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## CHAPTER 1

# Single Cases

A multicase study project as a whole will have its plan and organization, and so will the study of each individual case. The director or coordinator will think about all the cases, but a field researcher or data gatherer will concentrate on each single case almost as if it is the only one. (Of course, in some studies such as a doctoral dissertation, the director and field researcher will be the same person, but this person will still have to consider the two responsibilities separately.) A researcher may spend a long or short time on a case, but works vigorously to understand each particular case (one case at a time). During work on the single case, the collection of cases remains mostly at the back of the mind. The target case commands most of the attention. But there is tension: The single case and the collection each vie for more attention. In this book, I call this tension the “case–quintain dilemma.”

For multicase research, the cases need to be similar in some ways—perhaps a set of teachers, staff development sessions, clinics, or airport security stations. For the study of a program in many sites, the collection may include all of the cases that exist. But more often it is a selection of cases. For the study of a phenomenon such as “highly centralized management,” the cases selected will be many fewer than all cases that exist.

Cases are rather special. A case is a noun, a thing, an entity; it is seldom a verb, a participle, a functioning. Schools may be our cases—real things that are easy to visualize, however hard they may be to understand (Stouffer, 1941). Training modules may be our cases—amorphous and abstract, but still things, whereas “training” is not. Nurses may be our cases; we usually do not define “nursing activity” as the case. “Managing,” “becoming effective,” “giving birth,” and “voting” are examples of

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functioning, not entities we are likely to identify as cases. For our cases, we may select “managers,” “production sites,” “labor and delivery rooms,” or “training sessions for voters.” With these cases we find opportunities to examine functioning, but the functioning is not the case.

Even when our main focus is on a phenomenon that is a function, such as “training,” we choose cases that are entities. Functions and general activities lack the specificity, the organic character, to be maximally useful for case study (Stake, 2005). We can use the case as an arena or host or fulcrum to bring many functions and relationships together for study.

To study a case, we carefully examine its functioning and activities, but the first objective of a case study is to understand the case. In time, we may move on to studying its functioning and relating it to other cases. Early on, we need to find out how the case gets things done. By definition, the prime referent in case study is the case, not the methods by which the case operates (Yin, 1994). Some qualitative studies investigate a collection of events or series of instances. Events and instances can be bounded; certainly they are situational, complex, and related to issues; but they often lack the organic systemicity some of us want in case study. Each case is a specific entity.

A national child care program may be a case. A child services agency may be a case. The *reasons* for child abandonment or the *policies* of dealing with foster parents will seldom be considered cases. We think of a reason and a policy more as a generality than as a specific thing. Each of the cases in a multicase project is a specific thing. In the social sciences and human services, the specific case usually has working parts and is purposive. It is an integrated system. Functional or dysfunctional, rational or irrational, the case is a system, in the way that an abandoned child or a foster family or a child services agency is a system.

### 1.1. SITUATION AND EXPERIENCE

The reason for making a fuss about what is and what is not a case is fundamental to qualitative case study. It is an epistemological reason. Qualitative understanding of cases requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its contexts and in its particular situation. The situation is expected to shape the activity, as well as the experiencing and the interpretation of the activity. In choosing a case, we almost always choose to study its situation.

Ordinary measurement of the case fails to give adequate attention to the ways the case interacts with fellow cases in its environment, such as its family members or community leaders (Tierney, 2000). The interactions within an entity and across entities help us recognize the case as an integrated system. It is relatively easy to identify the situation of a person or organization; it is more difficult to identify the situation of a functioning or policy. Qualitative case study was developed to study the experience of real cases operating in real situations.

The case has an inside and an outside. Certain components lie within the system, within the boundaries of the case; certain features lie outside. A few of the outside features help define the contexts or environment of the case. The case researcher considers many features of the case. Some are selected to be studied. Only a few can be studied thoroughly. Because much of the important activity of the case is recognizably patterned, both coherence and sequence are sought. The researcher tries to capture the experience of that activity. He or she may be unable to draw a line marking where the case ends and where its environment begins, but boundedness, contexts, and experience are useful concepts for specifying the case (Stake, 1988).

## **1.2. A TECHNICAL VIEW OF A CASE**

The case researcher needs to generate a picture of the case and then produce a portrayal of the case for others to see. In certain ways, the case is dynamic. It operates in real time. It acts purposively, encounters obstacles, and often has a strong sense of self. It interacts with other cases, playing different roles, vying and complying. It has stages of life—only one of which may be observed, but the sense of history and future are part of the picture. How does the case researcher gather data that can come together in a portrayal, perhaps a narrative documentary (Silverman, 2000), for the reader?

Later in this chapter, I take up the matter of *conceptual structure*. Research questions form the kind of conceptual structure suitable for designing and interpreting educational research. Often this is research seeking to understand how educators facilitate the understanding and capability of learners. Where does the researcher look for those questions? And for answers to those questions? For both, the qualitative researcher relies partly on coming to know personally the activity and experience of the case.

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For this purpose, the most meaningful data-gathering methods are often observational—both direct observation and learning from the observations of others.<sup>1</sup> The latter, indirect method is necessary for activity at which the researcher is not present; the researcher needs to ask someone who was there, and to find records kept of what happened and artifacts that suggest it. For audiences of the report, it is important to describe what the case's activity is and what its effects seem to be. What it does depends on the situation, so it is also important to describe situations. An outline for gathering data on a case is presented in Worksheet 1. Versions of Worksheets 1, filled in and slightly revised according to the needs of each case study, can be found later in the book as Figures 6.1, 7.1, and 8.1.

Many case studies require a researcher to work half time for half a year. Only a small number of observations, interviews, and document reviews are possible. In many situations, for every hour spent actually gathering data, the typical researcher needs another 6 hours for planning, negotiating, pondering, writing, explaining, and other practical activities. So in Worksheet 1 there are spaces for only three activity sites to be observed, six interviews, and two embedded case studies (mini-cases). More can be added if there is time to process the data. The worksheet needs to be adapted, of course, for each separate situation (which has been done in Figures 6.1, 7.1, and 8.1. Always, there is a ton of information to gather that is not directly related to the research questions. But the most important data will be those driven by research questions.

### 1.3. THE QUINTAIN

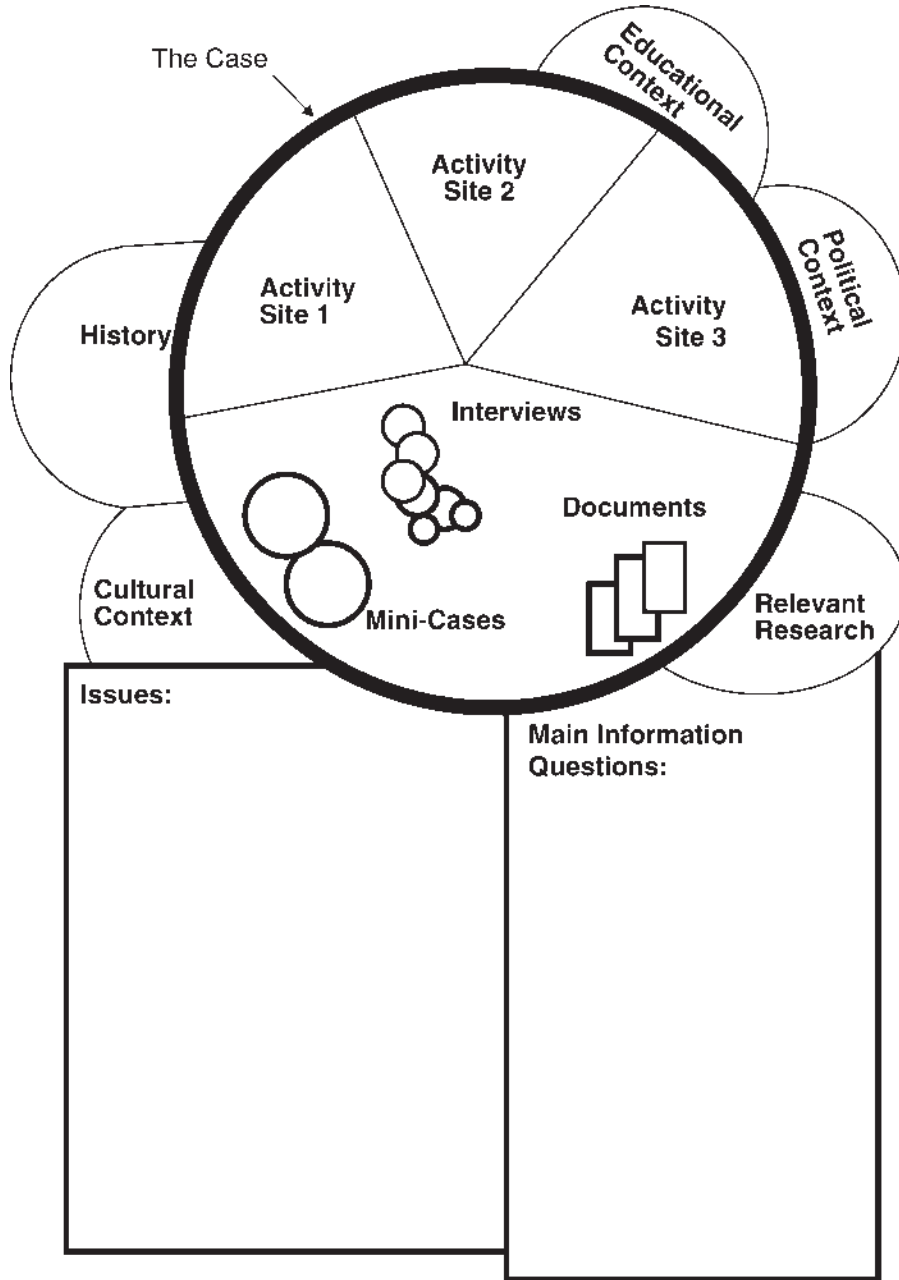
The single case is meaningful, to some extent, in terms of other cases. The researcher and the readers of the case report are acquainted with other cases. Any case would be incomprehensible if other, somewhat similar cases were not already known. So even when there is no attempt to be comparative, the single case is studied with attention to other cases.

In multicase study research, the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases. The individual cases share a common characteristic or condition. The cases in the collection are

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<sup>1</sup>Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln said, "In situations where motives, attitudes, beliefs, and values direct much, if not most of human activity, the most sophisticated instrumentation we possess is still the careful observer—the human being who can watch, see, listen, question, probe, and finally analyze and organize his direct experience" (1981, p. 213).

**WORKSHEET 1. Graphic Design of a Case Study**



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somehow categorically bound together. They may be members of a group or examples of a phenomenon. Let us call this group, category, or phenomenon a “quintain.”

A quintain (pronounced *kwin'ton*) is an object or phenomenon or condition to be studied—a target, but not a bull's eye. In multicase study, it is the target collection. In program evaluation, we may call it an “evaluand”; in music, it may be a “repertoire.” For multicase study, however, we have needed a word representing the collective target, whether it is a program, a phenomenon, or a condition. This quintain is the arena or holding company or umbrella for the cases we will study. The word needs to be generic. Neither “program” nor “phenomenon” is a big enough word. An uncommon word, “quintain,” may facilitate the dialogue—although I admit that it probably won't catch on. (From here on, I promise to restrain the foray into esoteric vocabulary.)

In this book, the main example of a quintain is the Step by Step early childhood program. For the proverbial blind men describing an elephant, the elephant is the quintain. Some examples of phenomena that could be quintains are “campus support for international students,” “agency use of home pages,” “parent assistance in the classroom,” and “labor and delivery nursing.” These quintains are functions or conditions of which we might seek examples to study. (As a program evaluator, I keep thinking quickly of the quintain as a program; we evaluators look for sites in which the program operates in embedded cases.)

Multicase research starts with the quintain. To understand it better, we study some of its single cases—its sites or manifestations. But it is the quintain we seek to understand. We study what is similar and different about the cases in order to understand the quintain better.

Our planning for multicase research will be somewhat different from our planning for a single-case study. The ultimate question shifts from “What helps us understand the case?” toward “What helps us understand the quintain?” It is a move away from holistic viewing of the cases toward constrained viewing of the cases—a viewing constrained by the dominion of the quintain over the cases.

Multicase research of a program can be designed another way. It can be an ordinary case study of the quintain, still with a look at several embedded cases. Each mini-case then will be constrained by its representation of or relationship to the program. But if the study is designed as a qualitative multicase study, then the individual cases should be studied to learn about their self-centering, complexity, and situational uniqueness. Thus each case is to be understood in depth, giving little immediate attention to the quintain. If the purpose of the research is to gain a general picture or to support immediate policy setting, the design may be

“formalized” (Firestone & Herriott, 1984), so that most attention is paid to selected variables in each case, not the case as a whole.

To illustrate, if the quintain is an educational program and if a single-case study is designed to study the whole thing, then much case study attention can be given to its central administration; its contexts; and the relationships among its policy makers, funders, partners, detractors, and competitors. If, however, a multicase study is designed, the central organization matters are studied to some extent, but the local administration and operation of the cases are deeply studied. A multicase study of a program is not so much a study of the quintain as it is a study of cases for what they tell us about the quintain. Of course, there is no one right way. Researchers can design a study to give either proportionate or disproportionate attention to the quintain and individual cases.

#### **1.4. THE CASE–QUINTAIN DILEMMA**

But even if careful design decisions are made, the researcher is pulled toward attending more to both the pieces and the whole. Both the quintain and the cases become more worthy of study as fast as they are studied. The more a social action becomes understood, the more there is to be understood. What earlier was believed to be dismissable becomes a component when it is better seen. Whether everything actually *is* a part of everything, or whether we have a human capacity for *seeing* everything as a part of everything, it all becomes more complex as it becomes better known, and it cries out for being still better known. It becomes increasingly worthy of being included in the study. Again, this is true for both the quintain and the case.

This is not just a procedural dilemma, but an epistemological one as well. What is more worth knowing? Both the collective and the specific are worth knowing, but what is worth knowing next? What should we think about? The multicase study is about the quintain, but is it the quintain with loose ties to the cases or the quintain with vital ties to the cases? What is more important for understanding the quintain—that one thing is common to the cases or that another is dissimilar among them? In any one study, the strategy may be easy to choose, but not for research as a whole. The pursuit of science seems to place the highest value on the generalizable, and the pursuit of professional work seems to value the particular most, but they both need both. For the multicase researcher, this is a dilemma.

Both case studies and multicase studies are usually studies of particularization more than generalization. One can use a case study or multicase study as a step toward theory, as described by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967; see also Ragin & Becker, 1992). But the power of case study is its attention to the local situation, not in how it represents other cases in general. It is true that social scientists seeking generalization attend to both the particular and the general. They often justify the study of the particular as serving grand explanation not so much in a statistical sense as in a conceptual sense. Even with formal experiments and statistical surveys, there is interest in illustrative and deviant cases. But many important groups of researchers—including social workers, historians, program evaluators, institutional researchers, and practitioners in all professions—are deeply interested in the individual case without necessarily caring how it might represent other cases.

There are many purposes for case research, running from the most theoretical to the most practical. When the purpose of case study is to go beyond the case, we call it “instrumental” case study. When the main and enduring interest is in the case itself, we call it “intrinsic” case study (Stake, 1988). With multicase study and its strong interest in the quintain, the interest in the cases will be primarily instrumental.

As you can tell, my emphasis in case study is on the particular and the situational. Even if all case researchers agreed (and they do not), it is true that—as Stephen Kemmis (1980) pointed out—the terms “case” and “study” defy clear definition. A case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry. Lawrence Stenhouse (1978) wanted us to call the final report a “case record,” but it is usually called a “case study.” Here and there, researchers will call anything they please a case study.

For a multicase study, the case records are often presented intact, accompanying a cross-case analysis with some emphasis on the binding concept or idea. As the design is “formalized” (Firestone & Herriott, 1984) more and more, the case reports may become mere synopses or statistical summaries. Sometimes a research question dealing only with the binding concept is developed, with occasional reference to individual cases. Such formalization is likely to waste the special effort that has gone into a contextual, particularistic, and experiential study.

Data from a multicase study usually will come mostly from the cases studied, but the researchers may gather other data than case data. They are likely to rely on what is already known about the quintain, but also may study it further. The more the cases become merely incidental to the study, however, the less appropriate it is to call it a multicase study.



## **1.5. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

A multicase study is organized around at least one research question. It asks what is most important for understanding the quintain. It may focus on the binding concept or idea that holds the cases together. It is a conceptual infrastructure for building the study. The multicase study will probably have several research questions.

In the Step by Step early childhood program, a multicase study was initiated to explore and document not only the breadth of the teaching methods used, but also initiatives in inclusive education, anti-bias education, linkages with institutions for teacher training and retraining, and parent education programs. Exploring the adaptation of core principles in different contexts, the main question was “How are the individual countries carrying out the different initiatives in the Step by Step program?” Six cross-cutting themes were identified that informed additional questions, such as “How does Step by Step promote equal opportunities for each child?” and “What kinds of networks and partnerships are supporting the program at the local, national, regional, and international levels?” The answers were intended to initiate a healthy process of critical reflection within the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) and its member organizations in individual countries on the 10th anniversary of the program’s initiation.

Within a multicase project, the study of individual cases will often not be organized around the multicase research question. To some extent, sometimes entirely, each case gets organized and studied separately around research questions of its own. A local orientation, tending carefully to particular sites and activities, risks paying too little attention to what binds the cases together, but it is an important step for relating the quintain to the situationality of the individual cases. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because of boundary-crossing problems, it was initially challenging to conduct training that included participants from across ethnic areas.

For these individual case studies, I call the deeper research questions “issues.” Issues are not information questions, such as “Who organized the assistance to the city’s homeless population?” or “In what ways was the Internet used in staff recruitment?” These may be important questions, seeking greatly needed information, but they fall short of tapping into the basic activity and values of the case. Issues are questions such as “In what ways did their changes in recruitment require a change in performance standards?” or “Did this executive development training, originally developed with male executives in mind, need reconceptualization

for female executives?” These issue questions might be answered superficially in a few words, but they should serve as prompts to deeper reflection of the operation of the program.

### **1.6. THE PARTICULAR AND THE GENERAL**

Case study issues reflect complex, situated, problematic relationships. They pull attention both to ordinary experience and also to the disciplines of knowledge (e.g., sociology, economics, ethics, literary criticism). Departing greatly from designs of experiments and tests of hypotheses, qualitative case researchers focus on relationships connecting ordinary practice in natural habitats to a few factors and concerns of the academic disciplines. (Issues “brought in” are called “etic” issues; those found in the field are called “emic.”) This broader purview of relationships is applied to the particular case. Generalizing (Becker, 1992) remains in the mind of the case researcher. Can we consider a tension between generalization and particularization as a healthy tension?

The two issues two paragraphs back were written for a particular case. If they are important to the multicase study, they should be asked again in a more general way, perhaps as follows: “Does change in recruitment standards away from affirmative action require change in performance standards?” and “Does executive training originally developed for male clients need reconceptualization for women?” Changing “Did” to “Does” changes thinking from the particular to the general.

Whether stated for generalization or for particularization, these organizing questions should serve to deepen understanding of the findings (Polanyi, 1962). Quintains are often better understood by looking at the way problems are handled than by looking at efficiency or productivity outcomes. Starting with a topical concern, case researchers consider the *foreshadowed problems*, concentrate on issue-related observations, interpret patterns of data, and reformulate the issues as findings or assertions.

Similarly, the multicase research director starts with a quintain, arranges to study cases in terms of their own situational issues, interprets patterns within each case, and then analyzes cross-case findings to make assertions about the binding. An example of the way an issue might evolve is illustrated in Figure 1.1. The hypothetical scene is a case study of a music education program.

For both the multicase project and the case studies, the selection of issue questions is crucial. In designing their studies, researchers ask, “Which issue questions bring out our concerns? Which might turn out to

1. *The quintain*: Preparation of music teachers in colleges of education of the American Midwest.
2. *The foreshadowed problem*: School boards that hire music teachers support an emphasis on preparation for band, chorus, and public performances, but a few teachers and most music education leaders advocate for a more intellectual emphasis, including history, literature, and critical study of music.
3. *The issue at some of the campuses*: What are the pros and cons of the teaching faculties' placing higher priority on music theory and music as a discipline in courses for their teacher trainees?
4. *After data analysis, the multicase assertion*: In general, the music departments have aligned with school districts opposing the hiring of teachers with strong inclinations toward intellectually based school music.

**FIGURE 1.1.** An example of the evolution of a research question.

be the dominant theme for the whole study?" To maximize understanding of each case, they ask, "Which issues seek out compelling uniqueness?" For the multicase study, they ask, "Which issues help our understanding of the quintain?"

The research questions of the more quantitative studies will be "formalized," as described by William Firestone and Robert Herriott (1984); this means that they are expressed in terms of factors or variables, and sometimes as regression equations. Examples of formalized questions include "Does organizational stability depend largely on age, training, and loyalty of the staff?" and "Are breakthroughs in science education a function of the priorities of government and the science community?" Some issue questions imply causality; some do not.

Some researchers consistently raise social justice issues (House & Howe, 1999). Some researchers consistently raise professional development issues (Schön, 1983; Stake, DeStefano, Harnisch, Sloane, & Davis, 1997). But in general, they ask, "Which issues facilitate the planning and activities of inquiry?" Issues are chosen partly in terms of what can be learned within the opportunities for study. They will be chosen differently depending on the purposes of different studies, and differently by different researchers. We might say that a contract is drawn between researcher and quintain. The researcher asks, "What can be learned *here* that a reader needs to know?"

The issues used to organize the multicase study may or may not be the ones used to organize the final report. Some cases will provide particular information and not much else, raising little debate, contributing lit-

tle to new cross-case understandings. Some cases will provide insights into multicase relationships not yet recognized—for example, “How does the strong support of the local leaders actually diminish public understanding of the program?” Issues at the case level sometimes lead to improvement of generalizations, especially when they are rooted in a situation of stress, teasing out more of the complexity.

### 1.7. THE CONTEXTS

Each case to be studied is a complex entity located in its own situation. It has its special contexts or backgrounds. Historical context is almost always of interest, but so are cultural and physical contexts. Others that are often of interest are the social, economic, political, ethical, and aesthetic contexts. The program or phenomenon operates in many different situations. One purpose of a multicase study is to illuminate some of these many contexts, especially the problematic ones.

The case is singular, but it has subsections (e.g., the production, marketing, and sales departments); groups (e.g., the patients, nurses, and administrators); occasions (e.g., the work days, paydays, and holidays); and many other dimensions and domains. Many of the subsections are so well populated that they need to be sampled. Each subsection may have its own contexts—contexts that go a long way toward making relationships understandable. Qualitative case study calls for the examination of experience in these situations. Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba (1985) pointed out that qualitative research is based on a view that social phenomena, human dilemmas, and the nature of cases are situational. The study of situations reveals *experiential knowledge*, which is important to understanding the quintain.

The search for generalizations usually accompanies a search for causes. In seeking research funding, social policy researchers promise findings that can lead to program improvement (Firestone & Herriott, 1984). They claim or imply that they are dealing with cause-and-effect relationships. But many, perhaps most, qualitative researchers dwell little on causal explanation of events (Becker, 1992). They tend to see the activities as interrelated, but with forces merely interacting rather than determinative. In *War and Peace*, Tolstoy said that the soldier burning his breakfast beans influenced the battle as much as Napoleon did. In modern thinking, that seems far-fetched. Modernists prefer the view that human activity has causes and effects.

But a cautious qualitative researcher sees the quintain as multiply sequenced, multiply contextual, and functioning coincidentally, rather than as causally determined. Many of them find the search for cause as oversimplifying. They describe instead the sequence and coincidence of events, interrelated and contextually bound. Actions are seen as purposive, yes, but underdetermined. They favor research designs that describe the diverse sequential activities of the case. Doing case studies does not require priority on diversity of issues and contexts, but most qualitative researchers carefully study such diversity.

In the earlier example of the training of music teachers (see Figure 1.1), cases were selected on the basis of priority given to training in the teaching of music in the schools. Bound in purpose, the colleges all trained teachers to become “certified” to teach school music. That was their binding concept, but it extended to a concern about narrowness of the training. The context included consideration of communities’ expectations for school band and choral programs, with a strong orientation toward sports and holiday performances. The context also included the scarcity of arts-related jobs for new college graduates. Developing these considerations within the study required attention to community values, student aspirations, aesthetic respectability, the economics of employment, and the orientation of the schools to standardized testing. Some of the picture became clearer at the individual sites, but it also became more complicated, such as finding that liberal arts colleges and education colleges placed their music education graduates in rather different schools. This example demonstrates that researchers have some of the influence of contexts in mind at the outset of a study, but they need to be prepared for the subtleties of unexpected influence.

Too much emphasis on original research questions and contexts can distract researchers from recognizing new issues when they emerge. But too little emphasis on research questions can leave researchers unprepared for subtle evidence supporting the most important relationships (Firestone & Herriott, 1984). Many inexperienced case researchers, wanting to be open-minded, seek to avoid forcing the study to be about their own interests, and begin observations without a plan. But to be sensitive to the meanings of activities as perceived by different people, they should anticipate what some of those perspectives might be. It is not easy to find a perfect middle ground between underanticipating and overanticipating, but a new researcher should expect that good hard thinking about the relative importance of research questions will increase the relevance of observations.

## **1.8. MAKING THE INDIVIDUAL CASE REPORT**

Even when the study is well done, the research questions will not be fully answered. Some assertions can be made that partially answer the question, but ways the questions need to be improved will become apparent. And new questions needing to be asked will become apparent. So the case study report is a summary of what has been done to try to get answers, what assertions can be made with some confidence, and what more needs to be studied. This seems like “slim pickings,” but the quality of the investigation, the increased familiarity with the program and phenomena, and the new realizations of complexity can make the research community proud.

The aim of multicase research, as presented in this book, is to come to understand the quintain better. The research questions are selected to guide this search for understanding, and the discussion in the interpretation sections will also be guided by research questions. Some of the questions will have dropped out, some may have evolved, and some new questions may have become important enough to deserve review. But the report will be structured, in part, around the research questions.

### **Planning the Report**

The presence of research questions is apparent in Figure 1.2, which presents a completed plan for producing the final report in the Ukraine case study of the Step by Step case project (see Chapter 6). A blank form of this graphic was used early in the planning, and entries were modified slightly by the team in subsequent stages. It is a general plan for reporting, suitable for a variety of case studies. When the time comes for reporting the analysis and interpretations of a multicase study, a different report assembly form is needed. An example is offered in Chapter 4 as Worksheet 7.

In its original format, the Ukraine case report covered 39 pages. An estimate had been made early in the research that 45 pages (standard paper and margins, single spacing) should be the target for the submission. That number appears now at the bottom of the column marked “Pages” in Figure 1.2. Those 45 pages were to be divided into 16 sections, with each topic identified by a short name (see the “Topic section” column). Notice that Liubchuk (the child who was the case for the Ukraine study) was targeted for description in 10 of the pages—some at the beginning, some at the middle, and some at the end. After the report opened

Insertions	Topic sections	Pages	Pages of context	Issues appearing							Minor topics	Quotes, impressions
				Questionnaire info	Inclusion	Teacher training	Child-centered educ.	Democratic educ.	Program sustainability	Choice vs. standard		
D,C,3	Liubchyk	5		×			×				1. Teacher selection	A. Black today, green tomorrow
F,1	Oksana	3	1	×	×	×			×		2. Child protection	B. Director, not bureaucrat
4	Tchr. tng., Lviv	3	1	×	×	×					3. Child view of disability	C. L.'s view of time & mgmt.
	Press conf., Lviv	2		×					×		4. Tchr. view of disability	D. Body contact
	Tchr. tng., Kyiv	2				×					5. Nature of disability	E. Tchr. staffing or potholes
	Tchr. tng., Ukr.	2	2	×	×						6. Role of church	F. Oksana's activity centers
3	Liubchyk	3		×	×						7. Teacher unions	G. Parents voted support
	His parents	2		×	×						8. European Union TACIS	H. Psycholog'l assessment
	Parent orgs.	2	2	×							9. Chernobyl effects	I. Aggression, affection
B,9	LEA, Lviv	3	1								10. Special ed. alternatives	
	Ministry	2	2	×		×	×				11. Preparing parents	
2,8	SbS Ukraine	2	2	×		×	×		×			
10	Interpretation: Alt. ed. policy	4					×					
	Interpretation: Teacher training	4		×		×						
E,5	Interpretation: Inclusion	4			×							
A	Liubchyk	2			×							

FIGURE 1.2. Plan for assembling the final report case study in Ukraine.

with five pages on Liubchyk, his teacher, Oksana, a Step by Step first-grade teacher, was to be presented next.

As this case study evolved, the three most important research questions became those that dealt with alternative education policy (i.e., policy departing somewhat from the state curriculum), Step by Step teacher training, and inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classrooms. Interpretation of what was observed regarding those three questions was scheduled to appear in the three next-to-last sections, each allotted four pages. (See the three "Interpretation" entries in the "Topic sections" column, second, third, and fourth up from the bottom.)

Data and background for the three main questions would not appear only in these interpretation sections, but would be distributed throughout the report. The third, fourth, and fifth columns following the "Pages" column indicate where the researchers expected to provide data on the three main questions. At first, it was a wild guess where things would go, but sequence, names, pages, and placements were modified along the way, and the plan became little changed during the last weeks of the study.

Every day or so, the researchers came up with a minor topic, a quotation, or even an impression that seemed good enough for potential inclusion. These were listed in the last two columns of the matrix by number or letter, and were later located in a suitable section. For example, one day Liubchyk said to his teacher, "Black today, green tomorrow." This was interpreted to mean that he acknowledged the color of the clothing she was wearing, and was suggesting that she wear green the next day. It was decided that this quotation would be saved for the final section (note the letter A in the left column), where it would be placed with observations of the successes and limitations of admitting Liubchyk to this regular classroom.

Much was to be accomplished in these 45 pages. Gaining an understanding of the case and its contexts; raising the research questions; and examining the interaction not only of the children, but of the teachers, parents, teacher trainers, and even school and national education leaders, were the intentions of this case study. The experience with Liubchyk was to illustrate the work of the Step by Step inclusive education initiative in Ukraine, and to contribute to multicase understanding of the several international and local research questions.