, the “crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally dialogical character. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity, through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression” (p. 32). We can connect Taylor’s argument to the issue of musical identity. Acquiring different musical expressions through the construction of multicultural and culturally responsive music education helps our students articulate their musical identities. Taylor (1994) continues:

Discovering my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I negotiate it through dialogue, partly overt, partly internal, with others. That is why the development of an ideal of inwardly generated identity gives a new importance to recognition. My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others. (p. 34)

Cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds define our musical identities and who we are. As Elliott (2005c) explains, “praxial music education conceptualizes ‘identity’ in terms of the fluid connections between the student’s personal, psychological, social, cultural, and bodily self, all of which develop in the context of the educational community or ‘belongingness’ that I call the curriculum-as-practicum, which has self-growth and enjoyment as its center” (para. 10).

This study is about understanding students’ perspectives as a step toward a culturally responsive violin classroom. My goal as a researcher is to explore students’ perceptions of the current violin program (e.g., how they perceive the musical materials and teaching methods and

how they locate these activities in their daily musical experiences) and factors that explain their perceptions and experiences.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

I use a hermeneutical approach to understand and explain the violin experiences of a select group of African American students at Lincoln Elementary School in northern Florida in order to consider the potential for culturally responsive string education. The two broad research questions are:

1. What are the personal musical worlds of these African American children?
2. How do African American students perceive the current violin program at Lincoln and their experience in it?

Ultimately, I wanted to comprehend how their musical lives impact their perceptions of violin at Lincoln, and vice versa.

Introduction to the Study

Based on the notion that a qualitative approach should be used for in-depth probing to obtain the research participants' own perceptions, this type of investigative methodology was deemed most appropriate for this study of elementary school students' views of a violin program (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research aims to represent a particular and situated social reality. Anderson states that qualitative research is a "research paradigm, which emphasizes inductive, interpretive methods applied to the everyday world which is seen as subjective and socially created" (Anderson cited in Hatch, 2002, p. 6). Hatch writes, "For qualitative researchers, the lived experiences of real people in real settings are the objects of study" (p. 6). Most qualitative researchers support the notion that "all research is interpretive...guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 33). While quantitative research emphasizes the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), qualitative researchers concentrate on

processes, and attempt to understand how social experience is created and given meaning.

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer (researcher) in the world. The subjective position of the researcher is not ignored in qualitative research and is closely related to the reflexive and interpretive features of such research activity.

For the present study, a particular type of qualitative research called the “hermeneutical study” was used. I chose the hermeneutical study primarily because it is closely tied to the reflexive and interpretive approach, appropriate here owing to the dynamic dialogue undertaken by researcher and participants. Hermeneutical research also requires constant reflection on the roles (and how they might change over time) assumed by researcher and participants. The hermeneutical approach also takes into account the cyclical nature of the research process. Even though the hermeneutical approach and cycle will be explained in detail later in this chapter, it is important to make it clear how this research process will be cyclical. In hermeneutical understanding, an inquirer cannot understand the whole (a text, an experience, an action) without grasping the individual parts of the whole, and it is necessary for an inquirer to understand each individual part to grasp the whole (Schwandt, 2000). As the researcher, I have a certain preunderstanding of this research, its questions, its participants, and some literature related to the study. Throughout the research process (reviewing the relevant literature, conducting the interviews), I constantly engage in interpretation. This process of discovery helps me to build new understandings about the relevant research and questions, and therefore revise older notions. The revision-oriented, reflective nature of the undertaking represents another way of thinking about the cyclical nature of the work. As the research questions that drive this study indicate, understanding the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants is the focus of the study.

Hermeneutical research is conducted to understand individual experience and to explore how the participants and the researcher mutually interpret those experiences.

DeMarrais (1998) points out that there are various ways of *knowing* in qualitative research; these include archival knowing, narrative knowing, and observational knowing. While it is possible to use multiple data sources to gain a broader understanding in a hermeneutical study, in-depth interviews constituted the data source here, and narrative knowing formed the core of this study. Kvale (1996) remarks that “every word that people use in telling stories is a microcosm of their consciousness. Individuals’ consciousness gives access to the most complicated social and educational issues” (p. 1). For both researcher and reader, it is an exciting journey to enter into another’s story. In this research, I was curious about the violin experiences of African American elementary students and wanted to hear their narratives based on their experiences.

The Pilot Study

Overview of the Pilot Study

In the spring of 2005, I conducted a pilot study in which the questions and issues of the present study were examined. That work motivated the principal study presented here owing to the provocative, interesting ways that the pilot study participants responded to questions about their violin experiences and musical lives in general. It is natural that a researcher will bring certain expectations and assumptions to a process, and also natural that those expectations and assumptions will be challenged by how the participants respond. In the case of the pilot study, however, the participants’ responses made it obvious that I needed to know more about their perceptions of the violin program at Lincoln. Their responses demanded further elaboration and follow-up. I focused on the stories of five African American elementary school students and their perceptions of studying violin. Three research questions guided that preliminary study:

- (1) How do African American students perceive the current violin program at Lincoln?
- (2) For them, what does it mean to play violin?
- (3) What are the musical experiences of the students in and outside of school?

Participant Selection

The selection of participants in the pilot study was based on a criterion (purposive) sampling. All of the participants were third-grade African American students who attended the violin program at Lincoln Elementary. The five participants included: three girls (Kayla, Sara, and Mary) and two boys (James and Anthony). Before orally recruiting the participants, I discussed my project with Lisa Hall, the Fine Arts Facilitator at Lincoln. Mrs. Hall was very supportive and provided me the necessary equipment for my interviews. I chose these specific participants because: (1) they were my students, (2) I had a very regular schedule with them, so I could easily create a natural conversation related to my research topic, and (3) they were willing participants with rich sources of information.

First, I discussed the project with the participants and asked them to take the parental consent form home. I also conducted interviews with Mrs. John, the participants' classroom teacher, and Mrs. Hall, the facilitator of the violin program. They helped me to better understand my students' backgrounds.

Data Collection and Analysis

Interview data were collected over a period of four weeks beginning March 30, 2005 and continuing until April 25. The interviews were videotaped. Data were analyzed using the phenomenological method, which is presented in detail in Clark Moustakas's book, *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Phenomenology is "a research design used to study deep human experience" (Blodgett-McDeavitt, p. 1).

Results

The participants shared certain commonalities in their responses, including (1) that playing violin was a joyful and exciting experience; (2) that their musical experiences were limited to listening to certain types of music (primarily rap, hip-hop, and gospel); and (3) that the music that they played on violin and listened to at home were different. Each of the participants had unique perceptions and ways of making meaning from the violin experience. These experiences often occurred in conjunction with feelings of happiness, joy, having fun, and excitement. James said, “Playing violin is awesome because, you know, your fingers can do all these things.” For most participants, playing violin was a socially shared experience. They often mentioned playing violin for others, especially outside of school (for instance, playing for family members at a birthday party or a family reunion). For some of them, being watched and praised by their parents constituted the initial motivation to study violin. For instance, Sara said, “The reason why I wanted to study violin because, like, Monday we have, like, a concert [and] I could play violin and my family could see me [...] I stopped watching them, I was people playing and then I said, ‘Man, maybe this is a wake up for me.’”

Some participants had been exposed to violin outside of the classroom, such as watching a concert or seeing rap videos on television. Anthony explained why he wanted to study violin: “It was a video, and somebody was playing the violin. I saw the violin [...] I think it was rap music.” After this experience, he decided to study violin. This example suggested that their lives and musical habits outside of the classroom had an impact on their lives in the classroom, and should be accounted for in terms of pedagogy. The participants generally had very limited musical experiences, not more than occasional listening. Almost all of the participants experienced and shared rap music culture. They were certainly aware that the music that they played on the violin was different than the music they listened to at home. When they were asked

to describe the music they played on the violin, they struggled to answer, but they did try to understand the multiplicity of musical cultures, and also compared the music they played on the violin and the music they listened to at home. Kayla called the music she played on the violin “violin music,” while James used the phrase “old fashioned.” On the whole, they seemed to accept authority’s established meanings and plans for their musical lives even though they certainly showed a great willingness to play rap music with their violins. In other words, they negotiated the teacher’s wishes with their own desires. This study suggested that a phenomenological study can potentially uncover the essence of the violin experience in the classroom, and that such findings can be used for further educational advancement.

Implications of the Pilot Study for the Design of the Dissertation Study

The outcomes of the preliminary study, including the theoretical and methodological implications and findings, informed the design of the principal study in several practical ways. The violin students’ musical worlds and backgrounds emerged as a key issue for the principal study. Gaining a more complete awareness of their musical experiences could lead to more effective teaching practices. Hermeneutical theory, which emphasizes the placement of actors in a research setting (including the researcher) and attempts to make sense of their experiences through interpreting the full range of their experiences and their dialogue, would provide the study a solid theoretical framework.

With the help of interviews, it became clear that students experience music outside of the classroom and display interest in playing and listening to familiar music on the violin. Expanding the interview questions would help fill in the details of the students’ musical experiences in and out of school and would show how those experiences affect students’ perceptions and experiences of playing violin. The first research question from the pilot study (how do African American students perceive the violin program at Lincoln?) remained the same, but the second

research question required a reformulation so that it would contribute more directly to the field of culturally responsive teaching, particularly string teaching: what are the personal musical lives of these children? Interviewing the children was a challenge, but the pilot study sharpened the interview questions. The pilot study included third grade violin students who were willing to participate. The principal study included fourth and fifth grade students enrolled as violin majors. These students voluntarily chose to study violin. For third-graders, studying violin is a required part of the arts curriculum at Lincoln.

The focus of the research shifted from questions of discovery to possibilities for culturally responsive teaching and its connections to the larger educational literature. Chapter 2 focuses on central debates in the field of multicultural music education and cultural pedagogies, including the discussion as to whether or not, how, and in what ways culture can be systematically addressed in music classrooms (especially the violin classroom) to motivate and engage diverse students. The violin students' musical cultures and values also emerged as a key part of the inquiry; learning about these would enrich the researcher's understanding of the participants during the research process, assisted in reformulations of the interview questions, and improved the researcher's conversation skills. For the principal study, the researcher's subjectivity would be strictly maintained throughout the research process; to this end, the methodological framework of the study shifted from phenomenological to hermeneutical.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

As Rice (1997) argues, academic fields are constantly being created and recreated through research, writing, and teaching. The field of music education is no different. In the humanities and social sciences, there have been continuous theoretical developments since the 1960s. During the last half of the twentieth century, the field of education has borrowed these

theories; they include structuralism, constructivism, Marxism, critical theory, hermeneutics, phenomenology, and eclectic combinations of a number of approaches.

While various theories guide research in music education, this study was guided by the theoretical perspective offered by hermeneutics. Titon (1997) argues that Continental European philosophy since the nineteenth century regularly distinguishes between two kinds of knowledge: explanation and understanding. Explanation is typical in sciences, and understanding is typical in the humanities. The tradition of understanding falls under the interpretivist umbrella. According to interpretivists from ontological and epistemological points of view, multiple realities are constructed and knowledge is subjective, individual, and changing. The interpretivist tradition mainly involves two activities: phenomenology and hermeneutics, both of which are presented in Chapter 1.

Qualitative researchers believe that all research includes and is driven by an interpreter (for example, researcher and/or participants). Even though the main interpreter of the research is the researcher, participants are in a sense co-researchers who actively participate in and dynamically shape the research process. If it is necessary to place a text in its context to understand it, then the context should naturally also include the author(s) of the work. Authors, therefore, cannot be seen in isolation. They need to be placed in their social context, which can be further broadened to their whole historical background. In the current study, the “whole historical background” refers to the African American experience in America, especially from the Civil Rights Movement forward and its impact on education. As cited in Alvesson and Skoldberg, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu states that in reflective research, “The researcher is seen as being inserted into a social field, with specific relationships of competition and power conditions generating a particular ‘habitus,’ that is, a pattern of action dispositions, among

participants” (2000, p. 5). Titon (1997) explains that reflectivity in a research process might mean sharing authority and authorship with “informants”; a concern with history and issues of power relations, ethics, identity, race, and ethnicity; and close attention to how class and gender operate within music-cultures. A reflective music researcher would ask this essential question in a research process: what is the relationship among music and politics, economics, social structure, music events, and language? In this research project, constant reflectivity and interpretation—which are the main aspects of hermeneutical research—were the key activities.

The researcher remains cognizant of power issues during the data collection process and tries to understand the underlying meanings of all activities and reflect on them critically. Sometimes these reflections and interpretations might appear in the form of critiques of history, politics, schooling, and dominant systems and their relations to music education. In hermeneutical inquiry, understanding is “participative, conversational, and dialogic. It is always bound up with language and is achieved only through logic of question and answer,” and, it should be added, occurs in a cyclic process of understanding (Schwandt, 2000, p. 195). In addition, understanding is produced in a dialogue that is not merely discovered and reproduced by the interpreter through analysis; it is a shared, “real-time” discovery. According to Geertz (1979), the hermeneutical cycle involves

a continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring both into view simultaneously...Hopping back and forth between the whole conceived through the parts that actualize it and the parts conceived through the whole which motivates them, we seek to turn them, by a sort of intellectual perpetual motion, into explications of one another. (p. 239)

Working with the hermeneutical cycle helped to pose critiques of the research by putting it in a global and historical perspective, fostering a better understanding of the pieces of the experience (or phenomenon). It also helped to correct any misunderstandings or prejudgments held by the

researcher, and hopefully led to new understandings and meanings. To illustrate this complex process of understanding from the hermeneutical perspective, a model of inquiry was used that illustrates the researcher's understanding of African American violin students during the research process. Previous and existing understandings about African American violin students' musical culture formed a beginning. Through the review of multicultural and culturally responsive music literature, the interviews of students at Lincoln Elementary, and the discovery of critical incidents in the students' violin experience through analyzing and interpreting the interviews, the researcher's understandings grew. Chapter 5 discusses the growth in the researcher's understandings.

Research Design

Description of the School and School Population

Lincoln Elementary, like other Title I schools, is provided financial assistance because a high number of students (more than forty percent) live in poverty. Title I funds these schools to ensure that students meet state academic achievement standards (Title I, 2004). Lincoln Elementary is a K-5 school with 476 students. Since the Brown vs. Board of Education decision in 1954, the U.S. Department of Education has sought ways to implement desegregation. Lincoln Elementary became a magnet arts school in 2005 and has implemented the "Whole School Initiative" to integrate arts into daily classroom practices. Students receive sequential and comprehensive instruction in music, dance, drama, and visual arts (What is Whole Schools, 2004). The violin program was implemented as part of the arts education curriculum at Lincoln in the fall of 2002.

Setting

The violin program has been a part of the arts curriculum at Lincoln since fall 2006. Most third grade students study violin for one full academic year. Because of the high number of third

graders at Lincoln, they only meet the violin teacher once per week; this limited class time presents challenges for the instructors because it translates into very little time for individual instruction. The four third-grade sections meet on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays for forty-five minutes per session. Each section comprises eight to twelve students, which means that each student may receive a maximum of five minutes of individual instruction per week even though the program is designed to emphasize group instruction.

Fourth and fifth grade students select a major at Lincoln; violin is one possible major. Since most students study violin in the third grade, they gain familiarity with the instrument. Violin majors meet four days per week for fifty minutes each session. The teaching schedule is shared evenly by two violin teachers. Classes are held in a portable building provided to the school by the administration. The program materials—violins, method books, and music stands—are stored in the building.

Violin major students begin the program with different experiences in playing and different achievement levels. The advanced students are asked to practice in different corners of the classroom. While violin teachers teach to the majority of the students, the advanced students keep practicing. Then the violin teacher usually asks the advanced students to play what they have been practicing and proceeds to spend time with those students. Students have recently been permitted to take their violins home to practice. The materials covered in the violin class at Lincoln include technical fundamentals, songs from the Suzuki Violin Method, and popular children's songs.

Participant Selection

The participants in this study were selected using the purposive sampling method based on their status as “violin majors” in the program and through their willingness to participate. Purposeful sampling, as defined by Patton (2001), is “selecting information-rich cases for study

in depth” (p. 46). Creswell (2003) further explains that, for purposeful sampling, individuals and sites are selected purposefully to learn about the central phenomenon to be examined. In this study, all of the participants were African American students who were violin majors at Lincoln Elementary. Even though there were ten students majoring in violin, I had to limit the sample size to seven because of unexpected problems.² Before orally recruiting the participants, I discussed my project with Lisa Hall, Lincoln’s Fine Arts Facilitator.

I adhered to confidentiality according to the University of Florida’s Institutional Research Board guidelines and policies. The participants’ privacy and anonymity were respected and protected by the researcher by using pseudonyms in all writings. (Pseudonyms were used in place of the name of the school, the city where it is located, and the names of students, teachers, and administrators.)

Data Collection Procedures

A semi-structured interview (Kvale, 1996) was used to understand the violin experience of these African American students. The semi-structured interview utilizes a series of open-ended questions; although the researcher should prepare an interview guide to use during the interview, she can allow questions to flow naturally based on the information provided by the participants. As proposed by Kvale (1996), three types of questions (introducing, follow-up, and probing) were used as guides for preparing the semi-structured interview.

I discussed the project with the participants and provided detailed information about it, questions that they would be asked, and what they would be expected to do. I also asked them to take the parental consent form home. Interview times and settings were established at the convenience of the participants. Interviews—one per student—lasted about an hour and were

² One student moved to a different school district; one possible interview was lost because of scheduling conflicts involving a parent; and one student’s parent was impossible to reach to obtain permission.

tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim as soon as possible. The student interview protocol is found in Appendix B.

Interview data for the study were primarily collected during a period of five weeks from March to May 2007. Because my participants were young children, I collected the data during an activity time to reduce the artificiality of the interview. For instance, I provided a quiet room and a violin to create a natural context for the interview, and I embedded the interviews into regular violin activities. Eder and Fingerson (2003) suggest that the naturalness of the interview context would be better developed if the interview is placed within a larger activity with which the participants are already familiar.

The interviews in this research were not examined as a process of neutral data collection; rather, they were seen as interpretive and interactive events, meaning that both participant and interviewer were free to revise and rethink questions and answers during the course of the interview (Koro-Ljungberg & Gubrium, 2005, pp. 690-691). Even though the researcher and participants come to the interview with their own agendas and culturally and socially created meanings, these agendas and meanings are not fixed and unchangeable; rather, they are active and changing. Because interaction is the main activity throughout the interview, the social context of the interview shapes the ways in which the researchers and participants make meaning and use language within it.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis in qualitative research begins in the earliest stages of data collection and continues with the organization and reduction of data and the description of conclusions or interpretations from that data (Schwandt, 2001).

Spradley's (1979) four-step "Ethnographic Analysis Model" was employed to analyze the data from the interviews. Although the study is not an ethnographic study, my questions and the

students' responses are rich with cultural implications. Listening to and making music are cultural expressions; the classroom is a place of cultural interactions; and education itself—as the literature review argues—is bound up with culture. Spradley (1979) argues that, in doing field study, an ethnographer's effort is to make cultural inferences. Three main sources help an ethnographer to do that: (1) the things people say; (2) the ways people act; and (3) the artifacts people use. Cultural knowledge is often communicated through language. Spradley (1979) states, “Because language is the primary means for transmitting culture from one generation to the next, much of any culture is encoded in linguistic form” (p. 9). The interview is one of the strategies used to understand what people know and to provide them opportunities to describe their culture.

As Spradley argues, the ethnographic analysis model has an important and a single purpose, which is “to uncover the system of cultural meanings” (p. 94). In this study, examining the participants' violin experiences through interviews provided the linguistic foundation upon which cultural meanings could be gathered. In other words, the interview process and analysis revealed how culture influences the violin experiences of the participants and vice versa. The theoretical framework of this study required careful interpretation and reflection throughout the research process, and Spradley's model provided me an explicit, systematic, and rigorous approach for the analysis of the research data. According to Spradley's design, several steps were taken in analyzing the interview data:

1. Domain analysis constitutes the first step in seeking “cultural domains” (Spradley, 1979, p. 94). Spradley (1979) states that “cultural meaning systems are encoded in symbols” (p. 99). As a primary symbol system, language encodes cultural meaning in every culture. Spradley (1979) argues that a given language contains various numbers of terms to refer to phenomena experienced in a given culture. People in every culture express themselves by using these terms

that are linked together by means of semantic relationships. Spradley (1979) suggests that using semantic relationships in identifying domains is an efficient procedure. There are limited numbers of semantic relationships in any culture; moreover, some of them are universal (Spradley, 1979).

During this step, I sought cultural domains by selecting from each interview one particular semantic relationship at a time. Spradley (1979) proposes nine universal semantic relationships: 1. Strict inclusion: X is a kind of Y; 2. Spatial: X is a place in Y or X is a part of Y; 3. Cause-effect: X is a result of Y, X is a cause of Y; 4. Rationale: X is a reason for doing Y; 5. Location for action: X is a place for doing Y; 6. Function: X is used for Y; 7. Means-end: X is a way to do Y; 8. Sequence: X is a step in Y and 9. Attribution: X is an attribute (characteristic) of Y. For example, I began with “strict inclusion” to identify domains such as “Kinds of Musical Experiences.” While reading the interview data, I kept this question in mind: “What are the kinds of musical experiences children have?” The domains varied throughout the analysis process.

2. Taxonomic analysis requires close attention to “the internal structure of the domain” (Spradley, 1979, p. 144). Spradley describes cultural domains as the boxes of symbols possessing different levels of importance and relations with one another. In this process of labeling and categorizing, I took a particular domain and searched for specific levels in that domain. For instance, the domain “Kinds of Musical Experiences” is a very broad domain. With the help of interview data and the terms found in the data, I broke the domain into different levels and looked for particular relationships among these levels. In terms of musical experiences, the domain may be divided into musical experience at church, musical experience at school, musical experience with peers, musical experience with parents, and musical experience

through the media. Throughout this process, I found more levels under each level and finally constructed a complete taxonomy.

3. Componential analysis refers to a systematic search for components of meaning for identified domains and any term within domains (Spradley, 1979). Spradley (1979) states that “a componential analysis includes the entire process of searching for contrasts, sorting them out, grouping some together as dimensions of contrast,” and then charting this information into some logical scheme (p. 179). For instance, musical experience at church falls under the domain “Kinds of Musical Experiences.” According to Spradley (1979), certain components of meaning and characteristics define the musical experience at church. With the help of carefully formulated interview questions, I sought to discover the attributes of such experience. In this study, the purpose of componential analysis was to distinguish identified domains and terms within domains and to map the reality of the participants’ cultural knowledge.

4. Theme analysis seeks relationships among domains by making comparisons and contrasts from the data. Spradley defines a cultural theme as “any cognitive principle, tacit or explicit, recurrent in a number of domains and serving as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning” (p. 186). Cultural themes, which might appear in the form of recurrent expressions or common assumptions, also connect different domains. Every cultural theme might not be applicable to every cultural scene and its actors. As Spradley puts it, “It is important to recognize that cultural themes need not apply to every symbolic system of a culture. Some themes recur within a restricted context or only link two or three domains” (p. 187). In the dissertation report, I attached a sample of data analysis showing the steps discussed above. (See Appendix D.)

Validity of the Study

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) report that validity “is the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world” (p. 324). Validity has also been referred to as “trustworthiness” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002, p. 230); researchers must work to ensure that participants’ responses are reliable and consistent enough to offer valid explanations of the findings. According to Angen (2000), “For qualitative researchers, reaching the desired goal and meeting the requirement of trustworthiness become particularly problematic due to the considerable debate about what it means to do valid research in the field of qualitative inquiry” (p. 378). Subjectivity and an emphasis on the existence of multiple realities in qualitative research make validity problematic; still, qualitative researchers attempt to use several strategies to enhance validity in their research. They acknowledge that “interpretations [should] have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher” and that participants and researchers should agree on the description or composition of events, and especially the meanings of these events (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, p. 324). While most qualitative researchers argue that validity rests on data collection and analysis techniques, there are various strategies to enhance validity, such as prolonged and persistent field work, triangulation, multi-method strategies, use of participant language (verbatim accounts), low-inference descriptors, multiple researchers, mechanically recorded data, participant researcher, member checking, participant review, peer review, and negative or discrepant data (Creswell 1998; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Validity for the present study was ensured with member checking. Member checking refers to “the process of returning analyses to informants for confirmation of accuracy,” applied throughout the data collection (Angen, 2000, p. 383). During the interviews, students were frequently asked to repeat and confirm their responses.

CHAPTER 4 THE MUSICAL LIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN: INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to understand and explain the violin experiences of African American students at Lincoln Elementary School in northern Florida, considering that such experiences occur in the wider contexts of their rich, multidimensional musical lives. Such work may offer insight for educators interested in culturally responsive string education because it explores and presents the musical lives of African American children as they relate to their elementary school violin education. In this study, all seven research participants were violin majors at Lincoln. Although there are ten majors in the program, only seven were interviewed because of logistical concerns involving the other three. The interview questions were guided by a pair of research questions: (1) What are the personal musical worlds of these African American children? (2) How do these children perceive the violin program at Lincoln? These will help answer the study's overall research question: in what ways do the students' personal musical worlds and their perceptions of the violin program mutually interact and affect each other? This chapter is organized into two major sections: an outline of the findings related to the research questions and detailed illustrations of the student responses to the interview questions.

The interview guide contained two sections that pertain to two dimensions of the children's musical lives: (1) experience with music in general and (2) experience with the violin in particular. Each section contained carefully prepared sequential questions. The questions were designed to uncover the details of the children's musical lives, and, more importantly, laid the groundwork for an analysis of how their particular experiences with and perceptions of violin at Lincoln mutually interact with their other—non-violin, non-academic—experiences. Throughout the interview process, I consistently questioned the children about their perceptions of music in general, particularly their perceptions of the violin program at Lincoln.

The data were analyzed using Spradley's (1979) four-step "Ethnographic Analysis Model." The main activity in this model is to organize the data into categories or domains of similar events. Spradley (1979) suggests that researchers can choose "either [to] carry out a surface analysis of as many domains as possible or [...] conduct an in-depth analysis of a limited number of domains" (p. 133). For this study, I initially chose two particular domains, "kinds of music students are exposed to," and "kinds of musical experiences children have." Then I broke the domains into different subdomains to look for particular relationships among those subdomains. With the help of the interview data and the terms found in the data, I constructed two detailed taxonomies representing the musical lives and experiences of the violin students who were interviewed.

The domain titled "kinds of music students are exposed to" emerged as the large domain under which multiple categories of inquiry were placed. These included: "to what music are they exposed?" "where does this exposure take place?" "with whom are they exposed?" and "how are they exposed?" The domain "kinds of musical experiences students have" included the students' musical experiences (listening, watching, singing, dancing, and playing) and their experiences with violin at Lincoln. The categories that emerged under this domain included: "what musical experiences do students have?" and "how do they experience those particular musics?" The taxonomies are presented in Tables 4-1 and 4-2 at the end of this chapter.

This dual-taxonomy analytical tool was employed to reveal the internal structure of the domains and discern how the subdomains related to each other. I chose the two primary domains ("kinds of music students are exposed to" and "kinds of musical experience students have") because the interview data suggested that students define their musical experiences, places, and the people that play roles in their experiences through the kinds of music to which they are

exposed. In other words, what they listen to, what they like to listen to, and what music they dance to, sing, and play were closely associated with the kinds of music to which they are regularly exposed.

Findings Related to the Research Questions

Working through a detailed taxonomy revealed that students are exposed to certain kinds of music that are unique to their cultural and home environments. As listeners, singers, players, and dancers, children internalize hip-hop, rap, R&B, and gospel as parts of their musical identities. The students also listen to jazz, blues, and classical/opera/violin music, even though the genres with which they are most familiar are rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel. Their familiarity with and knowledge of classical/opera/violin music are not as rich as the kinds of music to which they heavily listen. The students' favorite musics represent distinct genres that today's African American youth enjoy. All of the musicians that they listen to are popular black musicians.

The students described the attributes and differences of the various musical genres with similar language. For example, many students characterized violin music as "smooth" and rap as filled with "cuss words" or "a great beat." The data revealed that their understandings of different genres also helped them rationalize why they listen to (and don't listen to) certain genres. Television, radio, stereo, and Internet provide media that expose students to certain kinds of music. For instance, all of the students watch Black Entertainment Television (BET) and listen to the radio channel 101.3 "Hip-Hop DJ." Additionally, all of the children search the Internet to find song lyrics.

The data also suggested that the children try to negotiate their musical and religious identities. The church has a strong influence on children's musical lives. Particular mediums expose the children to certain kinds of music. The music they listen to is learned and promoted at

home. The church is the other important medium; it exposes children to gospel music. Children rarely discuss the music they are exposed to at school. For all of the children, music is fun, especially when shared with others.

The children are exposed to certain kinds of music through various musical doings. Their favorite musical doing is listening. Dancing, singing, watching, and playing are the other common musical activities of these children. The students' musical experiences (listening, watching, singing, dancing, and playing) are also cultivated in their unique cultural and musical spheres. The music they listen to, play, and dance with is related to where and with whom they listen, play, and dance. The students' musical experiences (musical doings) such as listening, singing, playing violin, and dancing are also framed and associated with the kinds of music to which they are exposed.

Although the students listen to rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel most often, they appreciate and accept the music and activities covered in the violin lessons by noting at various times the value of the experience, especially when the instructor introduces a new song. They understand the challenges of a newly-introduced piece, and when they master it, they desire to display and repeat their newly-discovered skill. The data suggested that the children perceived playing violin as an opportunity to learn how to play an instrument. Multiple factors influenced this positive perception and appreciation toward playing violin. The data revealed that students perceived the learning how to play violin as valuable. Having fun in the violin lessons was one of the major factors why students expressed a positive perception of playing violin. Children stressed that learning new songs and escaping from the regular and "boring" classroom activities influenced their perceptions.

Their surrounding communities—such as family members and members of the church—factored in to their positive perceptions of violin. They delighted in receiving admiration from the members of these communities when playing violin. Their past experiences of playing violin at Lincoln, especially their memories of concerts and open houses, also factored in to their positive perceptions. In this respect, they also mentioned the performances of others. Seeing others’ playing well, especially older students who had moved on to higher grades, was a motivating factor, as was hearing violin in their favorite music on TV and radio.

Finally, the children displayed respect for the violin teachers. They admired the instructors’ proficiency with the instrument and sought to imitate it. Overall, the study provided detailed illustrations of the students’ interest in playing and studying familiar music on their violins. The students want to play the music they are exposed to and like. Data from the taxonomies are provided to further support and illustrate the categories mentioned above. (The numbers following the interview excerpts correspond to line numbers generated during the transcription process.)

The Musical Lives of African American Children at Lincoln

The most common musical genres to which the children are exposed are rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel music. Even though they possess a limited understanding of other genres such as country, classical, blues and jazz, their familiarity with and knowledge of these musics are not as rich as the kinds of music mentioned above. Their familiarity with certain kinds of music is affected by their home environments, peers, and media: TV (music videos especially), stereo, radio, and Internet. The following example was typical in many responses:

Researcher: Do you like listening to music?

Arica: Yes.

R: Tell me about that.

A: If it’s like a song R&B, it’s a song that I regularly listen to. If it’s R&B and gospel, it’s for me.

- R: What radio stations do you listen to?
 A: 101.3 and 101. 9. On Sundays, they play gospel music. And on regular weekdays, they play R&B and hip-hop. (1-7)

The children indicated that their favorite musical genres were rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel. During the interviews, when they were asked to talk about “what music they hear at home,” “kinds of music they like to listen to,” and “the names of the musicians and bands they listen to,” all of them mentioned similar genres and musicians.

Rap, Hip-Hop, and R&B through the Minds and Bodies of Children

The children who were interviewed listen to rap, hip-hop, and R&B most often. Listening to these songs, dancing with them, and learning their lyrics constitute important parts of their musical lives.

The children’s understanding of music is constructed upon the attributes of the kinds of music they listen to. For instance, all the children who were interviewed think that rap, hip-hop, and R&B musics are fun to listen to because they are fast, interesting, and make you dance. When children talk about the music they listen to, they often mention their bodily involvement in music. Arica said, “When it’s raining I will put on some music [referring to R&B] and I lay on my bed, sing to myself [...] get up, dance, jump around, jump on the bed. And for me, when I’m outside, they play outside, so it’s like for me to relax, I just get up and have fun” (132-134). An additional example illustrates how children perceive their favorite music:

- Brenda: Hip hop is really fast music. Hip-hop is music that they shake their booties, and that rap is hip-hop.
 Researcher: Rap and hip-hop? Are they the same?
 B: Hip-hop and rap the same.
 R: They shake their booties, huh? Why do you say that?
 B: That’s [...] they say that ‘cause they kind of make it interesting for everybody.
 R: How is it interesting?
 B: The word to the song. It’s like they mix songs up, they mix all different kinds of songs up to make it sound good enough for everybody to listen to hip-hop. (26-34)

The children also described the musical attributes of rap, hip-hop, and R&B. The most common attribute stated by children is that these musics are fast. They also emphasized that these musics have not only “beat,” but “specific beats.” Arica called the particular beat “R&B beats” (428). The songs in these genres contain speaking, singing, and rhyming. Dan said, “It’s like rhyming words [referring to the rap music] like a person who’s rhyming words, and then they’re just adding on a beat” (7-8). Chloe described rap similarly:

- Researcher: If I would ask you, “what is rap, Dan? How would you describe it to me?”
What would you say?
Chloe: It’s more of a hard-core the way they sound.
R: The way they sound [...] with instruments? Rhythms? Words?
C: They have beats. (110-114)

Children understand and conceptualize different kinds of music, which in turn helps them rationalize why they listen to particular kinds of music. They described the music they listen to by emphasizing its difference from other musical genres. For instance, Brenda said, “I’ll tell you hip-hop is different from jazz because jazz music is really soft music. You flow with the dance. You know, step and stuff. It’s different from hip-hop. ‘Cause hip-hop, it goes really fast, not just slow like jazz. It’s different” (35-37). Arica also said, “This music [referring to hip-hop and rap], they use drums, not violins and that they are more hippity-hoppity” (391). Many children distinguish rap, hip-hop and R&B from other genres because they have “cuss words,” which deal with “good stuff and bad stuff,” and talk about “guns.” This is clearly illustrated in the following example from Arica:

It’s mostly songs that have to do with s-e-x that we cannot listen to. They [referring to her parents] don’t want us to listen to that because they know that we have a young mind and that we might go around asking what that means, but it’s OK because there’s a disease out there in the world—HIV—and we should know a little bit but not a whole lot when it gets into our main brain that we should do it. So my mom doesn’t like us to listen to music about that. (108-115)

In the children's experience, music tells stories and gives messages, especially rap, hip-hop and R&B songs, which talk about "gangster stuff, hustlin', stuff like that" (Arica, 82). Dan said, "We are talking about life and there is a thug war out there [...] they are talking about their life and how it's a tough world out there outside" (230). Another example shows how children pay close attention to the stories of rap, hip-hop and R&B songs:

- Researcher: Why is music important to you?
Eddie: It's just fun to listen to it. I just feel like the songs are telling stories. They [songs] talk about what's going on in life; about things that you shouldn't do.
R: Can you give me an example?
E: Like smoking and stuff. Like they are just singing about that, like what's going on, like when you shouldn't really do all that stuff, and stuff like theirs is [...] Mary J. Blige and Ludakris and they was singing a song called "Runaway Love" and it was about four girls and they had ran away from home because their moms and people dying and all that other stuff. (48-55)

The songs children listen to contain messages and tell stories about love, broken families, crime, guns, drugs, violence, and racial, social, and political issues related to contemporary African American experiences. Children often interact with those messages. Here is another example showing how Chloe perceives some messages:

- Researcher: What does hip-hop mean? What kind of music is that?
Chloe: They sing about different stuff [...] Well, like Mary-Mary and Kirk Franklin [popular gospel singers], they're talking about their lives they have, Jesus, saved now. And it's like the battle for them. And Charis and hip-hop singers are talking about their lives, too, but it's more about how they feel.
R: Maybe about love?
C: Yeah.
R: Or feeling bad, feeling good?
C: Yeah. (99-105)

When children discussed the kinds of music they listen to, they listed genres such as rap, hip-hop, R&B, gospel, jazz, classical, violin music, and country music; however, they were only

able to give the names of hip-hop, rap, and gospel musicians. They could not provide the names of any particular jazz, country, or classical musicians, as in the following example:

- Researcher: What kinds of music do you like?
Eddie: Country, classical, hip-hop and [...] did I say gospel?
R: I remember in one of our classes I asked you and others what kind of music you listen to. You were the only one said you like listening to classical music. Do you remember any specific names, like “this composer? this person I listen to?”
E: Not really, ‘cause like my granddaddy and my dad, like, they had a lot of old CDs and they had gave some to me and I just listen to them, but I don’t really know the names of them. I mean, they had told me, like, the first time I got them, but I don’t really remember. (15-22)

Music shows and videos provide them information that helps them internalize the names of popular rap, hip-hop, and R&B musicians as well as the song lyrics. Brenda said, “I don’t know the jazz names. On my TV, it don’t tell you the names of the jazz” (102). Arica similarly remarked, “Channel 36 is BET and that’s how you find out the name, what the name of the song and who is the artist of the song. And most of the gospels, on Sunday they have a pastor from each church preaching on TV and then around 4:00 or 3:30 they put back on 36, which is BET channel, which is R&B” (76-79).

The rappers, hip-hop artists, and R&B singers that children listen to are all black musicians. The music to which they are exposed is promoted at home, especially through watching music videos. For instance, all of the children stated that they watch the music channel BET daily. Music programs and videos (gospel, rap, hip-hop, and R&B) on BET provide certain musical examples and entertainment for these children. This is illustrated in the following excerpt:

- Researcher: What is R&B?
Arica: R&B is like a phrase for music that our culture made.
R: Can you explain?
A: Like they have some songs that have to do with good stuff and some songs dealing with bad stuff.

- R: But you said “our culture.” What do you mean by that?
 A: Black people listen to.
 R: Why?
 A: I guess they’re just not into white kind of music.
 R: What does “R & B” mean?
 A: “R” means the rap and “B” means for black. (13-23)

Arica mistook R&B to mean “rap is for black,” so when I consider her statements about R&B, I consider that she is talking about rap music. She continued,

- Researcher: You said R&B music is music for black people. In your opinion, can you say that white people and black people, they listen to different kinds of music?
 Arica: Well, like, some black people, they listen to black music. Some black people listen to gospel. Some black people listen to rock, hip-hop, R&B. Some white people listen to rock, hip-hop, classic jazz, and R&B. So white people [...] some black people say that white people act black. And some people say that there was a sentence or a paragraph or scripture in a speech said white people shouldn’t mess with black people since what happened from the racism time. So that is like we have our own sets of music, because if people think that we have, that white people and black people have the same kind of music, that they’re a confuser.
 R: Why?
 A: Because if there’s white people and black people, white people start, people think that white people start claiming black people’s music as their music. And then they don’t get all the money for it. It’s like writing a poem and then putting “unknown artist,” which someone will come in, erase, say that “I wrote that.” But then getting paid for something that they didn’t do.
 R: Do you think that some white people act like R&B or rap or hip-hop music is their music?
 A: I haven’t really imagined it, but I heard about it. I heard not like somebody actually doing it; I heard somebody’s opinion that it might happen. (439-458)

Whatever the confusion Arica spoke of, she was not confused about dominant perceptions of race and music, that rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel are black music. She also identified herself with these musics, which were created and popularized by her culture. She was eager to attain musical ownership for her culture so that she could secure her belonging to that specific culture and distance her culture’s music from others. Brenda exhibited her opinion on the issue of race

and music by reflecting her historical understanding. In the past, white figures of power might have claimed that her music is actually white music. The struggles and problems that her race has faced are audible through the sounds and words of the music she listens to. This is why she tries to distance her music from others. If whites make her music, then it means they “act black.”

Gospel through the Ears of Children

Children are exposed to gospel music at home and church. They regularly go to church and are involved in musical activities there. When they are asked to discuss the kinds of music they listen to, all of them mentioned gospel high on the list. The following excerpt illustrates the importance of church and gospel for these children:

Researcher: Do you listen to gospel?
Dan: They play it at my church all the time.
R: They play? Where?
D: At church. We have cookouts at my church and sometimes we do a Bible study, we listen to gospel. (14-17)

They often described gospel music with phrases such as “church music,” “music about Jesus,” “Lord’s songs,” “music with no cuss words,” and “slow beat music.” This music, which is strongly associated with Christianity, conveys religious messages. Children understand the differences between rap/hip-hop and gospel music in terms of their different messages. Children are also aware that adults and church musical activities promote gospel music and explicitly criticize hip-hop, rap, and R&B for its lyrical content. In the following excerpt, Brenda exhibited this confusion and tries to negotiate her musical and religious identities:

[The researcher had been asking about her family and their interest in music.]

Brenda: I’ll tell you this, my brother and my grandma is Christians. They don’t like hip-hop, they don’t like listening to it, nothin’.
Researcher: What do you mean by that? Why—aren’t you a Christian?
B: I’m just not a Christian because I don’t go to church all the time, but I go to church a lot.
R: If somebody is a Christian, and if that person doesn’t listen to hip-hop, what does that mean?

- B: A Christian is somebody who loves church and don't listen to rap music.
 R: Rap music is—
 B: Hip-hop.
 R: But why is it bad?
 B: It's not bad. They just don't listen to it. That's what a Christian is. (272-281)

Brenda explains which gospel singers she listens to and returns again to the same topic.

- Brenda: So, I love church, I love it. I'm not a Christian, but I love it.
 Researcher: You are not a Christian? Who are you then?
 B: I'm like in the middle of hip-hop and jazz. I like jazz. (319-322)

The children who were interviewed believe that listening to gospel music is more acceptable than listening to hip-hop or rap music owing to the absence of “cuss words.” Gerald explained that he likes gospel music because “it's like for the babies, parents don't have to worry about cussing” (68). They often reflected their parents' or grandparents' concerns about the lyrics of hip-hop and rap music, as the following excerpt illustrates:

- Researcher: Do you like that music [rap and hip-hop]?
 Chloe: I like it, but when it has the cuss words in it, that's something I don't like about it.
 R: Some bad words.
 C: Yeah, right.
 R: Do your parents have a problem with that? Do they tell you not to listen to this music?
 C: My mother and my father doesn't [...] my grandfather and my grandmother most of the time.
 R: So they tell you not to listen to it?
 C: My grandma and my grandpa tell me not to listen to the music. It's not for little children. They don't think it's demon or devil music, but it's not for children's ears to hear. (122-130)

Church activities play a role in adjusting the musical cultures of children. Children also hinted at a negotiation among musical genres. The musical materials of rap, hip-hop, and R&B (such as beat, rhythm, and harmony) overlap. Gospel music or music made at church borrows musical ideas from hip-hop, rap, and R&B. The main difference among these genres is their lyrical content, which is illustrated in the following examples:

- Researcher: What kind of music do you hear at church?
 Gerald: Gospel. And rock with gospel.
 R: Tell me more about that music.
 G: It is kind of entertaining for the kids that like to watch BET.
 R: How about the words?
 G: Pretty good. They don't have no cussing on them like some music videos have. And some that don't say nasty words on them, either. (58-64)

Besides their lyrical appeal to some children, church musical activities also appeal because of their popular and percussive instruments, entertainment, and how they encourage the children to display their musical skills, such as dancing, singing, and playing instruments. These activities present opportunities for the children to “show off” in front of family and friends. The following excerpt provides an example of this:

- Researcher: So you hear music at church, does anybody play an instrument?
 Brenda: It's organ. My brother just brings his keyboard sometimes to play at the church.
 R: What about other instruments? Any drum?
 B: Yes, a drum. And you know, guitar, electricity, I don't know what they call it.
 R: Electric guitar. Do you like that music?
 B: It's pretty good. It's pretty good. We got a lot of people at our church, but we make a lot of money. We make a lot of money. I love the beat. It's really good. (228-234)

Arica, who is also a popular step-dancer at school, discussed how she developed her stepping skill:

- Researcher: How did you discover that—stepping?
 Arica: Well, at my church they have a stepping group and I'm one of the captains for stepping. Me, and Bethany and N[ora] and D[anielle], we make up steps [...] and when we do that, we start tapping any kind of beat and then if we think that it's interesting we go into something else and we put it into our step that, we put it into that and then becomes a dance. (137-141)

The most popular gospel singers for these children are Kirk Franklin, Mary Mary, and Yolanda Adams. Kirk Franklin is very popular because most of the children sense his incorporation of R&B into his gospel music. Arica said, “If you listen to gospel, and then you

listen to rap, you will think that rap is hippy-hoppy than gospel. But, see, Kirk Franklin, he's somebody that take these kind of beats, like R&B beats, and he'll get the beat, and then he won't use the same words. He'll change them into gospel words. He sings about the Lord with R&B beats" (100-104).

Classical and Violin Music through the Ears of Children

When children were asked to talk about classical music, they often referred to the music they hear in violin class. For them, violin music is soft and smooth. Gerald said, "Classical music is kind of smooth and kind of simple to play because that's the first song you've got to, first kind of music you've got to learn to play" (316-317). When they described classical or violin music, they compared these genres to the music they often listen to at home. For instance, Arica said, "Not like, in hip-hop they [violin music] go fast, like the beat I showed you. [She imitates the rhythms of a hip-hop song]. Like that. They're not, like as fast. They're more smooth" (395-396). Brenda said, "I think these songs [violin music] are more kids' songs and hip-hop is more like half-adult people, teenagers you know, it's like that. I like these songs because it's not hip-hop. People just get in more fights and stuff when they talk about it. I like these songs because when I talk about it, it makes me happy again" (76-78).

Classical music is an abstract and unknown genre for most of the children who were interviewed. This kind of music is not widely listened to among their peers and in their home environments, as the following excerpt suggests:

- Researcher: Have you ever heard the word "classical music"?
- Arica: Classical, yeah, I've heard of it, but I really don't know what it means.
- R: Like music that was composed for instruments and orchestras. Have you ever heard of composers called Mozart, Beethoven?
- A: Yes.
- R: Who are they?
- A: Actors?
- R: They're composers. They did compose music 300 years ago. You haven't heard their names?

- A: No.
 R: Mozart and Beethoven?
 A: I've heard of a movie "Beethoven." (416-425)

On the other hand, some children have experience listening to classical music. Gerald remarked, "It's [classical music] like [...] you can play it by yourself without being ashamed of it because a lot of people used to play it a long time ago and they say, 'you can't beat the classics.' So, that's classical music so there's nothing better than that." (105-107). Gerald also thought that classical music is like "soul music [...] and they use classical music as concerts in other countries" (311). Children who know about classical music and have classical music CDs are usually guided by adults toward listening to it, as in the following example:

- Researcher: Do you like listening to music?
 Chloe: Listening to music [...] I like listening to different kinds of music. I like listening to gospel, hip-hop sometimes [...] no one really knows this, but I listen to opera sometimes.
 R: Opera wow! Where do you listen to opera?
 C: My grandma's TV. She's got Cox Digital Cable and if you go in the 900s, you go up to where it says "Opera" and then it plays—opera just come on and sometimes I go to classical where you can listen to Bach and Mozart.
 R: Let me ask you this question: what kind of music is opera? What is it like?
 C: I don't know, but it's really good to listen to.
 R: It's like somebody singing or somebody playing or together playing and singing?
 C: Playing, and it's like a chorus playing. There's opera singers singing.
 R: Women or men?
 C: Both.
 R: Both—sometimes women and singing, sometimes men are singing. So you said classical music, Bach and Beethoven? Or Mozart?
 C: Mozart.
 R: Do you remember any particular piece that you listened to?
 C: What's the name of that one? I've still got the CDs, but—
 R: You have CDs?
 C: I don't got Bach, but I got Mozart.
 R: Who got you those CDs?
 C: My godmother. (1-22)

Here, Chloe expressed her interest in listening to opera and classical music. While her formal knowledge of the genres is limited, the passage clearly shows a desire to be engaged in them.

She recognizes the mechanics of the performances, but does not yet have the vocabulary to describe them. Although she obviously knows something about opera, her responses suggest shyness in admitting her interest.

- R: You said earlier that nobody knows you listen to opera. So, your friends think that you shouldn't listen to opera—because it's silly or funny?
- C: They say they just think it's a lot of people screaming out words.
- R: So they don't like it. Do they think you should listen to rap more, instead of listening to opera?
- C: Yes.
- R: Why do you like listening to opera? Why are you different?
- C: It's just something that my ears like to listen to.
- R: It sounds good to you, huh?
- C: I don't think it's just people screaming out loud. It's really something [...] you can listen to the words and it's nice singing. (389-397)

For most of the children, classical music and opera are unfamiliar genres. None of the children had ever gone to a live classical music concert. Their familiarity with classical and violin music is limited to what they play and listen to in the violin classroom and what they see in school concerts. Chloe's excerpt illustrates that her interest in listening to opera (even though her knowledge of the genre is limited) is considered foreign in her circle of friends. Since listening and dancing to rap, hip-hop, and R&B are common experiences in her cultural environment, her interest in listening to unfamiliar genres is not fully welcomed. Chloe, however, tries to negotiate among her musical experiences (listening to opera and rap, hip-hop, and R&B). Her excerpt shows that she listens to rap, hip-hop, and R&B with friends, but her grandmother's home is a supportive environment where her interest in an unfamiliar genre is appreciated.

TV shows, movies, and cartoons are also mediums that expose children to the unfamiliar genre of classical music. Here, Dan discussed violin music in the movies:

- Researcher: Have you seen anyone playing violin on TV or anywhere else?
- Dan: I think 51. This man, he was dressed up in black [...] he was playing the violin.
- R: Dressed up in black, like a serious suit. Do you remember what he played?

- D: Like, he had some people with him playing.
R: Did you see anyone playing violin anywhere else?
D: On cartoons. (50-56)

Arica offered a more specific popular culture response:

- Arica: Yes, on this movie called *Good Night Kiss*. A dude, he liked playing music and he was, he dropped out of school and he wasn't able to go to school for music because he had to go back to school and he thought if he went back to school people would think he was too old to go back to school. So he started kidnapping students who knew about violin and who knew how to play violin and he wanted them to teach him and he had 'em around in a circle, people who knew how to play the violin. And they played and people who knew how to instruct the violin—like you do—they instructed the people to play violin. And he chose one black girl to go to a concert for him, which was a movie where a time when he was like, he joined all kinds of people together.
R: Did they play anything that you've heard before?
A: They played [...] it was like a beat of "Lightly Row." That's why I'm good with it because I got it on tape and they played the part where it says A22EE. They played that and then they played the second line. (37-45)

This excerpt is particularly revealing because Arica is not only focused on the music in the particular medium, but is able to link it to a story that makes sense in her mind. This level of thinking suggests an internalized connection: she links the sound with a visual. Other children were able to do the same. She also specifically mentions a "black girl" (not just "a girl") who will perform the concert. She is possibly able to imagine herself in that musical situation. This could be a motivating factor for her to continue playing.

Spaces for Music: Home, Church and School

Particular environments expose these children to certain kinds of music. The music they listen to is promoted at home. Children generally listen to what their parents and siblings listen to, as the following excerpt suggests:

- Researcher: Does your father have any problem that you listen to rap or hip-hop music?
Dan: No.
R: Does he like listening to rap and hip-hop, too?
D: He look just like me. We do everything. (44-46)

Children also have music CDs (gospel, rap, hip-hop, and jazz) at home, and listen to many of the same radio channels. For instance, Arica explained that before she shops for particular CDs with her mom, she learns the names of the songs and artists from BET (76-79). Most of the time their parents provide the music CDs that children listen to, as in the following example:

- Researcher: Do you have any music CDs at home? Do you have music CDs for these singers [that Brenda listed earlier such as hip-hop, rap and gospel singers]?
Brenda: I have all of them except for Young Jock.
R: Who got you those CDs?
B: My mom.
R: Does she like listening to this music, too?
B: She likes hip-hop. She likes gospel a lot more. (107-113)

All of the children watch the music channel BET on a daily basis. The music programs and videos (gospel, rap, hip-hop, and R&B) on BET provide certain musical examples and entertainment for these children. For instance, Arica, who closely follows the music programs on BET, remarked, “If I’m listening to it [R&B] on TV, which is 36, the time wouldn’t change because if it changed, many people wouldn’t watch it because they wouldn’t know what time it was. So they’ll put it on one channel and they will say what time it comes on the next day. On Wednesdays, it’s longer time you have to wait for that channel to come on because you get out of school a little bit early. So you’ll have to wait until when it comes on” (137-142).

Other TV shows and channels provide children gospel music. On Sundays, their favorite music channel, BET, plays gospel. When they do not go to church on Sunday, they often listen to gospel songs, as in the following excerpt from Eddie: “My mom, she really doesn’t go to church; she’ll watch it on TV [...] We’ll like listen to gospel. I mean, if we didn’t go to church, and then that day we’ll just listen to church gospel music all day” (106-107/131-132). His response suggests neither a positive nor negative perception of gospel; it is merely a part of life, part of the usual routine.

The children's comments on a wide variety of music matters indicate that there are certain musical activities (especially listening and dancing) commonly shared among family members. This kind of sharing might include singing, dancing, listening to the same music together, and listening to parents' or siblings' CDs. Brenda said, "My mom likes dancing [...] she be dancing to hip-hop. She put on the station and dance to it" (262). The following excerpt represents a further illustration of the family-communal aspect of these children's musical experiences:

- Researcher: [Referring to the TV channels and shows that Gerald watches] What else? Music shows?
- Gerald: Yes, 36 [BET].
- R: What kind of shows do they have on that channel?
- G: They show video music awards, they show music videos. That's all they really show. And [...] stories, too. (12-15)
- R: Do you have music CDs at home?
- G: Well, I think she's [his mother] got like two of her favorite ones are James Brown and *Dreamgirls* [...] she drives me crazy with that *Dreamgirls* CD.
- R: Don't you like it?
- G: She bought it like two weeks ago and the CD was scratched in two days.
- R: Why don't you like it?
- G: It's just that I don't understand it. I don't understand what's the music they're talking about.
- R: What type of instruments do they play? What type of music is that?
- G: They play guitar and they play flute. And piano.
- R: What about the James Brown CDs? How are they?
- G: They're pretty good. They play the drums, the flute, the bass.
- R: Is this like jazz?
- G: Yeah, kind of like jazz.
- R: Do you like jazz?
- G: Yeah. (20-36)

As later analyses make clear, the children tend to associate certain types of music with people.

For them, to discuss music is to discuss people, and vice versa.

The church is another important medium where children are exposed to particular types of music and have the opportunity to share certain musical activities with others, as in this example:

- Researcher: Do you hear music at church?
Eddie: Mm-mm. Yeah, my uncle, he plays piano and keyboard, and he sings, too, and my auntie, she plays the drums and she's been playing since she was like five and she's like, real good. And my daddy, he was telling me, I was like, "I didn't know my auntie could play the drums that good," and then my daddy, he was like, "men aren't the only ones who can play drums." I was like, "I know." (112-116)
- R: Are you enjoying listening to them when they play?
E: Mm-mm. Especially like one of my aunties, I mean, the other one, she's pretty good, too [...] I mean like one time we was at church and one of my aunties [...] I was like, "what are you doing?" and she was like, "I'm trying to play the drums." And then that was her first time playing and just I never saw [...] heard her play like that before.
- R: Really? Is she fast—or what is she like?
E: I mean, not fast, I mean like, she just plays to the song [...] they know a lot of songs since they grew up together and they know a lot of old church songs and stuff and so they'll like, he'll start off and he'll ask her if she remembers it and then, like, if she says yes, they'll start playing it and stuff. And like my grandma and granddaddy, they don't even have to remember. I mean, they just know it.
- R: By heart, almost?
E: Hm-hm.
R: Amazing—you said church songs. Are they like songs that you can play with piano, violin? How are they?
E: Not really.
R: What kind of songs are they?
E: I mean, the Kirk Franklin [popular gospel singer] one, you know, you can't really play with that. I mean, play with that song. This man, his name is Johnny Cash and he's and his daughters, they sing in the choir at his church. He owns a church, too, and he comes to my granddaddy's church and his daughters come and they sing music and, like, they'll be like, the whole church will be packed. (159-179)

The children rarely discussed the music they are exposed to at school. They did not provide any particular examples of school musical experiences. When they talked about the music they listen to at home, with peers, and on radio or TV, they had stories to tell. Their

musical experiences—in terms of school—often relate to the violin program, as in the following example:

- Researcher: Do you hear music anywhere else [after discussing what kind of music Gerald hears at church]?
- Gerald: I hear it at home, I hear it at concerts, and I hear it in my classroom once in a while.
- R: What about the concerts? What concert did you go to?
- G: Like the violin concerts.
- R: Which one?
- G: Last year's in third grade and second grade one. (71-76)

Eddie also commented on music at school:

- Researcher: Do you hear music at school?
- Eddie: Well, like, any concerts?
- R: Yes.
- E: Well, you remember last year [...] remember Bianca [a former Lincoln student who was very successful in the violin program]? She played—she comes a lot, she used to come days, and do it for us.
- R: What do you think about her?
- E: She is really good. (137-143)

Brenda responded to the same question differently. Referring to the music she hears at school, she said, “Yeah, not all the time, but yeah. People drum in the class” (239). An excerpt from Dan illustrates:

- Researcher: Do you hear music at school.
- Dan: At school, I hear music, too.
- R: What kind of music do you hear?
- D: Like the reading rap, different words made up for rap for fifth graders. Made up a rap and put in a CD. And everybody from school has one. And the math rap.
- R: Are you part of it?
- D: No. That's the fifth grade made it. We are just listening to it.
- R: Who leads that project?
- D: Mrs. Bryant.
- R: OK.
- D: She is the leader of fifth grade. (118-130)

For the children, violin music at school is associated with concerts. It represents something to be performed in front of an audience. It loses a part of its communal aspect, which is so important in

their other cultural environments. Note that when Dan discusses the math rap, however (an activity that does not occur in the music classroom and does occur with an African American teacher), the music seems to regain its communal aspect.

Music as a Shared Experience

For all of the children, music is fun, especially when shared with others. Children often spoke about listening to music with others, dancing with friends, and playing violin in front of family members. Felicia says: “On birthday parties, we sing and play games and we dance and all kinds of stuff. And at parks and stuff we dance” (80-81). Parents, siblings, grandparents, and friends are popular people in their lives in terms of experiencing music, as the following excerpt shows:

- Researcher: Do you like listening to music together with your family?
Gerald: Yeah, mostly in the car or sometimes on the weekend. Because me and my mom got a big old game room. While we’re playing pool, she likes to play her *Dreamgirls* and that’s really the only kind of music I get to listen to. (96-99)
- R: What about friends? Do you listen to music together at all?
G: Yes.
R: Tell me about that.
G: Well, my friend Adrian has his own stereo in his room, so usually he clears out his rooms so he can have a little dance floor in it.
R: Dance? You dance? What kind of dance?
G: We kind of like do the “motorcycle,” the “lean with it rock with it,” just those two dances.
R: What do you listen when you dance?
G: We listen to hip-hop, R&B, and rap. (106-114)

Listening to their favorite music and dancing with others are very common shared experiences for these children. For Eddie, listening to music with his cousin is important:

- Researcher: What about friends? Do you listen to music together?
Eddie: Yeah. I mean I don’t really have any friends that come over or nothing, or any houses that I go to. I mean, like, we just hang out at school, but out of school, not really. When my cousins come over or when I go over to my cousins’ house, we listen to a lot of music, get on the computer, just like go to the pool, watch TV, or whatever. Watch movies and play games and all that other stuff.

- R: Do you particularly listen to any songs, CDs with your cousins?
E: Hm-hm. A lot. We listen to a lot of music, like when we are on the computer, I go to my cousin's house and when she's on the computer, I'll just be watching a movie and listen to music and, like, she will have on a big radio, and she just puts in a CD and we just listen to it and stuff. (216-223)

Arica also talked about her experience with others:

- Researcher: Do you listen to music with your family?
Arica: Gospel—family and sometimes R&B.
R: Friends?
A: R&B and gospel.
R: When you listen to music together, what do you do?
A: We, [referring to her friends] when we listen to music, we don't listen to the words. We like the beat, and then take the beat. Steal the beat, and then make it up as a step, because stepping is, like, fun to me because you get all these emotions and stuff like that. (148-155)

Again, for the children, music and people are always associated. Music outside of school is rarely an activity that is enjoyed in isolation. It is always enjoyed in the presence of others. Note, too, the interesting detail in the above excerpt. When Arica is asked about the music she listens to with her family, she lists gospel first, followed by R&B, which means that she privileges gospel in the context of family. But when she is asked about the music she listens to with friends, she puts R&B before gospel. She understands the expectations associated with her different cultural spheres.

Music as Experience

Listening, dancing, watching, singing and playing constitute the main musical activities of these children. Listening is the most common musical experience discussed by these children. They listen to music through media (TV and radio/stereo) and at church and school through musical activities. When they talked about listening, they closely attended to the details of the listening experience, as in the following example:

- Researcher: I want to know if you like listening to music.
Brenda: I love it.

- R: You do? Tell me about it.
 B: When I listen to music, it makes me feel like playing the violin in class and playing that music I listen to.
 R: Tell me about the songs you listen to.
 B: Well, it has specific beats and most of it has violins playing.
 R: Really? You hear violin that they play?
 B: Some of them don't, but when I do, I hear violins playing. Some people don't hear it, but I can hear it good. (1-12)
 R: Tell me what you listen to. I want to know.
 B: Usually I just listen to gospel to get more information how a violin player plays. On the gospel station they have violins. One of my favorite songs got violin on it.
 R: Gospel song? You listen to gospel to hear violin music? What about the words?
 B: [Referring to listening] You don't just listen to the words; you listen to the music and how the rhythm is going [...] You listen to the rhythm to see what kind of music or instrument is playing. I listen to about three songs in hip-hop to see what violins or guitars or electric guitars or anything playing.
 R: So when you listen to a song, you're trying to hear the instruments.
 B: Yes. (52-61)

Arica's narrative of her listening experience was a little different:

- Researcher: Do you like listening to music?
 Arica: Yes.
 R: Tell me about that.
 A: If it's like a song, R&B, it's a song that I regularly listen to. If it's R&B and gospel, it's, for me, if I like the song, I keep listening to it. Listen to it and listen to it until I be able to learn it. And if I really don't like the song, I see like, I wouldn't listen to it no more. (4-7)

When children experience music, they are exposed to certain kinds of music through media (e.g. TV, radio/stereo and internet), church, and school musical activities. When they listen, dance, watch and listen to music videos, children are exposed to hip-hop, rap, R&B, and gospel. All of the children interviewed listen to the radio station "Hip-Hop DJ 101.3" and watch BET. Listening to CDs and watching music videos are also among these children's daily musical activities. Music tends to be very important in these children's lives, as illustrated in the following example:

Researcher: Is music important to you? If this is your life [she writes], this is your family, this is your school, where is music?
Dan: I do listen to music everyday. (128-129)

When children listen to music, they pay close attention to the lyrics of the songs. The following example illustrates how these children are willing to take stories and messages from the songs they listen to:

Researcher: Why is music important to you?
Eddie: It's just fun to listen to it. I just feel like the songs are telling stories. (288-289)

Church and school music activities provide these children opportunities to sing and play instruments, especially gospel and classical violin music. Some children have very rich musical lives outside of the classroom; some sing in a church choir and play percussion instruments. Some children, on the other hand, experience musical experiences through watching others' (especially family members') playing and singing in church or family environments.

Playing Violin

The violin program at Lincoln offers students opportunities to play an instrument, to gain exposure to different kinds of music, and to perform alongside others. Playing violin is their main musical activity in terms of learning an instrument, and the interviews suggest that these children are aware of this opportunity and are motivated to choose violin as their "major."³ For instance, Chris wanted to choose violin as a major because, as he said, "I had picked it 'cause I really wanted to get back into violin, since I was in it last year" (294). The following excerpt also illustrates this:

Researcher: Do you like playing violin?
Brenda: I like to learn.
R: Why did you pick violin as your major?

³ Other options for arts majors at Lincoln include dance, steel pan drum, keyboard, and drama. All of these majors, even drama, are associated with music and performance.

- B: When I first came to see what happens, to see what it's like, I fell in love with it. I liked the way it holds the violin, like the way you go up and down with the bows with your finger. Every time I go home I do a little finger exercise like this to get my hands to move better.
- R: That's a good idea.
- B: I do it for about an hour until my hands start hurtin'.
- R: You picked violin because you came to the demonstration, you saw us playing [...] so what was the first time you started to think about picking violin as your major?
- B: I first started that, it was very interesting. It was the first time I ever been interested that much in my life.
- R: OK.
- B: And that's the first instrument I started playin'.
- R: So we did a demonstration. Your class came here. Was it the first time? We played some things for you to listen to?
- B: You let us move the bow up the violin a little bit. And I said, "That is cool. I like it." And that's when I signed up.
- R: So how do you feel when you play your violin?
- B: I feel happy. It just makes everything I do [...] it makes me feel better. (400-418)
- R: What is good about violin at Lincoln?
- B: The thing that's good about violin is you learn an instrument, learning it the right way, in a good way, respectful way, and treat, you know, treat the violin right, the way you want to be treated.
- R: What's not so good?
- B: There's nothing that's not good about violin. Everything's good. (426-430)

Children display a willingness to learn and to use their time wisely during the violin lessons. For instance:

- Researcher: How do you feel when you are in the violin class?
- Arica: Good, that I'm learning songs, that I'm learning new songs. I get to play songs that I already know. (249-250) That's what I say to myself, "this class really brought up my day. I'm glad that I learned something."
- R: Why would you say that? Tell me more about that.
- A: Because it does. Because it's fun to learning those songs, and playing the violin. (254-257)

Eddie said, "There's not really anything bad about it [violin], but like sometimes I would like to just be in a room with everybody who loves to play the violin instead of some people who just didn't turn in their slip or whatever and just didn't want to be there (319-321) [...] I feel like I

wish we would've had more time. Since some people be holding us back, they waste our time" (347-348). Gerald expressed how he feels when it's time to go to the violin class in a similar way: "Like happy and kind of, I don't know how to say it OK., happy and kind of mad [...] well, I'm glad to go to violin because I can still practice though, but the fact that sometimes the kids get so loud sometimes I can't concentrate on practicing" (206-208).

Most of the students indicated that they were amazed by how they can learn particular skills and apply them on their instruments. Eddie remarked, "I'm just really surprised that I have learned all those songs. Most of the time I just really give up on stuff, but not this time" (333-334). The following excerpt further illustrates this point:

Researcher: How do you feel when you play violin?
Chloe: That's a hard question. I have to think [...] At first, it felt painful, learning how to use our hands, but then I get used to it. (207-209) When you play and you get something right, you get excited about it because you never did it before. (221)

"I Love Playing Violin Because It Is Fun": Enjoyment as Meaning

Many of these children chose violin as a major because they perceive it as a fun, happy experience that feels good. Dan explained, "I tried it last year. I thought that it wasn't gonna be fun, but after the day was over I was having fun, so then I went to fourth grade and fourth grade had majors" (219-220). Chloe also remarked, "Because when I was in second grade I saw how fun it is so I wanted to keep on playing it" (203). Chloe remarked, "It's fun learning those songs and playing the violin (257). It's something that's really fun. It's good learning about it. I like learning stuff here" (273).

Their enjoyment of the violin lessons constitutes one of the major factors why students displayed positive perceptions toward violin. Many children went deeper into the meaning of

having fun in the violin lessons. Eddie, for instance, stated that violin lessons are fun because they offer an escape from regular classroom activities:

Researcher: How do you feel when it's time to go to the violin class?
Eddie: I'm happy that I am going to violin because sometimes your day's, go to school [...] it's either boring or frustrating. But then, when you like violin, when you go there, you get excited because you're going somewhere you're gonna like. (242-244)

Arica also explained why she thinks about violin class during other times of the day:

Arica: In some classes, I feel like I want to hurry up and go to the violin.
Researcher: What classes are they?
A: Social studies.
R: Don't you like social studies? Is it tough?
A: Not really tough, but it's not fun.
R: Do you prefer violin? Is it more fun than social studies?
A: Yes.
R: When you have other classes, as you said, boring classes, do you think about violin class? What do you think?
A: Like, c'mon class, get over, I be looking at my watch, I got this amount of time, this amount of time, then this amount of time. And it's like hard 'cause you've gotta wait until the amount of time. You cannot leave until the class is over. (331-347)

The following excerpt also illustrates this:

Researcher: How do you feel when it's time to go to the violin class?
Eddie: Sometimes I just feel like something good might happen today in violin class and I just love coming to violin class.
R: Sometimes not?
E: There's not one time when I wouldn't like to come here. I mean, I like coming here even if I do have a bad day 'cause I just like the violin. (325-327/329-330)

“We Heard Good Things about the Program”: Instruction at Lincoln

Others are impressed with the instruction, like Arica, who noted, “What's good about violin at Lincoln is that, from what I heard, most of the best teachers come in, so I would say teachers [...] and that you have your own instrument” (188-189). For Chloe, the joys of violin included teachers, as well:

- Researcher: Do you want to keep studying violin even though it is painful to play once in a while? Doesn't it stop you?
- Chloe: No. it doesn't. When you have a great teacher like you, you get to learn more stuff faster.
- R: Thank you. Why do you think I'm a great teacher? What makes me a great teacher?
- C: You don't give up when we can't make it through, so we need to have someone to help like you help us. Either you help or you have someone to help us when you're working with other students.
- R: So I'm persistent. I'm pushing you and it's something good for a teacher to do? I shouldn't give up, right? So, what else is good about violin at Lincoln?
- C: When you play and you get something right, you get excited about it because you never did it before. (210-221)

That these children praise their instructors constitutes an interesting dynamic. On the one hand, they are looking to please the researcher, who herself is an instructor in the program. The reasons for their praise may, however, go deeper. They hear in the community—from friends, parents, friends' parents, teachers, and church leaders—that the arts magnet program at Lincoln benefits the community. For instance, Felicia [answering the question, “what is good about violin at Lincoln?”] said, “I heard that it was the only school that had violin” (115). As they are thankful for the benefits (repeating what they have heard elsewhere), their instructors become equated with the program itself. Brenda identified the program (and making music in general) with her instructor: “When they listen to it, they say it's got some beat, some rhythm, and some good sound to it. And they'll love to hear you [the researcher] play because you got magic—a wonder—a magician. I don't know how to say it, but—” (327-329).

“Everybody Says It Is Good to Play Violin”: Identity, Family, and Community

Children frequently shared their experiences with family members—experiences that include playing to them or talking about the lessons. They, in turn, receive positive support from their parents and the surrounding community. For example, Brenda remarked, “My mom said if she heard me before she said I play really good, and she hope I continue to stay in violin 'cause

she said she like the music I play and she loves how the whole class plays together, like one big violin. She says she loves that” (63-66). She continued, “My mom and my auntie said if I keep studying I’ll become used to it, I’ll like it. They said most people just quit on what they want to learn” (421-422). Felicia also shared her violin experience with her mom. She said, “It [playing violin] is important to me because I really want to learn. But sometimes I just feel I want to play violin because my mother played it with me” (83-84). She continued:

- Felicia: My mama did play; she played violin, too. She was trying to remember what songs she played.
- Researcher: Really? What school did she go to?
- F: I don’t remember the elementary school.
- R: So your mom played violin (42-47). What does your family think about your playing violin?
- F: It’s good [...] because that, they were just thinking, they was just thinking that me and my mom was the only people in the family that played instruments [...] That it is a good thing that we have a player in our family. (57-61)

Students often expressed that they are the only ones in the family (even their extended family) who can play an instrument. Gerald commented, “My mom sometimes likes to sing, but she can’t sing. But, really I’m the only one that can sing in the house and the only one that can play an instrument” (80-81). Dan is also the only one in his family who can play an instrument:

- Researcher: Do any people in your family sing or play an instrument?
- Dan: I’m the only one.
- R: You are the only one? Wow! You must be feeling lucky? Do you feel lucky?
- D: Yes.(102-105)
- R: What do your parents think about you playing violin?
- D: They think it’s good for me. They think that, so they can enjoy me playing violin to them. Really just enjoy me playing for them. That’s all.
- R: When you take your violin home and play your violin for your father, what does he say?
- D: He says, “good job” and he just tells me to keep up the work. He tried playing, but his fingers too big. (110-118)

Arica also discussed what she shares with her family about playing violin:

Well, my dad, he says that he's gonna try to keep me in music for the rest of my life [...] and my mom, she thinks that I should stay in violin [...] And my brother, they like the violin. They like trying it, 'cause when I took it home, my brother, they kept messing with it, but I wouldn't let them mess with it 'cause it wasn't mine. And they wanted to try to play it and I said, "I'll play a song for you, I'll play 'Lightly Row' and 'Mickey Mouse and Minnie'." They was like, "I wanna play violin, I wanna play violin." I said, "Well, next year Broderick's going to be in violin, and you've gotta wait a couple of years because you're not in a grade to get a major." He was like, "I know, but—" I was like, "OK, OK, OK, I'll play another song." (193-202)

Children often discussed playing violin at church, gathering positive support from the church community. Brenda goes to church with her grandmother, and she plays violin to her:

"She [her grandmother] thinks I'm a really excellent player. She say I got some skills, and you know, how you hold the bow [...] I am good at that" (119-120). Brenda's conversation with the researcher continued:

Researcher: You told me that you took your violin to the church. Tell me about that. When did it happen? What did happen?

Brenda: I don't remember when. Everybody, the whole crowd reacted good. You know how they react when they hear something, they'll clap afterwards. They clapped for I don't know how long, but they said I was good. (124-127)

Eddie also stated how his grandfather wants him to play his violin at church: "My granddaddy, he was, like, one day, 'well, once you get a violin, then you're gonna have to come to the church and play for us one day.' I mean, like, I didn't even think of it until he said it that day" (188-190).

"I Want to Play Rap, Hip-Hop, and Gospel Songs on the Violin": New Musical Territories

This study illustrated students' interest in playing and studying familiar music. Students want to play the music they are exposed to and like. In several classes, the violin teacher let students explore options to add parallel rhythms and beats to what they already play. Arica, who was popular with stepping, volunteered. First, she listened to the player and grew familiar with the rhythms of the song. She then borrowed the rhythmic elements of the song and improvised

further and finally created patterns for particular songs. She produced the rhythms through stomping, clapping, the use of body percussion, and hand jives. At the same time, the rest of the students provided a loud steady beat by stomping whenever Gerald and Arica performed. The children called the activities and performances “Stepping Violins.” The following excerpts illustrate students’ interest in playing familiar music and their perceptions of “stepping violins:”

- Researcher: You did something interesting with Brenda [referring to the “Stepping violins” activity]? Did you like what you did?
Gerald: She makes me tired.
R: Good. She makes you work, right? How would you describe it to somebody?
G: She step and I play.
R: Other kids really liked what you did.
G: They did?
R: They thought it was very interesting and fun.
G: They wanna try it. (249-259)
R: What other kinds of music would you like to play with your violin?
G: Rap.
R: [After talking about the differences between classical and rap music the researcher asks.] So, what you did with Brenda was an example of classical music or something else?
G: A mixture of classical and rap.
R: Is it fun to do that?
G: It is kind of fun. (319-326)

All of the students expressed their desire to play familiar music. Brenda, for instance, attempted it herself, as the following excerpt reveals:

- Brenda: Jazz is music you can dance to and stuff, and jazz, sometimes when I bring my violin home, I play jazz music and play a little song that goes to it.
Researcher: Would you like to play other kinds of songs with your violin?
B: Yes. I made up about three songs [...] with jazz music. (14-18)

Eddie also conveyed an interest in playing familiar music with his violin. He said, “If we could, I would like to play [...] not really rap but the singers’ songs, gospel songs as I was talking about, and classical songs. I mean like, if I could find those CDs and bring them, I could let you hear what kind” (412-414). Felicia also wanted to play rap and gospel with her violin:

Researcher: Do you remember Gerald and Arica did something different yesterday?
Did you like it?
Felicia: Yes.
R: Why?
F: It was interesting.
R: Do you think it was something we didn't do before?
F: Yeah.
R: Is it similar to what you listen to?
F: Yes.
R: Really? Like what?
F: In rap, they have the beat going while they play. (175-183)

Arica described her own experience with "Stepping Violins:"

Researcher: So, you did stepping when Gerald played. How was it?
Arica: You're using beats from R&B with violin.
R: Would you like to do more things like that in our class?
A: Yeah.
R: I asked other students, "Did you like what Arica and Gerald did?" They said, "yes." They said, "it sounded really interesting and fun." Why do you think they liked it? Rhythm makes people move?
A: More excited (399-405). I like mixing music together, because one type of music would be very boring.
R: That's true. So, what do you do? Do you listen to different kinds of music?
A: I listen to Kirk Franklin and Beyonce. (413-415)
R: What could make violin at Lincoln better?
A: Using R&B beats [...] I guess more treats. (427-428)
R: I want to use these ideas in my violin class. Tell me one more time. Would you say, "Miss Lisa, this music we play here is not 'black culture music' [These were Brenda's words]. Why don't we make more black music?" Would you say that?
A: I'd say, "Miss Lisa, this music is not into our style. Can you hippy-hoppy it or can you notch it up a little bit?" I wouldn't say, "This is not our kind of music or I don't wanna play this." (474-479)

As the children's answers in the early and late sections of this chapter suggest, they love the music they love (rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel) because it tells stories and contains beat.

Playing violin opens unfamiliar territories for them. What matters to the children is not only receiving the opportunity to play such music (rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel) on their violins, but also using their instruments to generate beat. For children, violin music is music with no beat. Their desire is to go beyond that.

Conclusion

A portion of the final chapter of this study explores the pedagogical implications of the children's desire to generate beat on their instruments. That desire—that love of rhythm and repetition—which emerges in many of the children's responses to a variety of questions, can be important for string educators as they construct non-traditional approaches to instruction. The rest of the final chapter proceeds similarly, charting implications for pedagogy based on the data presented here. As outlined more fully in the next chapter, the process of discussing and drawing conclusions about the data involves two steps. First, the data on the children's musical lives must be discussed to see how it affects and shapes their perceptions of the violin program. The opposite set of questions is also important: how does their activity with the violin affect and shape their perceptions of the music and musical activities they love? Based on these connections, it is critical to arrive at conclusions on how string music teaching itself can become more culturally responsive. While the present chapter displays the collected data that *shows* the children's culture, the final chapter focuses on *why* understanding that culture (thinking about and discussing that data) is useful for string music educators as they construct new approaches. In addition, in line with the hermeneutical approach, the researcher's pre- and new understandings of the children's musical lives are explored.

Table 4-1. The Children's Personal Musical Lives

What Music?	Where?	With Whom?	In What Ways?	What singers/bands?
Rap/Hip-Hop/R&B	At Home	Alone With Parents With Siblings With Peers	Listening Watching Singing Dancing	Young Jock* Fantasia Barrino Mary J. Blige* Mariah Carey Chris Brown* 4 Minutes Keisha Cole UNK Akon Young Jeezy Beyonce* Ciara Ashanti Cherish Janet Jackson Pretty Ricky "Lil' Bow Wow"
Gospel/Church Music	At Home At Church	With Parents With Grandparents With Siblings With Close Relatives With Peers Alone	Listening Singing Watching Playing	Yolanda Mary Mary* Kirk Franklin* Cece Winans Beverly Crawford
Classical/Violin	At Home At School	Alone With Teachers With Parents With Grandparents	Playing Listening Watching	
Jazz/Blues	At Home	Alone With Parents	Listening Dancing Watching	

* Denotes a shared statement. These singers were the most popular among the children.

Table 4-2. The Children's Musical Experiences

Listening	Watching	Dancing	Singing	Playing
Through Media (TV, Radio, Stereo, Internet)	Media (TV)	Media (TV, Radio, Stereo)	Media (TV, Radio, Stereo, Internet)	Church Musical Activities
Church Musical Activities	Church Musical Activities	Church Musical Activities	Church Musical Activities	School Musical Activities
School Musical Activities	School Musical Activities			

CHAPTER 5 FROM CULTURE TO THE CLASSROOM: IMPLICATIONS FOR STRING MUSIC PEDAGOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand and explain the violin experiences of African American students at Lincoln Elementary School in northern Florida. A semi-structured interview was used to understand the musical lives of the children as well as their violin experiences and perceptions of the school's violin program. Interview data were analyzed through Spradley's (1979) four-step "Ethnographic Analysis Model." Although the findings from this study cannot be generalized to the population of all predominately African American music classrooms, they do have implications for music teachers. They are especially relevant for instrument teachers who are open to non-traditional ways of teaching music and willing to integrate ideas from culturally responsive pedagogy.

The data revealed that the participants of this study had shared perceptions of music; in particular, that it tells stories and has a distinctive beat. Their perceptions of music were also learned and experienced in their unique cultural environments and social spaces. The data also revealed that students' musical lives and perceptions of playing violin mutually interact and affect each other. For instance, the children discussed playing their violins at church and tried to hear violin music in their favorite songs at home. They spoke of wanting to generate beat on their violins and play familiar songs with them. Their narratives suggested a desire to make the violin experience personally meaningful and culturally relevant. They were eager to link their experiences in the school violin classroom with their lives beyond.

In this chapter, the role of the hermeneutical perspective is discussed in the complex process of understanding the children's musical lives as they relate to their perceptions of the violin program. As I reflect on my growing understanding throughout the process, I also discuss the findings in detail, especially their implications for string music pedagogy and future research.

Hermeneutics constitutes the theoretical framework of this study. The main goal of a hermeneutically framed study is careful reflection of the researcher during the research process. This reflection can be translated into critical self-exploration and careful interpretation of the researcher's own understanding of the research process and empirical data. Researchers come to a research site with a pre-understanding of the problem and the issues that should be tackled throughout the research process. Conducting research in itself requires constant questioning and intellectual growth. In other words, researchers should keep their pre-understandings flexible so that they can be shaped and transformed throughout the research process. In the current study, there were key observations that allowed the researcher to shape her pre-understandings in light of new-understandings of the children's musical lives as they relate to their violin experience at Lincoln. These observations, which emerged from the interview data, are categorized according to culture, space, and people.

Culture Matters

This study showed that the children liked listening to certain kinds of music unique to their cultural spheres. They shared similar tastes in music, and had commonsense ways of being in and perceiving the world of music. They expressed their musical likes and dislikes. They were eager to list the names of their favorite singers and bands. They also offered critiques of particular musical genres that they listen to. They often questioned their participation in those musical worlds, noting frequently the influences of family and peers on their musical tastes. Some students actually narrated their personal and social negotiations among different genres. Their musical cognitive maps were complex and well developed.

My understanding and knowledge of the Lincoln students' musical lives were limited at the beginning of the study. After engaging for a time in their cultural worlds—watching their TV shows, channels, and music videos, listening to their favorite radio channels, and surfing their

favorite music websites—I gradually become more aware of their daily musical experiences. The musics they listened to and danced to were different from my own. The children who were interviewed listen to rap, hip-hop, R&B, and gospel. Listening constituted a great portion of their musical experiences. Elliott (1995) states,

music listening always involves cognizing musical expressions of culture-specific information (including cultural beliefs and values) [...] in the process of cognizing musical works, listeners “place” or contextualize musical sound patterns by drawing upon all the cues and knowledge at their disposal. Listening as covert knowing-in-action involves assimilating culture-beliefs, values, and concepts, or *memes*. As an active, constructive process, music listening includes constructing a kind of cultural profile of the musical sounds we are cognizing. In the words of Lucy Green, musical listeners assess the ‘delineated meanings’ that musical works manifest or reflect. (p. 191)

What do the children’s musical genres share? Is there anything culture-specific in these musics?

“What cultural-ideological values are embodied in the musical patterns” of these musics?

(Elliott, p. 191). Culturally speaking, *are* rap, hip-hop and gospel African American children’s music? Do they identify themselves with these particular kinds of music? Rap involves a set of practices and a history that is different from traditional European concert practices. As it originated in the mid-1970s in New York City, rap “emerged from the streets of inner-city neighborhoods as genuine reflections of hopes, concerns and aspirations of urban Black Youth” (Powell, 1991, p. 245). The most distinctive feature of this music is its explicit lyrical content and rhythmic power. Powell (1991) states that rap lyrics represents an expression of contemporary African American experiences, including social, political, and racial awareness and critique: “For Black youth in particular rap provides a powerful force for identity, solidarity, and emotional reinforcement” (Powell, p. 245). It should also be noted that these children perceived rap as music. While this point seems obvious, not everyone (especially some in the white, mainstream world of music and music education) considers rap *to be* music.

For these children, rap creates a unique musical mood through rhythmic chanting and digital sampling. Their love of the kinetic aspect of this music was evident in the children's narratives. The children often discussed dancing and other forms of bodily involvement in music listening as part of their experience with rap, hip-hop, and R&B. Although the children identified themselves with these genres, they posed critiques of their widespread use of explicit language, sexual references, and violent imagery.

Gospel music also constituted a great part of their musical lives. One of the most prominent African American genres, gospel served as a vital dimension of these children's musical identity. They linked gospel not only to church, but also to certain home environments, often drawing cultural lines between gospel and rap (rap equals fun, gospel equals serious; rap equals the street, gospel equals Jesus). Their particular negotiation through these two genres was heavily influenced by the warnings of family elders: grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Future researchers would do well to explore this negotiation more closely—in the same way that African Americans negotiate language use through the practice of codeswitching (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

According to Masemann (2004), education is more than information transfer. Culture matters whenever education takes place. Education has a strong cultural component. As some researchers argue, teaching is a cultural transmission (Apple, 1979; Bourdieu, 1986). They believe that educational institutions (where most educational practices take place) transfer and reproduce the dominant culture's values and beliefs. In the case of violin teaching and learning at Lincoln, certain values and norms are reproduced, especially in terms of materials and performance. The children are expected to put their learning on display a couple times per year at concerts and open houses. Parents, siblings, and members of the community come to watch the

children play their newly-learned songs. These occasions, however, represent more than opportunities for the children to play. Because people from outside the school environment regularly appear at these events, they represent opportunities for Lincoln to demonstrate the success of their fine arts program within a cultural context valued by members of the community. They are putting on display—in the terms of these cultural theorists—the educational “transfer.” While instructors (like this researcher) are interested in process, the community is interested in product. This would be an example of how children at Lincoln are socialized within the dominant cultural norms and values.

Among scholars, there is a tension between being culturally responsive in one’s teaching practice and making sure that students learn in ways that will provide them access to cultural capital. Teaching practices should try to achieve a balance between these two goals—and, more importantly, these goals should not be seen as mutually exclusive. For instance, Gerald loves rap music and expressed an interest to play it on his violin. If my task as a teacher is to work with Gerald in a culturally responsive way but also provide him access to cultural capital, then I must do two things. First, I must learn about rap and his specific interest in it and encourage his love of the genre. In doing so, I will recognize and affirm his musical identity. I must also, however, make sure that he is equipped with the skills and repertoire that will enable him to participate in mainstream Anglo music practices. He must be able to join the academic dialogue. The ideal synthesis of these approaches—in practice—is to encourage him to play rap on his violin. The ultimate goal for critical pedagogues is to build critical consciousness. In the case of Gerald, that means working with him in ways that will enable him to engage in critical thinking. For example, he might arrive at his own understandings of the relationships between rap and mainstream Anglo academic culture. A teacher could ask for little more.

The findings of this study, however, also suggest a set of contradictions. Even though the children enjoy performing, when there is no audience and the children are back in the usual classroom, they express the desire to play the music that matters most to them. In other words, the children participate in the educational transfer (in the displays of cultural capital), but they would prefer to be playing rap or R&B on their instruments. At the performances, children play traditional, mainstream pieces like “Lightly Row” and “Go Tell Aunt Rhodie.” Imagine the motivating possibilities if children were given the opportunity to play the music they love at concerts. Practitioners should work toward that goal.

Space Matters

The children experienced music in particular locations. Their variety of musical spaces was evident in their statements, which included different times, physical localities, and with whom they experienced music. Being at church on Sunday morning or after school, listening to a gospel choir, sitting in front of a computer screen searching for song lyrics, watching music videos on BET, and trying to imitate certain dances constituted different sites where their musical learning takes place. As Everett Allsup (2003) argues, “schools, homes, places of worship, and even a friend’s garage are much more than physical localities: each space provides a complex of expectations, roles and organizational rules for learning” (p. 25). This was the case with the violin students at Lincoln. They gained specific musical learning in particular places. For instance, they listened to rap and danced in a friend’s room. They followed the norms of the church and did not listen to hip-hop songs there. They also brought their musical learning from church, home, and a friend’s room to the violin classroom. These negotiations of space and musical attitude and skills suggest that the students—even though they are only eight and nine years old—have matured to the point where they recognize the social expectations associated with music.

The violin classroom was also a place where they learned particular musical norms and behaviors. There, they discussed learning a particular strand of formal music culture. While it is the case that some respondents discussed playing music in structured environments at church or other gathering places, the environment at Lincoln provided them with an alternative set of behaviors associated with music. For the first time in their lives, they were the official “stars of the show” at school concerts, recitals, and open houses, given the opportunity to see their names on the program. For some, this new musical world was accompanied by different cultural expectations in terms of practice and readiness, receiving applause and congratulations, and viewing the event as spectators. The children who were interviewed enjoy describing concerts and other performances at Lincoln and recall the performances of older students who came before them. They began to see themselves as a part of a chain of musical performers, a realization that was reinforced privately by parents and family members who praise their abilities and discuss other musical talents in the family (for example, “Your uncle was a fine drummer; now you can join him on the violin”).

Space, however, does not have to refer to physical locations. Although Elliott (2005) never specifically refers to the concept of musical space in his Internet link to *Multicultural Music Education*, his encouragement to music teachers to begin “deliberately engaging [...] students with works and projects from even few different musical style-practices” constitutes the opening up of spaces. If children are given the opportunity to experiment among multiple genres, they can potentially create their own musical spaces where the genres overlap by blending elements of rap and classical music. This is another way of talking about the musical negotiations that the children consistently undertake.

People Matter

The children's musical lives outside of the school are real and complex. They share particular music with particular individuals. "Communal gatherings," especially at church, but also at family picnics and reunions, birthday parties, and holidays constitute their musical lives. These lives are inevitably people-based. When the children discussed music or were asked questions related to their musical lives, they mentioned people. Consider again the case of Gerald, who when asked about what CDs he owns or listens to, first referred to his mother's love of the *Dreamgirls* CD and his exhaustion from hearing it so often. Even the simplest questions provoked responses that involve other people. Because the children consistently referred to people in their discussions of music, it became clear that music itself is a social, shared experience for them. Further research may verify the differences between African American and white perceptions of music as a communal experience. For the respondents in this study, music was hardly ever something enjoyed or made in isolation.

Here, an additional type of negotiation may be noted, one that explicitly involves people and musical preferences. Because it became clear that the children identify certain musical genres with certain people (for example, "At grandparents' house we listen to gospel on Sunday mornings"), it is logical to assume that the children actually adjust their musical preferences depending on with whom they interact. Again, this phenomenon deserves additional research.

Several researchers who have done studies on successful culturally responsive teaching practices for African American students (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lundquist & Sims, 1995; Villegas, 1991) concluded that children learn better in informal and family-based environments. According to these researchers, teachers who try to incorporate students' home experiences into classroom activities are more successful. The findings in this study support their conclusions. When students are given the opportunity to incorporate elements

of their outside musical lives that involve family and friends (like Arica and Gerald's stepping routine) into classroom activities, success occurs. Stepping is performed where people gather. More than physical expression, it involves social dynamics. Making the classroom a family atmosphere helps students learn more effectively.

Mutual Learning in the Violin Classroom: Implications for Instrumental Music Education

In this study, African American students' views of a violin program were examined for insights into how teachers can become more culturally responsive. Through documenting and analyzing the lived experiences of the participants, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that there was a need for careful acknowledgement and integration of a student's daily performance and listening habits into the violin classroom because their musical lives outside the classroom are rich. Music is a more significant part of their lives than this researcher expected, and they experience it in multiple locations with multiple kinds of people. This multiplicity of musical experiences undoubtedly impacts their perceptions of violin at school. Teachers must find ways to put that rich multiplicity to work in the classroom. They can do so by establishing a dialogic and democratic teaching-learning environment, where they attempt to engage and build upon the musical knowledge that students already bring to the classroom. For the practitioner, this means first engaging students verbally, encouraging them to discuss their musical lives outside of school. The interview process itself taught this researcher that students are eager to discuss their experiences; they are able to build narratives based on their musical lives and musical connections with the people and places they value. Culturally responsive teaching is a way to do that and to empower these students.

In terms of culturally responsive teaching, this study is consistent with previous research. Previous studies (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lundquist & Sims, 1995; Villegas, 1991) revealed that African American children bring particular cultural characteristics

to the classroom that teachers should take into account. The cultural musical characteristics consistently mentioned in this study include: the children's desire to use rhythm, movement, and percussion when they make music, their desire to play the musics they know and love, and their desire to consider music as a shared activity that occurs in particular sites. Practitioners who wish to build a culturally responsive pedagogy should consider these dominant factors.

How can such a violin classroom evolve? Violin teachers who work in culturally diverse classrooms should try to connect students' prior and current musical culture to their violin practices. They should model a pedagogy that will be culturally responsive, engaging, and personally meaningful. Violin teachers can do this in many ways. This effort can begin with recognizing students' musical likes and dislikes through listening-discussion and playing-discussion sessions. In any music classroom, the children's musical experience might be different than the teacher's. Some violin teachers might feel uncomfortable exploring unfamiliar music such as rap, hip-hop, or R&B; the dialogic character of a musical classroom, however, is one of the premises of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Music teachers need to create a musical dialogue between themselves and their students so that they can learn from each other. Violin teachers can seek possible ways to do so, beginning with what the children already know musically. Teachers can then learn the unfamiliar genres and put them into practice in the classroom. At Lincoln, I had particular success with the "Stepping Violin" activity. Since the children expressed their love of beat and rhythm so often, adding those elements to the violin instruction was a valuable, relatively easy process.

Technology opens up a broad array of similar types of classroom incorporation. A quick search of Youtube.com reveals performers who use the violin in non-traditional ways, like hip-hop violin. While it may require years of practice for students to reach a point where they can

actually use their instruments to create hip-hop music, making them aware of the possibilities for such activity can generate their interest and put them on a path toward it. African American children should also be made aware of the rich history of African American jazz violinists: a quick Internet search revealed many musicians who made their mark in the world of jazz with violin. Children must learn to associate the instrument with their own cultural heritage. No instrument is a white or black instrument.

As the data suggest, even though the children were eager to discuss their musical experiences, their knowledge and language was limited. Empowering children in terms of building a language to describe and discuss the music they experience in and out school is crucial, and can be done in relatively simple ways. Teachers should take time early in the school year to sit down with students and listen to their ideas about music. These sessions should be repeated occasionally throughout the year, as children's ideas will change based on classroom interactions. The importance of *listening* should be emphasized: too often the simple act of listening is left out of discussions of pedagogy. As the data show, the children often tried to connect their favorite genres or familiar songs with unfamiliar music (violin, classical, or opera) or musical experiences. It was difficult for them to describe why a particular genre sounds a particular way, or why some genres are different from each other. Listening sessions throughout the school year will help students describe music. It will also facilitate better thinking. Many researchers agree that language use and cognitive skills are intimately linked. Allsup and Baxter (2004) emphasize listening in their arguments: "Dialogue is an important component in developing critical thinking and metacognition," which means "awareness of one's own thinking process" (p. 31). They continue, "Good discussion inspires both teachers and students. Teaching students to articulate what they like is an invaluable tool [...] dialogue requires us to genuinely

listen to our students” (p. 33). In order for this to happen in a violin classroom, teachers should bring different musics, especially the children’s own, and explore those differences in listening, dancing, watching, and playing. If these discussions take place alongside occasional listening sessions, the students will be empowered to articulate their musical likes and attach them to the learning of the instrument.

Violin teachers should also question dominant and mainstream forms of teaching an instrument. As the data revealed, there are natural ways for the children at Lincoln to learn music: listening, dancing, and imitating music aurally and bodily. In this researcher’s opinion, encouraging students to practice beat and rhythm in association with the instrument can be a valuable teaching tool. More specifically, adding bodily movements and rhythmic backgrounds to what they perform can be a way to achieve success. As the children expressed through “Stepping Violins,” they desire to perform familiar music on their violins. As Allsup (1997) reported his own instrumental teaching experience in a Harlem school with predominantly African American students, using non-traditional methods such as teaching through rap, structuring lessons around electronic keyboard (where a popular beat would accompany a simple melody), and establishing links to the community (like organizing concerts at church) were useful ways to involve students in learning their instrument.

At the same time, as the agents of the dynamically multicultural violin classroom, violin teachers should bring their students into unfamiliar musical territory. Music students, whatever their ethnic and cultural backgrounds, should be challenged with unknown and unfamiliar musics. The children’s narratives showed that although they internalize particular kinds of music and musical experiences, they were open to explore new musics.

Implications for Future Research

This study raises important questions and opens new avenues for the research community in the field of music education. In this study, the violin students were comprised of African American students who were categorized as low socioeconomic status. Would children's musical lives and perceptions of the violin program be the same in similar teaching settings elsewhere? How would the implications concluded for this study also be useful and effective in similar teaching settings? What about violin classrooms composed of diverse populations representing several different cultures? How can violin teachers be effectively culturally responsive in such diverse settings? This study provides a model for teachers who work with diverse student populations, but it can also be useful for teachers who work with predominately white students. Like African American children, white children experience the classroom and the world beyond in terms of their home cultures and family relationships. Moreover, simply because students are white (or come from affluent backgrounds) doesn't mean that they like the music of mainstream Anglo academia. They, too, will bring a multiplicity of musical and cultural preferences to the classroom that can be discovered through interview sessions. In other words, the tools identified by this study as important can be used with children from all cultural backgrounds.

This study focused on African American children's musical lives and their perceptions of a violin program. Although I did not lay out extensive teaching strategies and method, this work establishes a base for additional questions involving curriculum and instruction. How can violin teachers (and music teachers and instrument teachers in general) construct culturally responsive pedagogies for their classrooms predominantly composed of African American students? What musical materials and teaching strategies can they use? How might they develop lesson plans? Intense research on the construction of culturally responsive pedagogies for the violin classroom would expand on the limited effective teaching strategies and practices noted here. Moreover,

researchers who are interested in culturally responsive string education should envision a combination of culturally responsive teaching and dynamic multiculturalism in a violin classroom. As the agents of the dynamic multiculturalism, how would string teachers bring students into unfamiliar musical territory? Music students, whatever their ethnic and cultural backgrounds, should be challenged with unknown and unfamiliar music.

An additional research avenue opened by this study involves music teacher preparation. Almost every music teacher training institution's ideal is to prepare excellent musicians and teachers; however, problems and challenges still exist to achieve this goal. One of the challenges that university music programs face is how to prepare culturally effective and responsive music teachers. There are, however, other challenges in curriculum and course content, especially a lack of philosophical approaches in standard music education. Further research should be done on the challenges facing professional music educators when they encounter diverse musical classrooms. Investigating the violin experiences of these students suggested that music educators (especially violin instructors) should redefine what music education means. Should musical goals be reevaluated in a multicultural world? For what purpose is music education, and for whom? Answering these philosophical questions might help music educators construct new meanings and alternatives for the field and prepare them for diverse classrooms. For this researcher, reading extensive scholarship on culture and its role in education, the historical development of the civil right movements and their impact on education, and the African American experience in America helped place local issues in a broader context. After all, valuable teaching in any field is dependent on bringing the larger social, cultural, and historical contexts into the discussion. The seemingly least significant teaching tool or student response often springs from a vast and rich set of contexts. This study has attempted to understand the contexts for teaching violin to African

American elementary school students, and in doing so has discovered materials—through the lived experiences of the children—with which to enrich the classroom and empower those students. The value of qualitative research is that it allows students’ voices to be heard and places those voices at the forefront of the research process.

APPENDIX A
PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT

College of Fine Arts 358 Music Building
P.O. Box 11790
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-7900

Dear Parents/Guardian,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Music Education at the University of Florida, and a violin teacher at Lincoln Elementary. With this study, I am planning to conduct a study to understand better the process of the violin classes at Lincoln. I will seek answers for the following questions: How do the students perceive the current violin program at Lincoln and their experience in it? What factors explain their perceptions and experience?

The result of this study may help me and other violin teachers better understand the process of violin instruction at the elementary level. To help answer these questions, I need to ask some questions to your children about our violin class. With your permission, I would like to ask your child to volunteer for this study, and to interview her/him. The interview will last about one hour and will be audiotaped. After transcription, the tapes will be erased.

You and your child have the right to withdraw consent for your child's participation at any time without consequence. There are no known risks or immediate benefits to the participants. No compensation is offered for participation. In order to complete the interviews, your child will miss one violin class period.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at (352) 335-4054 or my supervisor, Dr. Camille Smith, at (352)392-0223, ex.217. Questions or concerns about your child's rights as research participant may be directed to the UFIRB office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0433.

Please sign and return this copy of the letter to Ilkay Ebru Tuncer. A second copy is provided for your records. By signing this letter, you give the permission to report the responses anonymously in the final manuscript to be submitted for publication.

Ilkay Ebru Tuncer

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily give my consent for my child, _____, to participate in Ilkay Ebru Tuncer's study, *Making String Education Culturally Responsive: The Musical Lives of African American Children*. I have received a copy of this description.

Parent/Guardian

Date

2nd Parent/Witness

Date

APPENDIX B
CHILDREN'S INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Students,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Music Education at the University of Florida, and a violin teacher at Lincoln Elementary. I am planning to conduct a study to understand better the process of the violin classes at Lincoln. More specifically, with this study, I want to answer these questions: How do you perceive the current violin program at Lincoln and their experience in it? What factors explain your perceptions and experience?

To help answer these questions, I need to ask some questions to you about violin classes and activities. I would like to ask if you want to be a volunteer for this research. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. In order to complete the interviews, you will miss one violin class period.

There are no known risks or immediate benefits to the participants. No compensation is offered for participation.

If you have any further questions about this research, please contact me at (352) 846-5458.

Ilkay Ebru Tuncer

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Student Interview Guide

A. Personal Experience with Music

1. Do you like listening to music? What radio stations do you listen to? What TV channels or shows do you watch? Have you seen anybody playing violin on TV (or anywhere else)?
2. Do you have music CDs at home? Could you tell me more about them?
3. Do you have a computer? Do you use it to listen to music? How? Could you tell me more about it?
4. Do you hear music at church? At school? What kind of music? Could you tell me more about the music you hear at (church, if student has responded affirmatively) and school?
5. Do any people in your family play instruments or sing? Please tell me about this.
6. What do they think about your playing violin?
7. Do you listen to music with your friends (or family)? Tell me more about this. What do you listen to together? Where do you listen to music?
8. Is music important to you? Tell me about this.

B. Experience with the Violin Program

9. Why did you pick violin as your major?
10. How do you feel when you play your violin?
11. What is good about violin at Lincoln? What's not so good?
12. How do you feel when it is time to go to violin class?
13. How do you feel when you are there?
14. How do you feel when it's time to leave violin class?

15. Do you think about violin class at other times of the day? Tell me about this.
16. Are there any songs we play that you really like? Tell me.
17. How did you feel about _____ activity?
18. If you were the violin teacher, how would you change this activity?
19. What other kinds of music would you like to play with your violin?
20. What could make violin at Lincoln better?
21. Tell me about practicing violin. What is it like for you? What is the difference between playing the violin and practicing?
22. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about playing violin at Lincoln?

APPENDIX D
DOMAIN ANALYSIS SEQUENCE

Locating Semantic Relationships

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: Rap is a kind of music to which students are exposed

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
Hip-Hop Rap Gospel Jazz Blues “Violin Music” Classical/Opera	is a kind of	music.

Raw Data Samples

The following chart displays the samples embedded in the informants’ sentences.

Protocol code	Statements found in protocol
Researcher/ 6 Brenda/ 8 B/ 12 B/ 22 B/ 53-54 B/ 29	R: What radio stations do you listen to? B: 101.3 Hip-Hop DJ. B: I listen to jazz most of the time. B: I listen to gospel. That’s church music. I love church music. B: Usually I just listen to gospel to get more on information how a violin player plays. On the gospel station they have violins. One of my favorite songs got violin on it. B: Hip-hop and rap is the same.

Componential Analysis Sample

Attributes of rap and hip-hop:

- has “cuss words” *
- has speaking and singing*
- “about gangsters and friends going to jail—you gotta help them out” (Gerald, 28).
- Talk about what’s going on in life; talk about things that you shouldn’t do (Eddie, 52-55).
- is made by black culture (Arica, 14).
- is listened to by black people (Arica, 19).
- Tells stories*
- Has rhymes and rhythms (Gerald, 318).
- “It’s like rhyming words [...] like a person who’s rhyming words that, and then they’re just adding on a beat” (Dan, 7-8).
- is about “gangster stuff, hustlin’, stuff like that” (Arica, 82)
- deals with “good stuff” and “bad stuff” (Arica, 16)
- “We are talking about the life and there is a thug war out there...they are talking about their life and how it’s a tough world out there outside” (Dan, 230).
- talks about guns (Arica, 120).
- talks about “s-e-x” (Arica 8).
- has lively rhythms (Arica, 6).
- is “jerky” music (Arica, 7).
- is fast
- “has beats” (Arica,86).
- is fun (Arica, 93).
- is “hippy-hoppy” (Arica, 101).
- has “cuss words” (Arica, 103).
- is a kind of music that parents don’t want their children to listen to (Arica, 108).
- “uses drums not violins” (Arica, 391).
- More hippity-hoppity than violin music (Arica, 391).

* Denotes a shared statement. These descriptive statements were the most popular among the children.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ilkay Ebru Tuncer was born in Ordu, Turkey, in 1975 and grew up in Istanbul. A student in the first class of graduates from the Anatolian Fine Arts High School, Tuncer went on to complete her bachelor's degree from Marmara University in Istanbul in 1997. From 1997 to 1999, she worked as a research assistant in the music education department at Marmara and also taught viola at the fine arts high school from which she graduated. In 2001, after receiving a scholarship from the Turkish Ministry of Education, she began her graduate studies at Ohio University in Athens. Tuncer completed her master's degree in music in 2003, and then moved to Gainesville to begin her doctoral studies in music education at the University of Florida. Her research interests include critical pedagogy, philosophy in music education, and qualitative research in music education. As a practitioner, she teaches violin and viola to children.