

CRISSCROSSING CULTURAL DIVIDES: EXPERIENCES OF US-TRAINED ASIAN MUSIC THERAPISTS

Laura E. Beer, PhD, MT-BC, ACMT

The following story is a written portrait (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) of Yuna, with particulars constructed and consolidated from data obtained from several of this study's participants. All had travelled to the US to study music therapy from a country in Asia. The form, themes, and shape of the story is taken directly from transcript data, while details have been fictionalized to create greater context for the reader's understanding of Asian students' lived experiences. The music excerpt that follows the story is offered as a way to further enhance our comprehension.

YUNA

Yuna walked quickly through the parking lot to the library, slowing down only to step carefully through icy spots as she made her way around the building. She felt like she might collapse into the snow at any moment. No one was in the little gathering spot back there—relief! She leaned against the plain brick wall and began to cry, hard. As she cried she looked out over the endless flat, grey horizon. “Why does she speak to me that way? Why?,” she thought. Her tears felt hot on her face, a warmth she did not feel inside. One of her teachers had just told her she should not go back to Japan for the winter break, that she should stay in the US to practice her English. Going home had been all she thought of for weeks now--soon she will not have to translate everything in her head but simply speak and think in Japanese, she will be able to eat her favorite foods, see her friends, relax, sleep, and spend time with her mother, father, and sister. It has been over a year since she has seen them! Too long! “What should I do? What should I do? My teacher says to stay, but my heart says to go. How dare she?! What gives her a right to take this away from me, when it is what I have been looking forward to for so long?” She knew she had to pull herself together, to walk into her final class before the break, but the tears would not stop, and she feared she would run into someone she knew who would see she was crying. What if they ask her what was wrong...what could she say? That she wasn't good enough? That she didn't know what to do? “I cannot say my teacher was mean, I must keep that inside.” All of her happy thoughts about going home were now blackened with fear and doubt.

Yuna takes a deep breath, watches a couple of ravens swoop overhead, and notices snowflakes beginning to fall. She forces herself to think more logically: “I already have the ticket. I leave in two days. I cannot get the money back. But my teacher tells me I must stay.

If I go will she allow me to continue in my practicum site?” Yuna begins to cry again, this time softly, more defeatedly. She relives what was said to her. This is someone she had been taught to believe without question. “You need to be able to talk more clearly, without so many pauses. Clients are confused by what you say, how you say things. I am not sure you can come back if you do not improve your English. I don’t think you should go home over the break. You should stay here and take some English lessons.” Again Yuna felt anger, and tells herself, “She is not worried about my English skills. She is unhappy that they are not good enough for her. If she wanted to help me improve my skill that might be okay. If she came to me and said, ‘I know you are going to the vacation, but you are not going to speak English while there, so I recommend you find someplace to speak it’, that would have been better. Why does she not want to help me?”

Music Excerpt

Hana, one of the participants in this study, created an improvisation as part of data collection titled “Studying.” While playing she remembered her time as a student, and her music offers an aural reflection of Yuna’s experience and is presented next as a way to enhance our comprehension of Asian students’ experiences. As you listen, notice the feeling of the music as well as the elements. Hear how the interval of the M2nd is repeated as an ostinato in the upper register, creating an unsettled feeling, a sense of holding, uncertainty, no resolution. Melodies and tonalities shift and move around this ostinato. As you listen, think of Yuna’s story and the tension she felt in reacting to her teacher’s words as contrasted to her personal needs.

MP3 FILE: Track 1 – Beer – Studying

Thoughts

Was it fair for the teacher to try to force Yuna to stay in the US to become more proficient in English? Where is the line drawn between the educational and personal needs of international students? Balancing these is a difficult task and must often be approached on a student-by-student basis. What this story elucidates, however, is the reality Asian students experience when professors, whom they have been taught to respect unconditionally, do not consider implications of their requests and responses from a culturally sensitive perspective. Doing so requires more thought and attention on the part of American instructors, and in the midst of a challenging higher education environment where more must be done with less, this outlook can fall into a void. Yuna’s story is why I undertook this study, to bring awareness to the experiences of Asian students and to try to understand intellectually and intuitively how I, as an educator, can interact with and support them. It was also my hope that by becoming more conscious of these students’ inner worlds, I might become more attentive and alert to my own biases and assumptions, and thereby be able to mitigate them.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Music therapy is a recognized therapeutic form used throughout the world. Educational programs for the modality exist in various countries, yet many students choose to attend

school in the United States to study music therapy (Kim, 2011). They do so out of a deep commitment to music and to helping others. Traveling to the US for music therapy education, however, not only presents a culture clash of customs, values, foods, and landscape, but also propels these students into a Western tradition of therapy in which self-awareness and the expression of emotions are valued as goals (Shea & Yeh, 2008). These goals are inherently counterintuitive to many international students: they grew up, were socialized, and steeped in an Eastern tradition of caring for others over self, collectivism, strong family ties, and reserved emotional expression (Mukminin & McMahan, 2013). What can result from this clash is the creation of internal struggles of identity and torn loyalties to traditions and familial standards. Moreover, cultural values shape attitudes towards therapy: Westerners value emotional expression and personal therapy is embraced as an accepted societal endeavor, while Asian values center on “collectivism, emotional restraint, and social harmony” (Shea & Yeh, 2008, p. 157). People living in Asian countries may reject personal therapy as intrusive and indicative of a lack of family support. The very nature of studying therapy bifurcated from a cultural standpoint presents a grueling acculturation process for Asian students, let alone the myriad other accommodations they must make in order to succeed educationally (Fritz, Chin, & DeMaris, 2008; Lee, 2009).

The difficulties of adjusting to life in a US higher education environment are well documented and most institutions have programs in place to assist international students, though there are questions as to the efficaciousness of approaches currently taken (Fritz et al., 2008; Lee, 2009; Major, 2005). Quiros (2012) talks of the responsibility educators have to culturally diverse students this way: “It is crucial for us to teach through the lens of multiculturalism and create spaces for voices of students who belie traditional racial and ethnic categories” (p. 518). Even with growing multicultural awareness, however, the question still stands as to whether enough is being done to facilitate the education of international students who expect to return to their home country to practice.

Hsaio’s (2011) phenomenological music therapy study focused on issues of reentry, or when a newly graduated music therapy student returns to their home country, with attention paid to career development. Her study addressed important issues that new professionals encounter when reentering their home country: job placement, advocacy, support, and identity among them. Hsaio’s investigation offers suggestions for Asian students experiencing reentry difficulties, such as focusing on career needs, maintaining a positive attitude, and seeking out other music therapists.

Purpose of the Study

The study presented here explored how Asian students experienced their time in the US, and how a Western style of music therapy translates into practice for international students returning home to work. Focusing on this shift in cultural perspective of therapy proffers an opportunity to elucidate and define fundamental differences in notions of therapy and also to explore the education US universities are providing international music therapy students. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to look at what happens to graduates, specifically those from Asian countries, when they return to their home country and are faced with bringing their new-found knowledge into the workplace. Their approaches to therapy and expectations for interventions are founded in Western ideals, leaving them with a

potentially awkward re-integration process as their employers and clients may be resistive to goals and objectives, and they may experience a lack of support from family and friends (Park, Chesla, Rehm, & Chun, 2011). These practitioners literally crisscross cultural divides: when they arrive in the US and begin to learn about Western music therapy, they experience inner conflict over the clash of values. They crisscross when they return home and realize the language of therapy they learned here does not translate directly into their home language. For example, there is no word in Japanese that captures the English meaning of therapy when it is used in context of emotional awareness or expression, and not rehabilitation. Also, one of my current Asian students (not involved in this study) told me the research articles that are translated from English into Chinese are “hilarious”: they appear to have been put through Google Translate without attention to grammar, form, or flow. Many terms specific to music and to therapy have no direct translation into Chinese dialects and so definitions are skewed and studies become meaningless. This impacts how music therapy is perceived in home countries.

The primary research question being asked was: What are the experiences of Asian music therapists who studied in the US and returned home to practice? Secondary questions included: How does a Western style of music therapy translate into practice in Asian countries; and, How can US educators better prepare their students to transition back to their home country? These questions revolve around the issue of whether US educators can do anything more or differently to best support this particular demographic of music therapy students. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was received from a university IRB committee before commencing with data collection.

The American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), as part of its Professional and Advanced Competencies (AMTA, n.d.), mandates some form of multicultural awareness be part of clinical training. Yet how this is enacted is not clarified; recent studies show a marked lack of training in and awareness of multiculturalism in the field (Hsaio, 2011; Kim, 2011; Swamy, 2011). As an educator and director of a North American music therapy program, this begs the query of whether I am responsive to the needs of international students. This in turn leads to a greater question: Is the information US educators are teaching students from Asian countries viable for their work in their home country, or do educators have an obligation to become sensitized to helping them develop a style, philosophy, and approach to music therapy compatible with educational goals and integration into their home country’s value system? And what steps and tools would help achieve a balance of competencies and realistic practice? Further, intercultural communication in the classroom becomes more complicated “because of differences in the ground rules of the interaction” (Matsumoto & Juang, 2013, p. 251). The context for mutual understanding of verbal interchanges is different for the American professor as compared to the Asian student. Kim (2011) says the goal of creating a more comprehensive and satisfying educational environment for international students “can be accomplished only when all international students, peers, educators, supervisors, and administrators collaboratively work toward mutual understanding” (p. 132). This is a starting point, but where do we go from there?

To look for answers to the research questions, I talked with US trained therapists working in their home country as well as one practitioner who came to the US from an Asian country and now not only practices but also teaches here. As a music therapist, I also wanted

to hear their music, to listen to musical expressions of their lived experiences. This became an integrated part of the methodology and is discussed in more detail later in the study.

Personal Statement

As a long-time professor, director of two different music therapy educational programs, clinician, and former internship supervisor, I have had many interactions with students from Asian countries and witnessed the struggles they undergo. In all of these instances I am left wondering if I could have done more, or done something differently, to help them adjust and cope not only to studying here but also to returning home to practice. This sensation follows me into the classroom: Am I doing all I can to teach international students what they need to know to facilitate reentry to their home country? Is it enough to teach them Western approaches to music therapy, leaving them to make information compatible with practice in their home country? Moreover, is there something I can do to acknowledge the dichotomous nature of their education and help them retain an enculturated sense of self, making their reentry smoother? Of course I understand my primary responsibility is to educate and train all students with the standards for music therapy as set out by the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), yet I intuit there is indeed something more I could be doing to bridge the two worlds.

Being White, middle class, and in a position of (some) power, I do not want to underestimate the internal struggles international students experience. Higher education has its share of embedded racism as it is: “Gender, racial, ethnic, classist, heterosexist, and ability bias in postsecondary classroom interactions has been documented from a number of perspectives” (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, p. 89). This project was created to fill a gap in the music therapy research body and, potentially, to help educators find ways to best prepare all students for practice.

Adjusting to US Customs

People who travel to the US from Asia to study music therapy with the intention of returning home to practice undergo three separate yet interrelated and intense processes. First, new students must acculturate to US customs and styles of education (Hsaio, 2011). This by itself is a formidable obstacle to be negotiated. Second, Asian students must acclimate to their studies, to clinical practicum and internship sites, and to a wide variety of instructors, supervisors, and social networks whilst maintaining a sense of who they are. Finally, students who graduate and return to their home country experience a process of reentry and somehow must fit their acculturated personal identity and new professional identity back in to cultural norms and expectations (Hsaio, 2011).

These three stages are supported by Spindler and Spindler’s (1992) model of situated, enduring, and endangered selves that “stresses the culturally-situated performance of students from culturally-dissonant backgrounds” (Major, 2005, p. 87). The situated self is concerned with adapting to the challenges and expectations of life in a new country and in an English-speaking university setting. The enduring self is able to retain the essential values and identity of being Asian while adjusting to new norms. This sense of endurance can help the student bridge the two worlds, learn new customs, yet not lose their sense of self. A student

moves into an endangered self when they are not able to cope effectively with the changes necessary to survive and thrive in the US. One cause of endangerment is a personal inability to adapt to new conventions and routines (Major, 2005; Swamy, 2011). One example of endangerment is that of Yuna, the fictionalized character at the beginning of the monograph. Her professor telling her she should stay in the US and not go home during Winter break endangered her sense of equilibrium and threatened to derail her valuing of her American education. She was able, however, to work through this crisis and return home with some sense of resolve to continue on. Her enduring self was strengthened by her commitment to move through the crisis.

Educational styles

Many Asian students come to the US having spent all of their previous student years in a very different classroom context. Their experience of education in their home country is “usually characterized as teacher-dependent, passive, receptive, unquestioning, and based on rote learning” (Major, 2005, p. 85). Beyond having language difficulties, Asian students are often unfamiliar with classroom dynamics such as active engagement, experiential exercises, and Socratic dialogue (Mukminin & McMahon, 2013). Studies show Asian students “have difficulty adjusting to Western dialogical practices in class such as questioning, criticizing, refuting, arguing, debating, and persuading” (Major, 2005, p. 85). This does not mean they will not succeed in an American higher education classroom, but does indicate a greater amount of adjustment may be needed.

Looking at this issue of cultural competence in education from a therapeutic point of view, these students are undergoing rapid changes in identity consciousness, when “their self-images may undergo dramatic changes and lead to subsequent identity crises” (Comas-Diaz, 1988, pp. 338-339). Students need support and assistance to regulate and adapt quickly. Adler’s (1975) developmental model of adjustment to a new culture holds possibilities for deepening our understanding of this phenomenon. His five stages of contact with a new culture help us understand students’ needs and were considered when collecting data: contact, or feeling excited about the new setting; disintegration of self-identity, a time when isolation and depression can manifest; reintegration, where feelings of anger, suspicion, or hostility can arise; autonomy, when a student’s confidence begins to return; and independence, a stage where a student appreciates the differences and strengths that exist between the two cultures (Adler, 1975).

Microaggressions

Other critically important factors of international students’ needs are the constant barrage of new information that can overwhelm the mind and senses, as well as the ever-present threat of microaggressions, or indirect forms of racism experienced in everyday life (Sue et al., 2007). Racial microaggressions are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271). Microaggressions take place when a student is constantly reminded they are different, or when their heritage is invalidated. Examples include complimenting Asian students for having good grammar; verbalizing statements like “I do not see color”; or suggesting students are being overly sensitive when perceived slights occur. These microaggressions

have insinuating effects, and can lead to feelings of defeat, fatigue, anger, and fear. Often White people who enact microaggressions do so without knowledge: their complicit assumptions of culture, privilege, and race preclude self-insight and awareness (Sue et al., 2007).

I witnessed an example of a microaggression when guest lecturing on a campus several years ago. The person speaking ahead of me was a White man who took a few minutes before beginning his talk to have the students introduce themselves. He then began his lecture. While he was speaking, a White male student came into the room and sat near the back. The professor stopped his talk, acknowledged the student, and asked him to say his name for the group. He then resumed speaking. A few minutes later, another student, an African American woman, came into the room and also sat at the back of the room. The professor did not interrupt his talk for an introduction. I gave him the benefit of the doubt and thought perhaps he was so far into his material he did not want to stop. Finally, another student, this time a White woman, came in and again sat in the back of the room. The professor stopped his talk and asked her to introduce herself to the group. The professor's acknowledgment of White students was notable, though perhaps not to everyone in the group. It was an indirect form of racism, yet its implications clear, for White students were recognized, while the African American student was not. This perspective is reinforced by Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009): "Power imbalances also occur in who receives attention from peers, who is interrupted, and other subtle interactions such as whose experiences are honored" (p. 89). In this instance, whose presence was considered valuable enough to be acknowledged?

Western and Eastern Thoughts on Therapy

As stated earlier, notions of therapy are based upon cultural values. Eastern ideals of valuing family honor, emotional restraint, and collectivism over personal freedom shape an approach to therapy that is more practical, cognitive, and integrative (Nishizono, 2005). The Western valuing of freedom of expression and individuality has led to psychotherapeutic approaches based upon exploration of unconscious desires and thoughts (Freud, 1985; Jung, 1989). Individuation and self-actualization (Maslow, 1971) are sought after in therapeutic as well as everyday pursuits. Not to oversimplify, but Western culture seeks to free itself from repression while Eastern culture retains values of humility and engagement in collective society via emotional restraint and a focus on social harmony.

Themes such as harmony with nature, integration of differences, importance of family, being other-oriented versus individuality-oriented, and seeking resolution are found in Asian cultures (Tseng, Chang, & Nishizono, 2005). These are deeply held values, and Asian forms of therapy tend to focus on strengthening these. For example, psychiatric care that is focused on medication and increasing self-awareness has not been a success in Korea, "mainly because many patients still seek help from practitioners of traditional medicine, shamanistic rituals, faith healing, and various other folk remedies" (Kim, 2005, p. 225). In contrast to these values, Western therapeutic models stress psychopharmacology and solution-focused treatments (Fernando, 2002). American clinicians turn to drugs, behavioral modifications, and psychotherapeutic interventions. Psychotherapy has recently become

more established in Asian countries, yet harmonizing traditional approaches with those of the West is far from complete (Kim, 2005).

Student Experiences

These fundamental differences in ideas of therapy can create schisms in thoughts and volatile reactions in international students. In some ways their educational process reflects the challenges of reconciling divergent forms of therapy, something they will need to resolve upon their return home: retaining cultural sensibility through an enculturated approach to studies is essential for Asian students' physical, emotional, and spiritual health. One study's findings illustrated how "the effect of cross-cultural factors during their education appeared to be greater than expected because underlying assumptions in therapy are deeply embedded in Western philosophies" (Kim, 2011, p. 131). Moreover, the inherent power differential of professor-student and a cultural assumption that instructors are not to be challenged makes this an invisible and potentially upsetting process, in that Asian students are taught from an early age to not question teachers. It becomes easy for Western educators to assume all students are progressing along with few issues, while in reality Asian students may not be comfortable sharing their struggles (Shea & Yeh, 2008). Alienation, withdrawal from social encounters, and an inability to speak about their difficulties can become entrenched responses. Adding to this phenomenon is the looming prospect of returning home and somehow re-integrating all of their knowledge back into their lives and music therapy practices (Hsaio, 2011). When they go home they are different and, as we will see with participant experiences, it can be a volatile time for them and their family.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Case study was the methodological approach to the study, and arts-based approaches were used to generate and collect data. This entailed collecting data from the participants as well as the researcher. I discuss both of these in detail in this section. Additionally, I discuss music improvisation as a performative aspect of arts-based research, as well as its roles in data collection, analysis, and representation stages. This is a topic not currently supported in the literature.

Epistemology

Epistemology refers to a researcher's approach to acquiring and interpreting knowledge. The investigator's conception of knowledge informs and shapes how data is received, aggregated, interpreted, and presented. In essence, epistemology is "the reference point for the *way of knowing* [italics original] that supports and validates the actions of the researcher" (Edwards, 2012, p. 382).

In this study, constructivism is the overarching philosophy. Constructivism is widely accepted and values the co-construction of meaning and takes into account both the participants' and researcher's meaning making processes (Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 2005). My epistemological stance reflects the purpose and enactment of the research process: knowledge is socially constructed and also highly personalized. The context of environment,

cultural surroundings, and familial histories shape who we are and how we make meaning of our lives, yet how we do so is interdependent with the way we assimilate life events. Asian students studying in North America are processing their lives through a cultural viewpoint very different from my own, and so using a constructivist lens allowed me to consider my own assumptions and defer meaning to participants. Maintaining constant awareness of the cultural, personal, and social differences that separated me from the participants was crucial to the integrity of the study. I otherwise risked appropriating their responses and imposing a dominant-culture interpretation upon their words, stories, and music. It was important that I analyze and reflect upon data with a constructivist lens in order to check my own responses and give prominence to the participants' meanings, observations, and conclusions.

Qualitative Research

Hallmarks of qualitative research involve exploration of topics, asking “how” and “why” questions, the co-creation of meaning alongside participants, and the de-emphasis of the researcher as the authority (Kincheloe & McCarran, 2000). Additionally, qualitative research is well suited to the study of multicultural issues (Ponterotto, 2010), with attendant emphases on deep appreciation of the life experiences of participants and giving voice to those who are marginalized or who have experienced marginalization. Qualitative methodology entails a more explorative approach that is suited to the examination of identity issues, because the qualitative researcher values participants' unique perspectives and takes into account power differentials and researcher stance (Hill, 2005). The researcher in this proposed case (myself) did not hold proprietary or special information on this subject, though I knew I needed to maintain awareness of myself as a White female who was born and educated in the US, and who holds a director position in a music therapy educational program. This is important to the study, because international students can feel ostracized, ignored, and, in general, invisible to their American counterparts in terms of understanding educational systems and cultural expectations (Major, 2005; Young, 2009).

A participant-focused approach was essential to this study as I expected participants, by the very acts of recalling experiences they had as students, linking these to their present practice, and improvising music reflective of their feelings, might undergo some sort of retrospective transformation of their emotions or perspective (Hill, 2005). This required quick changes in questions and documentation on my part. The emotive feature of interviewing was conducive to the study, for talking with participants evoked emotional reactions and sometimes painful memories that needed my support, acknowledgement, and respectful response (Sciarra, 1999; Seidman, 2006).

Case Study

I chose a case study design because it met three criteria: it was an inquiry that “investigate[d] a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 2008, p.18); it provided an intensive, holistic description and analysis; and it demonstrated aspects of the particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic (Merriam, 1998). This case study exhibited the particularistic by focusing on the experiences of specific participants. The thick, rich narratives of each of the participants and their improvisational contributions addressed the descriptive feature. The

heuristic characteristic was met by making meaningful connections and asking about practical approaches that could be applied to music therapy education.

Simons (2014) encourages researchers to become more imaginative in design, implementation, and dissemination in order to capture “the unusual, the idiosyncratic, the uniqueness of the case...as well as for eliciting and interpreting data (p. 468). This study’s intrinsic components of language, distance, and power dynamics required an approach that was elastic yet reliable. Case study design, chosen for this study, allows for a flexible design, important here due to the inclusion of an arts-based approach.

Arts-Based Research Method: Performative Social Science in Form and Function

Taking an arts-based approach to research is a way to work with data that more fully expresses and embodies participants’ creative, emotional, and intellectual lives. When arts are integrated into a research design, data becomes accessible and directly sensed, and offers an interactive process of engagement to the reader/audience (Gergen & Gergen, 2012; McNiff, 2008). Its aim is to connect with, not control a reader’s/audience’s reaction to research (Bochner & Ellis, 2003; Leavy 2009). The intent is to stimulate the reader’s responsivity through an artistic medium that bypasses rational thought and intellectualized reactions. In this case the primary artistic form was music, and to a lesser extent drawing. This study was arts-based in nature, with Performative Social Science (PSS) its specific form. Arts-based research is an umbrella term with many forms and a plethora of terminologies and approaches (Chilton & Leavy, 2014), while PSS represents one of these forms and is a “synthesis of the arts and social sciences” (Jones, 2006, p. 67). Music therapy has been slow to adopt arts-based theories (Beer, 2015), yet PSS is internationally recognized as a practice-led methodological approach (Haseman, 2006) and serves as a bridge between clinical work and research.

Lincoln and Denzin once stated “we know the other only through our practices of representation” (2003, p. 17). In this study, the “other” was a person from a culture vastly different from my own and so my attempts to know them were naturally delimited. A hallmark of qualitative research is to recognize that there is no one Truth in social constructions of meaning, but there are multiple truths unique to each person in the study (Roller, 2013). I approached this study with the desire to hear and understand these truths. One way to gain more complete knowledge was to, quite simply, let them tell me about their experiences and play music that informed me. In gathering data of words and sounds I hoped to acquire and, in turn, impart to a future audience, a more visceral experience of the data and what it was like to be that person (Barone & Eisner, 2011; Conquergood, 2003; Franz, 2010; Madison & Hamera, 2006). Arts-based research (ABR) and its offspring PSS offered a venue to do so that required rigor, aesthetics, elasticity, and a scientific approach to methodology. To me, this sounds a bit like a music therapy session, with the theoretical framework, assessment, goals, and enactment of therapy through music. It made sense to me to ground the study in an arts sensibility.

Use of Music in Music Therapy Qualitative Research Projects

There is little mention in music therapy literature of studies that use musical forms for data collection and representation, and when it is directly addressed it is critiqued as being too subjective (Daykin, 2009). Ledger and Edwards (2011) suggested this lack in the music therapy research body is in part “due to a desire to ensure that music therapy research is accepted as scientific and scholarly within the dominant traditions of healthcare research” (p. 314). Aigen surveyed articles, book chapters, and doctoral studies (2008a; 2008b), yet did so to look at themes, approaches, and methodologies versus the use of music. A possible contributing factor to this absence is a deficit of education at the graduate level in qualitative research methods from a social science perspective. Qualitative methods that incorporate creative strategies for data collection and representation that are not music therapy-focused may or may not be introduced to student researchers. Further, the use of music in qualitative research has not been developed as a common methodological approach, though there have been some advances (Austin & Forinash, 2005; Lindvang, 2010). Both PSS and APR have well-documented uses of poetry, art-making, movement, story-telling, videography, photography, and other visual art forms, but not music (Beer, 2012, 2013a, 2013b); this study helps to fill the gap in literature.

To more fully understand how music is used in well-designed qualitative studies I turned to *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy: A Monograph Series*, published by Barcelona Publishers. Over the course of 10 years, 34 monographs have been published. Eight incorporated music as a part of the methodology, three made reference to arts-based research, and three others included excerpts of music. Of the latter three, one was a retrospective study and the other two relied upon clinical work for the excerpted music pieces available for the reader to listen to (Gardstrom, 2004; Turry, 2010). The review of this source of literature was informative in terms of how little music therapy researchers rely upon and incorporate music directly into the processes of data collection, analysis, and (re)presentation.

The Use of Music in the Current Study

Some of the struggles international students go through revolve around difficulties with language and communication (Kim, 2011; Major, 2005). Therefore, I anticipated there might be times when finding the right words to express sentiments and describe experiences would be difficult for participants. This potential for verbal miscommunication, combined with the study’s focus on music therapy education and practice as well as the inclusion of an arts-based methodology, made including music-making as part of the data collection, analysis, and representation processes a rational step to take.

Music therapy literature, as seen previously, has little to no information on tapping into uses of music in research designs that, with music as our primary means of work, is an area in need of development (Ledger & Edwards, 2011). Doing so could make qualitative studies more transferrable in knowledge and applicability, an important part of evaluating a music therapy qualitative project (Stige, Malterud, & Midtgarden, 2009). Incorporating improvisation into the research design and data collection processes has the potential to

establish a platform for replicability and shared understanding among music therapy colleagues.

METHOD

Participants

A total of five to six participants were sought for the study, with five agreeing to engage in it. The primary characteristic of a participant was someone who traveled from an Asian country to receive their music therapy education in the US and returned home to practice, yet this was expanded to include one participant who remained in the US. A snowball approach (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006) was employed, where participants initially approached were asked if they knew of anyone who might be interested in being involved. One person was added to the study that had come to the US and received her graduate degree in music therapy but decided to stay on, for her perspective as someone who now taught music therapy added another dimension to the project. In order to avoid a dual relationship, no participants were sought who had an active educational relationship with the researcher.

Music therapists from Asian countries were chosen because of the strong differences in culture and perspective of therapy. Also, 56% of international members of AMTA come from Asia: Hong Kong, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan (AMTA member survey, 2013). This indicates most non-American music therapists are in Asian countries yet were educated and trained in the US. I want to add here that I was careful in terminology here: lumping students from several countries initially felt like a misprision, for “overgeneralization about any cultural group needs to be carefully avoided” (Tseng et al., 2005, p. 2). For the purposes of simplicity and confidentiality, however, I decided early on to consider referring to these participants as being from Asia. I asked two participants if they were comfortable with this designation, and both said it was acceptable to them. Table 1 depicts additional demographic information.

Table 1: Participant demographics

Name (Pseudonyms)	Home country	Where living now	Music Therapy Degree	Undergraduate Degree	Graduate Degree (if any)	Current Work
Anna	Withheld	Home country	MA	BA in Music Performance (US)	US	Children with special needs and older adults
Janelle	S. Korea	S. Korea	MA	Music Studies (Asia)	US	Withheld
A.	Japan	Japan	BMT, MA	Music Therapy (US)	US	Older adults
Hana	Japan	US	MA	Music Studies (Asia)	US	Educator, Well teens and adults, older adults

M.	Japan	Japan	MA	Jazz performance (US)	US	Music therapist in hospital
----	-------	-------	----	-----------------------------	----	-----------------------------------

Data Collection

Data were collected in several ways: I conducted two Skype interviews were conducted with each participant, and participants were asked to record themselves improvising on an instrument of their choice, relying upon differing prompts provided by the researcher. Interviews were semi-structured in order to maintain flexibility to follow participant lines of thought as well as make certain I addressed the research questions (Brinkman, 2014). The semi-structured interview format also allows for a more authentic interaction between interviewer and participant, and injects rigor into a study (Bruscia, 1996, 1998). At the beginning of the first interview demographic information was also sought, including age, time spent in the US, degree(s) obtained, time at home since being in the US, religious practice/affiliation, and current employment.

First Interview

Sixty minutes was allotted for the initial interview, and questions focused on a participant's experience of being an international student in a music therapy program and what happened when they transferred this education into practice back to their home country.

Sample interview questions included:

1. What was it like for you to come to the US to study? What was hard about acclimating to the culture here?
2. What are the differences between Eastern and Western definitions of therapy? Of music therapy?
3. Do you think your instructors of music therapy were sensitive to your needs as an international student? Why or why not?
4. How could your teachers have helped you integrate the two worlds while a student, if possible?
5. Did you have to "unlearn" customs and assumptions in order to become a music therapist?
6. What did this process look like?
7. What did this process sound like? (see section on improvisation)
8. How do your clients react to your westernized style of therapy?
9. What do Western educators need to know about Asian music therapy students? What would help us be more sensitive to their educational needs?

Improvisation as Part of Data Collection

A secondary yet important component of participant data consisted of asking participants to improvise music on an instrument of their choice; they all readily agreed to do this. By virtue of all of us having studied music therapy in the US, participants and I shared knowledge about clinical improvisation, leading me to choose improvisation as a primary method of data

collection, member checking, and representation. We had been trained in AMTA approved programs and been exposed to basic improvisatory techniques. We were also schooled in principles of self-expression through music. These factors combined to give us a shared musical language that transcended verbal language barriers, and offered me (as researcher) insights otherwise not attainable.

We talked about the improvisation in the first interview and four of five of the participants chose to improvise and record on their own time and email me a digital copy. There were no restrictions placed as to length to improvise or what instrument to play on. I offered participants a “script” to follow when improvising. The script was also followed for one participant who asked to improvise during our second interview time. The following is the scenario given that participants were free to either choose elements of or adopt in its entirety:

- Imagine yourself before you came to the US to study music therapy. What was it like to be a student here?
- Consider improvising on a theme related to your returning to your home country to work as a music therapist: How did it feel to return to your country and introduce western-style music therapy to your colleagues and clients? What did you experience?
- Can you improvise music based upon the images, sensations, and memories you are experiencing right now?
- For the participant who remained in the US, I asked her to also contemplate her current clinical practice and teaching identities.

What evolved out of this script was interesting: each person approached the improvisation as a journey through their education into the present day.

In one instance the participant asked to improvise her music while during the second interview. The Skype connection was poor, resulting in a recording that had poor quality. All other recordings were of good quality and were digitally normalized using the computer program Audacity 1.3.

Second Interview

A second interview of 30-60 minutes was completed in order to check in with participants as to the possible meanings of their music and capture any other thoughts they may have. Before conducting second interviews I transcribed the first interviews and reviewed transcriptions to create new questions. I also listened to each improvisation (except for one person’s who had opted to play her improvisation during our second meeting) and engaged in listening and data analysis processes that are described in an ensuing section of this monograph. The second interview was also the time I conducted member checks, asking participants to clarify statements and images shared in the first interview.

Questions in this second phase were tailored to each participant, focusing on the rhythms, melodies, and overall impression of their music as well as serving to follow up on meanings gleaned from transcripts of the first interviews. I found that the music offered a springboard to explore nuances of meaning. The second interview also presented an opportunity for participants to verbalize some of the thoughts and feelings captured in the music.

Data Analysis and Representation Procedures

I undertook several approaches to data analysis as the sheer amount of data generated by the interviews and improvisations required a multi-pronged approach in order to ensure trustworthiness. In the following sections data saturation, self-reflexivity, portraiture, and analysis and representation of the music are discussed. Member checking is addressed as an important part of triangulation and trustworthiness. All of these processes are critical in assessing the strength of a qualitative research project, and in this case study the specific methods utilized also yielded valuable data.

Triangulation of Data

Triangulating interview data with other forms of data is a well-known and effective qualitative process for ascertaining trustworthiness (Creswell, 2007; Crotty, 1998; Stake, 2000; Thurmond, 2001). Trustworthiness reflects the integrity and credibility of how qualitative research is conducted (Rossman & Rallis, 1998; Stige et al., 2009). Triangulation “has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Stake, 2000, p. 443). Postmodern researchers, however, contend triangulation is limited in its efficacy (Guido et al., 2010). The very image of a triangle reflects this limitation: it is a “rigid, fixed, two-dimensional object” (Richardson, 2000, p. 934), incapable of capturing the many facets of participant experiences and investigator’s influences. Towards this end I examined participant proffered words, symbols, and music in order to triangulate interview data, wrote in a journal, drew images, and improvised music. To further ensure trustworthiness, I also employed a snowball approach to finding participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), where participants suggested other people I might contact to participate. The combined force of these processes strengthened triangulation so it could contribute to the study’s trustworthiness.

Saturation

I re-visited interviews, read hundreds of pages of transcripts, and listened to music pieces, all with the intention of ascertaining when a saturation point was reached. Saturation is an oft-used term in qualitative research that can be vaguely determined (Bowen, 2008). It was therefore my aim to articulate when and how saturation was reached not before data was collected, but during the process. After two interviews were conducted with each person and music data was collected from the fourth participant, I realized I was beginning to hear similar themes. Every participant told different stories and had very different experiences, and commonalities began to emerge. Yet the data set still felt incomplete so I deduced having a fifth participant might suffice to reach saturation. The addition of this fifth person gave the study a sense of completion. Another consideration in assessing saturation was the accrual of an abundance of data that would have required extended efforts to analyze and compile. In retrospect, I believe saturation was achieved.

Self-Reflexivity

This study was like any other qualitative project that relied upon participant engagement: I relied upon honesty and full disclosure from participants. It was only fair, in return, to provide transparency and open communication on my part. According to qualitative research guidelines, self-reflexivity should be part of any study (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). I did not engage in this process, however, because I was expected to from a methodological point of view: I did so because I felt compelled to. I needed an outlet to record my internal reactions as well as sift through my assumptions and conclusions, and I found this outlet in improvising music, journaling, and drawing. Lincoln and Guba (1994) call self-reflexivity “critical subjectivity ... [that] is a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent, as teacher and learner, as the one coming to know the self within the processes of research itself” (p. 183). Indeed, in talking with participants and listening to their music, I felt like an inquirer as well as a respondent. Expressing thoughts, frustrations, hopes, and excitement through words, images, and music were how I filtered my own reactions, brought them into consciousness, and kept them separate from those of my participants. I felt driven to do this in order to maintain some semblance of objectivity and establish validity (Creswell & Miller, 2000). To conduct a rigorous self-examination of assumptions, preconceptions, and ideals is to remain vigilant in the research process. In this study, spanning the worlds of scholarly research, music therapy, and cultural responsiveness required me to be authentic and thorough in my scrutiny of my own motives, assumptions, and hidden prejudices.

Self-reflexivity as a research process induced me to constantly question my motives, postulations, and hopes, and reduce my own preconceptions. There can be no complete elimination of human partiality in any experiment because the very act of research, of assuming, probing, and interpreting, contains the biases we seek to eradicate (Fine, 1994). Engaging in unrestricted journaling, however, served as an exploration of my “lifeworld” (Brookfield, 2005, p. 56), my own preconscious presuppositions and filters of how I experience reality. This was done with the expectation that it would help reduce any distortion I may unconsciously apply to data; in my experience this reduction did occur. Through this process of self-awareness my own orientations were separated from participants’ and a measure of objectivity thereby gained (Guido, Chávez, & Lincoln, 2010). A skeptic may assert that injecting self-reflection into research destroys ethical standards and results in a complete lack of consistency. The constructivist or transformative researcher will refute this stance. Her use of reflexive thinking, when combined with the mandate to make meaning alongside participants, requires her to have stringent ethical standards and work to establish trustworthiness and consistency in language, data analysis, and interpretations.

Musicing as a Reflexive Practice

While asking the participants to improvise music, I also engaged in improvisation as a way to externalize and sound the sensations and the emotions evoked in the research process. Being a qualitative researcher is difficult work, with the amounts of data generated, and when I experienced insecurities centered on not wanting to unwittingly offend participants or somehow misinterpret their statements, I found I needed to express my inner reactions through sound and silence. I did not impose a schedule of improvisation (for example,

dictating I must improvise after every interview), but rather allowed the impulse to play music arise organically. I improvised on violin, guitar, keyboard, and Native American flute at varying times. I also recorded these improvisations in order to capture my aural impressions and, if warranted, include in the data analysis and representation processes.

Journaling as a Reflexive Practice

As part of the investigation I began a journal to track my own dilemmas, outlying thoughts, and potential areas for future investigation. This was an important part of my writing process. Aside from helping me maintain awareness of potential internal biases, journaling helped me discern what strands of thought I most wanted to present and which ones to put aside. Writing in an electronic journal without consideration to flow, grammar, or cohesiveness helped untangle interior arguments and clarify the sometimes murky inclinations for explorations (Janesick, 1999). This type of creative, free-style, and unhindered writing facilitated the separation of participant voices from my own, and lessened my sometimes thunderous and unacknowledged internal critic's voice.

Some may question why I do not call it self-reflection. In a literal sense, self-reflection is the mirroring back of surface features. With self-reflexivity, I challenged myself to delve into behaviors and unconscious reactions in order to reach a level of transparency of motive. The clearer I was about my personal state, the clearer I would be with participants. Excerpts from this journal are periodically included in the dissertation text.

Affective elements are integral to qualitative research just as they are in the therapeutic process we engage in as music therapists. Sciarra (1999) wrote, "not only are emotions allowed in qualitative research, they are crucial. Because entering the meaning-making world of another requires empathy, it is inconceivable how the qualitative researcher would accomplish her goal by distancing herself from emotions" (pp. 44–45). Following this thought further, I recognized how maintaining awareness of my own emotions was important. For this reason, when I began the IRB proposal I started keeping a self-reflexive journal. As noted earlier, self-reflexivity is a process that deepens understanding and contributes to credibility. My involvement as a person and as a researcher is a factor in the research process that should not be under-emphasized, for personal "experience and subjectivity become part of the study" (Stige et al., 2009, p. 1508).

Reflexivity should not be relegated solely to journaling, however. Injecting reflexive moments into all aspects of the study is possible and optimal. For example, Oliver, Serovich, and Mason (2005) write of the importance of reflective writing as part of the transcription process. I adopted their technique of pausing to note in-the-moment reactions or thoughts while transcribing. These spontaneous thoughts and realizations became valued pieces of data as they often captured bits of meaning I might have missed had I approached transcription as a chore to get through. Instead, it became a part of the data collection process. Going beyond this, I believe taking a reflexive stance in every stage of data collection, analysis, and representation is necessary, especially in a study like this that has embedded in it components of hierarchy and cultural difference.

Processes of self-reflexivity compelled me to constantly question my motives, postulations, and hopes, and reduce my own bias. There can be no complete elimination of human bias in any experiment because the very act of research, of assuming, probing, and

interpreting, contains the biases we seek to eradicate (Fine, 1994). This type of journaling, however, served as an exploration of my “lifeworld” (Brookfield, 2005, p. 56), my own preconscious presuppositions and filters of how I experience reality. This was done with the expectation that it would help reduce any distortion I may unconsciously apply to data; in my experience this reduction did occur. In this way, self-reflexivity became part of triangulation.

Drawing and Stream-of-Consciousness Notes

One form of arts-based data collection that I relied upon took a visual form: as I listened to participants’ music and sometimes while transcribing I would draw lines, images, scribbles, and write down words and phrases that seemed to represent what I was hearing. This is an extension of Bergstrøm-Nielsen’s (2010) work, where visual scores are created to match and/or mirror the music being played and words being spoken. I found these alternative art forms often captured sensations and reactions I had in a way that did not demand my scholarly mind get involved. Engaging my right hemisphere in the data analysis process allowed me to sort out data in a different way and reflect upon what I heard a non-linear fashion.

Another creative form I used in analyzing data was that of a narrative description. While listening to improvisations I would write in a stream-of-consciousness manner in order to capture non-linear, perhaps non-logical impressions. Simply writing a word to express what I was hearing, or writing enough of an image to convey it later, were ways I could hold competing or conflicting responses together in dynamic tension. For example, part of an improvisation could be heavy yet also solid. Other times while listening I would write entire descriptive paragraphs. There was no set methodology for doing this, just as there was no pre-conceived procedure for artistically rendering my impressions through graphic notation.

Engaging in graphic notation was a process I adapted from Bergstrøm-Nielsen’s (2010) work that depicts the music in simple forms, that of visual images. These pictures, figures, and symbols served as a sort of “aural score” (Bergstrøm-Nielsen, 2010, p. 162). To do this, before I started listening to an improvisation I had at the ready drawing paper, markers, art crayons, as well as pens and pencils. This was extended into transcription: there were times when transcribing interviews that I felt compelled to draw symbols, lines, and shapes in varying colors to visual depict what I was sensing or reacting to. This served as a contrast and comparison to the words being said.

Member Checks

After I collected data and conducted a preliminary analysis, I brought back music and themes to the participants to make certain I was synthesizing and interpreting their words and music as they wished them to be understood. For readers not familiar with the process, member checks occur when a researcher offers an opportunity for the participant of a study to review data, themes, and/or final writings. This is typically mentioned as a possibility in the letter of consent, before any information is collected. Member checking can help alleviate fears a participant may have about how their information will be presented (Carlson, 2010). It is, however, a delicate dance between ensuring accuracy of data, respecting participants’ ability

to object to portrayals, and synthesizing themes and data in an unobstructed manner. Carlson (2010) writes of the pitfalls and potential traps in conducting member checks, including strenuous censoring, participants dropping out because they do not like how they are being portrayed, or, less severely, creating miscommunications. These unseen snares “can easily and at times unknowingly be set during...member checking, threatening the research/participant relationship and possibly the stability of the study” (Carlson, 2010, p. 1102).

Another trap investigators unwittingly set for themselves is that of seeking consensus on a transcript. If a participant were to extensively edit their interview transcript, the transcript then “loses the edge of criticism (in its best sense) that makes it useful” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983, p. 375). For these reasons I was mindful of material I presented to participants for member checking, offering only materials that were related directly to each participant and sending material directly related to findings. As I transcribed I sometimes also edited participants’ speech patterns in order to reduce possible feelings of embarrassment, an acceptable form of transcription referred to as denaturalization (Oliver et al., 2005). I asked all participants if they wanted to engage in member checking and only one specifically requested to see parts of themes as they were developed.

Portraiture in Data Analysis and Representation

With its ability to hold paradoxes and dualities, portraiture (Chapman, 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) was chosen to frame and enliven the data. Portraiture creates an amalgam of a participant, weaving together quotes, observations, impressions, and details to create a picture that is unique to the participant as well as to data gathered. Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) said, “One of the most powerful characteristics of portraiture is its ability to embrace contradictions, its ability to document the beautiful/ugly experiences that are so much a part of the texture of human development and social relationships” (p. 9). This containment of seemingly oppositional thoughts and formats was well suited to the study as I anticipated participants would experience contradictory emotions when trying to adjust to US culture, and then, once finished with their education, in re-adjusting to their home culture. Yuna’s story, which opened this monograph, was portraiture in action.

Finding an artistic way to express an interviewee’s voice through portraiture, or the creation of individualized and tailored images of participants, is an established form of depiction (Beer, 2012; Dixson, Chapman, & Hill, 2005). This re-presentation of data achieves two aims: it liberates the information from the personal sphere and places it in a universal realm of shared experience, and gives the reader a sense of what it was like to be this person. Preparing a portrait “is extremely demanding and labor intensive. Virtually every statement in the portrait should accurately reflect the totality of the objective information in the transcripts and the totality of nuances in the passages the investigator has studied” (Witz, Lee, & Huang, 2010, p. 398). Creating and reading portraits is similar to writing and reading contrived stories, but, and this is very important to stress, portraiture is not fiction but is a carefully stylized representation of voices, scenes, and artifacts gathered through systematic, disciplined, and closely monitored research methods. Crafting portraits is a process of writing in a state of heightened and focused creative awareness, where all thoughts and intuitions are

concentrated on the participant's words, movements, sounds, environment, gestures, silences, and expressed emotions.

Portraiture in this study served as a flexible medium within which music was explored as a qualitative data analysis and representation tool. In a way, music is "slippery": it is a highly subjective creative form, vulnerable to personalized reactions and interpretations. With a framework of guiding questions and a clear purpose to the study, however, music and stylized written portraits hold the potential to capture nuances of expression, emotion, and reaction not attainable through interview words alone. Each participant's music was unique, indicative of rhythmic drives, melodic expressions, tonal centers, and harmonic structures. Additionally, transparency in data analysis and representation is of paramount importance in qualitative research (Aigen, 2012), and, as will be seen, portraiture offered an outlet for clarity, voice, and presentation. As noted in the literature (Dixson et al., 2005), portraiture often blends into both analysis and representation. This blending occurred in the present study, and portraits are offered of each of the participants.

Analysis of the Music

I engaged in several methods to analyze the music improvised by the participants: looking at structural elements was one way, while another was taking into account the overall composition and effects. While conducting the literature review I noted analysis practices employed by Gardstrom (2004) and Keith (2007) that paid attention to musical elements. Drawing from their work, I formulated a strategy of referring to a list of musical terms while listening to participants' improvisations. The list comprised the following: themes, rhythms, harmonies, background vs. foreground music, shifts in playing, tonality, timbre, placement of hands on piano or registers, coherence, symmetry, tension/relaxed, resonance, metaphors, shifts in playing. This was not an exhaustive inventory but served as a guide for listening and notating impressions. As I listened I would look at this list to prompt reactions or thoughts.

The process by which I analyzed the improvised music was to listen to it in a deeply focused, relaxed manner. At times I would write or draw while listening, especially if I was having images come to mind or phrases that seemed to capture the music. I was hesitant to overlay the music participants offered with too much of my own imagery or responses for this was not a clinical situation but one in which I wanted to draw any conclusions from the participants themselves. The interview transcripts were reviewed in conjunction with listening to each participant's music and in this way their own words framed any interpretation or meaning that was derived from the music.

I also listened to three of the five participants' music with them in the second interview. I found that doing so evoked powerful and eloquent responses. Hana chose not to listen to the music when we talked for the second time; she said she had just finished listening to it. The music was fresh in her ears and how she talked about it was poignant and offered insight into her emotions and development as a music therapy student.

PARTICIPANTS AND THE RE-PRESENTATION OF DATA: PORTRAITS, THEMES, AND MUSIC

Portrait of Anna: “It Works! It’s Not Just a New-Agey Thing. It Really Works!!”

Before Coming to the US to Study Music Therapy

Anna was employed as a music teacher in her home country and enjoyed the work with adolescents who have special needs. In her five years working there, however, she noticed how several of her students responded to music. She saw there was more that could be done with these students through music as compared to the other kids, but is unsure what it would look like. She said, “It really made me think about exploring music therapy as well, taking music beyond a classroom. Find out a little more about how music could be harnessed. So that is why I went to graduate school.” She decided to pursue a music therapy education, and felt blessed that her parents were so supportive, both emotionally and financially, despite the fact they were not exactly certain what music therapy was. Anna said,

I think when I first started they were not too sure what it was, but when I came back for holidays, I did show them some of the work and I think they understood what it was all about. Using music to meet certain goals and to help people. They see it as that. Sometimes they actually give tips as well! [laughter] Especially when they see someone...the little kids that I work with now, they come over to our place so they do meet my parents sometimes, and after the session I’ll be talking about what happened, and they could hear what was going on! They give some insights sometimes about the children and their temperaments, even if they have special needs. So that’s great.

This does not mean, however, that her entry into music therapy was easy. Like others in this study, in her very first week of school she had an unguided group process class. She described what happened this way:

We were told to sit together in a circle and choose an instrument and all that, I was kind of shocked! I went back thinking “Oh my God, oh my God, how am I going to complete these two years?! I didn’t know what was going on in that first class!” It was quite disconcerting. Although I must say that later the lecturers facilitated it very well, but it was still an individual challenge.

Anna was specific in articulating why these classes were initially so intimidating:

Personally I am quite a discreet person to begin with, and partly because of my Asian background, we always believe that we shouldn’t be too explicit with our emotions, and we shouldn’t air our problems like dirty laundry in public, and things like that.

She went on to describe her experience in more detail:

I came from a very structured education in music and education, and even group music making was always in the classroom, a structured ensemble. And we were playing the instruments that we were trained in: piano, violin, that stuff. So that first group I was holding onto a drum, or a tambourine, and they said, “just listen to each other, and just play whatever you feel like.” Those weren’t the exact words, but something like that. I was feeling “oh my gosh, it that what music therapy is?” Randomly playing?

During that first week, Anna was afraid that her entire training was going to make her feel constantly exposed and vulnerable, and she wondered if there was any theory behind it all. It was only when she had the opportunity to hear Clive Robbins lecture on Nordoff-Robbins music therapy that she knew she was in the right place. Up to then she says “I was actually beginning to be a bit skeptical, until we had Clive’s lecture where he showcased studies, and this is when I became a little bit more assured that I was in the right place [laughs].”

She gradually became more comfortable in expressing herself, and,

The process of opening up and expressing myself during that two years, although it was very tough, it helped in changing my character, to become more outspoken [and be able to] work on the emotional and psychological side. As opposed to merely an active engagement in music.

Anna’s Music Improvisation

Anna sent me her music improvisation after our first conversation, and it was intense: intensely private, emotive, and expressive of her experiences. As I thought about her and started to write her story/portrait, I listened to this music over and over, each time moved for reasons I had difficulty identifying. Here is her piece:

MP3 File: Track 2 – Beer – Anna’s Music

Listening to this music with Anna during our second conversation, we were both quiet at its conclusion. Here is part of the transcription of the conversation that ensued, including impressions I had while transcribing which are italicized:

A laughs slightly, as if shivering.

L: What are you thinking, feeling right now?

A: I don’t know how that came about. *Laughs.* It felt really intense. *Hard time finding words, silence envelops us for a while as we absorb the music*

L: There was so much going on that piece of music. A lot of shifts, a lot of movement to new expressive areas. Were you thinking about your time as a student while you were playing?

A: Yes, I was actually. I was thinking about the whole two years, and what it was like at the beginning, and in between, and there were times when I just let the music take its own organic pathway. With an overall picture of being there, when I was a student. I wasn’t thinking particularly of any specific experiences or incidents that happened, just the general overall image of being a student during those two years.

L: What came up for you while you were listening to it?

A: I felt pretty moved, especially at the first part, I was like, “whoa, that was a bit intense!” It felt quite loaded at the beginning. And then, I didn’t know I shifted so many times! It felt...it almost feels like a different person. Like listening to it, I seem to look at myself as a different person then. And now. I’m not so sure I am being clear. But it almost seems like it is a totally different person, like an acquaintance. But it felt at the beginning, for at least the first third of the improvisation, it felt for me very emotionally charged. Because there was the repeated ... *sings the alternating intervals, moving back and forth one whole tone for ostinato* ... it almost felt like, a feeling as if I was stuck somewhere, and yet there was that desire to move. And the melodic runs, and henceforth the shifts and different modes.

L: So in a way it is like you are listening to someone else, but it is you, from a different time period.

A: It is like that.

L: You were moving towards the ending in this beautiful, harmonic, lush way, with just a little bit of dissonance in there still, and then you create simple chords and a melody that stopped on the 2nd. So there was no resolution.

A: *laughs* No!

L: It was moving, yet...

A: Yes, I didn’t want to end it. I remember when I was playing it, I remember that part and it didn’t feel right to resolve it onto a tonal chord. It just didn’t feel *me*. I’m not too sure if a little bit of me in the present moment wasn’t in there as well!

L: Do you think that happened throughout the piece or more at the end?

A: I think more towards the end. The beginning of the piece was, I had that image of being a student, so maybe towards the end when the music took over, I think some bits of the present me might have moved into the whole music. I didn’t want it to end. It should just go on...

L: It is a beautiful image, that you are playing as your new student self, then the image of your present self weaving into that, and creating something new from that. It is a lovely image. You can hear it in the music. It seems like there is some kind of integration, or some kind of coming together happening near the end.

Thank you for sharing your music with me. I think it adds something so amazing, to be able to hear the process in music, and hear your feeling of what it was like.

A: I should thank you for asking me to do it! Because I’ve never done that before!

Portrait of Janelle

To begin the re-presentation of data from transcriptions and music belonging to Janelle, I offer a story she shared that I call “Portrait of Frustration.” Setting the scene, Janelle was a young woman who had traveled from Korea to attend graduate school in a large metropolitan area. She had never been outside her home country before, yet was driven by a passion for music and a compelling sense that she needed to bring music therapy back to Korea. What she experienced upon arriving, however, was severe culture shock: being in New York City “was a scary thing for me, in the beginning.” What follows is part of her story.

Portrait of Frustration: One of Janelle’s Stories

Arriving in New York City, Janelle realizes she is lucky to have an older sister already there, but her sister is studying economics and is very busy. Janelle begins her music therapy program and is immediately overwhelmed: when she was in undergraduate school for Music Studies she was studying to become a professional performer, learning difficult pieces and music history, going to lessons, and playing for recitals and juries. She had not learned how to write papers or speak in a personally expressive way. All of a sudden she was adjusting to life in a very large, noisy city and expected to write scholarly papers in something called APA. She says, “I didn’t get enough sleep, and I was really stressed out. Not knowing New York, not knowing the studies, it took me a lot of time.” Her work was constantly criticized by teachers for not being done “correctly,” but none of them took the time to help her understand her mistakes. In her third psychology class one of her professors called on her to give a response to a question, and she froze. “I know the answer—but how do I say what I want to say? I am taking too much time to answer!!!,” she thinks to herself. She has to quickly translate in her mind what she hopes is the right answer, then say it quickly. She of course does not look at the professor when she speaks, for this is a sign of disrespect. After she gives her answer, the professor says, “Well, that is almost right. Your answer is close. You seem hesitant about your answer. Please make sure to complete the readings before class.” What? Of course she had done the readings! She spent hours last night going through the chapters, taking notes of what she thought was important! She felt humiliated by this experience and now feels even more afraid to speak up in a class. She does not volunteer to speak up in any class, and soon many of her teachers looked pointedly at her when they asked questions of students.

On top of all of this pressure, Janelle was in another course where she was expected to play music freely, improvisationally, and somehow expressive of her being in the world and room. How does somebody do that? “I’ve never just played, without notes! Why is this important? The teacher will not give me advice...I don’t know what to do!” And what are these instruments she is to play on? The piano is about the only instrument she recognizes in the room: “I didn’t see these instruments before going to school. I did not know any other instruments for music therapy. It was weird! All kinds of different instruments, coming from every country!” She begins to feel panicked, unsure, doubtful she will make it through. In Korea, therapy means someone has a disability and needs specific interventions to improve. She is starting to realize that therapy in the US is something very, very different, and

becoming a music therapist is going to require her to talk about her emotions and to play music not from a page, but from her heart.

Janelle shed many tears during her first few semesters of school: “It was just really emotional Being in the new city, studying music therapy, and starting to realize that music therapy is so emotional. Missing Mom... Music is emotional in itself, so everything came together.” Her difficulties in adjusting were such that one of her professors recommended she see a therapist, which she did once while in the US, but continues to do now in her home country. She regrets not having “proper counseling” when in school.

Her reasons for studying music therapy include not wanting to be the center of musical attention, something she would have had to endure as a performer. She said, “I really wanted to use the music to help people. I was really good on piano, but I wasn’t happy.” She discovered music therapy and decided to pursue her master’s degree in the US, despite knowing people in her home country did not value therapy:

Therapy here is not something a normal person can have. People think a person who has therapy has a lot of problems. Mental problems. But later, in New York, I realized that anybody can have therapy. And somebody who is having therapy shouldn’t be judged.

Janelle also spoke about her changes in identity. While still living in her home country and subsequently in Germany, she realized,

My identity wasn’t clear to me. I lived in Germany for many years, and I felt “I’m not even Asian, and I’m not a German.” Then I moved to New York, and when I came back home it was different. I am still adjusting myself. I am marrying a 100% Asian man who has only lived in this country, so I think that will help me to be more settled here.

Upon returning home, her desire to assimilate more fully back into her home culture was strong. She wished to become culturally centered in the traditions of her childhood, and getting married was one way to do so. Even after all this, however, she says “I am thinking differently from other people here. Just different. I know that.” Her time living in Western countries had changed her, creating tension between her identities that she is still, after five years, reconciling.

In her music therapy practice she relies upon the aesthetic elements of music: her work with clients “is really beautiful.” She also uses clinical improvisation in sessions, singing freely with piano and guitar to support as well as lead. She says when playing for clients, “I let the music flow. The here-and-now moment. I need to feel that I am bringing something important to them.”

Janelle’s Improvisation

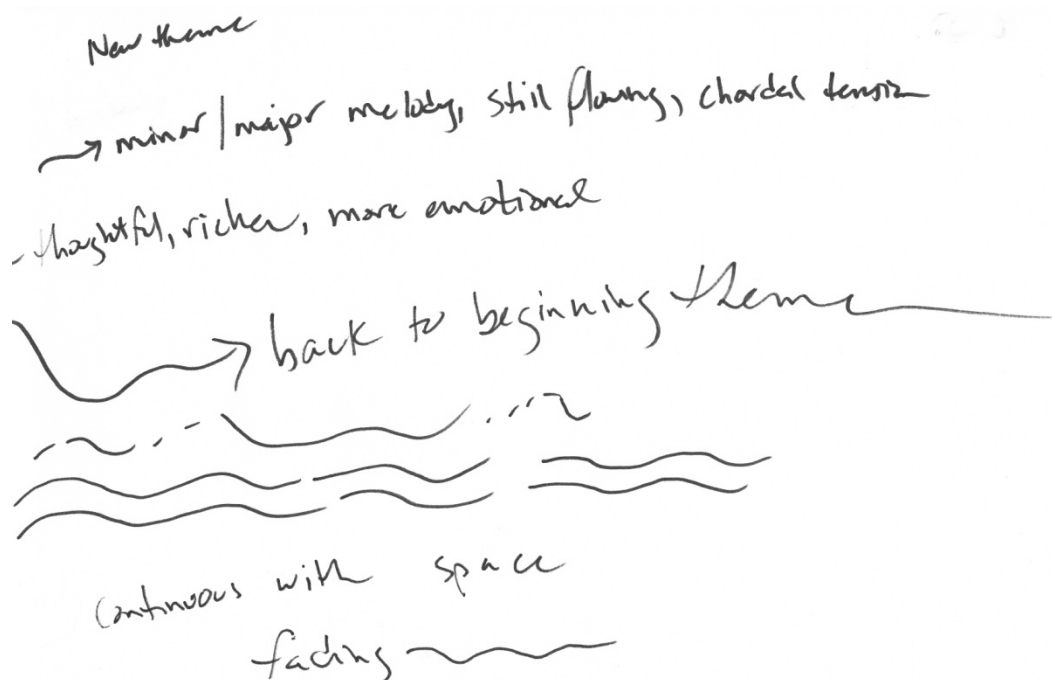
Janelle requested that she improvise for the study during our second interview meeting. The music was recorded yet due to the lack of quality in Skype sound transmission of music, much of it was not able to be retrieved for reproduction here. Her music was lush, harmonic, and steady in pace and thematic development. An excerpt is presented here so you, as audience, can get a sense of her music.

MP3 File: Track 3 – Beer – Janelle

After Janelle finished we talked about her music, and she said that while she was playing, I thought about many memories. In the beginning I thought about my first time being in New York. And then with that I moved on to my studies. I played a minor key here—that was when I thought about the time I had some kind of depression. I can't exactly say it was depression, but when I had a hard time. And then I moved on to my graduation day. [*Janelle laughs a bit*]. I got a little happier!

As I listened to her piece, I drew pictures and wrote down words that seemed to capture what I was hearing. An expansion of the arts-based approach, the images served as a form of graphic notation (Bergstrøm-Nielsen, 2010). Some of the words I wrote during the first section of the music were “lovely, light, flowing, high melody, comforting bass, continuous, supportive, rhythmic rocking.” As the music moved into the second section with a minor theme emerging, I wrote, “thoughtful, richer, more emotional.” As Janelle returned to her original theme I created a page (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Reflection on Janelle’s Music



After listening to Janelle’s piece several times, a thought struck me: the recorded noise interference and at times poor quality of the sound was analogous to her experiences. There were times while in New York City when Janelle felt like people did not understand her, as if there were interference in the air, and though she felt steady inside herself (like her opening melody), her intentions were not fully understood when she had to translate her

thoughts. The gap in quality of sound that Skype created in the transmission of the music mirrored her difficulties in expressing herself and translating clearly what she wanted to say while a student.

Janelle's Shifts in Identity

Adler's (1975) five-step developmental model of cultural adjustment was briefly touched upon earlier. His theoretical frame supports Janelle's transitions in identity. Her contact with American culture resulted in a disintegration of self-identity: she began to experience depression and self-doubt soon after arriving. With the support of her sister and professors, however, she began to integrate her new experiences into her identity and achieve a level of autonomy, enabling her to finish her studies. Finding a sense of independence in her internship completed her cycle of identity formation, though, as previously expressed, this led to new challenges in integration when she returned to her home country.

Reflexive Moment: The Researcher's Music Improvisation and Process

I pause here to interject the researcher's process of inquiry and reflection. In the midst of processing, reviewing, and synthesizing the copious amounts of data, I took time to write down my thoughts as I was at times beleaguered by the amount of data generated and fatigued by notions of how to organize it. Periodically during data collection and analysis I would stop, turn inward, and simply reflect upon the overall impressions I was gathering. I remembered musical and transcribed themes, shook off my personal sense of dissatisfaction at how slow I seemed to be going, and enjoyed seeing, in my mind's eye, how pieces of data fit together (or not). In engaging in this process while immersing myself in participant experiences, a different portrait emerged, that of the researcher. What follows here is a portion of the research journal.

September 18, 2014. I have not looked at data or written anything for the study in a few days. I find myself frustrated in not being able to complete this study. I am overwhelmed by the amount of data, and I need to find a way to find a way in, a way to make sense. Sitting back in my chair, I close my eyes and breathe deeply. I begin to hear a melody in my mind, so pick up my flute and play.

As I begin to play, however, I know the data is not the root of the frustration: I am frustrated with not paying attention to my own process and inner voice. I have many reactions to each participant, and also an overall reaction to what is emerging. The music that comes forth is surprising to me, yet it seems to sound the shapes of thought, feeling, and gratitude I felt inside. It strikes me as funny that though I was feeling frustrated, the music did not reflect this...the frustration was a surface emotion prodding me to pay attention! As I play I remember interactions, voices, themes....

MP3: Track 4 – Beer – Reflexive Musicing

[Continued personal log] The music begins with a bit of hesitancy, which is what I heard when each person described their initial feelings about being in the US. The music moves into playful exploration and expression, and ends definitively.

In listening back to this piece I hear clarity, strength, determination. Going further, the piece has an identity all its own, a sense of vigor. This brings to my mind important realizations: participants went through dramatic and difficult shifts in their identities yet did not lose sight of their goal to become music therapists. What I hear now, from a perspective of distance from these struggles, is a strong sense of identity in every one who I talked to. Underneath the words of each is a foundation of identity--not a multipart identity of Eastern and Western, but separate and individually integrated identities of Hana, M., Janelle, A., and Anna. They crisscrossed continents and cultures to find a new self of music, compassion, integration.

I think the piece also mirrors my own journey. Full of leaps of faith, questioning notes, pauses, strong thematic material, appreciation for the beauty of each person, and, I must add, awe at their courage. Right now, I bow my head: I applaud each one of you, and thank each one of you.

Taking time to create my own portrait through words and music helped me clarify my stance and perspectives and separate them from participant experiences. Doing so also inspired me to move forward with the project with enthusiasm and appreciation for what participants shared with me.

Portrait of Hana: "I Didn't Raise You to Marry an American Boy"

Thoughtful in her responses and quick to laugh, Hana offered a perspective similar in some ways to other participants, yet unique in that after her education concluded she stayed in the US and became a music therapy practitioner and faculty member. Hana's impetus to study music therapy stemmed from her realization that when she played piano,

I feel something internally ... And that made me look for some sort of music in psychology, and that eventually led me to music therapy. Somehow I think music was important enough for me to keep questioning. It was almost like a calling.

When she read about music therapy and understood how life changing it could be for clients, she knew she had to travel to the US to study it. Once here, her identity became formed and informed by her studies and by the clinical work she engaged in. She said in some ways, living in the US was her destiny, it "was for me about deciding to become who I am, and to live. So staying here was a part of me becoming alive."

Hana's Sense of Time

The theme of time (addressed in more depth later) was brought up several times by Hana. When looking at transcripts of our discussions, I realized the issue of taking enough time to

interpret, comprehend material, and complete homework cannot be over-emphasized with Asian students new to American-style education. Hana explained it this way:

It was really frustrating, because at the beginning, for me it took twice as much time, processing-wise. I would go to school and sit through the class, and digest once in class, and digest again at home. So that I could really understand. Make sure I do the reading. And that I really understand, like if I don't know the words I have to use the dictionary and make sure I know what we are talking about. I wanted to be focused and really make sure I digest and clarify things.

Hana also noted that needing to take time was intrinsic to being a music therapist. She said, "It's not like calculation, it's not 1 plus 1 equals 2-- so many things are intertwined. It can be music, and art, and movement, and psychology, and physiology, and neurology, and everything ... It is deep."

Decision to Stay in the US

As noted earlier, Hana decided to stay in the US after completing her graduate education to "make my own way." This path led her to teaching in a music therapy program, a job she quickly grew to love and appreciate. She said in order to teach, "I have to prepare myself. And that means I have to study, and I have to think about how I can translate what I feel passionate about to students." She found it interesting that she does not have many international students, but said the next time she does, she "will not pamper the Asian student, but I will be supportive of the student." Her experiences as a student shape how she teaches, in that she learned how to stand up for herself, figure out how to fulfill all her educational requirements, and become a well-rounded and effective music therapist, and she expects the same of her students.

Hana's Music

Improvising music for this study was something Hana had to fit into her life of caring for a baby, taking care of family, and teaching. When she created the pieces of "Studying" (heard at the beginning of the monograph), "Practicing," and "Teaching," she did not reflect on them right away but sent them directly to me. Then, before we spoke for a second time, she listened to all three. Her impression was "they feel so true ... Each of them feel very true. They have the essence of the period." When we compared notes on what we heard in her piece called "Teaching," we were surprised to hear we had written down the same words: "Solid. Steady. Warmth."

I was struck when talking with Hana that her description of the music captured meaning and insights she may not have otherwise been able to verbalize. When I mentioned this insight in our second conversation, she agreed that this was true. The improvised music expressed elements that in turn prompted perceptions she was able to share with me.

Portrait of A.

A. has an infectious laugh--I find myself smiling just thinking about her. She animates what she talks about: when talking about commuting to work in Tokyo she says "it is really stressful. We usually take the train or bus, and the train in Tokyo is very very packed. Crowded!" she pulls her shoulders in and re-creates the stressed facial expression. We both laughed in a commiserative spirit. It turns out we know many of the same people, and we bond quickly over this. She apologizes for her English, saying she has not had much opportunity to speak it over the past couple of years. Like Janelle and Hana, A. had originally intended to become a pianist and performer. In Japan, however,

Going to a classical concert or recital, it is not very common. It's very specific. I didn't like that part. I wanted to use my music for more people. I knew there are other people who don't have a chance to listen to music, and I wanted to play for somebody who doesn't have a chance to listen to music. [*I add into the transcription: Lots of pauses in her speech as she tries to find the English words to express what she wants to say*]

Knowing there might be another way to use her music to help people, A. first pursued music education, then discovered music therapy and decides to continue her education in the field. She traveled to the US and completed an undergraduate degree in music therapy then a graduate degree before returning home. She remembers her early days as an undergraduate: "everything was overwhelming." Her main obstacle was the language barrier, for "I had to do the practicum the same as other students. But communicating with clients was very difficult for me." Referring back to Spindler and Spindler's (1992) theory of acculturation, A.'s situated self was learning to cope with demands and pressures she had not anticipated.

A. attended an undergraduate program that was focused on skill-building and competencies yet did not include time for self-reflection. Looking back now, she sees that her graduate education, which placed value on self awareness, was an important component of her music therapy training. She said,

When I was at [graduate school] we did a lot of self-reflection. Thinking about ourselves, our abilities. For me it was very meaningful. Like I was able to discover myself, parts of myself I didn't recognize. I really liked that part, to think about myself, from childhood, teens, twenties....I didn't have much chance to think about myself after I was gone until now. But it was meaningful and very interesting. Knowing myself helps me know my clients.

Self-awareness as a core value is something all participants shared, and something they all learned about in their US graduate music therapy programs. A. had a unique view of this as she was not exposed to reasons why self-reflection was important in her undergraduate studies. Perhaps having this information could have made her re-entry to her home country an easier path. Yet getting to know herself was a revelatory process, and gave her life-long therapeutic skills that she feels are invaluable to her music therapy practice in Japan. A. was able to move through her various phases of education while maintaining her enduring self as well as the values intrinsic to her Asian identity, and find ways to integrate her new identity as therapist into her identity as a Japanese woman.

A.'s Music

A.'s improvisation was immediately strong, with a deliberate melody that seemed to draw the harmony along. The word that came to me as I listened was "journey." A. had this to say:

The music started from the very beginning of my life in Michigan. I was trying to remember what I was like in the beginning of my life there. I had told you that I had a lot of difficulties in starting, but somehow I started feeling that the struggle and difficulties were part of myself. Of course there was a point I had a hard time, but that experience might be necessary for me. For example, struggling with relationships with classmates or professors. Of course that was not fun in the moment, but I think I became stronger.

Her words here give me pause again to admire the focus and dedication students coming from another country displayed. Their passion for and commitment to music therapy overrode their negative experiences and helped them sustain a steady focus on their goal. A. said,

I think my motivation was I wanted to bring my knowledge and technique back to Japan. Because I knew I can't learn the same thing in Japan. And I also thought that having a hard time helps in finding a way to solve a problem.

As I re-read A.'s words I listened to her music and this time heard determination in it, as well as a sense of joy. Her piece is presented here for you to listen to:

MP3 FILE: Track 5 – Beer – A.Improvisation

Portrait of M.: "Americans are Really Something!"

Shock. That describes what M. felt when she started her orientation to the graduate music therapy program she had enrolled in. Her first experience with music therapy was of other students playing loudly and shouting music that felt to her mad, confusing, dissonant, and chaotic, all at once. In Japan a person hid their tears and screams: What was the purpose of all this noise? "What am I supposed to do?," she asked herself. M. picked up a small resonator bell and began to play, softly, careful not to make eye contact with anyone. "I came to the US because I didn't like Japan so much anymore! I needed more stimulation. I asked my parents to invest in me to study in the US." What would they say if they hear what was going on around her?! "People were dancing, improvising, singing, and making artwork, and I was very shocked to see how people can be that expressive when you just met someone." M. retreated to her room and thought about all she had experienced that first day. "I must get used to it. I can get used to it."

M. quickly realized that her instinct to hide her emotions was not going to serve her well in her graduate studies. In Japan, "you learn to hide everything. The problem has to be hidden in the family. You don't talk about it. When I saw the show Jerry Springer, that was a culture shock—people screaming at each other! [*laughter*]. Then I thought, 'Wow, America is very interesting!' That would never happen in Japan!"

As time went by, it became easier for M. to adjust to her studies and new ways of thinking about emotions, music, and therapy. When she was in school she was one of two Asian students in her class, which instead of unnerving her gave her an opportunity to educate others. She said,

I was comfortable with [being one of two Asian students], but I felt like I had to be more American! And also I thought I had to be more open to teach them the different culture that I grew up with, and the musical background. The cultural issue was always brought up in the class and we discussed it a lot. And it was very good. I felt like other students who are not used to having Asians as classmates—many of them came from Ohio, or a suburb of [the city]—so they weren't used to having Asians or foreign students in general.

M.'s professors actively sought her feedback and knowledge about her culture and she became a teacher in this way. She was appreciative of how she was brought into discussions and her opinions valued. She played Pentatonic improvisations in her improvisation class, and she shared how she was raised and what festivals and ceremonies she attended were like. When I asked if she had been content with the way professors asked her to disclose information about her culture, she said, "I think they did very well." It helped her feel that she was an equal to all other students and increased her confidence.

When she re-entered Japan after her 10 years in the US she, like Janelle, faced a difficult transition period. For M., however, her difficulties were with her family. M. said,

When I came back I was pretty much Americanized and my parents still saw me as the same daughter who was here 10 years ago. So I think we had to adjust many things, because I wanted to talk more about problems and discuss them, but they don't want to discuss them. I think at the beginning I wanted to see how my way of doing things would work in Japan. And I did try many things with my parents. Fighting, screaming too. But I learned that this way doesn't work with my family, or with my friends, or co-workers, or anything. So yes I started adjusting, and I have two different identities. As a therapist, I think. When I work with the Japanese community that really focuses only on the Japanese way, I become very Japanese. *[laughs a little]* Sometimes I just start music therapy by singing songs. Which is more popular here. And then I start including more improvisation, or artwork, or verbal processing. Otherwise they won't react too much, it's too shocking. So that was important for me to just learn the group, and start with what they are familiar with, and start adjusting it. But after 10 years, they are so used to it, they can do whatever I want them to do.

M. is now reconciled to her two identities, knowing when one should be more active than the other. She has learned how to gradually introduce her way of working to patients and co-workers, and now enjoys the respect and engagement of both. It was not easy at first, when nurses would remove patients from therapy out of fear of disrespecting "Sensei" M. (the therapist in Japan is referred to as Sensei, or teacher). She remembered one of her first sessions this way:

There was an Alzheimer's patient screaming at me, telling me to get out and stuff like that. And I was fine, I was very happy that at least he was saying something. So I was happy to work with him, but the nurse came in and removed him right away. And I said, "no no, you don't have to," and she said, "it's very rude to you, you came here to do music, and this patient is disturbing other patients." There is no idea of group dynamics, there is not

much awareness of what this loud patient can bring into therapy and also can be beneficial for other patients as well, depending on how I handle it. I was more happy to work with him than nicely behaving patients who are not saying anything and smiling at me.

M.'s Music

M. sent me her improvisation so that I was able to listen to it before we spoke a second time. When we met on Skype for the next conversation we listened to her piece together. While listening to this music with M. I wrote the following excerpt. I present it here as an introduction to M.'s reflections on her music as transcribed below:

Opening line is long, full, with a quick uptick end to the phrase. Then returns to the long phrasing. Minor key, lovely melody, then ornaments into an exploration of the theme.

Space: second section. Lively, jumps in intervals. Minor key. Some dissonant explorations. Half tones are pulsed, meandered through, into a series of riffs that continue the exploration, switching between major and minor, not based in any specific tonality or key. Loss of grounding, breathiness without support....melodic exploration, into major key that morphs into atonality. Moves upwards in register and finds a melody and intensity. Then shifts into high register...this feels to me like M's voice, her voice becoming integrated with previous identity as Asian student, into music therapist, into Japanese music therapist. Shifts again into a fun, playful exploration of the melody! Ends with humor, lightness, yet solid. Fluttering and steadiness, all at once.

Here is her music:

MP3 FILE: Track 6 – Beer – M.Improvisation Flute

After we listened to this music, there was a long silence. I asked her what her thoughts were upon hearing it. She responded at length:

Hummm, I thought many things. An image of a lot of heart. Feeling of challenges. A lot of challenges that I had to overcome and these challenges are sometimes because of language, and the biggest challenge was actually at the internship site. Because you deal with real people. The patients come to me because they are there for reasons. They came to me and said something like, "The Japs killed my father," or something, or some things like that happened. Something related to that happened a few times too. And I had to be very ... strong is not the right word. But I had to be very stable. There was a lot of feeling that I have to be stable in order to be a therapist I have to look confident and react with responsibility, no matter if I am Japanese or American.

So listening to the music reminded me that I had to really struggle to carry myself as independent person. The music now speaks to me more, it is very difficult, it was a difficult time to be trained as a music therapist in the

US. But at the same time there was a lot of joy and a lot of self-discovery. Many amazing things happened at the same time. But it wasn't that easy. That's what spoke to me now.

M.'s music "spoke" of strength and uncertainty, harmony and dissonance, legato melodic lines and jagged snippets of phrases, high reaches of sound and guttural explorations. Her flute improvisations captured the duality of experience the participants in this investigation all expressed.

THEMES

Several themes emerged out of the data analysis process and are addressed below. One theme that did *not* come up but that I had expected to see was that of intolerance: whether overt or subtle, racial denigrations are commonplace in American culture (Sue et al., 2007). I specifically asked each person if they had any remembrances of instances in school when they felt they were discriminated against because they were Asian: all took some time to ponder the question then answered no. If there were times they experienced bias or prejudice they were not related to their education. There were examples of micro-aggressions (as written about earlier), yet participants felt these were more a result of ignorance and not bigotry.

Time

Time as a theme arose in all interviews, with several variations in meaning. Four of the five participants specifically suggested that Asian music therapy students be encouraged to take more time in their studies. The reasons behind this suggestion are practical in nature: a student new to America cannot be expected to become enculturated quickly. Matsumoto and Juang (2013) say, "Culture must be learned through a prolonged process, over a considerable amount of time, with much practice" (p. 64). Janelle recommended that Asian students take more time to complete programs, though she also said she understood there are pressures of money and family that can prevent students from doing so. International students typically pay more for their education and are not eligible for student loans, so their families often pay all of their tuition and expenses. Taking an extra year may not be an option. Also, several participants said their families did not understand why they were having difficulty and pressured them to just keep going, to finish on time. This aspect of Time, however, helped me understand potential answers to the research question pertaining to the experiences of Asian students and also to the secondary question of what American educators could do to better prepare their students for work in their home country.

Studying in the US for two to three years is barely enough time to move through culture shock. Simply getting used to Western teaching practices required a substantial adjustment. Anna described her process of answering a question a teacher had posed to the class this way:

There is always a voice editing what I am saying. So I won't just tell you how I feel or what I think, but there is an internal editing going on, maybe changing the phrasing [before I feel comfortable answering]. By the time I think [my answer] is ready, the opportunity to talk is gone. It has passed!

This idea of taking additional time also holds for US educators, though in a different way. A. said, “I know it is going to be extra work for professors and other teachers, but all of the international students will be happy when they get attention or care from professors.” In talking with all five people it became clear to me that it is important to whenever, however I can, pause and talk to international students and to check in with them periodically. In some cases this extends to handing back two sets of papers: one graded by the class rubric, and one with extra editing suggestions on all or part of the paper to help the student improve their ability to write in English. Is this extra attention? I do not believe so, for it is student-centered and customized to their needs. A’s words ring in my ears: “Basically most international students are nervous about some things.” If I take the time to help students cope with their test anxiety or interactions with professors, I can take the time to help international students with their nervousness, knowing they might be hesitant to volunteer they are feeling that way. These insights help answer the secondary research question having to do with what Western educators could do to better support Asian students.

Frustration

All five participants talked about their varying levels of frustration in having to concomitantly acculturate to American customs, learn about music therapy, become scholars, and become comfortable in clinical settings. Part of their frustration was related to becoming comfortable in speaking up, in and of itself a difficult thing to master. In asking questions that explored their frustration, I was able to more fully understand their inner responses and experiences to events and situations. This theme arose in interviews with all the participants and serves a way to more fully answer the initial research questions relating to what US educators can do better and what the experiences were of these student music therapists.

Frustration signified much of their initial responses to Western classrooms, customs, and expectations. For example, several people talked about times they were in class and the teacher asked a question to everyone. They would think about what they wanted to say, often translating their response from their language to English in their heads, but by the time they were ready to talk the question was finished and the teacher had moved on. Hana offered this example,

I am comparing it to a classroom in Japan. I think it is more common sitting in a circle here, having conversations in classrooms, like I use [now as an educator] all the time, and so your participation is done through the common verbal communications instead of just listening and receiving information. But you have to express your thoughts and feelings, and actively participate. So at the beginning it was very frustrating for me, especially when the teacher asked a question and I had something I wanted to say, and then I didn’t know when and how I could bring it to the circle. And then three minutes later the topic was all done. So many things happening, and “awww, I missed my chance!”

Hana offered an illustration of being exasperated by a classroom interaction with her teacher, who was also her program director. One day the professor asked a question of the students and asked for a response. Before any students responded, however, the instructor said, “Except Hana, you don’t have to answer if you don’t want to.” Hana felt targeted and humiliated by this experience, and she became angry. She thought, “What the *%*#! You

don't have to say that to me or to the class! That is my job!" She felt she could have answered the question but was told not to. After the class she began to cry. With tears in her eyes she marched to the professor's office, and knocked on the door. When she heard "come in," she went in, sat down, and told the professor that she did not need special treatment in class and that she wanted to be treated like every other student. The professor was shocked, yet immediately understood her mistake. She apologized, saying she had only intended that Hana not feel obligated to answer, but in retrospect saw how her comment was disrespectful and how she was being overprotective. Hana thanked her, dried her tears, and left feeling stronger and more confident. In talking about this incidence of microaggression Hana said she had felt proud of herself afterwards, proud that she had stood up for herself in a clear and respectful manner. Her frustration transformed into power and confidence when she confronted the teacher in a respectful yet firm manner. Her encounter with the professor gave me insight into the often hidden responses Asian students may have to my words and expectations.

Self Expression as a New Core Value

M. summarized this theme in one statement: "Once we know the truth, it's hard to hide that, it's hard to just close that door and go in another direction." When I asked her what she meant by 'the truth', she said,

I know what is going on inside of me more now. So far this part is still very useful. For me. First in therapeutic process it helps me to be aware of myself in order to work with my client, but most Japanese people are not really aware of the self inside. So I don't talk about things like what I talk about with my clients in the US. I tend to hide more in Japan. Because it is more acceptable.

Upon embarking on their music therapy education, however, all participants revealed they had difficulty speaking up for themselves, especially in the classroom. Anna said, "We are all guarded! We are guarded people, we don't want to just blurt out everything until we know that we can trust who we are talking to." She felt fortunate that there were several Asian students in her class and her professor did not force them to participate. The instructor "facilitated and encouraged us to step out a little more" each week. It is important that Western educators know that hesitancy on the part of Asian students to engage in emotionally expressive musical and verbal experiences is not just part of personal characteristics, but is deeply embedded as a cultural value.

As a result of their education, each participant said they became more self-aware, and that it was a good process to have undergone. This also meant, however, they needed to recognize that their home culture may not welcome the new self they were developing. Hana talked about becoming more vocal and verbal and how this contradicted her status as a woman in Japan, "a very indirect culture" and one where women were "expected to be quieter than men."

Taking an entire course that focused on personal exploration and self-awareness was a powerful experience for M., Hana, and Anna. Each specifically mentioned these types of classes as life-changing. M. said, "It really changed *me*, and trained *me* to be aware of my true needs and wants. Then you can't lie to yourself anymore ... And once you know, it is there. And it is so true, it is so authentic, that you cannot go in a different direction." She

went on to say this self-knowledge, which has its roots in Humanistic educational values, has helped her become an excellent therapist for she is able to separate her own inner feelings and processes from those of her clients. A. also talked of the importance a Humanistic perspective played in her preparation as a music therapist: “I of course make the measurable goals and objectives, but I don’t talk to the clients in numbers.” Being able to create observable and attainable goals was something they all needed to learn, yet grounding this knowledge in knowledge of relationships created in each a strong identity as an effective, strong music therapist. This theme of self-expression served to answer the primary research question pertaining to the experiences of Asian music therapy students, and also leads directly into the next theme of Therapy, which illuminates their experience of returning home to practice and whether a Western style of therapy has relevance there.

Therapy

An area of frustration for Asian students starting to practice music therapy in their home country is the misconception of what therapy is there, let alone misperceptions people have of what music therapy is (Demaine, 2015). None of the participants felt adequately prepared for this shock, for each person found that Western music therapy did not “fit” into the expectations and norms. This became another adjustment the four participants who returned home experienced. A. said, “In Japan, ‘doing therapy’ doesn’t sound very professional. We have physical therapy and occupational therapy ... [but] in general people do not think therapy is a professional job.” She went on to say that “some people, especially older people, think expressing ourselves is a selfish act.” This cultural mismatch is something each person had to cope with and find ways to handle.

In exploring this topic with participants it became clear that the Western concept of therapy (a secondary research question in this study) does not have relevance in Eastern cultures. In fact, several participants shared their experiences of employers, clients, and co-workers rejecting their approach to therapy. After a couple years home, M. stopped reacting to this and decided to just do her job. Gradually, she noticed, other professionals began to recognize the therapeutic elements of her work.

Therapy in many Asian countries is something very different from what it is in the US. In Japan, M. says,

People associate it with occupational therapy and physical therapy. Psychotherapy is very different from the rest of it. When it comes to psychotherapy or music therapy, it requires clients to work through something in their emotions. It becomes very, very difficult.

Each participant expressed their realizations that they had to drastically re-define what therapy is, based upon psychodynamic principles they were taught in school. Interestingly, in her undergraduate music therapy studies A. did not learn much about emotional expression in music therapy yet also did not resonate strongly with her program. When she attended graduate school and learned about emotions in music she understood much more about the power of music therapy, and wanted to bring this back to Japan. This valuing of self-expression and personal awareness became one of her core therapeutic values.

Suggestions for Bringing Western Therapy Home

Re-entering their home country in Asia, new music therapists will have to analyze the work environment they either want to work in or plan to approach with a proposal, and tailor their therapeutic language, goals, and objectives to fit each particular workplace culture. It might mean scaling back on self-awareness and self-expression goals and fitting them into rehabilitative language, but somehow also retaining the values they now have and bringing them to therapeutic situations. M. said, “You can’t just go in and do what you learned,” especially at first. But “because there was music, I was able to get through it and meet my patient in music. And that was everything. Music was a strength to me. That was the language that connected me and the patients” (M.).

Anna said in her home country,

We don’t have a culture of therapy. In fact, I think my idea of music therapy was basically just using music to help people, but how, exactly, I was not quite so sure. I did a bit of reading. In my undergrad days I took a module on music therapy and nearly failed it (this is embarrassing!). But I think I failed it because I did not understand the process.

It might be helpful for American professors to encourage Asian prospective students to learn as much as possible about music therapy before embarking on their great journey to the US, and include suggested readings in responses for information.

Another aspect of defining therapy from a cultural standpoint is that Asian cultures “are very goal driven. And so it can be difficult to explain what music therapy is all about” (Anna). Several participants said that once they explained music therapy and demonstrated it, people saw the value in it. Part of bringing music therapy to their home country was recognizing that disabilities are stigmatized there. Finding the right way to explain that goals can be long-term in nature is important to easing the anxiety of prospective employers. In contrast to this goal-driven ethic, however, Anna said that in her presentations to the public, having case studies has been more effective in making the work less abstract and more concrete. She said, “I find it so difficult to quantify what music therapy is all about. [Case studies] are what people most want to see.”

Unrestricted Self-Expression in the Classroom

There is an angle to this discussion of therapy that deserves mention, and that is to question the authenticity of insisting on free-form emotional/musical expression in the classroom with new students. Several participants said they were skeptical of this at first and went on to say that in the long run it was beneficial to their self-identities as music therapists. Yet when I heard their statements of initial misgivings people I began to wonder if there is something here that might warrant future exploration: when educators require students unfamiliar with non-referential improvisations to emote and play music freely and expressively, who determines what is authentic? Ultimately it is the individual, but it is notable that several people in this study said they thought “are you for real?!” when first immersed in experiences of undirected, non-referential improvisations. One participant said,

There is that little voice in there that keeps going on and on, you know, like “okay, what is she doing, what is he doing? He looks like he is enjoying it, but I am not too sure what is going on musically here. I am not too sure if the

problem is with me or with them! Are they pretending?" In retrospect, it took a while to get out of that mindset. I thought to myself, "If I am thinking this way, are others thinking the same way of me? Are they listening to what I can do, will they be assessing my music?" (name withheld)

Tart of this issue could be addressed directly, by asking students to reflect upon their own level of authentic engagement and to analyze judgments of self and of others.

To sum up the theme of therapy, all participants recognized that Western ideas of therapy were not understood or even welcomed in their home countries. This was shocking to them and required another process of modifying their goals and values to suit the needs of their workplace. This in turn led to another process of reverse acculturation which was difficult to move through.

Self-Doubt

One participant said while in school she constantly wondered, "How should I be behaving?" All five people said they were upset that it seemed to take them longer to understand the material, and this led to them doubting their abilities as students and potential music therapists. Janelle said she began to have reservations about her choice to come to the US early on in her studies, though with support from family and professors she was able to persevere.

Anna spoke of her initial misgivings, yet also credited encouragement from her family as carrying her through difficult times. This led her to develop a strong identity as a music therapist, though still with some reservations: "I do work hard with each client. That might not be quite so, that I have a lot of confidence in my abilities!" As an educator I have noticed that when I openly support an Asian student's endeavors in the clinic or classroom, many students will say something to effect of "I am glad you think so. I do not see it, I only see what I have to do to get better."

Self-doubt can be a corrosive feeling, leading to discouragement and, ultimately, feelings of failure. This sense of discouragement and doubt was a common experience all participants shared. In some ways this theme answered the primary research question of "what are the experiences of Asian music therapists who studied in the US?" most directly. As an educator, this concerns me: the individuals I interviewed survived and found a way to thrive in the Western academic culture, yet I have to wonder how many other students simply give up when self-doubt becomes too intense for them to handle. This study gives educators the knowledge that perseverance and family support are critical to the success of Asian students, and also offers Western teachers a beginning point of dialogue for an Asian student who is struggling in their studies or clinical work. Referring back to a secondary research question, US instructors *can* do more to help Asian students simply by being aware of the many dynamics and challenges they face.

It is important to note here, however, that participants said their feelings of doubt did not last long, for they were determined to receive their education. Their goal was to bring music therapy back home and they were not going to let anything get in the way of achieving this goal.

Pioneer Spirit

All five participants spoke of their intense desire to become music therapists. Four specifically said they went to study in the US in order to be able to bring music therapy to their home country, where they felt it was desperately needed. M. acknowledged that her education did not prepare her well enough for work in Japan, “but it gave me enough knowledge, and gave me enough information that different kinds of music therapy are available. And I will choose whatever is comfortable.” For M., learning about many different types of music therapy helped her adjust her work to fit the needs of her Japanese clients and to also fit into the workplace requirements. Her determination to bring music therapy to Japan was very strong, yet having a breadth of education enabled her to be successful in her re-entry.

Hana said therapy had a stigma back in Japan, and that notions of mental health and self-care were not known. I asked her if it was intimidating to think about studying Western style therapy, and she responded, “Nope. I felt it was for me. I had this ‘mover and shaker’ spirit! Because it’s me saying, ‘we must change it!’ In a way, I did feel somewhat like a misfit. Especially as a woman.”

Anna left the safety and comfort of a “very safe” job in pursuit of a music therapy graduate degree. Her determination to pursue her passion was intense. In retrospect, she says,

I don’t regret the decision since, because I realized that if I wanted to do more of the work, both music therapy and teaching, I don’t think staying in a huge organization would give me that space. So it was scary, because of the uncertainty, but I think God has been good! *[laughter]*

Her determination to blaze a new trail was something she shared, albeit unknowingly, with all other participants. This spirit served them all well in not only becoming music therapists, but also gave them the strength to create a clinical practice at home, in environments where they sometimes had to hide their true therapeutic goals of self-expression and emotional processing. This determination underlies their engagement in educational pursuits and offers Western educators a glimpse of their inner worlds.

Omenotashi

A final perspective emerged from my conversations with Hana. Hana was eloquent in articulating her struggles learning American customs and expressions, yet also said there were Japanese customs she wished American teachers and students could know more about. One of these customs is Omotenashi, the practice of honoring guests above self. This is a deeply held Japanese value and is one I think Western institutions of higher learning could more formally adopt. Hana described Omotenashi this way: “It is the sense of treating others even better than you treat yourself [...] Every guest who comes to Japan, anyone who comes, you will be treated well.”

Omotenashi goes beyond being kind: it is putting the needs of someone else above your own and going out of your way to make them happy, comfortable, and serene. Joraku (n.d.) says, “I think it’s about creating a non-dominant relationship between a person who’s offering the service and a person who is receiving it” (para 1). It is a practice of being single-hearted and of service without expectation of anything in return.

This research project was predicated on wanting to know more about the experiences of Asian music therapy students, yet *Omotenashi* became my reminder that there is much I can learn from these students and Asian music therapists. It is not an unreasonable image, that of music therapy educators consciously welcoming each student or prospective student as an honored guest, especially at their informational sessions and orientations. This would require us to be mindful of the needs of international students and to provide a warm, engaging introduction to Western music therapy. As an educator and clinician I find this a core principle of music therapy: service with selflessness. *Omotenashi* has given me a name and form to talk about this practice and philosophy.

Future Directions

The data conducted for this study could be viewed as a continuation of the fine work done by previous music therapy researchers (Estrella, & Forinash, 2007; Gardstrom, 2004; Hsaio, 2011; Kariya, 2002; Kim, 2011; Swamy, 2011; Turry, 2010). There are myriad directions to go from here. Exploring the experiences of students from other countries would enhance our American ideas of education. Taking a look at dynamics of being a female music therapist in Asian culture from a feminist perspective would hold potential to further elucidate power dynamics many Asian music therapists have to contend with upon re-entry to their home country.

There could also be a stronger musical focus in the research: attending to cultural music preferences and analyzing those pieces of data might help students more concretely bridge their two identities. Conversely, focusing more intently on the values of Western music and how those play in the student experience of Asian students would broaden the field's multicultural perspectives. In terms of data collection, graphic notation (Bergstrøm-Nielsen, 2010) would be an excellent method to use more purposefully.

CONCLUSION

In finishing this study, I see how I have touched upon a topic with deep roots: there is so much more to know about the music therapy education of Asian students and what happens when they return home. Music therapy is a global modality yet the US continues to be the hub of education, and this study brings forth the importance for US educators to be aware of the dynamics and cultural clashes Asian students experience. It is my hope that the stories, music, and themes shared in this study will prompt Western educators as well as clinical supervisors to become more aware of the internal struggles their students may not openly share, and also to challenge their own implicit assumptions of power and privilege. These assumptions can quickly slip out in a phrase, a question, or a request, and if we have an inkling that we may have spoken from a place of ignorance or privilege, it sometimes only takes acknowledging it and engaging the student in a conversation about what happened.

I am grateful to my participants in this project: I learned so much from each of them and feel honored to have talked with each person. I remain in awe of their honesty, depth of expression, and willingness to share their beautiful music. Each person's commitment to this profession is profoundly moving to me and is a testament to their perseverance as well as to the quality of education they received in the United States. The knowledge and skills learned

here enabled them to bring the spirit and power of music therapy to many clients who otherwise would not be touched by music.

I conclude this piece with words from Anna:

Music therapy is not simply a job, it's not like teaching. There is a lot of involvement of the self. And a music therapist has to be willing to work at expressing their own self. Integrating that self, and getting connected to that self, and using that self in the therapy process. That is the difficult thing. And I think I am still learning that.

REFERENCES

- Adler, P. S. (1975). The transitional experience: An alternative view of culture shock. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 15*(4), 13-23.
- Aigen, K. (2008a). An analysis of qualitative music therapy research reports 1987–2006: Articles and book chapters. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 35*(4), 251-261.
- Aigen, K. (2008b). An analysis of qualitative music therapy research reports 1987-2006: Doctoral studies. *Arts in Psychotherapy, 35*(5), 307-319.
- Aigen, K. (2012). Publishing qualitative research in the Nordic Journal of Music Therapy: Guidelines for authors, reviewers, and editors for evaluating manuscripts. *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy 21*(2), 109-110.
- American Music Therapy Association (2013). *AMTA member survey and workforce analysis*. Silver Springs, MD: Author.
- American Music Therapy Association. (n.d.). *Advanced competencies*. Silver Springs, MD: Author.
- American Music Therapy Association. (n.d.). *AMTA standards for education and clinical training*. Retrieved September 8, 2014 from <http://www.musictherapy.org/members/edctstan/>
- American Music Therapy Association. (n.d.). *Professional competencies*. Silver Springs, MD: Author.
- Austin, D., & Forinash, M. (2005). Arts-based research. *Music therapy research, 2*, 458-471.
- Barcelona Publishers (n.d.). *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy: A Monograph Series*. Retrieved from http://www.barcelonapublishers.com/index.php?route=information/information&information_id=10
- Barone, T. E., & Eisner, E. W. (2011). *Arts-based research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Beer, L. E. (2012). *“It was beautiful but it wasn’t supposed to be there” : Spirituality in the work lives of higher education administrative leaders*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO.
- Beer, L. E. (2013a). qualitative music. *The Qualitative Report, 18*(41), 1-11. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR18/beer41.pdf>
- Beer, L. E. (2013b). Performativity in the real world: How *Playing with Purpose* informs and inspires social scientists. *The Qualitative Report, 18*(23), 1-3. [Book review]
- Beer, L. E. (2015). From embedded to embodied: Including music in arts-based music therapy research. *Music Therapy Perspectives*. doi: 10.1093/mtp/miv006

- Bergstrøm-Nielsen, C. (2010). Graphic notation - the simple sketch and beyond. *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, 19(2), 162-177. doi:10.1080/08098131.2010.497227
- Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (2003). An introduction to the arts and narrative research: Art as inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry* 9(4), 506-514.
- Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: a research note. *Qualitative research*, 8(1), 137-152.
- Brinkman, S. (2014). Unstructured and semi-structured interviewing. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 277-299). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Bruscia, K. E. (1996). Authenticity issues in qualitative research. In M. Langenberg, K. Aigen, & J. Frommer (Eds.), *Qualitative music therapy research—beginning dialogues* (pp. 81–108). Gilsum, NH: Barcelona.
- Bruscia, K. E. (1998). Standards of integrity for qualitative music therapy research. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 35(3), 176-200.
- Carlson, J. (2010). Avoiding traps in member-checking. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(5), 1102-1113.
- Chapman, T. K. (2005). Expressions of “voice” in portraiture. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(1), 27-51.
- Chilton, G., & Leavy, P. (2014). Arts-based research practice: Merging social research and the creative arts. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 403-422). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, D., & Crabtree, B. (2006, July). Qualitative research guidelines project. Retrieved from <http://www.qualres.org/HomeSnow-3816.html>
- Comas-Díaz, L. (1988). Cross-cultural mental health treatment. In L. C. Comas-Díaz and E. E. H. Griffith (Eds.), *Clinical guidelines in cross-cultural mental health* (pp. 337-361). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Conquergood, D. (2003). Rethinking ethnography: Towards a critical cultural politics. In Y. S. Lincoln & N. K. Denzin (Eds.), *Turning points in qualitative research: Tying knots in a handkerchief* (Crossroads in Qualitative Inquiry No.3, pp. 351-374). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 39(3), 124-130.
- Creswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Daykin, N. (2009). The role of music in an Arts-Based qualitative inquiry. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Method meets art: Arts-Based research practice*, (pp. 123-134). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Demaine, K. (2015). Musical roots for healing: The role of music as therapy in traditional Chinese medicine. In S. L. Brooke and C. E. Myers (Eds.), *Therapists creating a cultural tapestry: Using the creative therapies across culture* (pp. 154-169). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Dixon, A. D., Chapman, T. K., & Hill, D. A. (2005). Research as an aesthetic process: Extending the portraiture methodology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(1), 16-26.

- Edwards, J. (2012). We need to talk about epistemology: Orientations, meaning, and interpretation within music therapy research. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 49(4), 372-394.
- Fernando, S. (2002). *Mental health, race and culture*. New York, NY: Palgrave.
- Franz, J. M. (2010). Arts-based research. *Researching Practice: A Discourse on Qualitative Methodologies*, 2, 217-226.
- Fritz, M. V., Chin, D., & DeMarinis, V. (2008). Stressors, anxiety, acculturation, and adjustment among international and North American students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32, 244-259.
- Gardstrom, S. (2004). An investigation of meaning in clinical music improvisation with troubled adolescents. *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy: A Monograph Series*, 1, 77-160. Gilsum, Nh: Barcelona Publishers.
- Gergen, M. M., & Gergen, K. J. (2012). *Playing with purpose: Adventures in performative social science*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Ginsberg, M. B., & Wlodkowski, R. J. (2009). *Diversity & motivation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Guido, F. M., Chávez, A. F., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2010). Underlying paradigms in student affairs research and practice. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 47(1), 1-22.
- Haseman, B. (2006). A manifesto for performative research. *Media International Australia incorporating Culture and Policy*, theme issue "Practice-led Research" (no. 118), pp. 98-106.
- Hill, C. E. (2005). Qualitative research. In J. C. Norcross, L. E. Beutler, & R. F. Levant (Eds.), *Evidence-based practices in mental health: Debate, dialogue on the fundamental questions* (pp. 74-80). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Hsiao, F. (2011). From the ideal to the real world: A phenomenological inquiry into student sojourners' reentry adaptation. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 48(4), 420-439.
- Joraku, M. (n.d.). What is Japanese 'Omotenashi'? Retrieved August 20, 2014 from <http://www.wattention.com/archives/omotenashi-the-heart-of-japanese-hospitality/>
- Jung, C. G. (1989). *Memories, dreams, reflections*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Kariya, M. (2002). *Being a client in Music Therapy: Personal exploration of music through different cultural perspectives* (Unpublished Master's Degree Thesis). Lesley University, Cambridge, MA.
- Keith, D. R. (2007). Understanding music improvisations: A comparison of methods of meaning-making. *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy*, 8, 62-102.
- Kim, K. (2005). Culture-relevant psychotherapy in Korea: Clinical insight. In W-S Tseng, S. C. Chang, and Nishizono, M. (Eds.), *Asian culture and psychotherapy* (pp. 225-247). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kim, S. A. (2011). Predictors of acculturative stress among international music therapy students in the United States. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 29(2), 126-132.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. L. (2000). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 279-313). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (1983). *The good high school: Portraits of character and culture*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2005). Reflections on portraiture: A dialogue between art and science. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(1), 3-15.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Davis, J. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practices*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Leavy, P. (Ed.). (2014). *The oxford handbook of qualitative research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ledger, A. & Edwards, J. (2011). Arts-based research practices in music therapy research: Existing and potential developments. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 38, 312-317.
- Lee, G. (2009). Speaking up: Six Korean students' oral participation in class discussions in US graduate seminars. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28, 142-156.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Denzin, N. K. (Eds.). (2003). *Turning points in qualitative research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief* (Crossroads in Qualitative Inquiry No. 3). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 105-117.
- Lincoln, Y & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. London, UK: Sage.
- Lindvang, C. (2010). Resonant learning: A qualitative inquiry into music therapy students' self-experiential learning processes. *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy*, 8, 1-30.
- Madison, D. S., & Hamera, J. (Eds.). (2006). *The sage handbook of performance studies*. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC: Sage.
- Major, E. M. (2005). Co-national support, cultural therapy, and the adjustment of Asian students to an English-speaking university culture. *International Education Journal*, 6(1), 84-95.
- Maslow, A. H. (1971). *The farther reaches of human nature*. New York, NY: Penguin.
- Matsumoto, D., & Juang, L. (2013). *Culture and psychology* (5th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- McNiff, S. (2008). Art-based research. In J. G. Knowles and A. Cole (Eds.), *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research* (pp. 29-40). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mukminin, A., & McMahan, B. (2013). International graduate students' cross-cultural academic engagement: Stories of Indonesian doctoral students on an American campus. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(69), 1-19.
- Nishizono, M. (2005). Culture, psychopathology, and psychotherapy: Changes observed in Japan. In W-S Tseng, S. C. Chang, and Nishizono, M. (Eds.), *Asian culture and psychotherapy* (pp. 40-54). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Oliver, D. G., Serovich, J. M., & Mason, T. L. (2005). Constraints and opportunities with interview transcription: Towards reflection in qualitative research. *Social Forces*, 84(2), 1273-1289.

- Park, M., Chesla, C. A., Rehm, R. S., & Chun, K. M. (2011). Working with culture: Culturally appropriate mental health care for Asian Americans. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 67(11), 2373-2382.
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2010). Qualitative research in multicultural psychology: Philosophical underpinnings, popular approaches, and ethical considerations. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16(4), 581-589. Doi:10.1037/a0012051
- Quiros, L. (2012) Raising the voice: Teaching through a multicultural lens. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 32(5), 518-531. DOI: 10.1080/08841233.2012.724047
- Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 923-948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Roller, M. (2013, July 13). Ten distinctive qualities of qualitative research. *Research Design Review*. Retrieved from <http://researchdesignreview.com/2013/07/31/10-distinctive-qualities-of-qualitative-research/>
- Sciarra, D. T. (1999). The role of the qualitative researcher. In M. Kopala & L. A. Suzuki (Eds.), *Using qualitative methods in psychology* (pp. 37-48). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Teacher's College, Columbia University.
- Shea, M., & Yeh, C. J. (2008). Asian American students' cultural values, stigma, and relational self-construal: Correlates of attitudes toward professional help seeking. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 30(2), 157-172.
- Simons, H. (2014). Case study research: In-depth understanding in context. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 455-470). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Simons, H., & McCormack, B. (2007). Integrating arts-based inquiry in evaluation methodology opportunities and challenges. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(2), 292-311.
- Spindler, G., & Spindler, L. (1992). The enduring, situated, and endangered self in fieldwork: A personal account. In L.B. Boyer and R.M. Boyle, (Eds.), *The Psychoanalytic Study of Society (Volume 1)*. Essays in honour of George and Louse Spindler, (pp. 23-28). Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press.
- Stige, B., Malterud, K., & Midtgarden, T. (2009). Toward an agenda for evaluation of qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 19, 1504-1516.
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life. *American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271-286.
- Swamy, S. (2011). "No, she doesn't seem to know anything about cultural differences!": Culturally centered music therapy supervision. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 29(2), 133-137.
- Thurmond, V. A. (2001). The point of triangulation. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33(3), 253-258.
- Tseng, W-S., Chang, S. C., & Nishizono, M. (2005). Asian culture and psychotherapy: An overview. In W-S Tseng, S. C. Chang, and Nishizono, M. (Eds.), *Asian culture and psychotherapy* (pp. 1-18). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.

- Turry, A. (2010). Integrating musical and psychotherapeutic thinking: Research on the relationship between words and music in clinically improvised songs. *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy*, 5, 116-172.
- Witz, K. G., Lee, H., & Huang, W. (2010). Consciousness in the study of human life and experience: "Higher aspects" and their nature. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(5), 397-409.
- Yin, R. K. (2008). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Young, L. (2009). Multicultural issues encountered in the supervision of music therapy internships in the United States and Canada. *Arts in Psychotherapy*, 36(4), 191-201.