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Music Generated Narratives: Elaborating the Da Capo Interview Technique

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Abstract

This paper shows how we played researcher-selected extracts of music to participants in “the Da Capo technique,” to elicit narratives of their learning experiences. Previously, we used music alongside other techniques in an interview about learning; here we explore the Da Capo technique as a standalone technique to study its potential for narrative recall. To do this, we played 10 one-minute long extracts of classical music (five “Western” and five “Chinese”) to 20 participants (10 “Western” and 10 “Chinese”). After hearing each piece, participants were asked if the music recalled for them any experiences of learning. When it did so, we explored this further in dialogue and narrative recall. As expected, some narratives related to experiences of studying, academic success, and of particular times and places associated with learning. However, in many cases the music elicited narratives of learning which, surprisingly and in multiple dimensions, related to physical learning, culture, the family, and particular emotions such as sympathy, and of aspects of character, such as optimism and honesty. We provide details of using the technique, where particular music elicited learning experiences and where they did not. We provide further evidence of the value of using music either as a stand-alone method in the qualitative researcher’s toolkit, or as an additional and complementary tool. We discuss the merits, limitations, and potential applications of the Da Capo technique.

Keywords

Narratives, Music, Interviewing

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Music Generated Narratives: Elaborating the Da Capo Interview Technique

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This paper shows how we played researcher-selected extracts of music to participants in “the Da Capo technique,” to elicit narratives of their learning experiences. Previously, we used music alongside other techniques in an interview about learning; here we explore the Da Capo technique as a standalone technique to study its potential for narrative recall. To do this, we played 10 one-minute long extracts of classical music (five “Western” and five “Chinese”) to 20 participants (10 “Western” and 10 “Chinese”). After hearing each piece, participants were asked if the music recalled for them any experiences of learning. When it did so, we explored this further in dialogue and narrative recall. As expected, some narratives related to experiences of studying, academic success, and of particular times and places associated with learning. However, in many cases the music elicited narratives of learning which, surprisingly and in multiple dimensions, related to physical learning, culture, the family, and particular emotions such as sympathy, and of aspects of character, such as optimism and honesty. We provide details of using the technique, where particular music elicited learning experiences and where they did not. We provide further evidence of the value of using music either as a stand-alone method in the qualitative researcher’s toolkit, or as an additional and complementary tool. We discuss the merits, limitations, and potential applications of the Da Capo technique. Keywords: Narratives, Music, Interviewing

Introduction

In qualitative research, music has been used to reveal and re/represent data (Beer, 2013), to explore aspects such as its relationship with aggression (Roberts & Mattern, 2014), and as a metaphor to facilitate thesis writing (van Shalkwyk, 2002). Our own previous research, somewhat surprisingly, showed how playing extracts of music to participants can elicit memories and experiences that textually based spoken interview questions did not (Pilcher, Cortazzi, & Jin, 2014). We had interviewed graduating students about their experiences of studying, primarily via more traditional oral questioning and, as a tailpiece, played these participants selected music extracts. After each piece, we asked if the music reminded participants of anything about their degrees. Among memories triggered, we found that quiet solo piano pieces often reminded students of library study, that celebratory symphonic pieces reminded students of graduating and academic success, although huge large-scale works were considered more indicative of higher degrees rather than of

undergraduate studies. Such results show the potential of music to transport people towards recall and imagination to generate vivid memories, which evoke experiences that appeared to surprise and puzzle participants themselves. We called this technique the *Da Capo technique*, in line with the musical term “Da Capo” which is often written at the end of a musical score, and which means “from the beginning.” The term resonates with Goffman’s (1975) dramaturgical metaphor of narrative as “replaying a strip” of experience which suggests “re-framed” remembering of the past in a present narrative performance.

There were, however, additional questions and issues. Previously (Pilcher, Cortazzi, & Jin, 2014), music was used alongside oral questions in a more traditional interview approach: music only constituted a small section of the actual interview. Hence, the real potential of music (if any) as the sole tool to elicit data from participants awaited exploration. We wanted to push the Da Capo technique we had developed to answer questions our initial research had raised. If we used music as the sole focus of gathering data, what would be revealed? Would it be successful to gain useful data? If we focused the Da Capo on gathering narratives of learning, would similar memories to those previously generated emerge through the same or contrasting pieces of music? How would participants respond in an interview with music as the sole focus? Does music really have the potential to be a significant tool in qualitative research?

Here, we present and discuss the results from an exploratory investigation that used 10 pieces of music as the sole focus of an interview intended to gather narratives of learning from participants. We first review literature in the areas of music, narratives and individual experiences. Secondly, we describe the process to using music to attempt to generate narratives of learning in interviews. Thirdly, we report and discuss the results from these interviews before concluding. It is our hope this report inspires qualitative researchers to take creative initiatives, perhaps combining music in multimodal approaches.

Music, Narratives, Individual Experiences

Music is strongly associated with memories and experiences (Keightley, 2009) and can evoke highly emotive responses in listeners (Meyer, 1956). The applied use of music is highly varied, including practices in music education, therapy, marketing and advertising, and health and well-being (Juslin & Sloboda, 2010), and its potential to add value to narratives elicited has been demonstrated in research that has focused on students’ experiences of studying for undergraduate degrees (Pilcher et al., 2014). Such use of music to stimulate narratives can be compared to how other non-verbal techniques have been used to elicit narratives. These include established use of wordless film sequences to stimulate oral narratives in different languages (Chafe, 1980), and of videos as cues for narrative (Lyle, 2003). Further, there are visual techniques when participants produce their own drawn timelines, or *learning journeys*, in interviews to stimulate personal accounts of international study (Gu, 2011), or draw self-portraits and use self-taken photos to construct visual and textual narratives of personal language learning (Kalaya, Alanen, & Dufya, 2008; Kalaya, Dufya, & Alanen, 2013; Nikula & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2008) or compose their own multi-media individual learning histories (Menezes, 2008). Unusually, the latter make some indirect reference to music, as when participants use hyperlinks to note songs that influenced their learning of the English language. In developing classroom writing skills, teachers’ long-standing practices include employing music as a stimulus for students to write creative narrative or autobiographical texts; however, these tend to be reported as pedagogic practices focussing on writing through evoked emotion rather than as research methods (e.g., Goring, 2004; Jones, Kokotsaki, & Cholevar, 2016; West End in Schools, 2013). Other research-based multimodal approaches to the elicitation and expression of narrative have suggested that the

mode of analysis of narratives is an open-ended one and includes “language, image, color, typography, music, voice quality, dress, gesture, spatial resources, perfume, and cuisine” (Page, 2010, p. 6).

Still, music is rarely included as a mode for multi-modal narrative analysis; music is absent in the major guides to narrative research which emphasize qualitative methods in social sciences (e.g., Bold, 2012; Clandinin, 2007; Czarniawska, 2004; Elliott, 2005; Goodson, 2017; Riessman, 2008) even in those which distinctively feature multi-modal approaches (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; Mannay, 2016; Squire et al., 2014). Where music is mentioned, it accompanies visual and verbal expression in participants’ *production* of narratives; it is not used to generate or *elicit* narratives (Doloughan, 2010; Menezes, 2008). The present study may contribute to this wider multi-modal view of stimulating narrative expression and suggest further reciprocal relations between qualitative research and multimedia.

As noted by Pilcher, Cortazzi, and Jin (2014), the use of music to elicit narratives involves a number of considerations. First among these is to consider whether the music is heard in the same way by different participants. Gregory (1990) demonstrated that participants were able to distinguish three lines in polyphonic music with equal ability, thus, although participants may interpret music individually, they hear different melodies and lines similarly. Hence, when researchers choose music for melody and lines, it can be assumed that participants will also hear the same lines and melodies. A second consideration is whether musical training has any effect on participants’ emotional responses to music. Waterman’s research (1996) shows few differences in this regard. Thirdly, a key consideration is whether cultural background has any influence on individuals’ ability to decode basic emotions in music. Research shows the ability of adults from different cultures to identify lullabies (Unyk, Trehub, & Schellenberg, 1992) and suggests that basic emotions in music are decodable by adults regardless of their cultural background (Thompson & Balkwill, 2010). Fourthly, and critically, it is important to consider whether music interpreted as *happy* by some might be interpreted as *sad* by others, that is, whether the same type of music creates different affective responses. In this context, “fairly similar” responses have been found regarding interpretations of the emotional content of music (De Vries, 1991, p. 51). Fifthly, there may be an ethical consideration in the use of music in eliciting narratives: highly emotional properties of some music might possibly elicit highly emotive responses as some participants recall experiences of a sensitive or negative nature. Therefore, when using music to elicit narratives, it is ethical to inform the participants at the outset that they can withdraw at any point and that the research will be stopped if any sensitive or harrowing memories arise (cf. Hariss & Atkinson, 2011).

Given these considerations, the use of music to elicit narratives has many apparent benefits. To complement classical narrative elicitation whereby participants are asked to recall and then relate narratives (Czarniawska, 2004; Riessman, 1993), the playing of music serves as a portal to transport participants back to a particular time and place. Narratives as responses to selected music are recalled musically-associated or emotionally-prompted events already in memory and verbalized in language (Chase, 2005; Riessman, 2008). Furthermore, in interview dialogues the music can serve as a sharable common-ground or context to focus discussion and reflection (Bakhtin & Holquist, 1981). Music represents a vast resource from which researchers may select from multiple types of music (varying the genre, tradition, instrumentation, key, style, tempo, or performance) that are available in the Da Capo technique; music is thus able to take account of multitudes (cf. Hertz, 1997) and multiplicities of selves (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988) within individuals.

As researchers ourselves, we have explored the use of music to elicit narratives within our interest in narrative inquiry (e.g., Cortazzi, 1993; Cortazzi & Jin, 2006; 2012) and in

qualitative research methods and approaches (e.g., Cortazzi, Pilcher, & Jin, 2011; Pilcher & Cortazzi, 2016). We are interested in intercultural perspectives within international education (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011; 2013). We participate actively in music-making. In using music as the sole tool to elicit narrative we explore further the potential of music to act as a portal for the elicitation of memories and experiences through the Da Capo technique (Pilcher et al., 2014). We wanted to complement our prior efforts by ascertaining the effect of music to generate narratives in a study, which honed the music alone as a narrative stimulus and might potentially expand the tools for other qualitative researchers to go beyond more traditional methods. Following, we describe the method of how we used the Da Capo technique in this study and how we approached the data analysis.

Methods: How the Da Capo Technique Was Used in This Study

Type of Qualitative Inquiry Used

The type of qualitative inquiry used here is narratively oriented research into student experience of learning, solely using music to elicit personal narratives from participants. As noted above, we had, to the best of our knowledge, invented this Da Capo approach, yet it needed further investigation to explore its potential applicability and effectiveness. Thus, instead of more routine lines of questioning, we chose music as the exclusive focus of the interview to see how its application in this context might elicit narratives of learning.

Identification and Recruitment of Participants and Selection of Musical Pieces

Participants were undergraduate and postgraduate students who were studying in the UK and were known to the researchers from having previously attended our classes. In total, there were 20 participants, 10 of whom were from countries in Western Europe, and 10 of whom were from China. We selected 10 pieces of music selected for use. Previously (Pilcher et al., 2014), we had used 7 pieces of music with 15 students who were all from China, so here we expanded the number of participants, widened the geographical areas they were from, and extended the amount and type of music we played; selections are detailed in Table 1 below. Additionally, we wanted to make the research as participatory (Fontana & Frey, 2005) as we could and in return for participation in interviews that on average lasted one hour, we offered to provide suggestions on participants' current research efforts, based on our experience as faculty and researchers (although not necessarily subject matter specialists). We would provide similar feedback to any previous or current student in our classes who made a request, therefore we believe the decision to participate provided these students no unfair advantage with their research efforts over any non-participating students.

The research was approved by appropriate university ethics committees before it was undertaken, and all data are presented here anonymously (Christians, 2011), to avoid possible identification of individuals. To recruit participants, all members of our classes were simply asked if they would be interested in participating in the study; most students who were approached expressed interest, perhaps largely through curiosity.

We selected the music using several criteria. First, we wanted to play a range of Chinese and Western classical instrumental pieces. The five Western pieces were ones we had used previously (Pilcher et al., 2014); these had effectively generated recall of memories of experiences of learning. The pieces were selected to provide a suitable range of different keys (major or minor), tempi (repetitive, slow, fast) and scales (large scale orchestral or solo instrumental). Our rationale was that the type of piece would likely be associated with the recall of a type of experience. So the large scale orchestral major key pieces might be

associated with the recall of celebratory type events, such as success in an exam; the slower solo instrumental pieces might be associated with recalling more reflective events, like studying in the library; slow minor pieces might evoke memories of more challenging experiences such as receiving a bad mark.

For the Chinese pieces, we selected pieces that we thought, as far as possible, paired with the Western ones. So if we played a Western a solo instrumental piece, we followed this with a Chinese piece that was solo instrumental, or that had a similar rhythm or tempo. We chose the pieces collaboratively, through discussion about the nature of the pieces, with the goal of identifying those most suitable to sustain interest and participation. We additionally identified the mood we associated with each selection. This information is contained in Table 1.

Paired Western and Chinese pieces	Key, tempo, and anticipated mood
A. Western. Bach, J. S. The Well-Tempered Clavier. Book 1. Prelude No. 2.	Key: Minor. Tempo: steady, continuous Associated mood: perseverance, solitude,
B. Chinese. Yang Wei. DaXun Zhang. 'Galloping Horses' Melody. 0:30 – 1:40	Key: Major. Tempo: steady, fast Associated mood: hard work, perseverance
C. Western. Beethoven, Ludwig van. Symphony Number 5. 4 th Movement	Key: Major. Tempo: fast, driven Associated mood: triumph, celebration
D. Chinese. Xiao Xinghai. Yellow River Piano Concerto. 4 th Movement	Key: Major Tempo: fast, driven Associated mood: triumph, celebration
E. Western. Vivaldi. Concerto No. 2 for wo violins and cello. 4. 1. Adagio e spiccato	Key: Minor. Tempo: slow, steady Associated mood: sadness, hard times
F. Chinese. Gou Xiao Hu 'Swallow' Xinjiang Folksong 2:00 – 3:00	Key: Minor Tempo: slow, steady Associated mood: sadness, hard times
G. Western. Bruckner. Symphony No. 8 4 th Movement	Key: Minor. Tempo: driven, regular Associated mood: action, hard struggle
H. Chinese. Wang Xilin 'Fire Torch' Symphonic Suite 1:50 – 2:50	Key: Major. Tempo: driven, regular Associated mood: action, hard struggle
I. Western. Medtner. Canzona Serenata in F Minor.	Key: Minor. Tempo: slow, regular Associated mood: reminiscing, nostalgic
J. Chinese. He Zhan-Hao and Chen Gang Butterfly Lovers. First section 2:50 – 4:00	Key: Minor. Tempo: low, regular Associated mood: reminiscing, nostalgic

Table 1: Pieces selected, key, mood and our associated moods.

Data Generation and Collection

Our approach to data collection was exploratory. In an empty and quiet room with a portable CD player and headphones, we explained that we would play them a minute of a piece of music, that there would be 10 pieces in total, and that after hearing each one we would ask them if the music recalled any memories they had of experiences of learning. Participants were asked about whether the music they heard reminded them of anything they had experienced during their undergraduate degree study, and, following, whether the music evoked any experiences of learning they had had. The extract was usually the very first minute of the piece, or occasionally, a minute from later in the piece; exact timings are specified in Table 1. While participants were listening to the music, we deliberately moved out of range of eye contact to allow participants to focus more closely on the music; we explained this in advance. If a selected piece did not remind participants of any experiences of learning, we moved on to the next piece. More often than not, the piece did remind them of an experience of learning. When this was the case, we solicited further information such as

the type and details of the learning experience and what each participant thought it was about the music that related to that particular experience for him or her. While we acknowledge that the questions will have shaped the discussion and played a role in memory, we suggest it was the music itself that triggered these memories initially.

All interviews were recorded using a portable recording device and then later transcribed. We stressed to participants how we ourselves were transcribing the data and no-one else; this was partly for ethical reasons and the possibility that participants might feel more at ease to speak with the assurance that no one would hear the recording. We also found that the process of researcher-transcribing already started the analysis of the transcripts through noticing and noting (Bird, 2005; ten Have, 2007).

Analysis of the Data

We carefully read through the 20 transcribed interviews to identify where a piece had triggered a narrative and where it had not (see Table 2) and noted the nature of this narrative to identify whether it was a narrative of learning or about something else. Then we repeatedly read through the narratives of learning to identify and to develop and assign categories for the type of learning it related to. We found it was necessary to work through this manually rather than via use of QDAS software because the themes and categories that emerged continually changed and morphed until we had reached a final version. We believe our manual processes were better suited to the dynamic nature of data analysis because they allowed us to more quickly and flexibly modify categories and consider, reflect on, and reconsider interpretations and categorical alignments of selected excerpts from the data.

This approach was similar to that of a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2010) where codes and themes emerged bottom-up from the data rather than being identified prior to analysis.

Organization of Results

We organise our results by first tabulating where the music did and did not effectively trigger narratives of learning or other narratives. Then we present our results according to overall categories of: Academic learning experienced; Non-academic learning experiences; Memories of places; Narrative of learning about emotion; Narratives of learning the importance of certain aspects of character. Under these main headings, we provide sub-headings to further categorise them. Although our focus is on the narratives generated, when relevant we note the nature of the piece of music played and sometimes whether the response was from participants from China or the West.

Results

Effectiveness of the Music in Triggering Experiences of Learning or Other Types

Table 2 shows details from the first stage of analysis. In most of the 200 possible instances (20 participants x 10 pieces of music), the music triggered some experience; most often these were experiences of learning. In only 13 instances were no experiences at all triggered by the music. Experiences not related to learning included memories of movies or of restaurants. Quantitatively, therefore, in only 7% of instances did the music fail to trigger any experiences, but in 25% of cases it did not trigger any experiences of learning.

Piece of Music	Experiences of <i>Learning</i>		Any other experiences?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
A. Bach	12	8	7	1
B. Galloping Horses	13	7	5	2
C. Beethoven	15	5	4	1
D. Yellow River	17	3	3	0
E. Vivaldi	19	1	1	0
F. Swallow	15	5	3	2
G. Bruckner	15	5	3	2
H. Fire Torch	12	8	6	2
I. Medtner	16	4	2	2
J. Butterfly	15	5	4	1
Totals	149 / 200	51 / 200	38 / 51	13 / 51

Table 2: Key narratives triggered.

Academic Learning Experiences

Many of the narratives were related to academic learning experiences; many were narratives we had anticipated as we had chosen the music specifically to trigger such narratives. These were often recalled through references to the nature of the music. For example,

the kind of music is very quick and then give me the feeling that pressure in the examinations... I find first it's very difficult to start, and then I choose avoiding that and then through the music there's a kind of a, music slow down and then I realise that I choose the easy one first, then I... overcome all the difficulty in examination.... So that kind of experience I can remember from that music. [A]

Here the participant's memory of the process of doing examinations was directly "mapped on" to the experience triggered by the music: the idea of pressure associated with the repetitive nature of the music—this pressure is released, and the participant overcame this by choosing a question, associated by the participant with the music slowing in tempo. Academic success is also a memory triggered, for another participant that

powerful music sounds the feeling is glory [laughs]... and the memory was the degree ceremony award.... I remember going up the steps to the stage... and getting my certificate from the president of the university... and the gestures... the feeling that now you are one of us... it was a changed moment from student to professional somehow. [C]

The participant directly associated triumph and success with a celebratory major key orchestral piece and expressed how this then made that individual feel "changed" into becoming a professional and graduating.

Deeply personal triumph. Sometimes the memory triggered was of a deeply personal triumph. For example, for one participant:

in my family... my uncle... Just say... to my mother 'Yeh, your son is stupid'... [but] when I got like Master degree... this music remind me... the triumph, you go back home, you open the door and you say "See, what you said wasn't true... so don't say things that, don't try to predict the future". [G]

Here, the powerful nature of the music, a very large minor key orchestral piece, triggered the association of vindication for the participant, whose success and newly established self-efficacy disproved wrong family assumptions. Another participant was reminded of a deeply personal triumph of finally passing an exam at the 5th attempt by sheer hard study and perseverance; after doing so, the tutor finally greeted the student in the corridor: *"I remember this guy [the tutor] who throughout the years I thought he didn't like me because I was one of his bad students... see me in the corridor of the university and say 'Hello' to me and I thought 'OK, I gain his respect.'"* This student recalled this through the *"powerful sound it remind that the feeling I get rid of this module... and the 'Hello' of my tutor,"* and concluded from this experience that *"I learn that if I find the solution on my own... It worth more than my whole degree than all this"* [G]. Here the powerful music directly triggered this remembered experience and led the participant to relate deriving a key lesson through this triumph: the importance of learning a solution by oneself.

Successful approaches to learning. Often, the evoked academic experiences related to recalling successful approaches to learning. For example, the importance of teamwork:

Well... this is a clear one... that memory is that we have the teamwork in the competition... we get the second place... and this music bring me the situation that it's a very slow movement can you imagine that? ... and the number come out from the screen then we will three of members we're cheering up, but this moment is still very slow and some of other teams look some disappointed on their face or something else... Yeh then we jumped out and then we celebrate the success. [G]

This student expressed learning how,

teamwork is... essential... my teammate will always... let me calm down... we always can discuss in the team... the team member is very important... because... yes there's a very popular sentence in Chinese ... "You don't afraid a very strong enemy but you're afraid you have team member as stupid as a pig." [G]

Here it was the slow movement and memory of being awarded second place which had underlined for the participant the importance and value of teamwork. Sometimes, a successful learning technique recalled by the music was related to an association of a location. For example, for one participant

it reminds me... you need total different techniques to learn I think, or in my case... I experienced or I tried to probably sit on other tables so I had, in the end I was sitting at home on my table on one side to do calculus... and then I changed to the other side for do something else and it helped me or I walked around or stuff like that... that helped me and I still do that. [D]

Thus, the music recalled how this participant would sit at different tables for studying a different topic, sensing affinity of spaces for particular subjects.

Memories of failure and of struggle. Minor key and slow music could recall very detailed and vivid memories of failure and of struggle. Yet such memories could also be related to successful outcomes. Responding to one piece of music one participant commented:

It's like those sleepless agonising nights when you're in the middle of having two or three things or even a really hard assignment... and you have the strange feeling that you want to go at least I try to go to bed early and... I can never fall asleep... and then the feeling drags on, drags on that you have to do something... and you end up having a horrible sleep... and having to do some work the next day... [I – Does that teach you anything or do you learn anything from that or?] I actually learn to do these bullet points for myself... to get myself organised so that even if I'm stretched out I don't spend a sleepless week on something I just spend two sleepless days... so I shifted from making no notes whatsoever about my schedule and about my life to doing all these bullet points in my small notebook. [E]

Here, a minor piece with slow repetitive rhythms was, for this participant, directly related to the academic difficulty of working through an assignment, yet ultimately developing a successful learning strategy that helped with this work.

Non-academic Learning Experiences

In addition to the above academic learning type of experiences that we had chosen the music in anticipation of eliciting, there were also quite a wide range of non-academic learning experiences that were triggered by the music. We had not anticipated that the music would trigger these types of experiences.

Physical learning. Sometimes the music recalled participants' experiences of learning physical activities. These included learning to dance, to ride a bike, and experiences of the realization of suddenly being able to do these things. For example, one participant said in response to an orchestral piece which we thought might evoke celebratory experiences:

It reminded me the moment I start cycling and the feeling I get and I start using the... roller skates... because I think... it remind the feeling of freedom... you're moving fast and also this feeling of "Waaah look what I'm doing!" [C]

In telling this, the experience recounted was a response to a piece of music we had chosen in anticipation that a celebratory experience would be recalled, but we were surprised that the recounted learning experience was of a non-academic, physical nature.

However, physical learning experiences were also recalled in relation to other types of music. For one participant after listening to a slow and reflective solo piano piece of music the physical learning experience evoked was of how to remain calm in order to better control a motorbike and be a better rider.

Maybe sounds a little bit strange, but I think that you know I'm driving on my bike... it is very relaxing and (pause) and I'm, often when I'm driving I try to learn to handle it better... It is motorbike... So, to learn to get it smooth and nice when you're driving through corners and things... It is yeh, it's that feeling of, just to get it there...this, you know, to, to feel the bike to get the

right balance in the bike it will give you a better chance to handle things you can't see. [I]

Culturally centred narratives. Commonly with participants from China, and in response to the classical Chinese music, the learning experiences recalled were closely related to learning about traditional arts and culture. This was another surprise for us. Participants said these traditions related directly to the music and the images it recalled. For example:

OK, the traditional Chinese music... when listening that it will have some Chinese painting frame appear in my mind [laughs]... someone is painting... some mountain, Chinese mountain or Chinese style stuff. [B]

Sometimes these memories and narratives could be full of explicit vivid details, almost carrying the listener visually and emotionally back to the place and time itself:

This kind music give me some kind of warm situation that I was practise my handwriting by maybe pen or something... some brush made by the other, bamboo or something... my father always sit on the sofa and watch the television for the news... and mother always to clean the floor and maybe sweeping or... clean the bowls... after we finish the dinner. That's a very long time memories and we have moved a lot several times but we still in the very old house and then (pause) there will be an orange table, table lamp on the tables... and the paper will be some kind of light yellow because of the light and we will, according to the handwriting my mother always come here and look at that and a comment on that maybe always he, she always say that change another paper... and do it again... it's kind of some kind of warm heart... because that kind of experience you can never get back... the other music cannot [recall this] but this music can...I have say that's a good memory from that music... its relationship with my parents. [J]

Learning and the value of family. Also, with participants from China, and again in response to Chinese music, vivid and detailed memories of family celebrations were recalled. For example, one participant remembered:

For this song in the beginning I think... reminds something like when I, you know the song in China has the spring festival? ... and... all people will get together and enjoy the dinner... [I – Does it remind you of any learning experiences you had?] ... maybe maybe this one, how to say is behalf of the experience people who sit in front of TV and er celebrate the spring festival and they feel very happy and warm, warm heart about that... and although they working for 300 days and I don't know actually they work for but they stop all things and a, a big family they get together... You will saw some little children or your grandfather or something and relatives and they saw the TV and they talking with each other and you forget all the annoying things and... yeh, the importance of family, family maybe. [H]

Leaning to value time. Another participant from China in response to a piece of Chinese music spoke of the family, remembering the death of a grandfather, and how for the participant this had taught the lesson of the need to value time. Once again this referred to an event remote in the participant's past:

It's recall me about... when my grandfather die... and on that I still can image, image right... that day, throughout and make me learning some, I need to... do not waste time... value time [I – how old were you?] 10, maybe not 10, maybe 8 or 9. [J]

Only learning the value of something after it has been lost. For one participant, in response to the slow minor key music, the experience recalled was of learning that sometimes you only realise the value of something when it is gone, and you no longer have it. In the participant's words:

It teach me... like when you've got something you don't what it is, how it is important for you... and then when you just take it away from you... You just realise that OK this thing is, was important. [E]

Struggling to replicate a feeling of motivation. For another participant, in response to slow, minor key music, the experience triggered was of gaining a strong feeling of control after managing to direct “a big force” of motivation and dedication in order to succeed. However, this had led to a feeling of regret as the participant struggled to replicate the strong feeling from this success:

It's interesting because that period of time is not like, like crazy and exciting and play all the time... on the other hand it's, I feel that drive inside my body... But I use them, and I manage them and when you use a big force and you supress it and control it... It's It's a it's a quiet and peaceful but but strong feeling yeh..... It actually erm, brings me problem afterwards because it's so, it's so strong that I want it, I want it back but it just won't come back, because the feeling of changing everything slowly and come like myself really dedicated, it's good, it's even addictive but it doesn't come easily. [E]

Learning the need to sacrifice for success. One lesson recalled in response to the music, was that of the need to sacrifice or relinquish something sometimes in order to be successful. Here one participant spoke of learning the need to lose something to gain success:

if you want to get success you must feel lonely, experience, you must experience lonely... if you want to get something you must leave some [I – Leave something] ... Lose something... That make sense? [J]

Another participant spoke of how this sacrifice was often made by the individual but done for others. This participant narrated a reluctant choice to go to a military school, against the participant's personal will but with the knowledge it would benefit the entire family in the long term, concluding that, “sometimes the thing you want to do and you know is necessary and is important but it's not good for yourself It's for someone else” [F].

Listening to a slow piece of reflective solo piano music evoked the importance of learning about unrequited love. Here one participant stressed the importance of this lesson, and of how the music sounded romantic and melancholic, and that this in turn meant the participant was inevitably drawn to thinking about learning the importance of unrequited love:

Probably most people find this the most romantic melancholic.... It's like can't help but thinking about some unrequited love... it's just the simple lesson of learning that sometimes things don't work out the way that you thought they would or.... Not necessarily everyone's interested who you think would be interested or could be interested... and it's actually one of the most useful lessons that you learn from your beautiful neighbours at the door sometimes. [I]

Learning that achievement is relative to others' achievement. Some minor key slow music triggered for one participant a challenging experience of having to do a very difficult mathematics test which the participant believed resulted in a failing grade. However, the participant received, surprisingly, a passing grade, and concluded that this experience demonstrated that so long as others around you achieve less than you do, it is satisfactory. In the participant's words: *"by the end of it I kind of find out that as long as people around you do less than you it's OK"* [E].

Learning the lesson: you are only human. In response to the large scale orchestral piece we had chosen anticipating that it would recall challenging academic experiences, one participant did indeed recall one, but concluded it had a non-academic nature. The participant related how the intermingled feelings arising when a gratifying experience was followed closely by a challenging experience was grounding and emphasized the need to remember humility and the human potential to make mistakes, no matter how elated, elevated or exalted people sometimes feel. The music reminded the participant of a

moment of pure joy is actually... the closest thing I could get on it was when I got my admission for my Master placement... before I nearly burned down my apartment on that day... I went to make pizza... and it wasn't on the tray with grill.... The whole thing burnt down and there was black smoke and smelled for three days... and, it actually was a good experience coz that brought me down back on my feet very very hard, very strong and I said "OK, are you still a fucking stupid human... you can die any moment of any stupid idea... It was really good... even if you feel like you can, you can, you're the biggest guy in the world you... can just burn your kitchen down. [G]

Memories of Places

Academic places of study. We had anticipated that the music would stimulate participants' memories of being in places where they had been studying: this did indeed happen. In response to a Chinese piece paired with a Western piece that we anticipated might evoke memories of studying in the library, this is exactly what happened for one participant.

it reminds me... the good... moments... the image was me in library studying book and make progress I realised at that moment... that books are helping me a lot to... gain the knowledge that I want, in this case was good version of a book... remind me specifically... about electro-magnetics. [B]

Other places not related to study. In contrast, the music often returned participants thoughts to sites that were not remotely connected with academic study but were still connected with learning. For example, in response to a Chinese piece of music, one participant had memories of the past:

I heard this music before but I don't know where but it reminds me my grandpa... and the holiday I spent with him in the countryside... Yes and... I try to learn swim... but I failed. [B]

Sometimes the remembered location related to a particular activity as in this example:

Wow this music... it's like the music they played in the sports competition... reminded me of in the Junior High School or the High school I take part in the running competition. [C]

These recalled places could be associated with sad memories, for example in response to a melancholic piece of solo instrumental Chinese music, one participant remembered their fear of the dark, of primary school, and living away from their parents:

It's being afraid of the dark night... it reminded me the, when I was in the primary school... and I didn't live with my parents as well I live in the primary school... So yeh it's really depressed. [F]

The remembered place was vividly described, showing the noticeable ability of the music to transport participants back to these places. A different participant, again in response to the solo instrumental Chinese music, vividly recalled a park where they walked, close to the university:

The time that I had a break after, between the modules after studying... in the university... I had walks in the park close to the university just to relax my mind from the stress of studying... it was connected with the university it was directly outside from the university and the park... and I remember some birds around searching to the fallen leaves for food... I, there was a... man-made lake... I remember I spent a lot time there because it had frogs... through my studies through the semester I was exploring the progress of the life... because you can find them from the stage of... tadpole until frogs so day by day... so it was... relaxation from the stress. [F]

Narratives of Learning about Emotions

Although music has a known intrinsic connection with emotion (Meyer, 1956), and the music played here would, we thought, likely engage emotional responses, we had not anticipated that the pieces would recall any experiences of learning about emotions. Probably, like most education professionals, we focussed initially largely on academic learning because this is default idea of learning in universities. Nevertheless, narrative responses included actual experiences of learning about emotions or learning the value of particular emotions.

Learning the experience of stress and about coping with depression. For one participant, an extract of piano music with a repetitive pattern and rhythm evoked memories of stress:

So the feeling was it makes me nervous, stress, it makes me feel stress... and I had the flashback through my years of education... some images of the university... elementary and high school as well... my... whole education... was affected... it's mostly focused on feeling of stress... through education

throughout all those years I have to, I have an aim and I have to pass through all of these stages and achieve this aim. [A]

In response to a slow minor key extract of music, one participant related the importance of being able to cope with difficulties, being upset, and feeling depressed, and conclude that such difficult experiences were beneficial:

This song's very depress me... make me upset and... when I was hearing this song I was asking me who I am and er maybe I met some difficulties... and I began to suspect myself.... rethinking my life, something like that, yeh... it's a necessary experience, you see it for the peoples' grow up... it's good for teenager... they should experience a lot of difficulty. [E]

Learning to express emotions and to cope with despair and fear. For another participant, this slow minor key music reminded them of feeling very sad and lonely, possibly with a sense of loss, but they underlined the importance of the need to open up and express such feelings rather than keep the pain inside themselves:

This is so sad... It remember me like a with loneliness... some parts are like a like a very deep and increasing cry as well, but very deep... like when you feel... so when you have some lost... It's also how you learned... to know how to manage this process... when you lost something that is really important for you, you feel very deep... and you have to, and you want to scream but you because you need to open yourself... to express... or learning or... it's your, expression, your pain...but it's something that you need to do you cannot stay with this pain inside of you, you need to... express. [E]

In response to a melancholic solo piece of Chinese music, one participant recalled moments of utter despair when they had no idea how to deal with their situation or plan what to do. They expressed how, in the midst of such despair, they had learned not to combat these feelings directly, but let them pass naturally and, therefore, they would pass more quickly:

Despair when everything falls down, you know dead end... that kind of happens a lot... in your life, even if you're studying.... You have these situations when there is just nothing beyond that and you can imagine going to the sea, smoking a cigarette... or standing in the rain it's just one of those hopeless moments when you have to, when you actually can't even figure out what you need to do... Just when you have to go with it and be depressed for some time... because I found that sometimes it doesn't help to try to cheer yourself up you just have to let it follow and eventually if you're lucky it blows over.... And then you can start being a bit more upbeat again [I – And do you learn things from that?] I learned not to fight it to a certain extent... I mean it's good to feel hopeless and in despair for a few hours... Maybe for a day but I think that eventually you surrendered yourself to it knowing that it will blow over... Then you can recuperate much faster.... At least I hope so. [F]

For one participant, the slow reflective music recalled a distant childhood memory and learning how to face fears, remembering the supportive care and tender comfort from their mother to confront their fear of the dark:

I remind when I was a child and I was afraid of darkness... and my mum comes to, to say "Don't worry... be calm, nothing's happened," and I got my bear... and I would like "Uhh, nothing happens, sure?" and with the tenderness of my mother nurse me, it happen "I'm going to put the light this and don't worry" maybe it's learning to confront life you know... your fears. [I]

Learning the importance of empathy. For one participant, the slow piece of solo instrumental Chinese music was perceived as expressing sadness, and evoked epiphanies of learning about empathy and sympathy:

Because it's very sad... make me feel sad and I remember the experience when I have travelled... and I saw the very old lady... and she sold something, cucumber or something in the basket. I feel uncomfortable, I want to help them... sympathetic... it was not good way to do that, I wanted to give the original price to buy all of them, not all of them, some of them... now, maybe in some cities... I also saw some, some situations like this where some poor guy er pick up some, pick up some boxes someone's thrown it and you know it's quite like rubbish, but he picked it up and eat something from it so make me er sympathetic er show sympathetic to him... [I – But do you learn that? Or is that just a feeling?] No I learn now, I want to maybe in the future I got some little rich, although I can, maybe I can be the richest person but I wanted to go in to the mountain and help some children. [F]

Narratives of Learning the Importance of Certain Aspects of Character

Another type of narrative of learning experience recalled through music concerned aspects of character. These participants' narratives stressed the importance of certain features of character or personality and their experience of learning the value of these qualities.

Optimism. One participant responded to the Chinese piece of music paired with a Western piece of repetitive tempo and rhythm, by emphasizing the value of the need to be optimistic: *"When I heard this music... remind me should optimistic with my life... similar as the first music I need to hurry up I need to keep steps everyday..." [B].*

Being uncomplaining, patient and not arguing with others. In response to the reflective solo piano Western piece, one participant envisaged peaceful places with family memories:

From this music I know that there is one thing that is, people cannot complain all the difficulties... In life in worker, such as, this music let me feel there's a picture such as sunshine in the grassland... And very peaceful world I like this peaceful world yeh so just er, remind my life when I stay with my grandmother... And stay with her ... And her dogs, not, not noisy, very peaceful and very, how to say word... I learn it, people cannot complain anything... the mood should be peaceful, not complain everything... if you fail your exam, that's fine, if you, if some, some people near to you was dead that's fine just keep your life going and... no arguing with others, no fighting and, such as the assessment don't need the highest level... Just the medium level is OK. [I]

The importance of accepting that you can't always get what you want. In response to one of the Chinese pieces of music, one participant recalled learning the importance of accepting in life that it was not always possible to get exactly what you want.

My Dad was yell at me, I say 'I don't want to do this, this is not what I love I should do what I love as a job and for the rest of my life' ... and he said, 'You think I don't want to do what I love?' ... And he said, 'What I love is sleeping and playing all the time' ... my point is there are certain jobs... and hopefully it's like more than 60% compatible to you but... if it's not you have... to bear with it. [H]

Learning not to be too proud. Another lesson related through the piece of music chosen in anticipation of triggering memories of challenges was of the danger of self-pride:

[I – Does it remind you of any learning experiences?] Learning, er, it seems I too prouded of my study, too prouded... So if people have too prouded hisself or herself maybe... he won't help the others he think he's the best one... maybe will lost some friend, some study skills... And he won't want to study anymore because he think, he thought he's the best one. [G]

Learning to be tolerant and honest. The music also triggered memories related to the importance of being tolerant and being honest. For example, in response to the slow reflective piece of solo piano music, some participants' narrations concluded that on reflection they had learned to be tolerant:

When I hear this songs I got this feelings though I've, I graduated from the universities, and I see back my life during the universities and I cross the classroom, cross the beautiful lake and... yeh, just memorise to save my memory during the university what I learn maybe like the memory the life I should, I don't know, it's valuable and don't waste it, it should be hold in my heart like that... and maybe we have some argument with the roommate... it's not very big things I feels big and feel we can talk in, play a joke with each other again or something... be... tolerant yeh. [I]

Learning to trust others and have faith. In relation to the paired pieces chosen in anticipation of triggering celebration, participants spoke of the need to have trust in others and to keep faith:

Just like I face on the river and... exciting but also... scary [I – What did you learn from that experience?] I think the faith is very important.... If you have faith you can keep conduct and if you not very strong faith you just mess up. [D]

Learning the right temperament to be an artist. One participant recalled through the music a far distant childhood memory of how they learned to sketch from their mother. As this participant related:

In my childhood I learned sketching from my mother.... She's a artist.... And sometimes she will play some music like this type... so I really I learn enjoy [I – OK, so it reminds you of that] Yeh [I – And what did you learn from that?]

Erm I think (pause) er I use dictionary... I'm not sure this word [I – Temperament OK, that means like how to behave] yeh yeh... you know artist is different the normal people... They more love the beauty stuff... And they can feel more beautiful from the product or the world, what you see... so I think that's the temperament... I think it's she affect me... [I – How old were you?] about 6... [I - what is the correct temperament?] (pause) I think it's peace... And... you can focus. [C]

Learning how to be brave and strong. In another narrative, the music recalled old Chinese movies, then lanterns and festivals and walking across an iron bridge with their grandmother. Much story-telling experience from their grandmother had taught them the importance of being brave and strong. In their strongly visualized account:

It's hard to say... But I've, I've related like old Chinese movie... And people walking, walking on the street... just watch beautiful lanterns... we have a festival for to see the lanterns... and...when I was a young boy... my grandmother took me... to go the city centre... to see this, it's very deep memorise... and... if you want go the city centre you have a cross the iron bridge... It's very long bridge... And my grandmother will told me lots of story about she's young... [N – What did you learn from those experiences] All those stories, most part about she lives on the very poor... Er social environment... And she wants to leave... I think she is very brave... and... strong... and also... teach me... be a good man like she, brave and strong. [H]

The importance of controlling your feelings. One participant, in response to a Chinese piece of music, recalled learning the importance of having the strength of character to keep focused, to remain hardworking, and not give up. The music had evoked a martial arts movie starring Jet Li, which connected with their own learning of the martial arts and how studying these arts had helped them learn to control their emotions. They had used this self-control significantly during their studies which helped them remain focused and calm in exams:

A movie... Romeo Must Die... it just reminded me of Ju Jitsu... Er self-defense or, which I have been doing for many years ago... from that... I learned to maybe keep focus well I have actually learned really a lot from that... compared to, in relation to schools and stuff like that coz, you always see people like really stressed before an exam and, oh, don't know where to put their feelings and... I think I learned to control that from that action yeh, that's a good learning experience I've, I've probably used that a lot... doing my studies, also without knowing it when I think about it... I've used it. [J]

Learning the value of hard work. In response to another Chinese piece of music, one participant, from China, narrated their graduation from primary school and how they got a big hug from their parents and teacher because of their hard work. They had thus learned to associate hard work with doing well, and that it was important to work hard in order to do well:

This music... remind me when I graduate in my primary school... and my parents and my teacher give me a big hug because I do it very well in my study.... So, I think from this music I think if I, if I do work very hard now as I

was in primary school er so, maybe... my study result will be better so I won't be, I won't have the sad mood [N – Right, so, it's teaching you the value of hard work] Yes. [H]

Learning you need to try and persist. In response to a Western piece anticipated to recall studying through repetitive rhythms, one participant narrated how as a child they had made a toy car but because they were shy they had not entered it for a competition; they later learned that they would have won if they had joined the competition. In evaluating this experience, they learned the importance of the need to try:

I can recall my... childhood playing toy car... they make a competition but for me when I was young, I'm shy... they think my car is enough good, but I think it is not good enough and I didn't join the competition... But if I join I will win [laughs] [I – Do you regret not joining the competition?] Yes [I – So did you learn from that, anything that, like, you should not be so shy or?] You need to try yeh. [A]

Also in relation to repetitive rhythmic music, another participant spoke of learning the need to persist, in the face of difficulties, narrating how when they were starting kite surfing they faced hard mental challenges but nevertheless they kept going:

It remind me about when I'm learning something new... it could be when I was starting at kite surfing... you have to work a lot in the start and the thing is new and there's progress... and it's going good... but you have to keep on... and it is the difficult part [I – Yeh, so what do you learn from those experiences?] There's only one way it is, it is to keep on going... but it can be... mental hard to keep on. [A]

Discussion

Here we've extended a previous Da Capo study of using music to elicit narratives (Pilcher et al., 2014) by exploring how music worked when it was used purely by itself; we broadened the scope to investigate experiences beyond the academic learning found in a degree program degree program Additionally, we extended the study to include both Western and Chinese music and also to play pieces both to participants from China and from Europe. Given our previous findings in which music generated narrative recall (Pilcher et al., 2014) we were anticipating that the music would generate experiences like those of graduation and of studying hard, and that narratives would recall learning in academic places such as the library. Also, that some participants would likely respond more to the music than others. Both these anticipations transpired to be accurate.

First, a key finding here is that often the music chosen for its potential to trigger anticipated recall of types of learning experiences and memories did so with expected narratives of learning. Next, it is a clear limitation that the technique does not work successfully for everyone. However, when it did, we were surprised by the extent to which the music transported participants back to varied times and places in multi-dimensional learning experiences.

Second, different types of music elicited different kinds of memories and greatly varied narratives of learning. Reflective music often evoked memories of reflection; large scale celebratory pieces often recalled narratives of success and minor key slow and melancholic extracts often elicited memories of challenging experiences. Yet, when this

happened, some emerging narratives were not types we had expected, and some degree of unpredictability is both a risk and fascinating potential for qualitative exploration given individual responses and the emotive nature of music.

A third major finding relates to dimensions of narratives of learning evoked by music here. They include: cognitive dimensions of academic learning; physical skill learning; learning life-lessons of character, morality and values; social, collaborative and teamwork learning; learning arts and aesthetics; affective dimensions of learning about emotions. Few of these dimensions were predicted. These outcomes demonstrate the potential of music to recall vividly remembered, multifaceted and unexpected ideas of learning. Based on a considerable range of examples which illustrate an unexpectedly broad range of dimensions of narratives of learning, we conclude that pre-selected music in qualitative inquiries can allow access to areas of richness and depth of experience that would not necessarily be recalled in response to other stimuli such as textually based questions.

Regarding content, the nature and range of narratives of learning involved here shows wide potential application of music for qualitative researchers investigating other narrative areas. In addition to the cognitive learning experiences such as writing academic essays, taking exams, doing projects, giving presentations and graduating, we found physical learning experiences including: learning to ride a bike, roller skating, climbing and gymnastics. Memories of places, times and events evoked by the music turned out to be vivid and extensive in range, with describing the lifecycle of frogs, the colours of lamps, and details of childhood family activities. The range of arts featured learning experiences related to painting and calligraphy, dance, drama, poetry, film and storytelling, suggesting an aesthetic dimension: "*Artists ...they love the beauty and they feel more beautiful from the product*"; "*experience with companion...being able to see the beauty of the different aspects.*"

In a dimension of morality, values and personal development participants highlighted aspects of character such as optimism, honesty, keeping faith, avoiding hubris, trusting others and always learning to try. Learning wider life-lessons included the need to retain a positive perspective on life, coming to terms with human nature, and the importance of family. Music is by nature very closely linked to emotion, and to a whole range of emotions (Meyer, 1956). Participants spontaneously affirmed this linkage: "*I often tie emotions and music together,*" "*I'm tying emotions and experience a lot to music.*" Experiences of learning emotions and of affective roles in learning permeated a surprising range of responses. The music unlocked memories of learning to manage stress, of coping with depression and despair, dealing with loss and loneliness, but also of experiencing tenderness and peacefulness, love, joy, empathy and hope, reveals the potential of affective dimensions of using a Da Capo technique.

Clearly, there are caveats and limitations which go beyond the limited choice of music extracts and numbers or range of participants. The ability of music to access to such deep areas as character, values and emotions raises ethical issues (negative emotions mentioned quite often included stress, anxiety, struggle, pain, loneliness, failure, sadness, loss and despair). Whilst we initially stressed to participants that they should feel no need to relate anything they did not feel comfortable about, the range and nature of narratives elicited here suggests that this aspect should be highlighted. The surprise we sometimes felt when some narratives were recounted was also felt by the participants, and this possibility of surprise might also be signalled in advance as an ethical precaution. At this stage in our research of using music to stimulate narratives, there is much more to explore about how the technique works: this study is still only very preliminary.

Nevertheless, some applications can be envisaged. Some narratives are useful material for workshops related to learning and personal, social and academic development, such as those illustrating experiences of coping with problems arising during academic study. Such

workshops might be held for students starting at university, or to learners in secondary schools, for reflective discussion around issues of learning and both successes and challenges. These narratives show the integrated and holistic nature of “learning” (cognitive-physical-social-affective-moral-aesthetic dimensions) and how learning takes place often symbiotically in and outside formal educational settings. Although narrative experiences are often highly individual in context, they have general value when used in discussion sessions with other students, say concerning the importance and role that non-academic learning and social experiences play in someone’s academic success.

Beyond this, we believe these recounted narratives indicate wider application of the use of the Da Capo technique that may have the greatest implications for researchers seeking in-depth data that could complement or combine with data obtained through more conventional methods. This applies to a wide range of areas such as marketing (Alpert & Alpert, 2006) and therapy (Kemper & Danhauer, 2005). For example, music-inspired narratives could stimulate the verbalization of past or present everyday experiences of patients with dementia (Sixsmith & Gibson, 2007) or those recovering from a long-term illness to recall critical past memories. Narratives inspired by music can extend experiential ways to integrate dimensions of learning as presented to teachers and students; this could combine cognitive, social and cultural aspects of academic learning (Illeris, 2018; Joyce, Calhoun, & Hopkins, 2008) or integrate social, cultural, moral and spiritual views of learning (Best, 2000; Eaude, 2008) or physical and aesthetic learning (Abbs, 1994; Bresler, 2004). In comparative or cross-cultural directions, the traditional Chinese music used here could inspire participants from China to gather more details about childhood and life perspectives of different generations. Similarly, traditional music from other countries could help to explore cross-cultural studies or collect life stories of migrant families. Music could be used to stimulate narratives with senior managers, executives and staff nearing retirement about key career moments in their careers and life work. Most obviously, in narrative research (e.g., Chafe, 1980; Cortazzi, 1993), there could be fuller exploration and analysis of narratives themselves gained through the Da Capo technique. Our aim here was to study the potential of music itself as a standalone research approach to generate narratives. Any narrative or narrative category could have been explored in more depth, say to explore narrative expression of loneliness, anxiety, stress and fear, or of trust, sacrifice and family values, perhaps oriented to social-moral education, guidance and counselling.

Here we have chosen the music we used. Alternatively, in future research, participants could be invited to bring their own pieces of music which they feel mean a lot to them and the discussion and narrating could then focus on these; a combination of researcher—and participant-chosen pieces could be used. We hope that developing the Da Capo technique has successfully demonstrated the innovative potential and power of music to evoke and stimulate narratives for qualitative researchers to take such research further and use music in their own qualitative studies. To do so is, in a way, to go back over something already played (as in music) but usually engaging in it in a different way with other nuances (*Da Capo*).

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