Navigating Identities: The Musical Lives of Four Second-Generation Immigrant Children in Miami, Florida

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NAVIGATING IDENTITIES: THE MUSICAL LIVES OF FOUR SECOND-GENERATION IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN MIAMI, FLORIDA

By

Sandra Sanchez Adorno

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2017
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

NAVIGATING IDENTITIES: THE MUSICAL LIVES OF
FOUR SECOND-GENERATION IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN MIAMI, FLORIDA

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No. of pages in text. (228)

The expanding social worlds of middle childhood prompt children to evaluate and explore their sense of selves to better understand who they are and where they fit in (Erikson, 1968; Josselson & Harway, 2012). Children born in the USA to at least one foreign-born parent, also known as second-generation immigrants, often straddle multiple cultures, making their social contexts highly diverse and their explorations of identity complex (Sebastian, 2008). This collective case study focused on the home musical lives of four second-generation children in Miami, Florida, USA to gain greater insight into music’s meaning in their lives and the role it plays in the negotiation and construction of their identities.

Data were collected through observations and semi-structured interviews in participants’ homes and communities and analyzed through the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965). Examining children’s musical experiences in the different contexts of their lives, as both music makers and music listeners, provided insight into the meaning and value of their experiences as well as the ways they explored and expressed their musical and cultural (i.e., youth, ethnic, gender) identities. Implications for music teaching and future research are provided.
DEDICATION

To my parents, Robert Antonio and Mary Patricia Sanchez
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must first thank the children and families involved in this study. None of this would have been possible without them and I am truly grateful for the close relationships we formed throughout this process.

During my time in Miami, I came across a number of influential mentors and peers to whom I am forever indebted. To Carlos Abril, my mentor, advisor, and friend who helped shape me into the educator, researcher, and person I am today. His professional and personal guidance always helped me persist and achieve my dreams through the good times and the bad. To Stephen Zdzinski, who always believed in me from our very first conversation in the FMEA expo hall. In addition to his unwavering support, he taught me think out of the box and dream big. To Don Coffman, who taught me precision and efficiency (I’m still working on it!). To Drs. Overland and Harry for their support and insight throughout this project and Drs. Asmus, DeCarbo, and Jordan for helping lay the foundation of my awesome graduate experience. To my friends and colleagues, Susie and Candice, because lord knows if I would have made it through without the two of them! Also, to the rest of the fine music education and music therapy graduate students I befriended along the way.

This work is not only made of the blood, sweat, and tears of myself, but also many of my close family and friends. To my husband, Miguel, who persevered through long-distance relationships, financial hardships, and a roller coaster of emotions to ensure I started and finished this degree. To my parents, who always supported me, no matter how crazy my dreams were. They never seemed surprised of my outrageous ambitions—from drums corps to a doctorate. My father, who did not make it to see this day, worked
hard to support my family and paved the way for me to live the life I chose. My mother, my rock, has always stood by my side to provide a shoulder to lean on and offer an overwhelming amount of love and encouragement. To my siblings, Bobby, Elayna, Carrie, and Kiko, my in-laws, Maria and Chu, and my Billy for being the best family anyone could ask for
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Middle childhood is a developmental period when children experience a number of transitions and changes—transitions to new schools, increased responsibilities, puberty, peer pressure, and changes in musical preference and behavior, among other things (Erikson, 1968; Harter & Bukowski, 2012). With one foot in adolescence and the other in childhood, children in the middle mature visibly, psychologically, cognitively, and socially, while continuing to maintain many qualities from earlier childhood (Kenny, 2012; Piaget, 1962). As children navigate through these shifts, they begin to recognize similarities and differences between themselves and others; they experiment with different behaviors and lifestyle choices to better understand who they are and where they fit (Erikson, 1968; Josselson & Harway, 2012; Tajfel, 1981). This exploration, in turn, helps children realize how their own characteristics, preferences, behaviors, and values contribute to their sense of self (Erikson, 1968; Ritivoi, 2002; Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006; Soenens, 2006). With additional challenges, such as acceptance among peers, pleasing family members, and attempting to fuse multiple cultures, identity exploration and evaluation becomes even more complex for children of foreign-born parents (Hernández, Nguyen, Saetermoe, & Suárez-Orozco, 2013; Sebastian, 2008).

Children of at least one foreign-born parent, also referred to as second-generation immigrants, are thought to experience exceptionally diverse contexts throughout their lives, explained in part by their parents’ acculturation behaviors and attitudes (Schwartz, 2001; Zhou, 1997). Defined as “the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when individuals from different cultures come into contact,” acculturation describes the
extent to which individuals maintain their heritage culture and acquire their host culture (Gibson, 2001, p. 19). Degrees of acculturation are determined by the level of involvement individuals have with heritage and host cultures and their attitudes and behaviors toward them. These levels of involvement can be explained through four approaches: separation, assimilation, integration, and marginalization. *Separation* describes the sole identification with the heritage culture and avoidance of surrounding cultures, while *assimilation* downplays the heritage culture to identify and interact greater with the host culture. The combination of aspects from heritage and host cultures is considered *integration*; a lack of interaction with both cultures is *marginalization* (Berry, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). When child and parent behaviors and attitudes do not align, *generational dissonance* occurs and can cause issues related to relationships and identity (Kearney, Fletcher, & Dobrenov-Major, 2011; Portes & Rambaut, 1996). With obligations to their parents’ heritages as well as U.S. society, second-generation children may juggle multiple, sometimes conflicting identities.

Although second-generation immigrants use many aspects of their daily lifestyles to evaluate and explore their identities, music is exceptionally appealing to those transitioning to adolescence (Chaney 1996; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002). Research suggests music aids children in developing value and belief systems, socially responsible behaviors, emotional independence from parents, and relationships with peers (Tarrant et al., 2002). Referred to as *music in identities* (MII), this concept views music as a means for developing non-musical aspects of one’s identity (Hargreaves, Miell, & MacDonald, 2002). With music being especially powerful through the transition into adolescence, second-generation children’s musical experiences can illuminate the ways
they construct and reconstruct their identities (Frith, 1996; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Tarrant et al., 2002). This study focuses on the musical lives of second-generation children to gain insight into music’s meaning in their lives and the role it plays in the development of their identities and the process of living between their home culture and the greater culture surrounding them.

**Need For the Study**

With a surge of second-generation students in U.S. schools (Child Trends, 2014), music educators often face challenges connecting with children’s cultures and designing instruction that is culturally responsive and relevant (Abril, 2013). Furthermore, music teachers who lack cultural understanding of their students or rely on strictly Western-influenced lesson content and repertoire may create learning environments that are somewhat disconnected to the lives of culturally diverse students (Abril, 2010; Kelly-McHale, 2011; Kelly-McHale & Abril, 2015). Teachers who thrive in multicultural music classrooms come to know their students and embrace their linguistic and cultural diversities by providing content reflective of and relevant to students’ backgrounds. They also develop a sense of community in the school and come to understand their students as part of communities beyond the classroom (Emmanuel, 2002; Robinson, 2006).

Being familiar with the musical lives of children outside of the classroom helps music teachers understand and respond to students inside the music classroom (Emmanuel, 2002) while offering “perspectives on what social values and interactive styles- and even thought processes- are important” (Lew & Campbell, 2005, p. 59). Although research relating to children’s musical experiences and engagements outside of the music classroom has grown over the past two decades (Custodero, 2006; Custodero,
Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Emberly, 2014), music education studies examining second-generation children in the U.S. are only beginning to emerge (Abril, 2009; Carlow, 2006; Kelly-McHale, 2011; Lum & Campbell 2009; Minks, 1999; Soto, 2012). There is a need for research that focuses on music in the lives of second-generation children in middle childhood.

Although a central aim in music education is to support the development of students’ identities (Hargreaves, Marshall, & North, 2003), research concerning the role music plays in this process for immigrant children is rather limited (Dibben, 2002; Folkestad, 2002; Kelly-McHale, 2011; Magee, 2002; Tarrant et al., 2002). Research examining second-generation immigrant children’s musical experiences and engagements can extend the existing literature by adding new perspectives, contexts, and insights into children’s musical lives and culture. Acknowledging second-generation children’s opinions, experiences, and knowledge not only contributes to a greater appreciation of children’s musical possibilities (Lew & Campbell, 2005), but it can also inform teachers as they strive to understand and accommodate immigrant students as they navigate multiple contexts and identities (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). This increased understanding can assist teachers in delivering relevant and meaningful lessons to their increasingly diverse music students.

**Conceptualizing Identity**

American philosopher and psychologist William James (1880) referred to identity in two parts: the *I* and *me*. The *I* symbolizes an unchanging personal self that reflects on the constantly changing *me*. The *me* is the social self—the spiritual, material, social, and bodily selves (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Similarly, the French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur
believed that one’s identity is made up of two fundamental parts: the idem and the ipse (as cited in Ritivoi, 2002). Derived from Latin terms, the idem represents sameness and links identity to the idea of permanence through time. In this sense, identity can be identified and categorized through individuals’ unchanging characteristics. On the other hand, the ipse represents one’s ever-changing sense of self and acknowledges that individuals develop continuously as a result of life experiences, interactions, and events (Soenens, 2006).

The I and me, or the idem and ipse, aligns with the notion that individuals develop multiple identities. Some aspects of these identities are based on relatively unchanging personal characteristics that influence an in-flux social identity. Erikson’s (1968) conception of ego identity describes how this sense of self develops. He explains,

[Ego identity] is the awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego’s synthesizing methods, the style of one’s individuality, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one’s meaning for significant others in the immediate community. (p. 50)

This awareness develops from dynamic interactions between individuals and the various contexts of their lives. These contexts are not only the physical aspects of one’s environments, but also the social (Schwartz et al., 2006).

Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan (1993) describe social identities as, “the multifaceted labels by which their ‘Me’ is recognized by themselves and members of society.” (p. 211). The development of social identities can be explained by social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel, 1981). The theory suggests that all humans are members of social groups, which may be larger (i.e., gender or race) or smaller (i.e., peer groups) (Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979). Based on the characteristics of the groups, individuals identify themselves as members of certain social groups, known as their ingroups, while recognizing others who
are not, known as *outgroups* (Tarrant et al., 2002). Individuals evaluate themselves and their social identities through comparisons of ingroups and outgroups (Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979). Positive social identities are constructed by those who determine that their ingroups are “somehow ‘better off’ than the outgroup” (Tarrant, et al., 2001, p. 598).

Building off of Tajfel’s (1981) ideas regarding social identity, Sysoyev (2001) conceptualized *cultural identity* as a multifaceted construct based on one’s group memberships. More specifically, cultural identity is:

> An individual’s realization of his or her place in the spectrum of cultures and purposeful behavior directed on his or her enrollment and acceptance into a particular group, as well as certain characteristic features of a particular group that automatically assign an individual’s group membership. (Sysoyev, 2001, p. 37-38)

According to Sysoyev, individuals belong to a number of different groups and one’s cultural identity is made up of various group memberships including racial, ethnic, social, economic, geopolitical, gender, religious, ability, and language. However, just as Ricoeur’s concept of the ever-changing ipse, group memberships are often context specific and may change depending on time, place, or those involved (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005).

Schwartz (2001) views identity as a synthesis of personal, social, and cultural self-conceptions. Similarly to the idem described by Ricoeur, the personal self-conception explains the level of coherence and internal consistency one possesses. This, in turn, affects the social and cultural properties of how one identifies groups and the attitudes he or she feels towards them (Schwartz et al., 2006).

Erikson (1968) believed that forming some consistency in identity is necessary for those transitioning to adolescence and adulthood. During this transition, individuals
experience a period referred to as an “identity crisis” which prompts them to explore and evaluate themselves in the various contexts of their lives (p. 15). Possessing some continuity helps individuals find their place in the midst of diverse experiences, encounters, and contexts. Although many aspects of their identities change through these interactions, some, such as race and sex, remain constant (Schwartz et al., 2006).

Many conceptualizations regarding identity align with the notion that some facets remain stable while others are constantly in flux (Erikson, 1968; James, 1880; Ritivoi, 2002; Schwartz, 2001; Sysoyev, 2001; Tajfel, 1981). The ever-changing aspects of individuals’ identities are largely based on their group memberships (Tajfel, 1981). The ways individuals identify with these groups and the attitudes associated with them are context specific and dependent on time and place or social environment (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005; Schwartz et al., 2006). For the purposes of this study, identity will be described as a stable yet flexible self, made up of personal, social, and cultural (including ethnic, gender, etc.) identities that form through individual traits and social interactions and comparisons in multiple contexts.

**Musical identities.** Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald, 2002) conceptualized two domains of musical identities: *identities in music* (IIM) and *music in identities* (MII). IIM concerns socially and culturally defined elements of musical identities. Social and cultural influences impact the ways and extent individuals view themselves as musicians. Social influences, such as family and school, and culturally defined roles in music, such as musician or composer, serve as references for determining musical self-concept. These influences may or may not encourage musical engagements and help children in defining or not defining themselves as musicians (Hargreaves et al., 2002). On the other hand,
music in identities (MII) relates to how individuals use music to develop non-musical aspects of their identity. Music can serve individual functions (e.g., emotional needs, expression) as well as social functions (e.g., differentiating social groups from one another), which aid in developing various aspects of one’s identity such as gender, youth, and national identity (Dibben, 2002; Folkestad, 2002; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002).

IIM and MII explain musical identities through both musical and non-musical elements. Each closely relates to the other. The musical aspects of one’s identity relate to the extent of music’s influence on non-musical aspects and vice versa. Furthermore, the importance of this musical domain varies depending on the individual (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

Conceptions of identity and musical identity conform to the notion that the multiple aspects of one’s identity inform and influence one another. Just as social identities help guide group memberships, IIM impacts the ways and extent individuals experience music for developing non-musical aspects of their identities. Furthermore, many aspects of individuals’ identities and musical identities are context specific. Various physical and social environments affect the groups, attitudes, and behaviors in which one associates. These groups, attitudes, and behaviors are related to categories such as age, ethnicity, gender, or music and may change depending on where individuals are and who is around them.

Examining children’s musical experiences illuminates not only who they are musically, but personally and culturally as well. Music helps children transitioning to adolescence develop value and belief systems, socially responsible behaviors, emotional
independence from parents, and relationships with peers (Tarrant et al., 2002). The ways children’s musical experiences shift in various life contexts help explain their personalities, group memberships, and ultimately, their identities.

**Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this collective case study is to examine the musical lives of second-generation immigrant children in Miami, Florida, to gain greater insight into music’s role in the negotiation and construction of their identities. The musical lives of these children is generally described as the their musical experiences within the different contexts of their lives. In support of this central purpose, the following sub-questions guided this study:

1. How do second-generation children experience music in the different contexts of their lives?
2. How do second-generation children develop and express their identities through musical experience?
3. Why are second-generation children’s musical experiences meaningful and valuable in their lives?

**Framing the research questions.** Influenced by the rapid increase of second-generation children in the U.S. and a growing body of research with aims in understanding acculturation and identity (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Child Trends, 2014; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2006) and musical identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Kelly-McHale, 2011; Lum & Campbell, 2009; Minks, 1999; Soto, 2012), this collective case study explores the musical lives of second-generation children in Miami to gain insight into music’s role in their identity.
negotiation and construction. The following research questions are addressed in support of this central phenomenon.

**Research question one: How do second-generation children experience music in the different contexts of their lives?** The ways children engage with music varies based on physical and social environments (Lew & Campbell, 2005). These musical experiences can be used to explore and develop both musical and non-musical aspects of identity (Dibben, 2002; Gaunt, 2006; Hargreaves et al., 2002). According to Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory, community, family, peers, and school comprise the immediate ecological environments that children directly interact with on a daily basis, largely influencing their identity development. However, these contexts do not always stand-alone. Community, family, peers, and school often interact with each other and connect various aspects of children’s immediate environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Research question one examines the range of children’s musical experiences and the influences of their ecological environments to better understand their musical lives.

**Research question two: How do second-generation children explore, develop, and express their identities through musical experience?** Examining children’s musical experiences give insight into who they are—musically, personally, and culturally. Research question two will address how second-generation children develop and express their musical and non-musical identities through music through the examination of their musical engagements, preferences, behaviors, values, and perspectives of music in their lives (Hargreaves et al, 2002; Sysoyev, 2001).
**Research question three: Why are second-generation children’s musical experiences meaningful and valuable in their lives?**

The modes and extent to which music develops non-musical aspects of identity depends largely on the meanings and values of one’s musical experiences (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Music’s meaning and value has deep roots in its personal and social functions. Merriam (1967) proposed that music functions to foster physical responses, facilitate communication and social integration, symbolize aspects of life and culture, enforce conformity to social norms, validate social institutions and religious rituals, contribute to the continuity of culture, and provide an outlet for expression, entertainment, and aesthetic enjoyment. Research question three seeks to reveal why second-generation children find meaning and value in their musical experiences by examining their musical attitudes, preferences, and behaviors, as well the role and function music plays in their lives.

**Methodology**

In qualitative collective case studies, all cases share a quality or circumstance. This attribute may include members of a specific group or examples of a certain phenomenon (Stake, 2005). In this study, the group and phenomenon being studied were the musical lives of four second-generation children in Miami, Florida. Although similarities related to age and background existed across cases, each was qualitatively different.

Rather than an intrinsic study that focuses on a particular case at hand, an instrumental case study’s purpose transcends the meaning of a case or group of cases to better understand a certain phenomenon or “binding concept” (Stake, 2005, p. 8). Therefore, collective case studies are typically instrumental case studies. This study
utilizes an instrumental, collective case study design to examine the musical lives of four second-generation children and gain insight into the roles music plays in their identity negotiation and construction not only as individuals, but also as a collective group (Creswell, 2012; Stake, 2005).

**Sampling.** In order to examine cases in great depth and breadth, while providing ample material for cross-case analysis, I selected four cases for this study (Creswell, 2012; Stake, 2005). I used *purposeful sampling* so that I could present multiple perspectives concerning this topic and to ensure diversity within the sample by selecting cases based on criteria that related to the focus of the study (i.e., gender, background, musical training) (Creswell, 2012).

**Recruitment.** My personal connections with colleagues who teach in Miami-Dade County schools and teachers associated with the Frost School of Music’s community outreach programs were instrumental in helping me find children for the study. Upon giving an overview of the study, I asked my colleagues to think of any students, ages eight to twelve, with at least one foreign-born parent, who might be willing to participate. I had colleagues distribute flyers to anyone who met that criteria and who they deemed suitable for the project. I created flyers that provided a brief overview of the study, what the participant might expect, and an incentive (See Appendix E). Those interested in participating or wishing to learn more about the study were prompted to contact me via e-mail or phone.

**Data generation.** Data was generated through semi-structured interviews and observations with the children, their family members, and other key figures in their lives. In addition, physical and digital artifacts including photos, drawings, and audio and video
recordings were collected. To help participants document music experiences throughout their days and in different context, as well as encourage conversation during interviews, I provided each informant with an iPad Mini and asked them to complete a project adapted from Barrett, McCoy, and Veblen’s (1997) musical culture circles exercise for pre-service teachers. Participants were asked to produce recordings, photographs, drawings and additional articles (e.g., stories, poems, songs) in a number of predetermined areas: music with friends, music in school, and music with family (Emberly, 2014; Richards, 2009). These artifacts acted as a second-hand observational technique allowing me to view experiences that I may not have seen or heard otherwise (Flick, 1998, p. 151; Pink, 2001). Additionally the artifacts helped participants extend their experiences and encouraged conversation during meetings through stimulated-recall interview techniques (Emberly, 2013; Fox-Turnbull, 2009; Griffin, 2007; Richards, 2009).

**Data analysis.** The constant comparative method of analysis was used with the data collected and generated from this study. I analyzed data as it was being collected through comparisons, coding procedures and theory development (Glaser, 1965). This procedure informed my thinking on each category in its entirety (i.e., conditions, properties, consequences) and helped guide shifts in my interview questions and observations to examine these categories further (Glaser, 1965).

When conducting a multiple case study and reporting its findings, Creswell (2012) suggests a format where details and themes for each case are presented first, in what he refers to as a *within-case analysis*. A separate analysis for each case aided in understanding the complexities within its own contexts through objective descriptions and explanations concerning key issues or themes that arose from the data through the
constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965; Stake, 2005). Within-case analyses are followed by an analysis of themes across all cases and the researcher’s interpretation of the cases’ meanings, known as the cross-case analysis, for a better understanding of the complexity of single and multiple cases (Creswell, 2012).

**Theoretical framework.** The work of Tajfel (1981), Sysoyev (2001), and Hargreaves et al. (2002) on group memberships, cultural identity, and musical identity was used to frame data collection processes, the analysis of the data, and the interpretations. Tajfel’s (1981) social identity theory (SIT) and Sysoyev’s (2001) subsequent work on cultural identity is based on the idea that individuals belong to a number of different groups. These groups can be large or small as well as context specific (Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979). Individuals identify themselves as members of certain social groups, known as their ingroups, while recognizing those who are not in their groups, known as their outgroups (Tarrant et al., 2002). Sysoyev’s (2001) framework builds on the concept of SIT and group membership to explain cultural identity as a series of group memberships and types of identities in categories including racial, ethnic, social, economic, geopolitical, gender, religious, ability, and language.

Musical identities are conceptualized in two developmental parts: identities in music (IIM) and music in identities (MII). IIM and MII closely relate to one another and explain musical identities through musical and non-musical aspects (Hargreaves et al., 2002). IIM concerns socially and culturally defined elements of musical identities. Social influences, such as family and school, and culturally defined roles in music, such as musician or composer, serve as references for determining IIM. MII concerns how individuals use music to develop non-musical aspects of their identity. Music can serve
individual functions (e.g., emotional needs, expression) as well as social functions (e.g.,
differentiating social groups from one another), which aid in developing personal and
cultural (including social, ethnic, gender, and age) identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002;
Sysoyev, 2001).

**Definitions**

*Acculturation*: the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when
individually from different cultures come into contact (Gibson, 2001, p. 19).

*Assimilation*: The most extreme form of acculturation. Describes a strategy where
one downplays their heritage culture and identifies and interacts with what is typically the
host or dominant culture (Berry, 1997).

*Cultural identity*: A multifaceted construct based on various group
memberships including racial, ethnic, social, economic, geopolitical, gender, religious,
ability, and language.

*First generation*: Someone foreign born who migrated to the United States after
childhood (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

*Heritage country*: The country associated with an immigrant’s place of birth.

*Host country*: The country that an immigrant migrated to and currently lives in.

*Identity*: A stable yet flexible self, made up of personal and cultural (including
social, ethnic, gender, etc.) identities that form through individual traits and social
interactions and comparisons in multiple contexts. (Erikson, 1968; Schwartz, 2001;
Schwartz et al., 2006; Tajfel, 1981).

*Identities in music* (IIM): Socially and culturally defined aspects of musical
identities (i.e., musician, composer, performer) (Hargreaves et al., 2002).
Integration: An acculturation strategy where both cultural maintenance and involvement with the host culture are sought (Berry, 1997).

Marginalization: An acculturation strategy that describes when neither cultural maintenance nor interaction with others is sought (Berry, 1997).

Middle childhood: The developmental period of children typically between the ages of six and twelve (Minuchin, 1977).

Music in identities (MII): The process of using music as a means to develop non-musical aspects of one’s identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

Second-generation: An individual who is born in the United States to at least one foreign-born parent (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Separation: An acculturation strategy that describes when one wishes to maintain their heritage culture and avoid interacting with other cultures (Berry, 1997).

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations. As research was undertaken, I was keenly aware of some limitations. Being a Caucasian female who only speaks English fluently proved to be a challenge during some data collection, particularly with one of the participants. Although he was fluent in English and comfortable speaking and expressing himself in the language, he and his father often acted as translators between conversations with his mother and me. We understood each other, but our limited language skills hindered our ability to communicate on a more intimate level.

Availability of key figures also placed limitations on the data I was able to collect. Participants’ fathers were not always around during our interviews, so most of my conversations with the participants’ parents were with their mothers. Additionally, friends
of participants were not present during any of my interviews.

**Delimitations.** The participants in this study were chosen based on my colleagues’ recommendations, demographics, and willingness and ability to participate. Although the cases selected varied by sex, background, and extent of participation in formal music instruction, diversity across cases were limited due to the small number of participants. It almost goes without saying that the cases will not yield generalizable results for the second-generation children population in Miami. The aim of this study is to provide greater insight into the roles music plays in constructing meaning and developing identity in each unique case. In turn, these findings support further research concerning this phenomenon.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides a synthesis of the research literature on immigration, identity, and music in childhood as a way to understand how second-generation immigrant children develop their identities and the role music plays in that process. First, I will provide an overview of immigration in the U.S. and discuss concepts of assimilation and acculturation as they relate to the immigrant experience and to educational systems. Then I will review literature on identity in general and musical identity in particular, with attention to how social contexts influence identity development. Lastly, I will review literature on music in childhood, with a focus on children’s musical experiences in middle childhood.

Immigration in the United States

The United States today is very different from the country that once welcomed Southern and Eastern Europeans at the turn of the twentieth century (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, p. 18). Over 77 percent of post-1960 immigrants migrate from Asian and Latin countries (Portes & Zhou, 1993). The physical characteristics of these immigrants do not always blend in as easily as did those of the early 20th century; therefore, contemporary immigrants face different challenges. As Portes and Zhou (1993) explained,

Skin color reduced a major barrier to entry into the American mainstream. For this reason, the process of assimilation depended largely on individual decisions to leave the immigrant culture behind and embrace American ways. Such an advantage obviously does not exist for the black, Asian, and mestizo children of today’s immigrants. (p. 76)
However, the difficulties immigrants in the United States face today are not always consistent. Depending on their background, beliefs, physical characteristics, as well as the location and social contexts surrounding them, contemporary immigrants’ experiences in the United States range from “smooth acceptance to traumatic confrontation” (Portes & Zhou, 1993, p. 75).

**Assimilation and acculturation.** Sociologists and anthropologists describe the processes and outcomes of interactions between groups of different cultures through the terms *assimilation* and *acculturation*. Although sociologists tend to use the term assimilation, while anthropologists prefer acculturation, these terms have been used both interchangeably at times with assimilation referring to extreme degrees of acculturation (Gordon, 1964).

Gordon (1964) described assimilation throughout U.S. history by three ideological tendencies: total assimilation, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism. Total assimilation, also referred to as the Anglo-conformity theory, has been the most prevalent ideology of assimilation throughout American history. Describing a process in which immigrants abandon their heritage culture and adapt the behaviors and values of the “Anglo-Saxon core group,” this theory concerns the attraction of keeping English customs, language, and culture the most dominant in the U.S. (Gordon, 1964, p. 85). An opposing notion, known as the melting pot theory, operates under the assumption that the interactions between Anglo-Saxons and other immigrant groups results in a blend of cultures to form a new stew of American culture (Gordon, 1964). The belief “that all could be absorbed and that all could contribute to an emerging national character” characterizes the ideals of the American melting pot (Handlin, 1959, p. 146).
Lastly, cultural pluralism, the idea that groups preserve their cultures to form a unique, ever changing American society, surfaced after the twentieth century. Horace Kallen popularized the term cultural pluralism around 1915 (Janzen, 1994). To him, the expression embodied the idea that religions and ethnic groups should take pride in their heritage, and U.S. society should encourage cultural differences (Bernstein, 2015). Janzen (1994) explains, “The goal of cultural pluralism is that ethnic groups will remain intact and that their idiosyncratic ways of knowing and acting will be respected and continued” (p. 9).

**Responses to acculturation.** Acculturation is a process in which cultural, psychological, and social changes occur following interactions with other cultures (Berry, 2005). Cultural changes may include variations in certain customs or practices, while psychological changes refer to individual attitudes toward acculturation. Furthermore, interactions with groups different from one’s own can also stimulate changes in social behaviors (Berry, 2005; Phinney, 2003).

Berry (2005) considers the multiple responses one may have to the acculturation process. Depending on the level of involvement with old and new cultures and certain attitude and behavioral preferences and traits, individuals may choose different strategies for acculturation. These *acculturative strategies* reflect individuals’ positive or negative attitudes toward maintaining their heritage culture and interacting with other groups, and can be described through four approaches: assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration. *Assimilation* occurs when individuals prefer to downplay their heritage culture and identify and interact with what is typically the host or dominant culture. On the other hand, *separation* takes place when individuals wish to maintain their heritage
culture and avoid interacting with the other cultures around them. *Marginalization* describes individuals who give little effort to maintaining their heritage culture and learning about the new cultures around them, while *integration* is quite the opposite.

Alejandro Portes, along with his colleagues, coined the term, *segmented assimilation*, to describe the acculturation and mobility patterns of today’s immigrants (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Referred to as *linear acculturation* or *linear assimilation*, the first of the three patterns describes immigrants who integrate social, cultural, and political characteristics of the host country, often advancing their economic status. Secondly, *selective acculturation* or *selective assimilation* refers to those who deliberately maintain their heritage culture, typically in a strong ethnic community. The strength and support of the surrounding community often encourage economic mobility. Lastly, *downward assimilation* describes those “trapped at the bottom of the economic ladder” (Gibson, 2001, p. 21) for reasons such as their education level or living environment.

**Immigrant youth.** From India, to Taiwan, to Cuba, to Mexico, today’s immigrant youth come from many walks of life, varying not only by their appearances and national origins, but also by their relocation circumstances and locations, parenting, socialization, education, and socioeconomic levels (Zhou, 1997). With the notion that acculturation strategies vary depending on individuals’ characteristics, values, and behaviors, Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder (2006) examined how immigrant youth live between two cultures.

In a study involving over 5000 first- and second-generation immigrant adolescents (ages 13 to 18) living in 13 different countries, results showed that the most
dominant acculturation strategy identified among immigrant youth was integration (36.4%). The second most frequent strategy among the adolescents related to separation (22.5%), while the smallest number identified with acceptance strategies (18.7%). The remaining sample (22.4%) either practiced marginalization or was diffuse in how they identify with acculturation strategies (Berry et al., 2006).

When relating how immigrant youth acculturate with how well they do it, results suggested that those who integrate both heritage and host cultures have the best psychological and sociocultural adaptation outcomes. Additionally, those with the worst outcomes were associated with marginalized or diffuse strategies. In between these two strategies were separation and acceptance, with separation being related to moderately good psychological adaptation and poorer sociocultural adaptation and assimilation with moderately poor psychological adaptation and slightly negative sociocultural adaptation (Berry et al., 2006).

Results suggest relationships between these strategies and youths’ length of residence and community type. Longer residences typically correlate with integration, while shorter stays link to marginalized or diffuse profiles. In addition, most youths who identify with integration reside in ethnically mixed communities while many of those identifying with separation reside in more ethnically similar communities. Lastly, those who practice assimilation usually live in communities where ethnicities differ from their own (Berry et al., 2006).

Portes and Schauffler (1994) found similar results when examining how language was learned and preserved among second-generation youth in South Florida. Results suggest that the community where they live, their parents’ socioeconomic status, and the
amount of time their parents have resided in the U.S. affect the maintenance of second-generation youth’s heritage language. Additionally, second-generation youths prefer speaking in English, regardless of their proficiency in their heritage language.

**Biculturalism.** Bicultural youths engage with both their heritage and national cultures through an integrative approach to acculturation (Berry et al., 2006). According to Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder, bicultural youths “appear to be comfortable in both ethnic and national contexts, in terms of identity, language, peer contacts, and values” (2006, p. 315). Bicultural youth involve themselves in both their ethnic and national cultures through their cultural identities, language behaviors (i.e., knowledge and use), social engagements with diverse peers, and relationships with parents (Berry et al., 2006).

**Generational differences.** The generational differences between first- and second-generation youth and their parents can be partially explained by the rates and strategies in which they acculturate. Portes and Rumbaut (1996) explain that *generational consonance* takes place when parent and child either stay unacculturated or acculturate at the same rate, while *generational dissonance* occurs when parent and child acculturation levels do not coincide or when children reject parental guidance. In some instances, the latter leads to role reversal and conflict.

Immigrant youth are more likely to be bilingual than their parents (Portes & Zhou, 1993). When parents have limited proficiency in the host language, they often depend on their more fluent children for communication with others. This role switch gives the child unique responsibility and authority over their parents, often weakening parental authority. Furthermore, parents who do not acculturate to the level of or as quickly as their children
may cause their children anxieties when attempting to identify with the host culture in some way (Zhou, 2001).

**Immigration and Education**

In the life of a second-generation child in the United States, peers and media serve as significant informal sources of acculturation, while school is their primary source of formal acculturation (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Orientations to acculturation in schools are thought to lie on a spectrum between two extremes. On one extreme, an assimilationist orientation often marginalizes second-generation students, requiring them to adapt to an environment maintained by the dominant culture, with little to no structural and pedagogical flexibility. On the other extreme, a multiculturalist or pluralistic orientation puts the student at the center and recognizes necessary changes and developments in structure and curriculum as a result of an increasingly diverse student population (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012).

Research suggests that multicultural school and class contexts encourage positive integration and identity construction, while more assimilative contexts are less compromising to the backgrounds and needs of second-generation students (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012; Lew & Campbell, 2005; Lum & Campbell, 2009). Although this idea is widely adopted in schools, not all teachers operating under this philosophy successfully accommodate their students (Foster, 1995; Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012; Moore, 1993; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Resnik, Sabar, Shapira, & Shoham, 2001). In an ethnographic study of two elementary schools, Resnik, et al. (2001) found that most nonimmigrant teachers considered their schools’ orientation in alignment with a pluralistic approach, while their immigrant students perceived a more
assimilationist environment. Although these perceptions do not align, research often overlooks the voices of immigrant youth, limiting understanding of their opinions and experiences (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008).

**Assimilation and cultural pluralism in education.** In the early nineteenth century, school reformers believed that the U.S. education system should provide “all children of whatever origin a basic education to form them into good Americans,” which, at the time, meant being “civically moral, patriotic, English-speaking Protestants” (Heater, 2004, p. 113). With this assimilationist ideology, immigrant students were encouraged to abandon characteristics of their heritage cultures and integrate values and behaviors of the dominant culture (Cooper, 2015).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, administrators created a more formalized approach to schooling known as “the one best system,” which involved the standardization of courses, subjects, and assessments to enforce a more “uniform course of study” across U.S. schools (Tyack, 1974, p. 44-45). Although shaped with the immigrant population in mind, schooling through an assimilationist system often put these students at a disadvantage.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, challenges concerning the assimilation approach to education arose with pluralists such as John Dewey. Based the idea that “individuals should be recognized for their own unique abilities, interests, ideas, needs, and cultural identity,” Dewey, a leader in child studies and progressive education, argued for school curricula that reflect the diverse shifts in the U.S. population, rather than ignore them (Abeles, 2010, p. 2). He believed that schools could support the U.S.’s increasingly diverse population and advocated for the integration of ethnic studies
through literature, history, geography, and the arts. Along with other pluralists, including Jane Addams, the social reformer who spent years working with immigrants at Hull House in Chicago, Dewey helped raise awareness of the ideals of cultural pluralism in the U.S.

Based on the ideals of cultural pluralism, the intercultural education movement began around the late 1930’s (Ladson-Billings, 1997). This movement strove to provide a quality educational experience for all students based on principles of equity and social justice. With an increasingly diverse population as a result of immigration, intercultural education aimed to prepare students for the future by instilling values such as tolerance and empathy towards others and promoting intercultural communication and understanding through a holistic educational approach (Palaiologou & Dietz, 2012).

**Multicultural education.** Sparked by the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 70s, support for equality in education grew through increased interest in ethnic studies. As a result, groups of color, women, and disabled individuals argued for courses in ethnic studies at the secondary and university level. From this point on, the idea of a multicultural education in schools gained momentum the U.S (Ladson-Billings, 1997).

Multicultural education is based on the ideals of cultural pluralism. In 1972, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education devised a four-part plan for teaching cultural pluralism to future teachers:

1. the teaching of values that support cultural diversity and individual uniqueness; (2) the encouragement of the qualitative expansion of existing ethnic cultures and their incorporation into the mainstream of American socioeconomic and political life; (3) the support of explorations in alternative and emerging lifestyles; and (4) encouragement of multiculturalism, multilingualism, and multidialectism. (Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 64)
The consideration of teaching cultural pluralism to future educators stemmed from the idea that the delivery of the curriculum is just as important as the curriculum itself. For “the goals of cultural pluralism can be achieved only if there is full recognition of cultural differences and an effective program that makes cultural equality real and meaningful” (Grant, 1977, pp. 23).

**Culturally responsive pedagogy.** Culturally responsive pedagogy takes into account the idea that students learn differently based on personal characteristics such as background, language, family structure and social or cultural identity (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). This approach strives to make educational experiences meaningful, appealing, and relatable by considering students’ traits, experiences, and perspectives, and positioning their learning “within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students” (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Based on Gay’s (2010) findings, culturally responsive teaching requires a knowledge base concerning cultural diversity; an ethnically and culturally diverse curriculum; the construction of a caring, collaborative learning community; cross-cultural communication; and methods of instruction that respond to ethnically diverse students (Gay, 2002).

Typically used interchangeably with the term culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally relevant teaching concerns the entirety of the teaching-learning process (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997). Those considered culturally relevant educators consider their values and beliefs while teaching diverse groups of students. Grant & Ladson-Billings (1997) articulated that these teachers exhibit a wide range of understandings related to “conceptions of themselves and others, conceptions of social relations, and conceptions of knowledge” (p. 62). In reference to these three areas, culturally relevant educators
believe academic achievement is possible for all students and strive to provide them with equal opportunities and a positive, collaborative learning community that recognizes the importance of knowledge and learning (Ladson-Billings, 1997).

In addition to its delivery, the type of content teachers incorporate into culturally relevant classrooms is just as important. Rather than utilizing references of other cultures in service of understanding the dominant culture, culturally relevant pedagogy recognizes the significance of these elements in their own right (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997). In so doing, instruction honors and respects various cultures equally, and in turn, supports the diversity of the student body. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), classrooms thought to be culturally relevant target three goals: “(a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (p. 160).

**Cultural pluralism in music education.** The aims of music education at the turn of the 20th century were based on literacy, vocal technique, and appreciation for European classical music. Curricula incorporated Western art music and German folk songs and had little consideration for music of other nations. Diverse student populations studied these musics rather exclusively, along with folk songs that supported Americanization. However, the rise of pluralism gave way to new thoughts on music education in the U.S. (Volk, 1998).

Folk songs and dances from other countries gained popularity in music classes throughout the beginning of the 1900’s. Instruction expanded from nearly all German sources to songs adapted from most Northern and Central European countries, African-
American and Native American cultures, and some Eastern European and Asian countries (Volk, 1998). Although these songs provided a mere glimpse into the musical cultures of the world, their inclusion in the music curriculum represented the initial push towards multicultural music in the schools (Volk, 1998). By the end of the Second World War and the intercultural education movement, music educators integrated more music from around the world into their school curricula. Although assimilative goals of Americanization and unity were still greatly apparent through the use of American folksongs, the musics of Latin America and Eastern Europe expanded the diversity of the curriculum.

Around the mid-1900’s, music curricula expanded further. Along with the discussions at the Tanglewood Symposium in 1967, the growth of Jazz studies, ethnomusicology research, and multicultural music texts gave music educators an increased awareness of multicultural music instruction. Additionally, these sources provided teachers with strategies for incorporating diverse musics in their classrooms and more authentic resources to pull from (Volk, 1998).

With the desegregation of U.S. schools and the increase in diversity of the post-1965 immigrants, multiculturalism in music education remained a large topic of interest accepted by many. The release of the National Standards in music towards the end of the twentieth century supported the use of diverse musics. Furthermore, conferences and publications sponsored by the National Association for Music Education (MENC) encouraged music educators to use multicultural music in their classrooms (Volk, 1998).

*Culturally responsive music instruction.* With the notion that culturally responsive pedagogy takes into account that students learn differently based on personal
characteristics (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013), culturally responsive music
teachers consider their students’ traits, experiences, and perspectives when creating and
delivering content (Abril, 2013; Gay, 2002). These considerations result in educational
practices that incorporate and contextualize multicultural musical elements such as
nontraditional ensembles and instruments and diverse musical repertoire (Abril, 2010).

Music educators face numerous challenges when attempting to be culturally
responsive in the music classroom. These issues often stem from teachers’ nearly
exclusive training in western music, inexperience with teaching outside of traditional
performance ensembles, and lack of confidence in selecting and teaching unfamiliar
music, which is especially apparent among teachers who try to teach music outside of

Abril (2009) described these challenges in his case study involving a white, non-
Hispanic teacher who began a Mariachi ensemble. With a low representation of the
school’s Hispanic student population in her music program, a teacher with formal
training in western classical music and little experience with Mariachi music decided to
offer a Mariachi ensemble course in hopes of appealing to more students. Although she
tried to make her courses more relevant for Hispanic students, her lack of contextual
knowledge regarding the musical repertoire of the ensemble resulted in some cultural
tensions with her students (Abril, 2009). Abril (2010) pointed out that opening space for
discussion and using students as resources can aid educators in creating a more culturally
responsive music classroom.
Identity

One’s identity is made up of both unchanging and rather flexible characteristics, referred to as the idem and the ipse, or the I and the me (James, 1980; Ritivoi, 2002). The idem represents sameness and continuity in one’s identity. It consists of individual characteristics that are more or less permanent no matter the social situation or circumstance. The other half of one’s identity, the ipse, represents one’s ever-changing sense of self. The ipse acknowledges that individuals develop continuously throughout one’s life and recognizes the ways one may change his or her way of thinking or behavior when placed in different social contexts (Soenens, 2006).

Social constructionists disagree with the notion that identities are differentiated by both unchanging personal characteristics and continuously changing social qualities (Hargreaves, Miell, & MacDonald, 2002). They consider one’s identity to be purely social and describe it as something that is constantly being formed and reformed through one’s interactions within different social contexts. From this perspective, identity is not merely influenced by interactions; it is made up of them. As a result, individuals do not form one underlying personal identity, they form multiple, and sometimes conflicting, social identities based on their interactions and experiences (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

Erik Erikson’s (1968) theory of identity conflicts with those of social constructionists. His conception of one’s ego identity is multidimensional and considers views of psychology, social psychology, and sociology (Côté & Levine, 1987). Each of these angles aids in defining ego identity because it “not only interacts with itself…but also with the persons in, and the normative expectations of, its social environment” (1968, p. 163). As a result, Erikson articulated two central features of ego identity: (1) spatial-
temporal continuity and (b) aspects of identity (positive or negative) that guide
individuals’ interactions with their social contexts (Côté & Levine, 1987).

Erikson (1968) believed that some consistency was essential to developing an
identity and creating continuity between social contexts. Possessing a sense of continuity
in identity aids individuals in figuring out where and how they fit into their social worlds.
Social characteristics may fluctuate depending on the context, but it is one’s personal
aspects that provide a feeling of stability across them (Côté & Levine, 1987).

A central theme in the conceptualization of identity concerns one’s social
environments. According to the theories described earlier, one’s social environment
largely influences his or her identity development (Hargreaves et al., 2002; James, 1980;
Ritivoi, 2002; Soenens, 2006). More specifically, interactions and experiences with social
institutions and significant others serve as the foundation for identity development and
redevelopment (Côté & Levine, 1987). Similarly, social identity theory (SIT) and the
work of Henri Tajfel (1978, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1985) and John Turner (Turner,
Brown, & Tajfel, 1979) align with these ideas.

Social identity theory suggests that all humans are members of social groups.
Social groups may be larger (i.e., gender, race, religion) or smaller (i.e., peer groups) and
are based on characteristics including interests, beliefs, values, appearance, and behaviors
(Tajfel, 1981). Individuals tend to classify themselves and others into these groups while
recognizing members of other groups (Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002). According
to SIT, the groups one identifies with are known as his or her *ingroups*, while groups one
does not associate with are referred to as *outgroups* (Turner et al., 1979).
Tajfel and Turner (1985) describe how identification with the social groups one perceives as positive or favorable supports identity development and self-esteem. A positive evaluation of one’s ingroups is accomplished through “comparisons that distinguish the ingroup from the outgroup and portray the ingroup as somehow ‘better off’ than the outgroup” (Tarrant, et al., 2001, p. 598). These comparisons help enhance characteristics of one’s ingroups, and in turn, his or her self-esteem (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

Festinger (1954) conceptualized two main types of social comparisons. *Upward comparisons* are social comparisons individuals make with others who they view as more skilled than themselves, while *downward comparisons* are made with those who are less skilled. Upward comparisons often help motivate individuals to set high goals, improve, and succeed; however, too many upward comparisons can negatively affect one’s self-esteem when goals seem unattainable. On the other hand, downward comparisons help boost one’s self-esteem; although excessive downward comparisons may inflate one’s ego and deter one from further improvement.

**Contextual influences of identity.** Children’s identity development is largely influenced by their social and cultural contexts (Côté & Levine, 1987; Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006). Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) theory concerning human development describes these contexts in concentric structures of influence. His ecological model of human development begins with individuals’ immediate environments in which they directly interact and extends outward to environments that affect development more indirectly.
The microsystem is at the core of Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) model and is composed of the social environments in which individuals directly interact. These immediate contexts include family, school, peers, neighborhood, and media (Andersson, 1986). However, these microsystems are not always independent of each other. Moving outward from the center, the mesosystem is comprised of the interrelations among one’s microsystems, emphasizing the connection between one’s immediate environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Furthermore, the exosystem accounts for settings that affect individuals more indirectly than the micro- and mesosystems. Although they may not directly participate in exosystems, the exosystem affects individual development through its influence on settings where individuals are active participants (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Lastly, the macrosystem is the most comprehensive explanation of one’s environment. It consists of the overarching influences of one’s environments through ideological, economical, historical, and political values, beliefs, or conditions of a culture or society, which in turn largely influences the ways individuals within that culture or society develop (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

**Immigration and identity.** Schwartz, Montgomery, and Briones (2006) examined the relationship between acculturation and identity based on Erikson’s (1968) conceptualization of personal and social identity. With the idea that personal identities are relatively static and social identities more adaptable, they argued that although one’s social identity may change through acculturation experiences, one’s personal identity can serve as an “anchor” during this transition (Schwartz et al., 2006, p. 2). This anchored identity can help stabilize and guide immigrant individuals during the acculturation process (Schwartz et al., 2006). In this and previous works, Schwartz and his colleagues
(2001; Schwartz et al., 2006) conceptualize immigrant individuals’ identities as being *adaptive identities*. According to their theory, an *adaptive identity* is:

A coherent *personal* identity, signifying a set of goals, values, and beliefs that are internally consistent with one another and that are employed and manifested similarly across situations and a coherent *social* identity (including *cultural* identity) that is internally consistent, flexible enough to support changes that occur as a result of acculturation without losing its internal consistency and workability, and that generates positive feelings about the group(s) to which one perceives oneself as belonging. (Schwartz et al., 2006, p. 7)

**Music and identity.** Music functions as an identity badge for many individuals. Not only can music be used as a form of expression and emotional and behavioral regulation, it can also be used as a way to present one’s self to others (Hargreaves et al., 2002). As Cook (1998) stated, “In today’s world, deciding what music to listen to is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you ‘want to be’…but who you *are*” (p. 5). Agreeing with the notion that individuals identify themselves by the music they listen to, research suggests that many adolescents and young adults consider their music collections to be representative of their personalities and join musical subcultures in order to define themselves (Hargreaves & North, 1999; Warlick, 2006). However, the music one listens to varies with fluctuations in mood, time of day, and social context (Hargreaves et al., 2002), placing it at the surface of understanding how and why one identifies with it. The ways and reasons music becomes integrated into individuals’ personal and social lives should be examined to gain deeper insight into how musical experiences relate to identity (Krause & Hargreaves, 2013).

**Musical identities.** Musical identities are made up of one’s musical tastes, values, practices, skills, and knowledge, and considers “how, where, when, and why those tastes, values, practices, skills, and knowledge were acquired or transmitted” (Green, 2011, p. 1).
Although almost every human on Earth has a musical identity, its impact on one’s life varies, depending on aspects such as musical interest and training. To study this phenomenon more closely, Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2002) conceptualized two domains of musical identities: *identities in music* (IIM) and *music in identities* (MII).

*Identities in music.* Identities in music describes how individuals define themselves based on different social and cultural roles within music. Identifications can be broad (e.g., musician), more traditional (e.g., composer, performer, improviser, teacher), or more specific (e.g., genre of music, instrument played). For children, IIM is largely based on their musical activities, social contexts, and self-concept (Green, 2011; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Lamont, 2002).

Children’s musical experiences influence opinions of their musical selves. Lamont (2002) found that many children define themselves as a musician or non-musician based on whether or not they play a musical instrument or receive formal music instruction. Additionally, those who participate in extra-curricular musical activities tend to identify with a more positive IIM than those who do not.

Social contexts also contribute to IIM. Contexts, where children are more exposed or involved with music, are highly influential to IIM. For example, children who come from musical families or children who are given opportunities in their schools or communities to participate in musical activities often identify with positive IIM (Lamont, 2002). Research has also found significant relationships between parental involvement and instrumental music students’ performance, affective, and cognitive musical outcomes at the elementary level (Zdzinski, 1996).
Musical self-concept also serves as a significant influence for children’s developing IIM. Those who feel more confident or experience success in their musical abilities typically have high musical self-concepts, and in turn, a positive IIM. However, musical self-concept typically decreases as children age and become more aware of their abilities and more accurate in evaluating them (Lamont, 2002).

Music in identities. MII concerns how individuals use music to develop non-musical aspects of their identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Music serves a number of functions in society, ranging from individual responses and expression to social integration and communication (Merriam, 1967). These uses can aid in the development of various elements of one’s identity such as gender, youth, and national identity (Dibben, 2002; Folkestad, 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Tarrant et al., 2002). However, the modes and extent to which one applies music in this manner relates to his or her level of musical engagement and commitment (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

Individuals may or may not view music as a significant part of their lives. Some may be intensely committed to music engagement, while others show little interest and investment. Similarly, the role music plays in non-musical aspects of identity can be great or small. For example, many adolescents consider music an important part of their lives (Kamptner, 1995). With music holding a high rank in their interests and activities (Fitzgerald, Joseph, Hayes, & O’Regan, 1995), it is likely that adolescents use music while forming their identities (North, Hargreaves, & O’Neill, 2000; Tarrant et al., 2002). North et al.’s (2002) research examined music’s role in the lives of adolescents, finding it significant in the formation of their self-images.
In addition to the extent of music’s importance in one’s life, the social contexts surrounding one’s musical experiences can also influence the ways it is used in developing identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002), which is especially true for children and adolescents (Tarrant et al., 2002). Finnäs (1989) points out that adolescent musical behaviors and preferences change, depending on their peer groups. In addition, broader social environments, such as cultural, ethnic, religious, and national, influence musical experience (Folkestad, 2002). For instance, Gaunt (2006) views black girls’ musical experiences as a means for learning to be “socially black” (p. 19). Gaunt (2006) discusses how black girls’ clapping, stomping, singing, and jump rope games teach not only aspects of black musical expression, style, and taste, but also gender and racial roles and identities in African American communities.

Music and Children

Children’s perspectives and interpretations of their musical experiences have gained greater acceptance since the development of the new sociology of childhood. This new sociology sees childhood as a complex culture in itself, considering children as “beings” for who they are now, rather than pre-adult “becomings” (Willet, 2013, p. 162). Placing children’s thoughts and behaviors at the center of the research process can be attributed to the idea that “simply cataloguing or measuring influences on children (without taking into account children’s active interpretations and transformations) overlooks the active involvement of children as arbiters of their own experience” (Clark, 1999, p. 39). Therefore, rather than a functionalist approach where children play a passive role while researchers rely on adults’ assumptions and interpretations, many
contemporary research methods utilize a more active, constructivist approach (Christensen & James, 2008; Clark, 1999; Corsaro, 2005).

Child-centered research emerged in the field of music education following ethnomusicologist John Blacking’s *Venda Children’s Songs* (1967). During his extensive field research in South Africa, Blacking observed the music making of children in Vendaland to gain insight into the functions and meanings of their songs. Although he focused mainly on the children and their musical behaviors without incorporating their perspectives, this research opened the doors to the exploration of the musical worlds of children. Since then, researchers such as Barrett (2003), Campbell (2010), Custodero (2006), Griffin (2011), and Young (2009) have expanded this area to examine not only children’s musical behaviors, but also their musical experiences and perspectives concerning those experiences.

**Children and musical experience.** Home, school, and community settings create different social environments, with varied types of supervision, playmates, and materials, thus influencing children’s musical behaviors and the meanings and functions they associate with their experiences. A majority of infants’ and young children’s musical experiences occur in the home, often with parents, siblings, and caregivers (Lamont, 1998). Parents’ singing is especially influential with infants, serving as a way to soothe or communicate with them (Custodero, 2002). As infants grow older, they become more interactive and engage in music through explorations and imitations of movement and sounds using objects, instruments, or their voices (Littleton, 1998).

The soundscapes of the home are a significant part of children’s musical lives. Custodero (2009) interviewed six families to shed light on the musical possibilities in the
home and the functions of those experiences. Musical practices in the home differed based on aspects such as parents’ musical backgrounds and culture and included experiences associated with singing, playing, dancing, and listening. The functions of these experiences varied, acting as a way to maintain homeland connections, establish community, create intimacy and provide coping strategies, impart knowledge, and negotiate identity.

The ways children experience music at home is similar to the ways they engage with it in the car (Koops, 2014). Musical experiences in the car consist of primarily listening (De Vries, 2009), moving or singing along with songs from the radio or CDs, and spontaneous vocalizations, movements, or body percussion (Koops, 2014; Young, 2009). When compared to the home, the enclosed environment of an automobile can reduce distractions and increase interactions with siblings, parents, and other riders (Koops, 2014).

While babies and toddlers spend most of their time in home settings with family members and caregivers, young children’s play spaces open up with the introduction to play groups and school (Lamont, 1998). These new environments not only give children the opportunity to play more socially with others, but also to engage in formal music-making activities and explore materials, objects, and instruments they may not have access to otherwise (Lamont, 2008). When given the opportunity, children engage in various types of musical behaviors. Known as the Pillsbury Foundation Studies, Moorehead and Pond conducted one of the first explorations of children’s free music play in a nursery school. The results provide insight to individual and group musical behaviors in relation to song, dance, notation, instruments, and exploration in four reports: Chant

As children move through elementary school, some instances of musical experience become more structured and organized. While younger children tend to engage with music by incorporating it into play episodes by creating sound effects, improvising songs and chants, and spontaneously moving to music (Moorhead & Pond, 1978; Littleton, 1998), older children often incorporate rules and standards into their musical experiences through songs, choreographed dances, and hand-clapping and jump-roping games (Marsh, 2006). Many of these engagements are collaborations among peers in their schools’ formal and informal play spaces such as the playground, cafeteria, or school bus (Campbell, 2010).

Older children incorporate more music listening and conversations concerning music into their musical experiences than younger children (Campbell, 2010; Dunn, 2011). Listening experiences occur in both solitary and social settings including but not limited to the home, school, and car through a variety of listening outlets such as radios, televisions, computers, and mobile devices (Dunn, 2011; Bickford, 2011). Furthermore, as children age and develop they also begin to evaluate music more critically and discuss their perspectives on music and popular media figures with others (Campbell, 2010).

**Music and middle childhood.** With transitions relating to “intellectual reorganization, expanding relationships, and changing conceptions of self and of society,” the ways children experience music in their middle years shifts as well (Minuchin, 1977, p. 1). Younger children’s musical experiences are strongly influenced by their parents and siblings, while adolescents are more likely influenced by their peers and popular
culture (Bosacki, Francis-Murray, Pollon, & Elliott, 2006). Those in middle childhood are caught somewhere in between.

For the first time in many of their lives, those in middle childhood experience greater independence and opportunities for autonomous decision-making (Bosacki et al., 2006). They begin to think for themselves and make choices based on their expanding social contexts and what they know, want, and like. With this in mind, De Vries’ (2011) conducted a case study examining the musical engagements of his eight-year-old son, Jack, to gain greater insight into his preferred music, why it was preferred, and how he engaged with it. Through data generated by interviews, observations, and drawings, findings revealed that Jack preferred a wide range of music that was particularly familiar to him. Both listening to and performing songs learned from his DVD and CD collection, school events, and formal music instruction helped him acquire this familiarity.

Jack’s cultural and social environments largely influenced the music he preferred and experienced. His home, school, and community environments exposed him to a variety of musical styles and practices upon which he drew when selecting his preferred music. The ways Jack engaged with music also linked to his parents’ and peers’ musical practices. Furthermore, interactions between Jack’s home and school environments extended his musical engagements across contexts, which in turn, reinforced his preferences and practices (De Vries, 2011).

Children’s musical preferences are influenced by a myriad of factors including their linguistic backgrounds. Abril and Flowers (2007) examined the preferences of English monolingual and Spanish-English bilingual sixth graders ($N = 60$) in the Midwestern United States. Findings revealed that the bilingual students preferred with
Spanish language music when compared with English and instrumental versions. The monolingual, English-speaking children preferred the instrumental and English versions to the music performed in a language unfamiliar to them.

Contrary to Killian’s (1990) study of adolescents that found participants to receive musicians of their same race and gender more positively, Abril’s (2002) study of bilingual, Cuban-American children found that most preferred music in English to music in Spanish (Abril, 2002). Similarly in terms of gender, a cross-case analysis of a group of seven-year-olds from around the world found the girls almost exclusively named male performers as their favorite artists (Andang’o and Pacheco, 2016).

Music and immigrant children. Research concerning music in the lives of immigrant children has recently gained attention at an international level. Marsh (2012) explored the roles of music in the lives of refugee and newly arrived immigrant children in Sydney, Australia, and addressed various outcomes of their musical experiences. The research setting was comprised of an extremely diverse primary school comprised of about 619 students, five to twelve-year-olds. Observations, field recordings, formal interviews, and informal interactions with both students and teachers helped give greater insight to the musical lives of refugee and immigrant children in the contexts of their school, home, and community.

Music in school helped refugee and immigrant children feel a sense of belonging in their class. Although they hesitated to participate in other activities, the repetition and movements embedded in the songs learned in their music class gave them deeper feelings of accomplishment and security. Refugee and immigrant children were able to make
connections between language and meaning through movements and dances and were able to participate at a higher level when compared to other classes (Marsh, 2012).

Refugee and immigrant students’ experiences with music on the school’s playground were not always as positive. Children who were a part of a large ethnic group at school often sang playground songs in their first language. However, those in smaller ethnic groups typically hesitated due to other students’ teasing. Most of the children only played games from their original countries with their siblings or other peers with the same background to avoid confrontation while games sung in English were more encompassing and included anyone wishing to play, regardless of ethnicity.

Hesitance was also detected in large group interviews during the discussion of musical preferences. Students who did not express much knowledge in popular music were often too embarrassed to share their musical tastes with others. Since their music seemed foreign and different, many feared that their peers would ridicule them.

Media served as a bridge for cross-cultural relationships. Friends from different backgrounds found shared interests through popular television and Internet shows and music videos. Furthermore, the Internet provided a place where children could search, find, and share music from their home countries and learn about and explore performers and genres from other countries (Marsh, 2012).

Media and technology was also a reoccurring theme in Lum’s (2008) case studies of two recent immigrant families in Singapore. Following his work with the students of a diverse first grade class, the researcher visited the homes of a Filipino student and an Indian student to gain greater insight to their musical lives and influences. The family stayed connected to their heritage culture primarily through their musical engagements
with karaoke singing, where they performed songs from American popular music and popular Filipino artists’ Tagalog songs. The Indian family utilized far more technological mediums to keep in touch with their home country. Dialogue and music from Hindi and Tamil television channels, radio stations, DVDs, and CDs constantly filled the air. Additionally, the family utilized the Internet to inform themselves of new and popular entertainment of their home country such as the Bollywood charts.

With the rapid increase of second-generation youth in the U.S., research concerning the musical experiences of children of immigrants living in the U.S. has gained more attention (Kelly-McHale, 2011; Lum & Campbell, 2009; Minks, 1999). Kelly-McHale (2011) studied four fifth-grade students whose families emigrated to the U.S. from Mexico to find relationships between their musical identities and their music teacher’s beliefs and practices in the elementary music classroom. Findings revealed that the students used music as a way to express their musical identities as dancers, singers, or musicians and maintain their ethnic identities, which varied from deeply rooted Mexican identities to those more associated with the dominant U.S. Anglo-American culture.

Lum and Campbell (2009) used a narrative approach to gain insight into the musical life of an eight-year-old Mexican American girl named Mirella. Soon after her birth, Mirella and her parents moved to join her grandparents in a farming community made up of mainly Mexican immigrants in the U.S. At home, Mirella’s family spoke Spanish, watched Spanish television shows, and listened to primarily Latin music. They even created an informal conjunto band with other relatives and friends by reproducing music from their CDs. Mirella and her family also attended a Spanish-speaking church across town, where she and her siblings learned a number of religious songs in Sunday
school. Her older sister, who regularly listened to and danced along with popular radio stations, first sparked Mirella’s interest in hip-hop and rap. In addition to listening to the radio and watching MTV together, the two share a small CD collection comprised of popular U.S. artists.

At school, Mirella associated with both Mexican and U.S. popular culture. Since Mexican-American students made up most of the school's population, it was common for the school to celebrate Mexican culture through music, language, and holiday celebrations. Along with many of her schoolmates, Mirella watched a popular Spanish television channel geared towards Latin youth. However, U.S. pop culture and media transmitted through CDs, local radio, and television programming was of strong interest to them as well. Mirella and her peers enjoyed listening, dancing, and analyzing the rap and hip-hop made popular by radio and television programming.

Mirella displayed acculturation strategies related to integration upon settling in the U.S. Although her parents spoke limited English and primarily engaged in Mexican traditions, Mirella was able to navigate between both U.S. and Mexican cultures with the help of her siblings, friends, and teachers. She preserved many of the musical traditions of her family through informal music making and religious songs while at the same time extending her repertoire through popular U.S. media and technology (Lum & Campbell, 2009).

Minks (1999) examined the various roles pop music plays in children’s social environments and the impact it has on developing identities. Through an ethnographic approach, Minks observed and interviewed ten- and eleven-year-old students, as well as their parents and teachers, in two US fifth-grade classes. Eight of the children in the
sample identified as either first- or second-generation immigrants from various parts of the world including North India, Palestine, China, Puerto Rico, Turkey, and Poland. Minks paid particular attention to these children due to the “added layer of complexity” between family listening habits and their developing musical independence (1999, p. 85).

The children’s views on and engagements with different types of music were not always parallel. In one case, a girl named Najah, who moved with her family from Palestine at the age of two, traversed between both popular Arabic and American music. Najah described her home listening experiences as mainly Arabic music with her family and American pop music by herself. She explained how she was the only one in her family who listened to English music, attributing her engagements to the personal radio in her bedroom. On the other hand, Maya lived in the U.S. for a number of years but did not listen to any American pop music. Instead, she engaged only with Indian music and media. Lastly, Carlos, a second-generation Puerto Rican boy, demonstrated the other extreme by strongly disliking his mother’s Latin music, referring to it as “boring” and “embarrassing” (Minks, 1999, p. 85).

These cases are examples of three children who practice different acculturation strategies. With close ties to both her heritage and current countries, Najah illustrated integration and biculturalism through her ability to “manage two cultural realities with comfort and efficacy” (Garcia-Coll & Magnuson, 1997, p. 108) by balancing “divergent musical tastes, languages, and identities” (Minks, 1999, p. 84). In contrast, Maya practiced separation by not associating herself with U.S. popular culture and limiting interactions with the other children at school. She expressed pride in her heritage and maintained extremely close ties with her family in a neighborhood where they were the
only immigrants. Carlos was quite the opposite, displaying assimilation strategies as he only related to U.S. popular culture while attempting to fit into a primary black community. Although he identified as a Puerto Rican, he did not understand Spanish, had never visited the country, and was often embarrassed by his mother’s cultural practices.

The extreme cases of Maya and Carlos are also examples of generational consonance and generational dissonance. Not socially integrated at school, Maya remains unacculturated with the rest of her Indian family. They maintain a close family relationship, strengthened by their cultural heritage. Oppositely, Carlos does not partake in any of his mother’s cultural practices. He identifies more with his peers and U.S. culture than his mother and Puerto Rican culture, often expressing embarrassment when she speaks Spanish or plays Latin music.

Immigrant children’s musical lives often align with their developing identities and acculturation strategies (Frith, 1996; Minks, 1999). In the case of immigrant children in Minks’ (1999) study, she noticed that those who preferred music from both heritage and host cultures practiced integrative acculturation strategies and closely identified with both cultures, while those who preferred only music associated with one of the cultures practiced separation or assimilation strategies, identifying with either heritage or host cultures. Additionally, as Marsh (2012) found, music provides immigrant youth with an outlet for finding comfort, expressing emotion, and connecting with others within and across cultures, which has been largely performed through media and technology.

**Children’s music and the media.** With the help of handheld devices such as laptops, gaming consoles, smartphones, and tablets, media’s availability to children is greater than ever before. As a result, greater attention has been given to research
regarding the influence of media on children’s musical experiences (Grugeon, 2001; Harwood, 1994; Marsh, 2001, 2008). Much of this research explores playground games and performances in school and community play spaces (Gaunt, 2006; Grugeon, 2001; Harwood, 1994; Opie & Opie, 1959; Marsh, 2001, 2008), while studies in home environments are on the rise (Campbell, 2010; De Vries, 2011; Lum, 2007).

Children’s music and the media in school. Much of the research concerning children’s musical play and media focuses on school and community environments, with the school playground being one of the most popular sites for observation. Peter and Iona Opie first documented the influences of media in children’s playground and street games in United Kingdom around the 1960’s, finding that children incorporate popular songs and jingles and characters from television shows in the texts and tunes of their games. Similar instances were noted upon the analysis of traditional North American children’s playground songs and chants (Bronner, 1988; Fowke, 1969; Knapp, 1976).

Harwood (1994) found children’s traditional songs and chants often reference characters of television and radio shows, movies, cartoons, and comic books such as Popeye, Little Orphan Annie, and Batman and Robin. Additionally, hand-clapping and jump rope game songs were often parodies of advertisements created for products including Pepsi and Pampers or adaptations of popular songs frequently played on the radio, such as Rockin’ Robin’ and That’s the Way I Like It. Marsh’s (1999) findings agreed with these trends while observing children at an inner city playground in Sydney, Australia. Similar to the playground songs and games from the United Kingdom and North America, children often imitated and adapted elements of popular songs and dances learned from music videos in the texts, melodies, and movements of their playground songs and games.
Harwood’s (1998) later studies focused on African-American girls’ improvisations in musical play during an afterschool club. She noticed that many of the improvised musical phrases and routines referenced melodies and styles of songs and performers featured on the Top 40. She describes this practice throughout her work:

The result is a hybrid that retains some rhythmic and melodic idioms from the original popular song, but also incorporates features invented by children and performance conventions appropriated from other material in their traditional repertoire. (1994, p. 190)

Additionally, dance movements primarily learned through music television were often borrowed and manipulated in order to create new dances to accompany their songs.

Similarly to the ways children imitate activities and behaviors learned by observing adults (Gosso, 2005), children imitate and parody popular media figures while on the playground. Marsh (2001) described how the children she observed in Sidney, Australia frequently imitated performers featured on MTV Asia by memorizing the songs and dances of popular singers. In one instance, students were seen imitating the sexual, trademark moves of the popular singer, Michael Jackson, through kissing motions, pelvic thrusts, and the, “lifting of skirts to expose underwear as a culmination of the game.” (Marsh, 2001, p. 83). Characteristics of Michael Jackson were also highlighted in Marsh’s observations three years later. This time, the game was more improvisatory in nature, revealing that children often reference parts or phrases of texts, music, and movements learned through audio-visual media. Marsh explained,

The game performance incorporates not only the textual and rhythmic formula repeated in the refrain of the original song (Black or White) but also the crotch-grabbing movements associated exclamations which accompany Michael Jackson’s performance on video clips of the song. (2001, p 83)
Similar trends of sexual undertones were also observed in girls’ singing games and performances in the United Kingdom (Grugeon, 2001). As the singing group the *Spice Girls* became popular, girls often imitated their high energy and provocative dance moves. In one of the schools, the girls had their own place in the courtyard dedicated to *Spice Girl* performances where they performed in groups for imaginary audiences.

Some children acknowledge this sexual behavior as inappropriate, while others do not. During recess, Campbell (2010) spotted one girl swinging her hips and chanting, “Nasty, nasty, they do like this, so nasty, nasty.” (p. 83). Knowing that the dance was inappropriate at school, the girl apologized, stating that she had seen it on MTV. In Bickford’s (2011) observations, children used their headphones as a way of concealing explicit songs at school. In one instance, a girl acknowledged the inappropriateness of an unedited popular song as she shared it through a pair of headphones rather than playing it freely over her speakers. The girls listened to and sang along with the music, only when under limited adult supervision (Bickford, 2011).

Children often refer to popular and familiar products, characters, tunes, and movements while engaging in social musical play. These references are made apparent in the texts of game songs where children often mention products and characters such as Pepsi or Batman (Harwood, 1994). Children also introduce melodic elements of popular jingles and songs in their musical play by imitating and adapting them for their own purposes. Although lyrics typically change, melodic elements of jingles and songs are also showcased in children’s parodies of the popular tunes (Campbell, 2010; Harwood, 1994). Furthermore, children imitate and manipulate movements learned from music videos and television shows. Popular dance styles and characteristic movements of
famous performers often accompany children’s musical play in the forms of improvised
dance routines and songs (Gruegon, 2001; Harwood, 1998; Marsh, 2001).

Children’s music and the media at home. Occurring in the comfort of one’s own
bedroom, living room, or dedicated play space, children’s music play in home
environments consist of a wide variety of solitary and social actions and activities. Not all
children have constant access to play partners in their homes such as siblings, other
family members, or friends, making solitary music play a common practice in children’s
home environments. In a study surveying, interviewing, and observing Australian
students in the sixth grade, De Vries (2010) noted an instance where media inspired
musical engagement through the radio in her bedroom. The young girl described how she
listened to songs from the Top 40 station repeatedly in order to figure out how to play the
melody on her piano. The researcher noted similar actions with his 8-year old son and his
favorite songs learned from an animated DVD movie. Not only would the boy try to
figure out the melody on his electric keyboard, he also altered the tune by experimenting
with different timbres and styles and singing different lyrics (De Vries, 2011).

The television also acted as a source of motivation and inspiration in solitary
musical experiences for seven-year-olds living in Singapore (Lum, 2007). Children were
often found singing, humming, and improvising the tunes and theme songs of commercial
advertisements and children’s programs such as Pokemon and Disney cartoons. Video
games inspired similar interactions, with children improvising chants, tunes, and sound
effects based on the games’ music, characters, actions, and events (Lum, 2007).

The privacy and mobility of iPods and other kinds of MP3 players can be
extremely desirable to children, making them a crucial to some children’s musical lives.
(Bickford, 2011; De Vries, 2011). In De Vries’ 2011 study, one boy described the freedom he has to move from room to room, without other noise distracting him, while listening to downloaded music. With the ability to move around with ease, dancing and movement frequently accompanied his mobile listening.

Movement often accompanies children’s music listening (Lum, 2007). In Lum’s (2007) study, televisions and videogames inspired children’s dancing and movement. Some imitated dancers while singing along with their favorite pop stars, while others danced to their video games’ background music, often incorporating the handheld game controller into their improvised movements. Similar episodes occur while children were in the company of their friends or siblings. Campbell (2010) observed a pair of boys reacting to the music and sounds produced by their video game through dancing, chanting, and moving. Similarly, Lum (2007) observed a pair of sisters interacting with their playstation games by, “bobbing their heads and swaying to the dance-like background music of the game while making various sounds effects…along with made-up tunes…” (p. 147).

Interactions with media in the home inspired musical play by acting as a source in which the children could draw from. Children were seen singing, humming, and dancing to tunes from television, radio, movies, and even videogames while engaging in play in their homes. Additionally, they often incorporated familiar rhythms and melodies of these tunes into song performances, movements of their toys, and improvised chants honoring popular cartoon and videogame characters.
Conclusion

As children make sense of the world around them through dynamic interactions between self and social environments, they develop an idea of where and how they fit in (Erikson, 1968; Josselson & Harway, 2012). Social environments are central to the development and conceptualization of identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002; James, 1980; Ritivoi, 2002; Soenens, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). For second-generation immigrant youths, their experiences with acculturation and widely diverse social contexts can largely impact their developing identities (Schwartz et al., 2006).

Influenced by their homes, schools, communities, and the media, second-generation children develop relatively static personal characteristics and flexible social characteristics (Schwartz et al., 2006). Although some self-conceptions stay constant throughout their different social interactions and experiences with acculturation, second-generation children display shifts in attitudes and behaviors depending on their social environment (Erikson, 1968; Schwartz et al., 2006). Similarly to the ways they use personal and social characteristics, second-generation children can use music to explore and construct their identities as well (Minks, 1999; Tarrant et al., 2002). As Bosacki et al. (2006) concluded, “Children’s music preferences reflect in part their developing values, conflicts and developmental issues, whereas their music habits also play an active role in shaping their developing identities, including their beliefs and values” (p. 382). An understanding of the ways and reasons music becomes integrated into second-generation children’s personal and social lives can provide deeper insight into how musical experiences relate to identity (Krause & Hargreaves, 2013).
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter will describe the research methodology, design, and procedures. First, I present a brief overview of the study along with a restatement of its purpose and research questions. Next, I provide a methodological framework and provide details regarding recruitment and sampling, gaining entry, timing, collecting artifacts, interviewing, and ethics. The chapter ends with description of the analytical processes applied to the data.

Research Overview

In the midst of puberty, expanding social circles, peer pressures, and increased independence, older children experiment with different behaviors and lifestyle choices to better understand who they are and where they fit. During this period, children also begin to evaluate their sense of self by making comparisons, generalizations, evaluations, and decisions based on the various social contexts of their lives (Erikson, 1968; Josselson & Harway, 2012). Children born in the United States to at least one foreign-born parent, referred to as second-generation children, often straddle multiple cultures, making their social contexts highly diverse and their experience with identity exploration multifaceted (Sebastian, 2008). With a growing number of second-generation students in U.S. schools, greater insight into the ways they explore their identities can help teachers understand and relate to them more effectively (Carlow, 2006; Child Trends, 2014; Kelly-McHale, 2011).

Just as Chaney (1996) described how people use aspects of their daily lifestyles to “identify and explain wider complexes of identity and affiliation” (p. 12), Hargreaves,
Miell, and MacDonald (2002) applied a similar notion to one’s musical experience and identities. The concept of *music in identities* (MII) views music as a means for developing non-musical aspects of identity. However, the modes and extent to which individuals use music in this manner depends on the meanings, values, and social contexts of the musical experience (Hargreaves et al., 2002). With music being especially powerful among children and adolescents, examining second-generation children’s musical experiences in the contexts of community, family, peers, media, and school can provide greater insight into the ways they use music to explore and construct their identities (Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002). Although one of the central aims of music education concerns the development of students’ identities (Hargreaves, Marshall, & North, 2003), research concerning the role music plays in this process is limited (Dibben, 2002; Folkestad, 2002; Magee, 2002; Tarrant et al., 2002). An understanding of the ways second-generation children experience music in multiple contexts and use it in the exploration and development of their identities can empower educators in creating and delivering content that not only reflects their increasingly diverse students’ musical lives, but also recognizes the meanings, values, and functions they associate with them (Abril, 2013; Carlow, 2006; Kelly-McHale, 2011).

**Central Purpose & Research Questions**

The purpose of this collective case study is to examine the musical lives of second-generation children in Miami, Florida, USA, to gain greater insight into music’s role in the development of their identities. The musical lives of second-generation children is generally described as the musical experiences of U.S.-born children between the ages of eight and twelve who have at least one foreign-born parent.
The central question of this study seeks to find music’s role in the negotiation and construction of second-generation children’s identities. In support of this question, the following sub-questions were used to guide this study:

1. How do second-generation children experience music in the different contexts of their lives?
2. How do second-generation children explore, develop, and express their identities through musical experience?
3. Why are second-generation children’s musical experiences meaningful and valuable in their lives?

**Case Study Research**

Case study research involves the in-depth examination of a specific bounded system in real-life contexts and settings (Creswell, 2012). According to Creswell, these systems, or cases, are characterized by tangible (i.e., specific individuals, groups, organizations) or abstract (i.e., relationships, decisions) concepts. A collective case study design recognizes a concept or characteristic that links multiple cases together (Stake, 2005). This approach not only provides an in-depth understanding of each case, but also makes comparisons across cases through a cross-case analysis. Rather than an intrinsic study that focuses solely on the case at hand, collective case studies are considered instrumental in that they seek to understand an overarching idea or issue through multiple cases in various contexts (Creswell, 21012).

For the present study, I chose a collective case study design to examine four second-generation children’s experiences with music in various social contexts. Characterized by their age and family background, these cases will provide an in-depth
look into the musical lives of four individuals to gain greater insight into second-generation children’s use of music in the development of their identities. Numerous forms of data were collected to gain an in-depth understanding of each case. Data were generated by the children, key figures in their lives, and my through direct and participant observations, field notes, interviews, informal interactions, and digital iPad artifacts (i.e., pictures, recordings, videos, songs, stories). Once the data collection phase was over, I completed a within case analysis for each case to further understand its complexity by formulating detailed descriptions and identifying key issues and themes that arose from the data (Creswell, 2012, p. 101).

Participants

Case study research typically focuses on unique and unusual cases or cases that best represent the research focus (Creswell, 2012). I chose four children between the ages of eight and twelve who had at least one foreign-born parent. The cases were chosen from Miami-Dade County due to its convenient location and diverse population. Although cases were in the same age range, the diversity in Miami-Dade County made it possible to examine cases varying by additional characteristics such as sex, ethnicity, and formal music training (See Table 3.1.). These differences were not meant to make findings generalizable, but to offer different perspectives on the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2012).
Table 3.1. Participant demographic table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Parents’ Background</th>
<th>Structured musical activities</th>
<th>Music in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ava</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Miami-Dade Co., FL</td>
<td>Mother (Miami, FL), Father (Costa Rica)</td>
<td>Community children’s choir</td>
<td>None in middle school, weekly general music classes (60 minutes) and after-school choir in Elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Miami-Dade Co., FL</td>
<td>Mother (Nicaragua), Father (Miami, FL; 2nd-gen. Cuba)</td>
<td>Community dance team</td>
<td>Weekly group violin lessons (30 minutes) and general music classes (60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolas</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Miami-Dade Co., FL</td>
<td>Mother (Mexico), Father (Dominican Republic)</td>
<td>Plays keyboard in after-care “modern band” music program</td>
<td>Weekly general music classes taught by out of area teacher (60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Miami-Dade Co., FL</td>
<td>Mother (Ecuador), Father (Miami, FL; 2nd-gen. Cuba)</td>
<td>Private violin lessons and community orchestra</td>
<td>Weekly general music classes (60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sampling.** To examine each in great depth while providing ample material for a cross-case analysis, I chose to study four cases (Creswell, 2012; Stake, 2005). *Purposeful sampling* was used to present multiple perspectives concerning this topic (Creswell, 2012). The study followed Stake’s (2005) criteria for case selection: (1) The case was relevant to the group being studied, (2) the case provided diversity across contexts, and (3) the case provided opportunities for learning about complexity and contexts. In order to ensure diversity within the sample, I identified criteria (e.g., sex, ethnicity, formal music participation) that have been attributed to varying outcomes in previous research.
(Creswell, 2012). Although cases in this study focus on second-generation children, I sought cases that varied by sex, ethnicity, neighborhood, socioeconomic status, and formal music training to present a more diverse, complex set of cases.

**Inclusion criteria.** Inclusion criteria for this sample included individuals between the ages of eight and twelve who resided in Miami-Dade County, Florida, USA. Additionally, individuals must have been classified as a second-generation immigrant. In other words, individuals had at least one parent that was foreign-born. Lastly, participants who did not receive parental consent were not considered for the study.

**Recruitment.** To recruit for this study, I utilized my connections with colleagues involved with the Frost School of Music’s community outreach programs. My colleagues were given an overview of the study and asked to identify any individuals that might fit the criteria. I gave them printed and electronic versions of a recruitment flyer to pass along to potential participants (see Appendix E). The flyer gave a brief overview of the study and described what participants who could participate can expect. Furthermore, my contact information was provided, so the families that were interested in participating had the opportunity to ask additional questions. As an incentive for participation and cooperation throughout the study, each participant was able to keep the iPad Mini and accessories (headphones, charger, protective case) that they used to produce digital artifacts throughout the research process.

**Consent.** I obtained written consent from participants’ parents (see Appendix A), written assent from participants (see Appendix B), and authorizations for recording from the participants and the rest of their household (see Appendix C). The consent process
took place in an initial meeting with the participants and their families so that I could explain the study and answer additional questions concerning the research process.

When informal interactions and interviews with those other than the participants and their parents occurred during the research process, they were asked to give verbal consent (see Appendix D) prior to any semi-structured interview or conversation. Additionally, since artifacts only served as a way to stimulate conversations during interviews, others indirectly included in the research process through artifacts produced by the participants (i.e., audio or video samples) were not required to give informed consent.

**Gaining entry.** Common issues in case study research with children include gaining access through their gatekeepers (caregivers) and earning their trust to disclose and share their thoughts (Creswell, 2012). I gained access to participants’ gatekeepers through my colleagues who already had a connection with the participants and their families. My colleagues either approached their selected students with printed recruitment flyers to bring home or e-mailed parents a digital flyer. Those who were interested contacted me by phone or e-mail. I eventually spoke with each of the participants’ mothers to discuss a time and place for an initial meeting.

The initial meeting gave me a chance to meet each participant and their families and gave them the opportunity to become more familiar with the study. Upon agreeing to participate, each participant and parent signed forms of consent. We used the rest of the meeting time to talk and learn more about each other and how the iPad will be incorporated in the study.
I engaged with each participant informally while introducing him or her to the study and iPad Mini. We played with the applications I pre-downloaded on the devices (which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter) and I shared examples from my own childhood as a model (See Figure 3.1). This served as an icebreaker where we were able to learn about each other through informal play and conversations concerning the iPad Mini and each other’s backgrounds, hobbies, and interests (Due, Riggs, & Augoustinos, 2014). This icebreaker served as a springboard in gaining participants’ trust and maximizing comfort during observations and interviews.

Figure 3.1. Personal eBook sample

Giving choice helped decrease the authoritative nature of an interview and made conversations more relevant to participants. Referring to participant-produced artifacts helped stimulate conversations in interviews. Although there were some parameters, participants were able to share what they wished and were provided with choices for discussion during each meeting. This approach considered participants as co-researchers,
rather than merely informants. Additionally, I strived to make research environments comfortable for these young researchers. I determined the appropriateness of the research environment by considering their preferences in observation and interview spaces (Punch, 2002). I did not want to impose on participants’ spaces, such as their bedroom or playroom, until they welcomed me in. Also, I did not want to place them in an environment where they felt threatened, so I made sure observation and interview times and spaces were convenient and comfortable for the participants and their families.

**Data Collection and Generation**

*Time frame.* Following IRB approval from the University of Miami and obtaining signed consent from parents, data generation lasted nearly three months. In their initial meetings, I introduced the participants and their families to the study and explained how to use the iPad Mini and Photo 365 and Book Creator applications. I showed the participants how to create artifacts using the applications to help ease them into the research process. Creating artifacts with the iPad Mini helped participants familiarize themselves with using the device and gain comfort in documenting, sharing, and talking about their musical experiences.

I met with participants seven to nine times each over the course of three months (See Meeting Log, Appendix F). Our meetings ranged from 45 minutes to two hours and took place mostly in their homes. During these meetings, I completed observations and interviews based on topics guided by artifacts gathered by the participants and my constant comparative analysis. Additionally, I had conversations with key figures in each participant’s life throughout the course of the study based on the information revealed to me by participants during observations and interviews (See Appendix F). Times, places,
and modes of these conversations varied depending on access and availability.

Furthermore, observations outside of the home occurred when participants invited me to their rehearsals or community events.

Observations. Traditionally rooted in ethnographic research, observation is a qualitative method used to aid researchers in understanding the populations they study. Observations may be done through direct observation, which entails solely observing participants, or participant observation, which includes both observing and participating in participants’ activities (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). Observing participants through one or a combination of these methods give researchers the opportunity to see participants in their environment to gain a better understanding of, “the physical, social, cultural, and economics contexts in which study participants live; the relationships among and between people, context, ideas, norms, and events; and people’s behaviors and activities—what they do, how frequently, and with whom” (Mack et al., 2005, p. 14).

In this study, I used both direct and participant observation in participants’ homes and communities and videos and pictures as a second-hand observational technique to gain greater insight into their musical lives, and the role music plays in the exploration of their identity. To best prepare for observations, I created a matrix (See Appendix G) based on steps suggested by Mack et al. (2005, p. 27). This matrix helped guide me in what I needed to consider, investigate, plan, and decide prior to observing.

Field notes. While observing in the field, I made objective notes describing all accounts and observations in a notebook dedicated to my field notes. These accounts and observations included informal conversations and interactions with participants and other
key figures and notes on their moods, body language, appearance, and other behaviors (Mack et al., 2005). When taking field notes, I kept my notebook organized by beginning each entry with the date, time, place, and method of data collection. I also left space on pages where I planned to expand my notes when I was only able to jot down a few keywords or phrases relating to an event. Since there was not much time to write down entire thoughts or quotes, I was strategic in what I recorded and used abbreviations and acronyms throughout my notes (Mack et al., 2005). Since it was not always possible to write down details as they happened during meetings, I exercised my memory as well as audio recordings to return to these experiences and expand upon them as close to the time of the observation as possible. When expanding my notes, I made sure to turn shorthand into full sentences so that I may be able to decipher my notes upon returning to them for analysis. Additionally, I created narratives based on my notes to describe what happened and what I learned from the participants and the setting. Lastly, I formulated questions that could help clarify or expand on comments or events that needed further examination (Mack et al., 2005).

**Interviews.** One-on-one conversations with those involved in the study provided opportunities where they were able to express their feelings, thoughts, and opinions about their experiences (Mack et al., 2005). However, considering issues related to the authoritative nature of the interview process, communication, and a lack of stimulating conversation, interviewing my young participants proved difficult at times. To mitigate these issues, I used an interview technique known to as autodriving. Autodriving refers to interviews that are propelled by the informant through explanations and discussions related to certain documents, props, pictures, or recordings (Clark, 1999). This technique
is also considered a form of stimulated-recall, which involves informants’ viewing of
their behaviors and expanding on their experiences (Fox-Turnbull, 2009). Much of the
autodriving or stimulated-recall tools used consisted of photos, audio and video
recordings, and drawings documented and created by the participants.

Rather than producing artifacts myself, I utilized informant-produced artifacts to
provide freedom and choice during interviews, making them an integral part of the
research process. These artifacts helped conversations in interviews reflect what
participants considered to be important, while staying in line with the research questions
of the study (Cook & Hess, 2007; Emberly, 2014; Richards, 2009). Furthermore, putting
the informants in the role of co-researchers minimized the sense of authority between the
participants and myself (Hernández et al., 2013; Punch, 2002).

The interview guide that I referred to throughout the research process is located in
Appendix I. This guide aided in keeping me organized and on task throughout
conversations by including participant background information, interview scripts, and
potential questions relating to the focus of the research. Furthermore, there space is
provided for recording field notes concerning the interview setting and participant
behavior and responses. Interviews were recorded using a small RCA voice-recording
device. Transcriptions were completed following each interview using RCA Digital Voice
Manager, the device’s accompanying software. This software allowed me to slow down
and pause the recording when needed to ensure conversations were transcribed accurately.

**iPad Mini devices.** I provided informants with an iPad Mini so they could use
cameras and software as a way of creating artifacts related to their musical experiences
(Emberly, 2014; Richards, 2009). These artifacts included photos, recordings, drawings,
and song lyrics. Aligning with stimulated-recall interview techniques, we viewed artifacts together while participants extended and contextualized their experiences (Emberly, 2013; Fox-Turnbull, 2009; Griffin, 2007; Richards, 2009). Furthermore, artifacts acted as a “second-hand” observational technique that allowed me to view and talk about experiences that I could not have seen otherwise (Flick, 1998, p. 151; Pink, 2001).

I choose to use a digital source for photography and recording rather than a disposable camera due to multiple constraints from the latter. Disposable cameras limit the amount and accessibility of pictures, creating disconnections between experience and meaning (Richards, 2009). Additionally, disposable cameras do not offer options for video and audio recording. With the use of digital technology, informants could capture as little or as much as they liked, with the freedom to review, erase, or retake content. Furthermore, the use of iPad applications and software gave greater opportunities for additional types of artifacts and records.

I anticipated some issues concerning the use of iPads in this study (Punch, 2002). Parental controls and restrictions were set on each device through a passcode known only by the researcher to ensure participants not buy or download music or applications without permission, change settings, or access inappropriate content on web sites and podcasts (Apple Inc., 2015). Additionally, I provided a protective case with each iPad to minimize damage.

Issues that arose during the research process mainly concerned parental constraints. Not all participants were permitted to take the iPads out of their houses, for some parents feared they would be lost, stolen, or broken. Furthermore, parents often limited iPad use during the week so that participants could focus on school. This was
especially true once the school semester became busy the end of October and November.

*Photo 365 application.* Photo 365 is appropriate for ages four and up (contains no objectionable material) and is an application that helps users capture and save at least one photo a day (Apple Inc., 2015). This application was programmed to remind participants to document at least one musical experience a day. Images imported into the app included pictures of places or things related to past or current musical experiences, “selfies” of participants engaging with music, or screen shots taken on the iPad Mini relating to a musical experience. We reviewed and discussed these photos using the calendar view (see Figure 3.2) so that participants could contextualize and extend each picture and the experience associated with it and become more comfortable documenting and conversing about their musical lives.

Figure 3.2. *Photo 365* application calendar view

*Book Creator application.* The Book Creator for iPad application is appropriate for ages four and up (meaning that there is no objectionable material included in the application). The iTunes Store describes it as a simple, easy to use book-creating tool. I
introduced the participants to the app through the interactive tutorial provided (Apple Inc., 2015). The tutorial guided us through the following eight steps: (1) Add content to the page, (2) Position content, (3) Working with images, (4) Using the Inspector, (5) Give it a go!, (6) Building your book, (7) Reading your book, and (8) Getting more help. Once we complete the tutorial, we will begin the project.

*My Music Book Project.* Shown in Figure 3.3 and Appendix H, the My Music Book Project helped build rapport between myself, participants, and their families, gave me insight into their musical lives, and familiarized participants with documenting, collecting, and talking about their musical experiences. The project adapts Barrett, McCoy, and Veblen’s (1997) exercise for examining personal musical experiences of preservice teachers. The exercise prompts individuals to draw and fill in circles based on a set of categories including but not limited to:

(a) early memories, (b) songs you recall singing in school, (c) musical works you have performed, (d) song you can sing or pieces you can play entirely from memory, (e) recordings you would not want to live without, (f) your least favorite music examples, (g) music you have heard or performed in the past 24 hours, (h) music you have taught (or love to teach) to others, (i) music that puzzles, (j) intrigues or challenges you, (k) hidden pleasures—what others might be surprised to know about your tastes. (p. 2)

Barrett, McCoy, and Veblen suggest completing the exercise can help individuals recognize the extent of their musical worlds and reveal “some of the various roles that music may play in one’s life” (1997, p. 3).

Rather than drawing and filling in category circles on a sheet of paper, the participants were asked to create a project using the Book Creator application based on instructions and categories from the musical experience reflection exercise created by Barrett, McCoy, and Veblen (1997). Instructions for this project (provided in detail in
Figure 3.3) were discussed during our initial meetings. This project served as a way for me to get to know the participants, focus our conversations, and build rapport with them during our first three or four meetings.

Figure 3.3. Instructions for My Music Book Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project 1: My Music Book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The categories below are only to help us get started on this project. Feel free to add categories that you think should be included. Create a chapter in your book for each category using the Book Creator App on your iPad Mini. The chapters can be in any order you wish (remember you can add more chapters). For each chapter, fill the pages with your choice of a combination of things that do not have to be limited to the following to describe the music in each category. You will be adding to this book throughout the next couple of weeks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Text** - Typing titles, people, descriptions, and examples
- **Images** - Pictures and drawings produced by you. Pictures/scans of old printed pictures, documents, or materials you have collected. Images, clip art, and screen shots saved on your iPad.
- **Recordings** - Audio or video recordings made by either yourself or saved on your iPad.
- **BE CREATIVE!** How else can you describe your music?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Memories</th>
<th>Songs you remember being sung to you or played frequently in your house when you were younger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Music you sing/play/listen to with your friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Music you sing/play/listen to with your family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Music you remember doing at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Music you sing/play/listen to around your neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media/Internet</td>
<td>Music you read about, talk about, create, watch, or listen while watching TV, using computer/Internet, playing video games...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorized</td>
<td>Songs or pieces of music you can sing or play by memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent</td>
<td>Music you have heard or played in the last 24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing</td>
<td>Music that you have introduced others to or taught others about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREATEST</td>
<td>Music or certain recordings you could not live without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT so Great</td>
<td>List your LEAST favorite music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Secrets</td>
<td>What others might be surprised to know about the music you like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Role of the Researcher.** My role as a researcher in this study was largely influenced my past experiences as a researcher and elementary school teacher. When designing this study, I utilized ideas from multiple scholarly works to determine the types of data to collect and how to collect it. Along with previous research, I relied on my past experiences. Although I am quite comfortable working with children, I learned quickly through a previous project that interviewing children is no easy task. This issue was in the
foreground of my mind while designed this study. Expanding on Griffin’s (2007) idea of using the Music and Me composition journal to learn about children’s musical experiences and various studies incorporating digital photography and participant-produced photos (Emberly, 2014; Richards, 2009), I decided to incorporate iPad Minis in the data collection process. Participants were able to utilize its many features to create artifacts related to their musical experiences and motivated to share them with me.

My past experiences as a music teacher ultimately affected the ways I interacted with participants. Although I am not a second-generation immigrant myself, my sensitivity and awareness of others’ backgrounds and experiences has been heightened by my experiences teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse settings. Furthermore, being an elementary music teacher and private music instructor has given me ample experience with children in various social contexts. These experiences have helped me become extremely comfortable when interacting with children, in addition to giving me insight into how they think, act, and learn and what may engage and interest them.

**Ethics.** Research involving recording devices of any sort with children raises various concerns to human subject review boards. I adhered to the policies of the University of Miami Institutional Review Board to ensure I met issues of consent. Parents of the informants gave their consent by completing authorization forms for audio, video, and photography recording (see Appendix C).

The privacy of the participants in this study was of utmost concern. In order to protect subjects’ privacy interests, I ensured that participants were aware that participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw consent at any time during the study. Additionally, information that reveals the identity of participants was not
published. Pseudonyms were used, and it was not be required to feature people and their faces in pictures and videos when producing digital artifacts.

All data was stored on my computer and an external hard drive dedicated to this study. The contents stored on both the hard drive and external hard drive were encrypted and password protected through an encryption program called FileVault 2 to secure privacy and confidentiality. Already installed on my computer, this program requires an Apple computer running OS X Lion or later. I created a password to access these files and did not share it with any other individuals.

**Data management and organization.** A wide variety of data was generated to illuminate each particular case and the cases as a whole. Adapted from Tobias (2010), the data matrix in Appendix J displays the relationships between the research focus and the data collected. The first column states the research questions while the second explains the contribution of the question to the study’s central theme. The third column articulates the data collection methods used to answer the question and the fourth describes the data sources. This matrix aided in organizing the data and connecting it to the research questions.

A data record was constructed around the raw data collected in the field. This record expands notes taken in the field and other various artifacts into full narratives. Although I kept and maintained all raw data, I constructed a record that transformed data into organized and flexible forms so that I may be able to make sense of the varying types of data generated in my fieldwork. Furthermore, this record was ongoing throughout my fieldwork to ensure that it would represent the raw data as accurately as possible (Graue & Walsh, 1998).
When constructing my data record, I was sure to annotate and describe each entry in great detail so that it would be easily identifiable. To do this, I answered the “who, what, where, when, why, and how” questions for each entry (Graue & Walsh, 1998, p. 132). Answering these questions helped me organize and make sense of generated artifacts such as drawings or pictures, transcriptions from audio or video recordings, or notes from interviews.

Entries in the data record were used as a reference for building larger narratives. These narratives extend past the scribbled notes on the page to provide what Denzin (1989) refers to as thick description. He describes this account as one that,

> presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationship that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question…the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard. (p. 83)

Thick descriptions offer a greater understanding of each case within its contexts and played a significant role in data analysis.

**Data Analysis**

**NVivo.** NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software program that I used for organizing and analyzing my data. This program supports data in forms of document, PDF, audio, image, and video files. I also used an add-on of the program, named NCapture, to import webpages when necessary.

**Constant comparative method of analysis.** The constant comparative method is an inductive method of theory development where data is analyzed as it is collected to explore and identify emerging themes or reoccurring issues within and across cases that may be further examined in successive interviews and observations (Creswell, 2012;
Glaser, 1965). Although the constant comparative approach is traditionally used for Grounded Theory methods, I adapted this approach to inform data collection and guide data analysis. Upon collecting data, I coded issues, events, and activities into as many categories of analysis as possible. While coding, I compared these incidents with previous ones in the same category. These comparisons helped me describe properties, conditions, and consequences pertaining to each category. I also met with my advisor regularly to gain different perspectives on the data collection and analysis. Finally, I wrote themes based on my findings, descriptions, and conversations (Glaser, 1965).

**Within and cross-case analysis.** The purpose of studying individual cases is to understand the complexity of each case within its contexts. I completed within case analyses by formulating detailed descriptions of each case including his or her history and background, a narrative of events, and accounts of musical experiences. Referred to as “relatively uncontested data” (Stake, 2005, p. 123), these descriptions explain the case without using inference. Upon writing these descriptions, I coded them for reoccurring events, issues, and situations. Through further analysis and discussions with my advisors, I combined any initial codes that were related on a broader level and defined the main themes that arose from the data. Although not generalizable, these themes help provide a better understand of each case within its own contexts (Creswell, 2012). In addition to the within case analysis, collective case studies make comparisons across the group of cases as well. Once themes were identified and described in each case, I completed an analysis across the cases to highlight similarities and differences among and between the cases and make interpretations of the meanings of the cases as a whole (Creswell, 21012).
Theoretical framework. The work of Tajfel (1981), Sysoyev (2001), and Hargreaves et al. (2002) on group memberships, cultural identity, and musical identity was used to inform the data collection, analysis, and organization of this study. Tajfel’s (1981) social identity theory (SIT) focuses on the idea that individuals belong to a number of different groups. These groups are based on characteristics including interests, beliefs, values, appearance, and behaviors, and can be large or small as well as context specific (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979). Individuals identify themselves and others as members of these certain social groups through social comparisons (Tarrant et al., 2001). The groups individuals associate themselves with are referred to as their ingroups, while outgroups concern the groups in which individuals do view themselves as members (Tarrant et al., 2001).

Group memberships are often context specific and may change depending on time and place or those involved (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2005). Building upon concepts of group membership and SIT, Sysoyev (2001) explains cultural identities as a series of group memberships and types of identities. Cultural identities are described in categories including racial, ethnic, economic, geopolitical, gender, religious, ability, and language and are formed through social comparisons concerning one’s beliefs, values, appearance, and behaviors.

Musical identities are conceptualized in two developmental parts: identities in music (IIM) and music in identities (MII). IIM explains socially and culturally defined elements of musical identities such as musician, singer, or composer. Social contexts, such as family and school, and defined roles in one’s musical cultures, such as musician or pianist, serve as references for determining IIM. MII describes the ways individuals
use music to develop non-musical aspects of their identities through personal and social functions and meanings (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Sysoyev, 2001).

For the purposes of this study, I used the theories of social and musical identities to guide data collection and analysis. Theories helped focus observations, interviews, and artifact collection so that I could learn about participants’ musical experiences, cultural identities, and their surrounding social contexts. Additionally, social and musical identity theories served as a framework for my data analysis. I interpreted the collected data through a lens focusing on participants’ musical experiences and comparisons and interactions within their social contexts to gain greater insight into the exploration and development of their identities, including cultural and musical identities.

**Triangulation.** Triangulation within cases helps ensure that data does not get misinterpreted and meanings are conveyed the way they were intended (Stake, 2005). For each important interpretation I make, I triangulated the findings through repetitious data collection and critical reviews of each statement (Stake, 2005). Various data collection methods were used to not only provide in-depth descriptions of the cases, but also to triangulate findings. The methods used in this study included interviews, observations, and the collection of artifacts to gather multiple perspectives of participants and key figures in their lives (i.e., family members, peers, caregivers). Additionally, critical reviews of interpretations were discussed with my advisor and committee members to clarify explanations and avoid over-generalizations. Lastly, I presented my reports to those involved in the research process to complete member checks and ensure the report portrays them accurately (Stake, 2005).
Stake (2005) refers to the triangulation across cases as the trustworthiness of descriptions and findings in the study as a whole. Although triangulation occurred throughout the study, findings from the cross-case analysis were triangulated to avoid misleading descriptions or assumptions. In this study, I triangulated my findings by utilizing previous research for comparison of what is already known about the topic; discussing them with advisors, colleagues, other researchers in the field, and additional insiders and outsiders of the study; and checking them with the participants (Stake, 2005).
CHAPTER 4

FOUR SINGLE CASES

This chapter will present each of the four single cases (i.e., four children). This within-case analysis serves as a description each of child and a presentation of emergent themes that arose specific to their contexts. The interpretations will be presented in a way that furthers and deepens understanding of each within their own contexts (Stake, 2006), thus connections to related literature will be purposefully limited in this chapter.

Snapshots of the children’s daily lives, along with vivid descriptions of their environments, are presented to introduce each child and provide context for each case. Next, themes specific to each case are organized into two major areas related to identity: identities in music (IIM) and music in identities (MII) (Hargreaves, Miell, & MacDonald, 2002). The children’s IIM illuminate how and to what extent they define themselves within the musical domain and their MII illustrate how their musical experiences act as a means or resource for developing aspects of their cultural identities, which encompass ethnic, youth, and gender identities, among others (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Sysoyev, 2001).

Getting to know Ava

Ava is an outgoing 11-year-old, sixth grade girl who is of Costa Rican descent. Her mother, Meg, was born and raised in Miami, and father, Antonio, moved to Miami from Costa Rica around his junior year of high school. Ava is the only child of the recently divorced couple; however, she has an older half-brother and sister from Antonio’s previous marriage.
When I first met Ava, she excitedly greeted me at the front door of her Grandmother’s house with a newly-braced grin, stretched from one ear to the other, on her perfectly round face. Eager to begin our meeting, she hurriedly led me down a long hallway to an oversized, sunken living room where she and her grandmother, Dianne, had just been watching the Disney Channel from a large, L-shaped couch placed in the corner of the room. Ava leaped onto the couch and motioned for me to follow. “I did ‘Popular’ from *Wicked,*” she exclaimed before I could make it to my seat. “Yes, at the children’s choir. She did the whole thing,” Dianne, proudly added. A moment later, she turned to Ava and asked, “Would you feel comfortable singing some for us?” Ava shook her head in agreement and confidently strutted to the front of the room. She combed her fingers through her wavy dark brown hair, took a deep breath, and sang:

Whenever I see someone, less fortunate than I  
And let’s face it. Who isn’t? Less fortunate than I?  
My tender heart tends to start to bleed  
And when someone needs a makeover, I simply have to take over  
I know, I know. Exactly, what they need  
And even in your case, though it’s the toughest case I’ve yet to face  
Don’t worry, I’m determined to succeed  
Follow my lead, and yes, indeed. You will be Popular!

Ava added melodic ornaments and embellished each of the phrases while she batted her eyelashes and swayed back and forth. She made the song come alive through her own musical interpretations and animated movements.

**Ava’s ecological environments.** Ava lives primarily between her parents’ homes and respective communities, school, and the church where she attends choir rehearsal. Her social contexts within and between these spaces typically consist of her family, friends, peers, teachers, and others throughout the community. Additionally, the digital
spaces woven throughout Ava’s physical environments, via the Internet, television, and radio, expands her social contexts to include popular media figures and cyber communities.

**Home.** Ava spends most weekdays with her mother and weekends with her father. Her parents’ divorce forced the relocation of the family from their house in a suburban agricultural neighborhood to more urban areas of Miami-Dade County. Ava’s mother, Meg, is a small-framed Caucasian woman with short blonde hair and freckles on her cheeks and forehead. She is somewhat reserved, but always extremely hospitable with me during my visits. She rents a cozy two-bedroom apartment in a large complex consisting of a circular road lined with two-story buildings decorated in a Mediterranean style with hues of orange, brown, yellow, and red trimmed on each wall and roof.

Upon my first visit to the apartment, Meg welcomed me in with a bottle of water and Ava excitedly led me down a short hallway to her bedroom. The beige-colored walls of her room were mostly bare with the exception of a small canvas print above the television on her dresser that read “Dance Just Dance” and a handmade construction paper decoration that resembled a street sign nestled between two twin-sized beds. The sign’s flags pointed to each bed (See Figure 4.1). The right flag read Ava’s name, accompanied by a set of hand-drawn eighth notes, while the left read “Friend” next to a treble clef. Impressed by her craftiness, I commented, “I love how you have the treble clef and eighth notes on your flags.” Ava sighed and replied,

Well, I was planning on making my room ALL music, but I guess people don’t really want music decorations. There wasn’t anything musical at the stores and stuff…I was expecting treble clefs and things like that to put up. Like a bunch of music notes and things that say, like, ‘Keep Calm and Sing On’ and stuff like that, but the only thing I could find was this ‘Dance Just Dance’ thing. So since I couldn’t find anything, I thought I would just make my own.
Antonio, Ava’s father, is tall, athletic-looking man with dark curly hair and caramel-colored skin. He lives about 45 minutes north of Meg’s apartment in a community known for its large Cuban and Cuban-American population. Only a few feet separated each house in the large middle class neighborhood. Tightly nestled between two almost identical looking houses, the little yellow house is trimmed with white metal bars on the exterior’s windows and doors for added security.

Ava peered at me through the screened door as I walked up the driveway for my first visit to Antonio’s house. “Hi!” she screamed from behind the barred door. Ava quickly turned the lock and welcomed me in with a hug. She took my hand and explained that she would give me a tour of the house. Our first stop was the dining room to visit
with her small, quarter-sized turtles. “What are their names?” I asked. Ava eagerly replied, “Leonardo and Michaela! Leonardo for the ninja turtles and Michaela because it’s kinda like the Michaelangelo turtle but a girl’s name.” Next, she led me to the living room where two large leather couches sat opposite of a large flat screen television. Ava sprinted to the same corner of the television and exclaimed, “And this is my guitar!” as she grabbed a three-quarter size guitar from a stand next to the television. “My dad’s friend got it for me. It used to be one of his old guitars, but he barely used it so he just gave it to me. I was so happy!” Ava began plucking its strings and continued, “But I don’t really use it that much. I use it once in awhile, but not much.”

School. Ava attends a school located a couple of miles from her mother’s apartment in a middle class, residential neighborhood in southern Miami-Dade County. Surrounded by green grass and palm trees, the campus was originally intended exclusively for elementary-aged students. However, with the growing population of South Miami-Dade county, the school recently added an upper division building to accommodate students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

Upon meeting Ava, she had only attended her new school for two weeks. Although she admitted to liking the school, Ava expressed a few concerns regarding her recent transition. She explained how she had to essentially “start over” with new friends since most of her peers from elementary school were sent to a different middle school and expressed her frustrations regarding her new academic responsibilities. “Middle school can get you really stressed out,” she explained as we discussed her teachers’ expectations and increased amounts of homework.
Community. Ava receives formal music training through a community children’s choir that rehearses at a church located near her mother’s house. I attended their first rehearsal of the fall semester and had the opportunity to speak with her choir teacher. We discussed the diversity of the program, which consists of students residing in the surrounding, middle-class community as well as those who are bussed in from other areas in Miami. Outside of rehearsal at the church, Ava’s choir performs throughout the community. They have performed at malls and sporting events in addition to retirement homes and hospitals for children with special needs.

Ava also engages with the community outside of her choir. In her father’s community, Antonio and Ava frequent the movie theater and occasionally attend cultural celebrations and community festivals sponsored by the city. In her mother’s community, Meg and Ava often run errands together and engage in outdoor activities such as miniature golf and paddle boarding at the beach.

Ava’s Identities in Music

The Singer. “You will never not hear me singing. I’ll always be here humming something or there singing something,” Ava explained while sitting around the living room with her father and me. “And in the car...we spend a lot of time in there,” Antonio added. According to Ava and her family members, she has always shown a strong interest in singing and performing. “When I was younger I was obsessed with The Wiggles...I didn’t stop watching them till I was like, six years old and I still know all of their songs ‘cause I was always singing with them,” she laughed. Ava also reminisced about the musical memories she has with her older half-sister, Seirra, as well.

One of my favorite songs is “Shawty’s Like a Melody” [A popular Sean Kingston song from 2010] ‘cause that was the first song that me and my sister created a
dance to and sang to. And it was so much fun! She was like, 15 and I was 5. I would go in her room and we would create dance moves and we would just be singing to the song and we did this whole choreography too.

By the time Ava was eight, her mother recognized her musical behaviors and registered for a local children’s choir. “I just always really loved singing and my mom realized that so she signed me up for choir,” Ava recounted.

*Singer preferences and behaviors.* The majority of Ava’s formal musical experiences involve singing. She is a seasoned member of the children’s community choir and participated in singing-based activities in elementary school. Her current school does not have a choir program, leaving orchestra as the only musical elective. “I was like, what? They don’t have chorus? I mean, what school doesn’t?” Ava said disapprovingly. “Did you think about trying orchestra?” I replied. “Well, I sorta have, but it’s like, not really my number one thing. ‘Cause I’m really more of a singer, so yeah.” The topic resurfaced at one of our last meetings after Ava shared a “selfie” with her friend’s violin. “Do you think you would change your mind about orchestra?” I asked. “No, not at all. All they do is violins and stuff. I’m just like, meeeeh. I just like choir,” she replied.

In later conversations, I realized Ava is not completely against playing musical instruments. She enjoys “messing around” on a refurbished guitar kept at her father’s house, but does not care to study it formally. “I usually just play it for fun. I don’t really want to actually play it. I just like to pretend to play while I’m singing,” Ava explained. During our next meeting, Ava proudly presented me with her iPad. “So I took a video of me playing the guitar last weekend!” She flipped through her video collection and stopped on an image of herself sitting on the couch in a yellow dress with a guitar in her lap. “See?” she screeched as she pressed play. Ava was sitting on the couch and holding a
She sang “Last Christmas” while repeatedly plucking the bass string of her guitar with little regard to the key, meter, and tempo of the song. “I just plucked it when it stopped,” Ava interjected as we watched the video. Although the sounds often clashed with her vocal performance, she continued to pluck the same string throughout its entirety.

Since her music electives are limited at school, Ava’s school musical experiences are often wedged into pockets of unstructured, and often unsupervised, time. Ava described how she and her friends frequently engage with music while eating lunch on the cafeteria patio. “We always have singing battle-offs,” she said. “Singing battle-offs?” I asked. “It’s sort of like in Pitch Perfect. So the topic could be partying and then we will have to think of a song about partying or heartbreaks or whatever and then you just jump in,” Ava explained enthusiastically.

When it comes to listening to music, Ava is an extremely active listener who attempts to sing along to almost every song she hears. I noticed this quality quite frequently in our meetings and through the videos she recorded of herself. During one of our conversations I questioned her about this behavior and she replied, “Well, that’s the whole point. If there is a song going on, you can’t just sit there. You have to be with it. Why even have music on if you are not singing?”

Ava admitted that singing along with the radio or iPad is her primary source of entertainment while driving in the car. “We spend so much time driving,” Ava laughed. Many of her daily “selfies” taken with the Photo 365 iPad application were of her singing with the radio in the car. Ava also compiled videos of herself singing songs from U.S. Top 40 radio in the car on a recent road trip. “I would just listen to the radio and be like,
Oh! I like this song! Then I would get out the iPad, press record, and sing with it,” she giggled as we watched her videos.

Ava’s favorite iPad application is based off of the competitive singing show *The Voice*. The karaoke singing game lets players choose songs from a song bank to perform. The game screen (See Figure 4.2) displays the lyrics and melodic contour of that song. The player sings along in hopes to impress as many of the four judges as possible. When sung accurately, the judges turn around in approval and players are awarded points. The points act as currency for unlocking new songs from the song bank, which predominantly features popular artists in the United States such as Ariana Grande, Bruno Mars, Taylor Swift, Selena Gomez, and Rihanna. During one of our meetings, Ava showed me a video recording that she made through *The Voice* application of her singing Meghan Trainor’s “Dear Future Husband.” Once the video ended, Ava flipped through the song bank. “Let me get a new song,” she said. “You can do any of those?” I inquired. “Well, you have to buy them with the points you earn…I like to look through all of them to make sure I get the right one. Party in the USA, Fight song, hmm. There are so many choices!” After a couple minutes of deliberation, Ava finally decided on Rachel Platten’s “Fight Song” and sang it in its entirety while I watched. Ava seemed to take this challenge seriously and practically ignored my comments until the song ended.
Figure 4.2. Screenshot of The Voice application for iPad.

Ava admitted that she often searches for music videos to sing to with her YouTube application when she is “craving” a certain song or singer. She favors songs featuring solo artists and singing groups, particularly those featured on American Top 40 radio, and finds song lyrics to be extremely compelling. She often places her focus on song lyrics and believes one cannot truly understand a song without knowing “the story behind it.” She enjoys listening and singing to songs that “are actually relatable and real” and believes every song has a meaning and tells a story. She continued,

Most people are like, oh she [Taylor Swift] just sings about breakups and all that, but I’m like, what’s so wrong with that? Literally, she is just singing about life. I mean, people think, oh I just want to hear the upbeat songs and all that, but you know? Life isn’t always going to be like that. I love the songs that actually relate to life.

Ava believes that the stories songs tell are intriguing and can actually teach people about life.
Although it is hard for Ava to narrow down her list of favorite songs, she has a slight bias for female singers. She compares the two, explaining,

I guess you can say I like girl singers a little more than guy singers because I love them and I like their music. Guy singers? I just like their music. Like, I like Shawn Mendes’ music. But if you asked my friend about him, she is addicted to Shawn Mendes. So she would be like ‘I love him’ and have a poster of him.

Ava sees popular female singers as more relatable to her than male singers. She is interested and attracted not only to the music they make, but also who they are and what they wear.

Ava often spoke about her idol, Carrie Underwood, and how she hopes to rise to fame as she did,

Cause before she was just like, a regular person. Messed up hair and just a regular t-shirt and shorts. Now she is just like all the big thing and I love that about her...that could be me too!

Not only did Ava admit to emulating her idols, she described imitating them as well.

During our next meeting, Ava showed off the new color scheme of the rubber bands on her braces. She described the reasoning behind her choice. “They are pink and blue, so now I can go around and be like, guess who I am?” Ava put her pointer finger near her lips and smiled. “I do that cause that’s what she does in the music video and it’s like, my favorite part,” she exclaimed. Unsure of her reference, I inquired, “Who’s she?” Ava repeated the pose and screeched, “Katy Perry! She does that while they are singing T.G.I.F in the background in her video.” Katy Perry’s character in her “T.G.I.F.” music video was a high-school girl who Ava described as, “a dork turned pretty.”

**Singer confidence.** Ava displays great confidence in her singing abilities. Not only were these behaviors quite evident throughout my own observations, Ava mentioned them in our own discussions as well:
If I wasn’t confident, I don’t even know what I would do with myself. Someone would probably be like, could you sing to me Ava? And I’d be like (slouches over and timidly responds) oh, I don’t know. But I’m really just like SURE! (giggling) Actually, I ask people if they want to hear me sing. I just love to sing.

Ava also exuded confidence in the skill and knowledge she gained since joining choir. “I know a lot because I’ve been going to that choir since I was like, eight and I’ve been in the choir since it has started. So, yeah, I’ve learned a lot.” She grabbed her iPad and opened the Book Creator application. After swiping through a couple of options, Ava stopped on an icon that read *Five Secret Music Tips* beneath it. She flipped through each electronic page of the book and explained how she adapted most of her ideas from “the stuff” she does in choir. Ranging from best vocal practices to reading music notation, Ava’s “musical tips” were also accompanied by picture and audio references (See Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. Selection from Ava’s *Five Secret Music Tips* eBook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip two</th>
<th>Tip four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A easy way to remember the note letters of the treble clef</td>
<td>The best time to sneak a breath while singing with a group is in the middle of the word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think the musical alphabet a b c d e f g a b c d e f g e t ..........</td>
<td>Try to find when I took a breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But in this case think e f g a b c d e f</td>
<td>That was a little obvious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But in a group you don't notice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ava admitted that her family’s encouragement contributes to her confidence as well. “My dad does it a lot,” Ava giggled as she began to play a video of herself singing “Last Christmas” in her father’s living room. Unaware of her live recording session, Antonio walked in about halfway through the performance and sat next to Ava. Upon
Ava’s finish, he walked in front of the camera and extended his arm for a high five while exclaiming, “Heck yeah, baby!” Ava smirked and said, “Um, Dad? Turn around.” Antonio looked over, saw the iPad, and realized that he was interfering. Nevertheless, he moved even closer to the device and boasted, “This one’s the best right here. The best, the greatest! RIGHT HERE. This girl! The best!” Ava’s family is extremely supportive of her participation in choir as well. Her mother, father, and grandparents take turns transporting her to and from rehearsal and whether the venue is a mall, sporting event, or concert hall—they rarely miss a performance.

**Singer comparisons.** Ava realizes that she possesses musical knowledge, skill, and experience that others in her micro-level social environments do not. During our meetings, Ava was quick to judge the vocal and performance qualities of others. Through comparisons primarily between herself and her family and peers, she recognizes others’ poor vocal tones and inabilitys to match pitch and “sing the right notes.” In addition, Ava acknowledges others’ lack of performance qualities in comparison to her own. For instance, Ava compared her outgoing personality to her mother’s more reserved qualities:

> Like, my mom and I are opposites. She was shy growing up and I’m not! Like, I’m this energetic girl! And you (pointing to her mother) didn’t like singing solos and stuff and I’m just like, HOW are we even related?

She also drew comparisons with a number of her fellow choir members at a recent concert:

> Everybody kind of just stands there and doing the movements just like this and I get up there and I’m like, waving my hands really big and singing…I’m just doing all these hand motions and stuff and everyone else is more small and shy.

Although she often compares herself to those who are not as skilled, Ava admits to being inspired by her singer role models. Ava aspires to be like her favorite female
solo artist, Carrie Underwood. Underwood’s *American Idol* victory continues to motivate Ava towards achieving her own goals. “Like, she’s [Underwood] this simple girl who turned into this big phenomenon…I see her do it, so why can’t I?” Ava commented.

Ava also aspires to be like her community choir teachers. She looks up to her teachers and integrates their musical values into her own. Ava often speaks of her teachers’ vocal talents and how she values music notation and reading sheet music due to its focus in choir. Although she admitted to learning songs by rote best, Ava works toward improving her reading skills to gain greater acceptance among her teachers and as a singer in the choir program.

*Singer conceptions.* Ava identified two types of singers: those who sing by reading music and those sing by hearing it. She explained that she was definitely more of a *hearing singer*, although she could be a *reading singer* if the music was not too difficult. Ava finds it much easier to listen to and repeat a song or melody than to read sheet music. At home, she is exclusively a hearing singer. Ava learns and memorizes songs just by listening to the radio and Youtube—an oral-aural process. Although she does not own any songbooks or sheet music to the songs she listens and sings to at home, she often searches the Internet for song lyrics to clarify any words she does not know. In choir, Ava’s music reading skills are nurtured a little more. Although they typically teach songs by rote, her teachers provide in-class copies of sheet music for each song. They also set aside time to teach music notation. Ava acknowledges the importance of reading music and she hopes to improve so that she may be selected to be in the more advanced vocal group.
Ava acknowledges that singers must possess certain vocal and performance qualities through both formal music experiences in choir and informal music experiences with her family, friends, and digital media (See Figure 4.4). Ava’s formal music experiences inform her singer criteria through her belief that singers should not only be able to learn songs (by rote or music notation), but also possess some knowledge on vocal technique and ability to sing with a nice tone. Furthermore, her choir experiences taught Ava the importance of standing up straight, with proper singing posture. Ava’s informal music experiences at home with popular music and music television and other sources of media inform her criteria that singers should have a good voice, whether it is pleasing or “catchy-sounding” and should be extremely animated in their performances.

Figure 4.4. Ava’s conceptions of singer identity based on musical experience

**Future aspirations.** Ava considers Carrie Underwood an influential role model. She is enamored and inspired by Underwood’s narrative of winning *American Idol* and her transformation from “a simple girl into this big phenomenon.” Underwood’s story
gives Ava hope in achieving her dream of becoming a famous singer. Ava already has a pretty clear vision on the type of singer she will be when she grows up and has her heart set on performing as a solo act. Additionally, she knows how she will dance on stage, what she will sing and wear, and the design of her first album cover (See Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5. Ava’s album cover.

**The Songwriter.** Closely linked to her singer identity is Ava’s songwriter identity. “I love writing songs, I’m really a songwriter,” Ava boasted in our first meeting together. “So how do you come up with your songs?” I asked curiously. “Well, I’m just a natural songwriter and, I just. They just come to me,” Ava said in a passionate tone.

Her seeming obsession with song lyrics and their ability to create moods and tell stories inspired Ava’s developing songwriter identity and motivated her to write her own songs. “Well, first I started writing songs ‘cause I just liked them,” she explained. Ava later admitted how she wished to emulate singer-songwriter idols such as Taylor Swift and Carrie Underwood. “I was like, ‘let me see if I can do this.’ Then I wrote a song and then I thought that maybe I could just write more, so I just started writing them,” Ava said proudly. Ava admitted that her songs were not written with “notes and stuff.” Instead,
Ava explained how she wrote lyrics and “just remember[ed] the beat and everything else” for each of her original songs.

Ava acknowledges that she is better at writing songs for some genres of music more than others. In her attempts to emulate one of her favorite artists, Nikki Minaj, Ava wrote a rap. “It failed miserably,” she laughed. “I just tried to rhyme words, like a mix of Dr. Seuss and Nikki Minaj…just no. It was not my thing,” Ava said lightheartedly. After her attempt, she decided that she would stick to writing songs similar to the popular music she frequently hears on the radio and the Disney Channel.

Ava listens to a lot of Taylor Swift’s music and emulates her songwriting style because she feels like she can relate to Swift’s lyrics. Ava jokes, “I listen to Taylor Swift too much” and describes how she writes a lot of love songs like Swift. “I’ve never really liked anybody or anything like that…I just love her songs, and I just write a lot of songs kinda like hers,” Ava explained. Later on in our conversation, Ava performed an original song that pays a small tribute to Taylor Swift.

Do do du-du du-do do do do do
Duh-Do do do do do do do do do
I find my way, through the town.
I’m never turning around....
I’ll fight all night and daaaaaay
Who am I kidding I won yesterday

Don’t, stop, listening
Stop, being, a foool
Do do du-du du-do do do do do
Duh-Do do do do do do do do do do do

I find my way, through the town.
and I’m not backing down
I’ll fight all night and daaaaaay
Who am I kidding I won yesterday
I congratulated Ava once she finished. “Did you hear it at the end? When I said like, ever? I did that cause Taylor Swift did that at the end of her song like that too,” Ava explained. Not only does Ava have a clear idea of the types of songs she feels confident writing, she can articulate resources that influence and inspire her style as well.

Ava articulated her preference for writing songs in English. She admitted to experiencing difficulties in understanding Spanish as well as feeling as though she cannot fully express herself through the language due to her limited vocabulary. We conversed on the topic during a meeting with her and her father, Antonio. She turned to her father and said, “I remember you asking me why I don’t put any Spanish in my songs. I was like, because I need to understand it first! I need to understand my songs!” Connecting with the songs she writes is extremely important to Ava. She feels the only way she can fully express her stories, ideas, and emotions is with English lyrics.

Ava typically writes her songs a cappella; however, she is not opposed to adding accompanying instruments. She explained how she sometimes plays one her songs on the keyboard at her father’s house. Curious as to how she learns to play her songs, I asked her how she knew what to play. She replied, 

Well, I never really knew. I just, like, played each one until I would be like, it’s this one! Then I would go to the higher keys and try to find it up there. Then I would mark them with a sticky note so I knew where to start.

Ava utilized her aural skills to figure out her melody on the keyboard and created a system of stickers in order to remember what keys to play when she sang along. Similarly
to singer identity, Ava experimented with instruments in service to her singing and songwriting.

Ava finds songwriting fun and enjoyable. She often writes songs with her free time at school and afterschool childcare, to alleviate boredom. “During school I was done with a test and I was just so bored…I was like, I have nothing to do, so I’ll just write a song…(laughing) so I did!” As I started questioning Ava’s most recent songs, she admitted to writing less than she used to due to time constraints associated with her new middle school schedule. She explained how songwriting “was more of an afterschool thing” that she would do after completing her homework. Now that she moved on to middle school, she finds herself barely finishing her homework by the time her mother picks her up from aftercare.

Ava described future aspirations similar to her singing career when referring to songwriting as well. Songwriting started out as an activity she would do when feeling bored, but her increased interest and confidence in writing has her contemplating her future. “I’m thinking of it [songwriting] more like a career now,” Ava explained. She envisions how her songwriter identity is related to her future endeavors and hopes to perform the songs she wrote herself when she becomes a famous singer.

**Ava’s Music in Identities**

**Exploring ethnicity.** Ava is at a stage where she acknowledges her ethnic identity, but feels the need to continue to explore it. When I asked Ava how she defined her ethnicity, she replied, “Well, I’m Floridian and I’m Costa Rican. So I guess you could say I’m Floricostan.” As our conversation continued, she admitted that she feels quite secure with her “Floridian side,” while she sometimes struggles with her “Costa Rican
side.” “I kind of have a little bit of trouble, sometimes, with my Costa Rican side. Like, I don’t really show it often, but I do,” Ava explained.

The security Ava feels with the “Floridian side” of her ethnic identity stems from her dominant surrounding culture. She is exposed to U.S. culture daily through the media she consumes, the school she attends, and many of the people she encounters. Ava is confident in the knowledge she possesses about her U.S. culture and performs this side of her ethnic identity rather effortlessly. She engages with an abundance of U.S. popular music alone and with her family, friends, and peers and writes songs that emulate the styles of her favorite U.S.-born singers.

Ava continues to explore and make sense of her “Costa Rican side” and ethnic identity. In one of our meetings, Ava reflected on the sadness she felt when her family moved away from the Costa Rican enclave where she grew up. Located in the southern region of Miami-Dade County, Ava described how good she felt “to have our culture there.” She recognizes how few Costa Ricans live in her new neighborhoods and compares it with her old neighborhood, stating that there was, “a lot more of my culture there than here.” She continued to compare her current, more diverse Hispanic neighborhoods to her Costa Rican enclave and comment on the various types of Hispanic races and cultures she encounters in Miami:

‘Cause here, you don’t really know. There’s a lot more cultures here. A bunch of different people with a bunch of different cultures and you don’t really know who’s what and who’s from where…for all I know the person next to me could be Costa Rican, but I don’t know.

Since her Costa Rican culture is not clearly present in her current communities and not as accessible as the surrounding dominant culture, Ava’s father serves as her primary Costa Rican culture bearer – a keeper of the tradition.
Antonio exposes her to a variety of traditional and contemporary practices through music, dance, media, and cultural celebrations. Since Ava’s proficiency in Spanish is limited, her father encourages her learning through Latin music and media. Ava and Antonio watch TV shows together such as *Latin American Idol*. Ava admits that she is not particularly motivated to engage in Latin media outside of her father’s presence. She described her frustrations, “I speak Spanish but not that much. I mean, they are cool shows, but I don’t understand the things they are saying!” Throughout the rest of the conversation, she continued to articulate how she loses interest in Spanish-speaking television rather quickly due to the language barrier.

Ava also admitted to having a hard time understanding the Spanish songs she hears primarily due to the lyrics used and the speed in which they are sung. Since Ava claimed to put much of her focus on song lyrics, she quickly lost interest in songs that she could not understand. Ava spoke of similar frustrations during a choir rehearsal where she learned an entire song in French before receiving any sort of translation or context. She explained,

> We finished the whole song and the teachers were like, ‘Do you want to know what you are singing about?’ I was like, ‘uhhh, yeah!’ We would just copy what the teacher said and had no idea...it makes it harder [to sing] when I don’t know.

Ava’s father tried to teach Ava to speak Spanish, but she admitted to her lack of commitment to learning the language. “I mean my dad teaches me, he still does, but I’m usually just like, ‘Dad! I’m watching Youtube, leave me alone!’” Ava said, while bursting into laughter. She continued, “[My] neighbors tried teaching me too, but I remember being more interested in just playing in their playground.” Nevertheless, she
acknowledges the importance of speaking Spanish and envisions herself learning in the future.

‘Cause my dad’s side of the family mostly speaks Spanish, so when I try to speak to them in English, they only understand so much. So I kinda have to learn at one point, cause my grandmother, she is 92, and she doesn’t really understand what I say. I kinda feel like, not that I have to, but that I need to.

Antonio also teaches Ava about her Hispanic heritage through traditional music and dance. Ava spoke of a time where her father gave her a long, flowing skirt from Costa Rica and taught her a traditional partner dance. She described, “People were over at our house practicing for this festival...so I was watching and he brought me in and taught me.” Rather than trying to describe the dance, Ava quickly sprung to her feet and performed what she remembered. With no skirt or music, she began to explain the steps of the dance as she moved. “So the dance goes like this, where you get your skirt and stuff and you have to show it,” Ava made movements as if she was holding an imaginary skirt and waved one arm at a time. She continued while she slowly spun around to her left, with her arms outstretched. “And then it goes duh duh duh duh duh duh duh,” she stopped and began spinning in the opposite direction. “Then there is more to it, like, it gets more complicated cause the men will do the same thing with their hats,” Ava explained while she raised her hand to her face as if she was holding the brim of a hat. During our next meeting, she reflected on the experience once more. “Learning the dance was fun and it helped teach my about my culture, but I wouldn’t want to dance like that all the time,” she giggled.

Ava admitted that Spanish music is not her preferred music; however she defended her stance anytime I may have insinuated her distaste for the music during our conversations. During one of our meetings she responded,
Like, it wouldn’t be my first choice, but I do like it. It’s just that I’d rather listen to something else. So if I hear a [Spanish] song on the radio I’ll go back to it if I can’t find anything better on the other channels cause I don’t want to miss one of my FAVORITE songs, you know?

Ava respects Spanish music for its cultural importance and symbolism and points out positive elements such as “the upbeat feel and exciting melodies.” Since she cannot understand most of the lyrics, Ava compares listening to Spanish music with listening to orchestral music. “You don’t always understand what ‘words’ they are saying or playing, you just listen to the music,” she explained.

Although Ava’s proficiency in Spanish is limited, she does not view herself as less of a Costa Rican in any way. She explained, “I don’t feel guilty or anything because, really, I’m from Miami, from Florida…it’s hard to explain, but it’s just who I am.” Ava’s ethnic identity is a fusion of her American and Costa Rican heritages. However, she recognizes that she performs aspects of her American identity more often than her Costa Rican identity. Although Ava acknowledges and respects the meaning and value of Spanish music and dance through its power to help her explore and express her ethnic identity, she does not particularly prefer to engage with it on a daily basis in the ways she engages with U.S. popular music.

Ava’s musical preferences may be attributed, in part, to the dominance of U.S. culture in her surrounding physical and social contexts as well as her overarching digital spaces. She is most attracted to music that is familiar to her and largely present in her daily life. Ava’s musical surroundings and preferences mirrors the experiences of elementary-aged students in Davis’ (2015) research. Davis (2015) noted that “While [children] may appreciate and enjoy the music of their particular faith or ethnicity...popular music seems to be the most pervasive music in their everyday
activities and therefore the most familiar” (p. 270). Furthermore, Bosacki, Francis-Murray, Pollon, and Elliot (2006) found that lyrics play a large role in children’s evaluations of music, as they tend to interpret lyrics quite literally. Ava’s fixation on lyrics and musical meaning coupled with her limited proficiency in Spanish may also deter her engagements with Spanish music.

**Conceiving gender.** Ava’s choir performed a Broadway-themed concert where the members were given the opportunity to audition for vocal solos. Ava chose to audition with a song from the musical *Wicked*, an alternative story that retells the events in *The Wizard of Oz*. Her song of choice, was “Popular,” originally sung by the beautiful, yet superficial character, Glinda the Good. The lyrics describe Glinda’s plan to make over her friend so that she may gain greater acceptance among her community. The character boasts about her own popularity throughout the song and displays confidence in her knowledge of how to be admired by focusing on the importance of appearance rather than intelligence. Ava chose “Popular” for her admiration of the featured character, Glinda, and the “perky” feel of the song. She prided herself in the costume she designed for the performance and described how she enjoyed dressing up “like a cheerleader” in pink clothes, make-up, and a side ponytail.

Ava made comments about looking like a cheerleader on several occasions. While reviewing the “selfies” she posted on her Photo 365 calendar, she pointed out pictures that she liked of herself because she “looked like a cheerleader” in them. She saw the term as a positive description and related it to her hair, smile, and clothing.

During our second meeting, Ava spoke of her favorite Taylor Swift song, “You Belong With Me,” and performed an excerpt for me, singing the phrase, “She wears short
skirts, I wear t-shirts, she’s cheer captain and I’m on the bleachers.” The song describes Swift’s character as an undesirable nerd in love with a boy who only sees her as a friend. Although she and the boy have much in common and enjoy each other’s company, he continues to date a pretty, popular cheerleader despite many flaws in her personality. Ava explained how she fell in love with the song through its upbeat feel and relatable lyrics. She compared herself to Swift’s character, admitting that she was a bit of a tomboy when she first heard the song.

Cheerleaders are often depicted as the popular, pretty girls in American popular culture and media. To Ava, cheerleaders are desirable females. They are the “girly girls” who are known for their beauty and popularity. During one of our last meetings, Ava acknowledged her transitions over the past couple of months,

I’ve kinda gotten a little more ‘girly girl’ lately. Like, I have more girly stuff than I would before. Cause before I would be a tomboy and only wear shorts and a t-shirt and now I dress more like in dresses, pink, and jewelry and stuff.

To Ava, a tomboy also embodies one’s actions as well.

Like, I was a tomboy growing up, but I’m MOSTLY girly now. I say mostly just ‘cause most ‘girly girls’ might not want to go mudding on an ATV like me. I don’t mind getting dirty, but at the same time, I love things like makeup.

Ava continued to describe her growing fascination with makeup and explained how she was already used to putting on makeup for her choir performances before she started wearing it more regularly. She concluded, “I think I’ll turn out being girly, but not TOO girly, you know?”

Ava uses popular songs and singers as a reference point while exploring and developing aspects of her gender identity. Just as the young girls in Tracy’s (2001) study admitted how popular music informed them about heterosexual relationships and
In her musical experiences, Ava’s experiences expose her to gender stereotypes and influence her beliefs on what she considers desirable female qualities. Ava imitates same-sex models and appropriates gendered ideas and behaviors described in her favorite songs. Although she used to identify as a tomboy, Ava speaks of her transition to more of a “girly girl.” Her “girly girl” criteria and the shift of her focus on her appearance and the way she dresses and uses makeup is influenced, in part, by her musical experiences.

**Getting to Know Daniel**

Daniel is an exceptionally well-mannered, articulate 11-year-old boy. His mother, Maria, was born in Ecuador and moved to the U.S. as an adult. His father, Jose, is a second-generation Cuban immigrant, born and raised in Miami. Daniel has two younger brothers, Sean and Edwin. Sean is eight and in the third grade, while Edwin recently turned five and started kindergarten.

During my first visit, I accompanied him in the kitchen as he prepared his own snack. I watched him as he rolled up three slices of prosciutto and carefully situated them around a small scoop of pesto sauce in the center of his plate. He explained his appreciation for “the finer things in life” while he searched the pantry for a box of flatbread crackers. “I’m a foodie. I appreciate food. I mean, I started eating sushi when I was two. But everyone at school? Horrible eaters. They could just eat potato chips for lunch and be done.” Daniel shook his head disapprovingly and continued, “Kids have lost three things these days: Kids have lost responsibility, kids have lost their taste in food, and then there’s music. Kids have lost their want to play music.” His mother entered from the other room, chuckled, turned to me, and said, “Sometimes he can really seem younger than what he is and other times he’s like an adult!”
Daniel’s ecological environments. Daniel spends most of his time at home, school, and in the community, where he participated in a number of extra-curricular activities, mainly soccer and violin lessons. Daniel also navigates a variety of digital spaces woven throughout his physical spaces via mobile devices, gaming consoles, and computers. Daniel experienced a variety of social contexts within and across these physical and digital spaces through daily interactions with family, friends, peers, teachers, coaches, and media figures.

Home. Daniel’s house is located in a small housing development within a suburban, middle-class community in western Miami known for its large Cuban-American population. The houses in his neighborhood were quite uniform all of which painted beige, orange, or yellow. Tightly sandwiched between two larger, beige-colored homes, Daniel’s canary-yellow, one-story home had a basketball hoop in the driveway and a small soccer goal in the front yard.

As I first walked up the driveway, I noticed a pair of neon-colored soccer cleats strewn in the grass near the small concrete entryway leading to the front door. I knocked on the door and heard a bit of commotion. A couple of moments later, I heard a faint high-pitched voice call “Who is it?” from the other side of the door call. A second later, the door opened slightly and Edwin, Daniel’s youngest brother, peeked out to investigate. Daniel’s mother, Maria, quickly pulled Edwin back and opened the door. She greeted me with a smile and invited me in. I entered the house and immediately found myself standing in the living room. Daniel and his brother stood in front of the coffee table, which was three or four feet from the large screen of their television, engrossed in a videogame. Daniel’s eyes were glued to the screen and hardly acknowledged my
presence. However, Edwin had all of his attention focused on me. He pulled on my pant leg with one hand and waved his iPad in the air with the other as he excitedly asked me to watch a video with him. I agreed and followed the young boy to the couch. As I waited for our viewing session, I observed Daniel playing his videogame. He and his brother leaned left and right, jumped in the air, and crouched low to the ground as they synchronized their body movements with those of their characters. They bobbed their heads and hummed along to the game’s soundtrack, which sounded like a heavy metal band complete with electric guitars, synthesizers, and occasional vocals, and shouted, chanted, and improvised sound effects to complement their characters’ actions and the game’s events. After a couple of minutes, Daniel gave up on his game and turned his attention to me. We sat down in a small seating area in the back corner of the living room. I noticed a music stand set up a couple of feet away from my recliner and asked Daniel if he ever used the space to practice. “Always,” he replied. I wondered if the noise and distractions bothered him while he practiced and he assured me that he “is used to it.”

During another meeting with Daniel, we agreed to have our conversation in his room. The room sat at the end of a short hallway and appeared to be room neat and organized. A bookcase filled entirely with different sets of Legos sat in the corner of his room next to a desk which housed an old, refurbished Macintosh laptop, a variety of office supplies, multiple stacks of Pokémon cards, and a number of soccer and baseball medals. The four-framed pictures hanging over Daniel’s neatly made bed complemented the gray and yellow theme of his room as well as his musical interests. One of the frames displays a yellow print of a violin while another reads, “Keep Calm and Play Violin.” I commented on the cleanliness of his room and Daniel explained that he does not spend
much time there. His mother jokingly interjected, “The boys follow us every where around the house! I keep telling my husband that we should just move back to our the small one bedroom apartment we had before moving here!”

**School.** Daniel is a fifth grade student at a small public, Title 1 school just south of his community. Although there are a number of Hispanic teachers and students, the school is predominantly African-American. The classrooms, media center, and cafeteria are all housed in one large building built around the 1960’s. The outside walls, colored with light sea foam green paint and trimmed in a much darker teal, are stained by the wear and tear of Miami’s subtropical climate. However, the well-needed facelift of the school does not seem to bother Daniel’s mother. Maria spoke highly of the school and articulated how it feels as though her children attend a private school due to the small student population and overwhelming support from Daniel’s teachers and administrators.

Daniel’s elementary school offers compulsory general music classes divided by grade and classroom teacher. With his extensive study of violin and classical music, Daniel does not find much legitimacy in the class. He describes, “My school doesn’t have any music. Well it does, but it doesn’t have, you know, *music* music. It only has recorder and stuff.” Daniel often loses interest in the class due to the simplicity of the curriculum, explaining, “Sometimes I’ll get bored in music class because I already know everything that she is talking about.”

**Community.** Daniel is quite active in his community and the greater Miami area. He spends most weeknights attending soccer practice at a field located near his house and traveling to violin lessons located in a conservatory school on the other side of the city.
As a result of his busy schedule, our meetings were often squeezed in between his evening extra-curricular activities when we could not meet on Sundays, his only day off.

Our weeknight meetings often took place at a quaint, eclectic bookstore across the street from the music school where Daniel attends violin lessons. The store housed a café and sold unique trinkets, toys, and art in addition to an array of books. The surrounding area is made up of numerous restaurants, cafes, upscale boutiques, high-rise condos and business offices, which attract many tourists and Miami residents alike. Each time we met at the bookstore, Maria could not help but comment on her admiration for the community. “I just love this area! I wish we could sell our house and have a little apartment here instead,” she exclaimed. Although he acknowledged the close proximity to his violin lessons, Daniel responded to her comment with concerns regarding the commute to his soccer practices and games.

After our meeting, we walked across the street and made our way up the stairs to Daniel’s music school. At the top of the stairs stood a large three-tiered fountain decorated with a mosaic of shiny blue tiles. Water trickled down from the top of the fountain, creating a soothing sound to compliment the silence around us. We then entered the lobby of the music school, which was much more lively than the breezeway outside. Bustling with students ranging from kindergarten through high school and their parents, the walls of the lobby were decorated with playbills and posters of past student performances. After Maria checked in at the front desk, we traveled down a long hallway of private studios until we reached our destination. Miguel, Daniel’s violin teacher, opened the door and welcomed us in. He and Maria exchanged a couple of words in Spanish as Daniel and I rearranged the small studio to accommodate the four of us. Once
our chairs were in place, Daniel began a conversation with Miguel about his soccer team’s recent loss. Miguel gave Daniel advice on competition and good sportsmanship then directed their conversation back to his music lesson.

**Daniel’s Identities in Music**

**The Musician.** According to Daniel, he was interested in music for as long as he could remember. During one of our meetings, he reflected on his inclination towards music as a toddler,

I mean, at the beginning, when I was a little kid, like three, one of the first songs I remember hearing was the, the “William Tell [Overture]”. No, it was Mozart. Anyways, I would sing along with it and I would be like, right there with the music.

His mother described similar instances where she noticed Daniel’s musical interests in addition to how she encouraged his musical engagements,

When he was just a few months old, 7 months or so, the ringtone on my phone, he would dance…He was always into music. I remember we went to the toddler music classes at the university when he was two or three years old. That was our first thing with music, because he really liked it. I clearly remember him just dancing to all the music. And at home? Everything I put on, he would memorize. Like, I used to put Spanish music on the TV back then and he would memorize and sing them. I have videos of him singing when he was very little and he could follow the patterns of the music, like he had that rhythm and he was always dancing, always!

In addition to his early interest in singing and dancing, Daniel explained his initial interest in the violin through a children’s television show upon sharing a page from his music eBook project (See Figure 4.6). “I added this picture of the Little Einsteins. I used to watch it all of the time,” he reflected. Daniel continued to describe his love for his
favorite, violin playing character, Quincy. “He [Quincy] inspired me. I’m like, if this kid can play all of this stuff, I can too.” Maria recalled Daniel’s obsession with Quincy and wanting to play the violin clearly as well,

   We were watching a cartoon that’s called Little Einsteins and his favorite character was Quincy and Quincy played the violin. So he told me he wanted to play the violin too…He kept telling me, ‘I wanna play the violin, I wanna play the violin!’

Violin was Daniel’s gateway to becoming and identifying as a musician. Soon after he began violin lessons, Daniel took piano lessons to learn “the basics and stuff.”

  Musician preferences and behaviors. Daniel is extremely proud of his musician identity and describes himself as the “pioneer” of music in his family. As the pioneer, Daniel explains how happy it makes him to share his musical talents with his family and see their growing interest in classical music. During one of our meetings, Daniel shared a
picture (See Figure 4.7) of a page of his sheet music placed on the music stand in his living room accompanied by the quote, “I like to entertain my family with the songs I play in violin class, like the double Bach concerto in D minor.” He continued to describe his practice sessions with his family as his audience:

Like, when my dad is watching football he puts it on mute and he listens to me. I love it when my mom and dad do that. You know, watching TV like that and listening to me…I like to practice when they like or want to listen to me.

Daniel commented on Edwin’s habits of watching him practice as well. “And my youngest brother? He listens. He listens to my every move and he listens to everything I say and play when I’m practicing.” Daniel continued to explain that Edwin recently started learning to play the cello and how these experiences “rub off” on him and help him excel in his class:

‘Cause cello, it’s a string instrument too, so it could be the same. Like, his teacher asked what comes after D and even though they’ve never learned the D string in class the only one that could say the full scale was him. ‘Cause the violin has E, F, G too. He listens to me and it’s kind of, well, it makes me really happy.

Figure 4.7. Selection from Daniel’s music eBook project
Daniel takes his violin playing and classical music quite seriously. He is content with following strict practice routines and assigned repertoire and has little desire to veer from this path. When I first visited Daniel’s house, he had a couple of violins ranging in size strewn across his bed. He described each of the instruments and the time period in which he used them. When I asked him about his current violin, he smirked and whispered, “Do you want to see it?” I excitedly replied, “Yes!” and he ran into his parents’ room to retrieve it. Once Daniel returned and removed the violin from its case, he quickly rosinied his bow and began tuning it by playing each string and manipulating the pegs located near the top of the instrument’s neck. He then rushed through a handful of major scales and arpeggios. Upon finishing his routine, he put his violin down and held it out to show me. Impressed by his rather advanced warm-up sequence, I asked Daniel if he ever “ messed around” on his violin. He replied, “Yeah, sure I do. Like, sometimes if I practice everything and there is an extra five or ten minutes, I’ll just play around with old songs that I used to play…like Canon in D.” Throughout the rest of our conversation I further realized Daniel’s opposition to experimenting and composing with his violin.

During another one of our meetings, Daniel showed me an image of the sheet music for Bruno Mars’ “Uptown Funk” and commented on how much he likes the song. Aware of his dependence on sheet music, I questioned him if he ever tried reading the music and playing it on his violin to which he sternly replied, “Not my kind of song. I like to listen to it, but I don’t play it.” Daniel views his violin as a strictly classical instrument. He meticulously follows warm-up routines that focus on intonation and scales.
and practices etudes and solos assigned by his violin teacher. Daniel rarely plays anything else on his violin that does not fit into this system.

Daniel’s is serious approach to violin playing and classical music listening is not the only way he engages with music. Daniel improvises and manipulates music on his own regularly. “I’m always humming when I do my homework...whatever I can think of,” Daniel explained. “Oh and at soccer practice too,” he continued,

At soccer practice I’m always like (begins singing what sounds like the theme song from Mission:Impossible) when I have the ball. Then I get closer to the goal and I’ll sing it faster and louder and then I’m like, ‘Ole! GOOOOOALLLL!’

Daniel often spoke of his informal engagements with music with his friends at school. He explained how they sing, chant, and parody songs from the radio, theme songs from their favorite television shows, and popular Vines, a digital video sharing service where users post short video clips, while walking in line, sitting in class, eating lunch, or playing on the playground. Daniel described how much fun he has with his friends when they “just mess around” with music throughout the school day.

Daniel’s informal engagements with music in school are not limited to his circle of friends. Daniel mentioned the popularity of Silentó’s dance song, “Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae),” in a number of our conversations. He explained, “Everyone does it. That’s one of the crazy things we all do. Even in the middle of class we will start whisper singing it and move our heads.” Daniel reflected on a time where the upbeat feel of the song inspired a jump rope contest during recess. He explained,

Sometimes we have these jump roping contests, like who can jump rope the most. The music kind of pumps you up…and sometimes they [his teachers] play really really popular music like the Whip and the Nae Nae and it’s so great! It really does pump you up!
Musical feelings. Daniel often referred to the deep emotional connections he experiences with music, particularly while listening to orchestral music or playing his violin. When I asked him why he preferred listening to orchestral music over most popular songs on the radio, he explained,

I like the Bach and all the feeling that they put into the music. It’s just different. It’s not like those singers who just sing whatever, like, ‘woah woah woah!’ When you listen to the orchestra it is majestic! I like the feeling that they put into the music. It makes you feel like it’s a new day and it’s gonna be a great day.

According to Daniel, most U.S. popular music he hears on the radio is dull. “There’s just no contrast in the music…it sounds so plain.”

Daniel also experiences an array of feelings while playing different styles of music on his violin. He explains,

When you’re playing an instrument, you get this feeling and this emotion that makes you feel different, like a different person. It makes your day because of the feelings and the emotions inside. They switch and the feeling is so good.

In attempts to better understand the feelings and emotions Daniel experiences while playing, I asked him to expand on this statement.

I can’t even describe it. I mean, I play a song, like, a crazy or fast song, and I feel like I’m in a war or something. Then I play a really sad song and I could start crying…The feelings tune up the song and turn it into a story, like a book that you are reading, or it turns it into something real. Something that you can think about and still think about in the future. That’s why music keeps me going, because of those feelings.

Daniel seems to believe that music has the ability to evoke feelings and emotions in a way that nothing else can. He engages with music to not only incite feelings of happiness when he is down, but also to transport himself and his thoughts into another dimension of fictional and nonfictional stories, people, places, and events.
Success and the future. Daniel believes his musical talents contribute to his popularity at school. After a recent solo performance at his school’s winter concert, he noticed an increase in his popularity,

After the concert, I was the most popular kid in the entire school! Even though I’m super popular already, even first graders are like, ‘Hi Daniel!’ and I don’t even know who they are. People just come up to me in groups and say, ‘Hi Daniel!’ and wave. I mean, I don’t even know these kids!

When I asked him how it made him feel, he sat up very straight, placed his hands on his waist, lifted his chin, smirked, and exclaimed, “I’m famous!” Daniel continued to explain how his classmates look up to him and respect him for his high level of musical talent.

Some of his peers have even asked him for music lessons.

Daniel appreciated the increased recognition he received from his teachers as well. He realized his musical abilities help set him apart from his classmates, which, according to Daniel, is no easy feat. He explained, “Sometimes it’s hard to stick out in elementary school, even if you behave really well…but I’ve gotten some awards, my teachers know me.”

Daniel is also encouraged by the amount of opportunities music can potentially provide for his future. With many of his peers dreaming to become professional athletes, Daniel believes success in music is a more obtainable and relevant goal.

Music is important because it’s gonna get you in. It actually will get you somewhere good in life. Because, sure you can play sports, but everybody can play sports! I mean, if you are awesome, like Lebron James awesome, then you are going to go somewhere, but if you are just a kid and everybody else is awesome too, then what’s the point? I mean, you can’t really get into many schools with just sports.

Daniel continued to support his claim by comparing his experiences applying for magnet and charter middle schools with his classmates:
Violin can get me anywhere. Right now, I’m the only kid in my class and everyone else is like, ‘I’m so scared cause I want to get into this school so badly and I don’t think I will.’ But I’m calm because I know I can make in. That’s only because of music.

In addition to getting accepted into some of the highest performing public middle schools in Miami, Daniel realizes that his musical talents may also win him scholarships and entry into a handful of private schools in the city as well. Although his first choice school has a high yearly tuition, Daniel believes he has a chance to attend by obtaining a music scholarship. He also sees his talents in music as a way to pay for his college education:

The opportunities! I mean, imagine you go to college and you get a full scholarship. College is like, what? A hundred thousand dollars? And you could get that money back, you know? So instead of your parents spending all that money, you can go into music and get a full scholarship in college. You go to the university and then you are set, you already have it paid!

In addition to winning scholarship money, Daniel acknowledges opportunities to make extra spending money through his playing as well. He expressed his interest in entering solo competitions to win cash prizes. “The last person won 120 dollars! And for my age, I think that’s pretty good!” Daniel also spoke of his future plans to earn money by playing at weddings. “I need to start going to weddings and getting paid! Maybe when I’m 13 probably.”

Daniel’s future aspirations encompass his musical goals. He often speaks of majoring in music in college and has a number of ideas on how he will succeed upon graduating. “I want to be in an orchestra, but of course there are all different kinds of jobs for violinists.” Daniel explained. He paused a moment then continued,

Actually, there are three things: I really like engineering, so I would be like a sound engineer. Like, I wanna be that ‘cause I build things, like legos and stuff. Also if they need music teachers, then I’ll go ahead and be a music teacher so I can play for an orchestra and have private classes.
He continued to describe his plan on how he would continue to perform if he worked as a sound engineer, “I would still play [violin]. Like, from eight to three I would be a sound engineer and then from three to nine I would do music in an orchestra.”

**Musician comparisons.** Daniel first realized his musical abilities by comparing himself with his classmates in his beginning string class. He explained, “I started playing violin and I just got really good at it. In my beginners class I excelled higher than the other students…I was the one to make it to the top the fastest.” Daniel continues to compare his violin playing to those throughout his community. He radiated confidence during one of our meetings when he exclaimed, “I’m one of the best [violin players] in Miami Dade, probably the best ten year old.” Daniel admitted to his high level of confidence again during a conversation between him, his mother, and myself while describing middle school string programs around his community. He explained, “Like, if I went there right now, I’d probably be the most advanced one in the middle school.” His mother interrupted, “You’re that confident, huh?” Daniel, with a smirk on his face, nodded his head and replied, “Yep!” with no hesitation.

Daniel compares himself to his peers at school as well. When discussing his general music class, Daniel often described his classmates’ lack of musical knowledge and skill. He explains, “It’s kinda fun. But I mean, I’m too, I’m ahead of the other kids. Lets just say that. I’m WAY ahead of the other kids.” Daniel attributes his level of musicianship to his dedication to music. He compares himself to his peers, stating, “A lot of the kids don’t take pride in music like me…they just don’t care.” He continued to explain how his classmates often come to music class late and unprepared, although that is rarely the case in other classes such as physical education.
Although Daniel gains confidence through his social comparisons, he would rather not play with those he considers less skilled. During our first meeting, I learned that Daniel’s younger brother plays the violin as well. When I asked Daniel if he ever played with his brother he replied, “He’s just not at my level, I can’t.” Daniel’s reservations for attending a middle school with an orchestra program near his house were similar. He explained, “Like, if I go there right now, I’ll probably be the most advanced one” Maria added her insight to clarify his statement, “You see, it’s a new program for the middle school, so the level is not very high yet, so he’s not sure he wants to go there.” Daniel shook his head in agreement.

Daniel also compares himself to his musical mentors such as his school and violin teachers and describes the special connection he has with them. He described being “good friends” with his school music teacher. He feels like his teacher is relatable because of her musical background, which gives them what he refers to as “a special bond.” Although Daniel admits the lack of challenge in music class, he respects his teacher and realizes the simplicity of her class is not a reflection of her level of musicianship but his classmates’. The two share a number of stories and often make music jokes with each other. He explained, “Like, with the recorder, there would be a false note, like the F, that sounds really bad. The other kids don’t notice and we just look at each other and shrug or laugh.” Daniel also feels like he is a friend his teacher can always count on to volunteer to play or help his classmates. It makes him feel special when his teacher asks him to help her or invites him to play at school concerts and he is more than happy to comply.
Daniel often referred to the close relationship he holds with his violin teacher as well. He describes, “I kinda feel like he is part of my family. Like a really close friend. Like, he’s my best friend.” Daniel continued to explain, “When he is playing with me or in front of me, I feel different. Like I’ve been granted a gift. I play with more feeling and more expression around him.”

**Musician conceptions.** To Daniel, a musician is someone who plays more than one instrument. However, his definition of playing an instrument is broad and includes winds, strings, and percussion, as well as singing, DJing, and producing music. Furthermore, Daniel does not believe reading music is a quality all musicians must possess. He explains, “You could still be a musician if you didn’t [read music]. Look at Taylor Swift…I don’t think she can read, but she sings and she plays guitar, so she’s a musician.”

Although Daniel’s definition of a musician is not based on one’s musical achievements, he conceptualizes different types of musicians based on their innate abilities. Daniel believes that most people have the potential to be a “good musician” if they try hard enough; however one must possess innate talent, such as a musical ear, to be an “awesome musician.” He explains, “I mean, you could be good, but you can’t be awesome if you don’t have that inner core for music…Not everyone is capable of being awesome.” He compared himself to a girl in his school to support his statement.

If you are just a good musician you don’t HAVE to have that really fine musical ear. Like, this girl in chorus…she would have this nice solo but then that one last note would be super flat and she didn’t know…I think I’m the only one that noticed, and my music teacher, she knows.

Daniel continued to explain how some people are just not meant to excel in music, no matter their efforts:
There is this one boy that tries harder and harder but he just can’t do that one note on recorder, then he gets an F on the test. I kind of think that is unfair, because I mean, you give an F to a kid that is trying his hardest but music is just, you know, not his thing.

Daniel also acknowledges that some people who have musical talent may only be “meant for certain instruments” and explained how a friend of his who had been struggling on the violin for years now flourishes on the French horn.

Daniel’s conception of what it means to be a musician and the types of musicians that exist is based on his formal and informal musical experiences. In his definition, he believes playing both traditional instruments, such as band and orchestra instruments, and more nontraditional instruments, like a DJ’s laptop, to be legitimate outlets for identifying as a musician. Furthermore, unlike his formal music experiences, reading musical notation is not a strict requirement for identifying as a musician.

**Daniel’s Music in Identities**

**Maintaining ethnic culture.** “So when the World Cup comes on, who do you root for?” I asked Daniel in attempt to spark conversation in one of our first meetings. “Well, I really like Antonio Valencia. He’s from Ecuador…that’s where I am from,” he replied. “You know I have soccer blood?” he continued, “cause two of my family members from Ecuador are professionals…it’s like a family tradition.” However, soccer is not the only cultural tradition he practices from Ecuador “because of [his] mom.” Daniel explained, “I hear Spanish music usually with my mom too because she is actually from Ecuador...She listens to it, so I do too ‘cause it’s from her country.”
Daniel often spoke of his visits to Ecuador and described memories of music and celebrations with his family.

There was one [song] that when I was little I would always remember singing in Ecuador. It was like a party song that we would always listen to and sing at parties for fun.

When I asked him to further describe the music he engages with from Ecuador, Daniel did so through comparisons with other music in which he is familiar, namely U.S. popular music and music of the Western classical music tradition. “[Ecuadorian music] is very different from music here in the United States,” Daniel described. He furthered his statement by comparing the musical moods he interprets when engaging in each of the musics:

Music from Ecuador is more nice and calm and very relaxing. Like, I would listen to it to relax…But then you come here and it’s like all, ‘Uptown funk you up, uptown funk you up,’ you know? All this punk and funk music. Which is fine too, they are just very different.

Daniel also highlighted the similarities among Ecuadorian music and the Western classical music he hears and plays to further describe the music of Ecuador:

[Music from Ecuador] is very, oh, you know, like opera. There’s a lot of singing and it’s kind of like opera…But then other types of music I would hear in Ecuador would be more, um, jumpy. Kind of like the orchestra pieces that I’ve played that are jumpy and exciting. Like Vivaldi concertos are always like that, they are always jumpy and very exciting.

Daniel admitted that he “doesn’t mind” listening to Spanish music. When I asked him if he ever listened to Spanish music on his own, he replied, “Well I only listen to it sometimes… pretty much whenever my parents play it on the radio.” To inquire further on his experiences with the music, I asked, “Do you remember any of the songs?” Daniel though for a moment and replied, “Oh, I don’t know, just Latin music…I don’t really
know any Spanish songs. Well, I know them, meaning if I hear it than I’ll remember knowing it, but I don’t know their names or anything like that.”

Just as she influences Daniel’s exposure to cultural music traditions, Maria fuels her family’s language learning and maintenance as well. At home, Daniel interacts with his family in both Spanish and English on a regular basis. During one of our meetings, Daniel and I conversed in his room while his mother tended to his younger brothers in the living room. The boys were getting restless and I could hear Maria speaking to them in Spanish. Her voice got louder as she continued to address the boys while walking down the hallway towards Daniel’s room. “Daniel?” she whispered as she peeked into the room and apologized for the interruption. Knowing that I do not speak Spanish fluently, Maria explained her recent actions in hopes I would better understand her bilingual family. “I speak in Spanish to them a lot. I’ll say a few words in Spanish to help them.” Maria’s various strategies to ensure her sons are fluent Spanish speakers became a reoccurring conversation of ours during meetings. “I used to pretend I didn’t understand English so they would have to speak only in Spanish…and now, sometimes if they are talking to me in English, I ignore them until they ask in Spanish too,” Maria snickered. “And now with Youtube, there are so many songs that they can learn. I think that’s important too…Oh and Netflix. You can put the movies in Spanish,” she explained. Maria looked over to Daniel and asked, “And what do you have to do to get new shoes?” Daniel smirked. “If I speak Spanish the entire summer I can get basketball shoes, like Jordans…but I have to watch all my movies and TV in Spanish too, the whole summer.”

Daniel maintains his ethnic identity, in part, through his engagement in cultural practices related to Spanish music and language. However, he admitted that his elders
largely initiate these experiences. Although he recognizes his family’s connections with
Spanish music and language and respects these practices for their cultural value, Daniel
does not necessarily prefer to engage in these practices throughout each of the contexts in
his daily life.

Children prefer the music in which they are most familiar (Davis, 2015). It was
apparent that his Spanish music engagements were far less frequent than his engagements
with other genres of music through my observations and discussions. Daniel admitted to
having more familiarity and knowledgeably of classical and popular music when
compared to Spanish music. Additionally, his descriptions and perspectives regarding his
classical and popular music experiences were typically detailed and specific, while those
regarding Spanish music were often more vague and superficial during our conversations.

**Getting to know Nicolas**

Nicolas is an extremely kind, soft-spoken ten-year-old boy. During our first
meeting, much of our conversation involved his varied experiences playing the keyboard.
Interested in hearing him, I invited Nicolas to play for his parents and me. He hesitated
for a moment then nodded his head in agreement as he stood up from his seat on the
couch. We followed him down the short hallway to his bedroom and crowded around the
keyboard. Nicolas pressed a number of buttons and slid his fingers across the keys. He
made a few more adjustments then placed both of his hands on the keyboard. A moment
later, he began playing the melody to “The Final Countdown,” a song first made popular
by the Swedish rock band Europe in the 1980’s. His mother, Adrianna, giggled at his
song choice and commented how she heard that same melody countless times each day. I
looked to Nicolas and asked where he learned it. “I think it was on a commercial,” he
replied. “So you just heard it then learned it?” I asked. “Uh huh, and I’ll search for it on YouTube if I need to hear it again when I’m practicing.” Nicolas explained. Adrianna added, “You know, Nicolas, he hears something he likes and he goes, he practice because I know he enjoys very much!”

Unlike both of his parents, Nicolas was born in Miami. His jet-black hair and dark, caramel-colored skin closely resembled his mother’s, Adrianna, who was born and raised in Mexico. Although she understood English well, Adrianna admitted to having trouble speaking the language. When she did speak in English, she had a noticeable Spanish accent. Nicolas’ father, Julian, was a tall, dark-skinned man with short, curly black hair. He was born in the Dominican Republic, but moved to Miami with his family as a young child. He spoke English and Spanish fluently and admitted to knowing some French, which he attributed to his Grandfather’s roots in Haiti.

Nicolas’ ecological environments. Nicolas spends the majority of his time at home, in school, at an afterschool childcare center, and in the surrounding community, including his neighborhood, apartment building, and church. Additionally, digital media’s strong presence is woven into these physical spaces primarily by ways of Internet, cable, and radio. Regular interactions with his parents, peers, teachers, families around the community, and digital acquaintances provide Nicolas with a wide variety of social contexts within his ecological environments.

Home. Nicolas lives in an apartment building just west of the Miami River and the city’s booming financial district in a neighborhood populated largely by lower middle and working class first- and second-generation immigrants. His mother maintains the household full time, while his father works a nine to five office job near downtown
Miami. Upon my first meeting with Nicolas and his parents, I walked up to the building’s entrance to find Nicolas and his mother, Adrianna, in the lobby. Adrianna was about eight months pregnant and beaming with happiness and energy. She greeted me excitedly and I congratulated her. A moment later, I looked over at Nicolas and greeted him as well. He grinned and returned my greeting with a nod and a softly spoken, “Hello.”

We rode the elevator up nine floors, to the top of the building, and stepped out into a long hallway. The windows at each end of the hallway were propped open with short wooden sticks to create a breezy wind tunnel on a relatively hot Miami day. I followed Adrianna and Nicolas about halfway down the hallway and stopped in front of their apartment. As Adrianna reached for her keys, Nicolas’ father, Julian, opened the door. “Hello, hello! Welcome! Please come in!” Julian exclaimed as he motioned for us to enter.

I immediately found myself in the dining area upon entering the front door. A large table took up most of the space, which flowed into to the family’s living room. “Please, please. Have a seat.” Julian insisted. “Would you like anything to drink?” I kindly declined and followed Nicolas to the couch. We sat down opposite of the family’s flat-screen television. The television stood on top of a short, two-shelf entertainment unit that housed the family’s DVD player, iPod speakers, and a Nintendo Wii video game console. Much of the free space in the family’s living room was filled with boxes of unopened gifts; most of which were dressed in blue and white gift-wrap and blue ribbon. Adrianna explained that her church had thrown her a baby shower the weekend before and guaranteed the room would be clear by my next visit.
Just as Adrianna promised, the living room was nearly spotless for our following meeting. I noticed Nicolas’ keyboard had been moved from his bedroom and asked him where all of the gifts went. He jumped up and excitedly led me down the apartment’s short hallway to his bedroom. The small room was packed with his and the baby’s furniture, clothes, and toys. As Nicolas showed me around his newly reorganized room, he explained, “Now all my toys are under the bed and all my books are where my toys were” He then walked over to the nightstand near his bed and exclaimed, “Here is the radio I use!” Nicolas picked up the CD player resembling Lightning McQueen, a character from the popular Disney movie, *Cars*, and examined it. He continued,

> It doesn’t work all of the time because the cable doesn’t stay in… but I don’t really listen to the radio on it much, I listen to CDs that I have… usually just the Disney ones at night, to help me go to sleep.

**School.** Nicolas attends a well-performing Title I charter school just a short drive away from his apartment. The almost exclusive Hispanic student population closely mirrors the demographics of the surrounding community. Although I was not able to visit the school’s campus, I spent a couple hours at the after-care center next door. The center was founded in the 1960’s in response to the need of quality child-care services for the growing number of Cuban exiles in Miami and has continued to serve the surrounding community for over 50 years. Currently, the center provides various free after-school activities for elementary-aged children including a music class inspired by the instrumentation of a rock band. According to Nicolas, most of the after-care center students attended his elementary school, although some traveled from surrounding schools. Similarly to his school and community demographics, the teacher, staff, and student populations were largely Hispanic as well.
**Community.** Nicolas and his family are largely involved in their community. Prior to joining the music club in the after-care center near his school, Nicolas was a member of a community music program sponsored by a local non-profit organization. “They have pianos you can use if you can’t get one,” Nicolas explained. Nicolas’ father, Julian, added, “Believe it or not, I didn’t know about the program, but when we got more involved in the area we learned about it.”

Nicolas and his mother, Adrianna, often spoke of their attendance at neighborhood gatherings and church-sponsored festivals, ceremonies, and celebrations. As I walked into the family’s apartment for one of our meetings, I found Adrianna in the kitchen pouring a pot of boiling water into three large water jugs. “Nicolas and me are going to the church, la Iglesias, this weekend for the fair…we are doing the jimica water, a Mexican water, to donate for the fair” Nicolas interjected, “It’s kind of like volunteering...last year we did the same thing.” I leaned over the counter to inspect the contents of the jugs. “I think people here call it Hibiscus. It’s a red flower that if you put it in water and sugar, it's delicious!” The three of us continued to talk about the upcoming fair as Adrianna stirred sugar into each of the jugs.

At our next meeting, Nicolas was eager to talk about the fair he had attended the weekend before. With his mother’s cellphone, he shared pictures of the bumper cars he had ridden and another of a large boat-shaped swing. He flipped through a couple more pictures and stopped on a video showcasing some sort of dancing and drumming ensemble. As I continued to watch intently, Adrianna commented, “Those are my friends. They were part of the presentation for Dia des Muertos…they do a lot of different presentations around here to help people celebrate and to teach others.”
Nicolas’ Identities in Music

The Keyboarder. Nicolas made it quite clear in our meetings that he had been attracted to the piano since he was a young boy. “Well, since I was little I always wanted to play piano,” he explained in one of our first conversations. Nicolas proceeded, “I think it was from Beethoven. When I heard that song [“Fur Elise”], I wanted to play piano and so badly wanted to play that song.”

During another meeting, Nicolas showed me one of his old toys, a small, multicolored keyboard. “We found it cleaning up my room to get ready for the baby! It was my first keyboard,” he said proudly. Nicolas examined the toy and laughed. “But it is much tinier!” he said while giggling. Adrianna explained how she noticed Nicolas’ interest in the instrument as a young boy. “He always played with keyboards, always!” she said as Nicolas nodded his head in agreement.

Keyboarder preferences and behaviors. Nicolas prefers to learn and practice only the keyboard, despite his mother who seems to often attempt to convince him otherwise. As we talked about Nicolas’ after-school music program, Adrianna commented, “Maybe next year, you want to play another instrument.” Sebastian looked at her disapprovingly and shook his head from one side to the other. Adrianna looked at me and laughed. “He says, ‘It’s my decision momma!’ Okay! That’s okay.”

Curious of his perspective, I asked Nicolas during our next meeting if he had ever thought about playing another instrument. He replied sternly, “No. Just piano.” Adrianna interjected, “But maybe you try.” She leaned over and whispered in his ear. Nicolas crossed his arms and shrugged his shoulders. He did not seem to have interest in this conversation. Adrianna continued, “He also learned, the ummm, fluta for his first time.”
Unsure of the instrument’s name, she looked to Nicolas for clarification. “Oh yeah, the recorder,” he replied. “Even with that he is just like, piano, piano, piano! Not too much interest in the other,” Adrianna explained.

Nicolas exhibited the same behavior when choosing applications to download on his iPad. We often searched through the App Store on iTunes for free application downloads and his choices always involved a piano. During one of our meetings, I pointed out a guitar application that was similar to his favorite piano application. “Would you want to download anything else, like that guitar?” I asked. Nicolas shook his head and replied, “Nah, I just like the piano ones.”

When he was not playing his keyboard, Nicolas was often playing the piano applications installed on his iPad. Nicolas admitted that the first thing he did after receiving his iPad was playing and recording himself on the keyboard in the Garageband application. Additionally, among his favorite apps was “Magic Piano”; a piano simulator game where players control the rhythm and tempo of a song of their choice by pressing moving circles with one to four fingers at a time (See Figure 4.8). “They are just dots, but it’s still exercise for your fingers for real life piano,” Nicolas explained while demonstrating the app.

Figure 4.8. Screen shot of Magic Piano iPad application
Later in our conversations, Nicolas discovered another piano application that became one of his favorites as well (See Figure 4.9). “I found another application that shows you how to play songs…it actually has the keyboard keys on it!” He exclaimed as he presented his newest discovery. “So I’ll go to this one when I want to play the piano and listen to the songs,” he continued. Intrigued, I wondered if Nicolas tried using this application as a reference when learning new songs on his keyboard. “Yeah! I learn by seeing and hearing mostly…so this helps.” He pointed to the tempo and transposition icons on the screen and continued, “Cause you can change the speed too and you can also change it like, higher and lower. Oh and you can also turn off one of the hands,” explained Nicolas. “So how do you learn?” I probed. “Well, I would usually change the tempo to make it slow and take the left hand off to learn the melody part,” he responded.

Figure 4.9. Screen shot of Piano 3D iPad application
Since Nicolas’ playing experiences at home and in his after-school program were solely on keyboards and iPads, he had limited access to a piano. He often spoke in awe of the baby grand piano in the living room of his mother’s friend’s house. “She has, like, a real one where you can play anything you want, so I’ll play on [it] sometimes.” During one of our conversations, he excitedly shared his upcoming plans to visit to the house again with his parents. “They have a real piano over there. When I go I usually play her piano, it’s a big one!” Nicolas stood up and stretched his arms to indicate the size of the instrument. “It’s huge!” he continued. “I like to go there and try it.”

A sound attraction. Initially inspired by a recording of a classical piano solo, Nicolas has continued his interest in the instrument, in part, through its appealing sound. “The piano has a nice sound and I like to listen to it when I play…it’s my favorite sound,” he explained. “And you know?” Julian interjected, “When the baby starts crying, Nicolas will offer to play the piano for him to soothe him. Isn’t that nice?”

Although Nicolas’ keyboard has a number of musical instruments and sound effects to choose from, he rarely deviates from the piano setting. “I leave it on piano cause that’s my favorite sound,” he explained in response to my comment regarding the impressive number of options available on his instrument. Similarly, he made the same comment regarding the various sound options on the Magic Piano application on his iPad (See Figure 4.10).

Figure 4.10. Magic Piano iPad application icon by Smule
From keyboards to iPads, Nicolas was particularly attracted to the act of playing the piano as well. Julian explained that he observed Nicolas’ playing behaviors quite frequently. “He always goes to the piano and like, just always plays it…sometimes I watch him just go on YouTube and he starts just learning the keyboard from there. Like, he really learns it. I’m like, wow!” In our meetings, Nicolas constantly performed songs he taught himself through the pre-programmed tunes on his keyboard or YouTube videos. “My piano has things that when you press the [song], it shows you with lights…it also has this thing where you could slow it down so you can keep up.” Impressed, I asked what else he liked to do on his keyboard. “I learn a lot of songs here at home…mostly songs from the radio cause I know them and like them,” Nicolas replied.

**Family support.** Nicolas’ parents encouraged his keyboarder identity through their help and support. With his father being the sole financial contributor to the household, Nicolas’ parents could not afford the prices of local private piano teachers in Miami. Luckily, his mother learned about a non-profit organization that provided free group keyboard lessons, among other instruments, to children in and around Nicolas’ neighborhood through her friends at church. Nicolas has since switched to an afterschool music program next door to his elementary school.

Adrianna invited me to Nicolas’ “Winter Showcase” performance coordinated by his after-care program and I excitedly agreed to meet her there. Although she had not left the house since the birth of her youngest son just two weeks prior, Adrianna vowed to be there to support her son while his father worked through the evening. I arrived early to the concert and saw Nicolas setting up his keyboard on the edge of the stage. Nicolas waved to me and mouthed the words, “They gave *me* the microphone,” while frantically
pointing at the microphone and stand hovering over his keyboard speaker. I moved
toward the front of the stage to cheer him on and noticed Adrianna, Nicolas’ aunt, and a
baby stroller off to the side of the stage. “This is the first time he is out,” Adrianna said
excitedly while peering underneath a blanket covering the newborn, “but we could not
miss this!” A moment later, the after-care coordinators made their way to the stage and
introduced Nicolas’ music club as the opening act. With a long program ahead, the group,
made up of keyboards, guitars, and vocals, played only one song, Katy Perry’s “Roar.”

At home, his mother and father welcome and encourage Nicolas’ keyboard
playing. Although he admitted to his nervousness when performing in front of others,
Nicolas feels extremely comfortable playing for his parents. Adrianna shared numerous
videos of her son playing, each time beaming with pride. During one of our meetings,
Julian explained,

It’s funny because I will be like, ‘Nicolas, go take a shower!’ So I’ll think he’s in
there but he’ll be in his room playing the piano and will scream to us from his
room, ‘Here it is Pop!’ or, ‘Mom, come take a look at this!’ So we will go in and
listen to him play for us. After 30 minutes, I’ll be like, wait a second, you were
supposed to go take a shower!

“Yes, he is always playing,” Adrianna explained, “but this is good because he likes it.”

**Keyboader comparisons.** “Look! Here is me and my friend on my keyboard,”
Nicolas said as he pointed to a picture on his Photo 365 calendar. “Does he play too?” I
asked. “No, he just wanted to try it...he wants to learn but he has tutoring during [music
class],” Nicolas explained, “so I’ve taught him a couple times here.” “Wow, do you do
that with all of your friends when they come over?” I inquired. “Pretty much, but no one
can play it like me,” Nicolas boasted. In our later conversations he referred to his friends
again, “They don’t know how to play really, but I’ll help them.” Nicolas noticed his
keyboarding abilities surpassed his peers in music class as well. “I already know the songs. Like, I learn them faster,” he admitted, “but if people get left behind, I will help them.”

Nicolas’ Music in Identities

Practicing ethnic culture. During one of our meetings, I watched a video from Adrianna’s iPhone showcasing a group of drummers and dancers. “This is Nicolas and I at practice…for Danza,” she explained. After she pointed out their participation in the ensemble, I immediately noticed Nicolas playing a large drum with a pair of wooden sticks. Nicolas leaned in to watch the video as well. “It’s a dance we did for our church,” he explained. “A Danza,” Adrianna clarified. “It’s more traditional in my country for the Virgen de Guadalupe.” Interested to hear more, I asked Nicolas about his drum in the video. “There are other weird instruments that I’ve never seen before too. These maracas and this flute with an ancient picture on it, and the shell. I do the shell… It’s kinda like a native thing,” he clarified. Adrianna struggled to think of the name of the instrument. “Um, caracol?” she said unsurely. “You know, the seashell you blow into,” Nicolas translated. “It takes all of your breath, but once you know how to do it, it gets easier.” He made a high-pitched trumpet sound and laughed. “The shell is like a symbol to let you know that there is a part where you are going to change or end in the song… There was just me and another adult who could play it and I was the only kid,” he boasted proudly and continued, “And on the day that we present it, we wear clothes, kinda like regular clothes, but older, like, traditional clothes.”

Nicolas recognizes actively participating in cultural practices positively contribute to his cultural understanding. “It helps me kind of be, like, closer to my culture,” he
explained. “Cause it’s like a tradition for my mom’s country and I think its good to
do that,” Nicolas clarified in our next meeting. “Yeah?” I replied. “Uh huh,” he continued,

She is Mexican and it made us understand what kinds of music and what dances
to do. And to learn more about something that she would do back at home that I
might not learn.

**Transmitting ethnic culture.** Nicolas recognizes the power music has to create
cultural continuity among his family and community. “We used to do [the Danza
ensemble] only for fun, like for our church, but now sometimes we do it for other people
too.” Nicolas explained. “Yes, presentations for the people to learn the traditions of mine.”
Adrianna clarified.

Nicolas not only helped transmit his culture through music to the surrounding
Miami community, he also explained his plans to teach his newborn baby brother through
similar techniques as well. “It can help make him understand like how music works and
how they use it.” As we sorted through his CD collection, I asked Nicolas which ones he
plans to share with his brother. “The Spanish ones,” he replied. Nicolas pointed to a CD
featuring a cartoon cricket labeled “Cuentos y Canciones de Cri Cri,” and continued “like,
the little kids songs. I think they could help teach him a lesson and help him speak
Spanish.”

Similar to Daniel, Nicolas’ experiences with Spanish music were largely
influenced by his parents as well. Nicolas acknowledged the importance of learning about,
practicing, and transmitting cultural practices connected to his mother’s Mexican heritage;
however, he admitted that he preferred to engage with other musics, such as piano and
U.S. popular music, in his self-initiated musical experiences.
Getting to know Isabella

As I entered her playroom, I saw Isabella sitting on a small couch with her legs crossed. The 8-year-old girl hardly acknowledged my presence as she peered into the small screen of her iPad. In attempts to get her attention, I walked across the room and sat down next to her on the couch. Isabella glanced over and thrust her iPad in the air. “Look!” she exclaimed as she lowered the device and handed it to me. Isabella swiped her fingers across the screen and played a video she and her friends made over the weekend.

“We had a sleepover,” she explained as we watched a video clip of four girls dancing around in their pajamas. I noticed Isabella right away. She moved, swayed, and jumped in her white, cherry-covered pajama set while the girls around her made similar movements. Unable to hear the audio, I asked, “What are you dancing to?” Isabella quickly raised the volume on the iPad and a familiar tune filled the air. The chorus of KC and the Sunshine Band’s hit song “Shake Your Booty” played from the stereo system in what appeared to be her family’s living room. The girls laughed as they shook their hips from left to right. Isabella suddenly paused the video, jumped to her feet, and chanted, “Shake, shake, shake. Shake, shake, shake. Shake your booty!” Isabella accompanied her chant with a popular disco move that featured upward and downward motions of her pointer finger. We laughed together as she continued to dance around the room and sing.

Isabella was born and raised in Miami, like her father, Andres. A tall, slender man with black hair and an olive complexion, Andres’ parents moved from Cuba prior to his birth in response to governmental changes following the Cuban Revolution in the 1950’s. On the other hand, Isabella’s mother, Mariam, whose wavy, long brown hair
compliments her curvy figure and light olive skin, was born in Nicaragua. Although Mariam and her family moved to Miami while she was a young girl, they frequented their home country throughout her childhood and moved back to Nicaragua prior to her beginning high school. Upon graduating high school, Mariam decided to move back to the U.S. to attend college. Isabella is the oldest of three girls. Her little sisters, Patricia and Catarina, are two and six.

Isabella’s ecological environments. Isabella spends most of her days between home, school, and surrounding community, including the community center where she attends dance classes. She experiences a variety of social contexts within her ecological environments and interacts primarily with her family, caregivers, friends, peers, teachers, and other families within in her community.

Home. Isabella lives in one of Miami’s most exclusive waterfront communities. The drive to her house consists of some of the most breath-taking views of the downtown skyline, Port of Miami, and South Beach, and large, multi-million dollar homes. Upon pulling into the driveway, I noticed a large circular window at the focus of her family’s large white, modern-built house with two young girls peering through it. The first, a toddler with short, blonde curly hair dressed in a flowered sundress and dainty gold-studded earrings. The second looked older, with two blonde pigtails framing the glasses on her face and a plaid overall dress that appeared to be a school uniform.

Before I could get halfway up the driveway, Isabella’s mother, Mariam, opened the door and greeted me from afar. When I made it to the doorstep, she greeted me again. We looked at one another with big smiles on our faces and proceeded to hug and give each other a kiss on the cheek. Mariam welcomed me in and I greeted the two girls whose
squeals of excitement echoed throughout the house. While Mariam introduced both girls as Isabella’s little sisters, I wondered where Isabella was and why she was not there with them to greet me.

Mariam told me that the girls’ playroom would be most appropriate for our meeting while she led me through the living room and down a short hallway. The playroom seemed to be well organized, with labeled toy and craft drawers lined along its pink walls. A large, flat-screen television was mounted on one of the walls and a tall microphone stand stood in the adjacent corner of the room. The focus of the room was directed to a small, gold-painted nook that housed a perfectly sized black leather couch.

Isabella was sitting quietly on the couch, with her legs bent and feet partially in the air. Unlike her sisters, Isabella had a darker, more caramel-colored complexion and light brown hair. “Hi Isabella, I’m Sandy,” I said to her enthusiastically with a large grin on my face. The eight-year-old looked up and smirked at me, but did not speak. Mariam encouraged her to say hello, so she quickly uttered an under spoken “Hi.” We both looked at each other and giggled while I sat down on the other side of the couch.

“Isabella is so excited to meet you! Aren’t you Isabella?” her mother exclaimed. Seeming a little underwhelmed in the meeting process, she shrugged her shoulders. In hopes she would warm up to me, I began explaining the details of my project to her and her mother. After only a minute or so, Isabella’s two younger sisters barged into the room, interrupting our meeting so that they could tell me all about one of their most recent “ouchies.” As the noise level in the room rose, Isabella began nodding her head and quietly chuckling at her sisters’ antics while her mother reprimanded them.
School. Isabella and her younger sister, Catarina, recently transferred from a private, Montessori school located near their house to an all girls, catholic preparatory school about a 25-minute drive away. The day school is located on a most impressive, state of the art campus, where its stunning architecture and lush landscape is enhanced even further by its bordering views of Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Serving pre-K through high school students, the campus is divided into five schools: pre-K, primary, intermediate, junior high, and high school. Being a new third-grader, Isabella attends the intermediate school where she receives daily core curriculum classes in language arts, math, social studies, science, and religion as well as weekly supplementary classes in general music, art, technology, Spanish, and physical education.

Community. Although quite small compared to other areas of Miami-Dade County, the exclusive community is bursting with resources to accommodate children and adolescents. Extensively involved in a competitive dance team, Isabella frequents the community center for ballet, acrobatic, and modern dance classes. After my first meeting with Isabella, she and her mother invited me to observe her dance classes one evening. Upon arriving at the community center, I noticed how new and well kept the facilities looked. Surrounding the large, three-story building were multiple soccer fields and an Olympic-sized swimming pool. With limited parking, many families, including Isabella’s, were traveling to the center in golf carts. In hopes of finding my own parking spot, I traveled to a nearby parking garage. Once I secured a spot, I joined two older women in the garage’s elevator. They paused their Spanish conversation with each other to greet me and then continued on as the elevator took us to the second floor of the community center.
I stepped out of the elevator to a number of parents and their babies gathered in the hallway. Unsure of where to go, I looked around for a clue as to where I might find Isabella’s class. Just as I began to worry that I may be in the wrong place, I noticed a young girl walking with her mother whose hair was pulled back into a neatly made bun. Hoping she was the clue I needed, I followed them down a long hallway to find an open seating area with couches and tables inhabited by a number of young girls with hair buns and gym bags. A few minutes later, I found myself in an area as bustling as a New York subway station, filled with dancers of all ages rushing from one room to another.

Isabella’s Identities in Music

Isabella attended group violin lessons through the local community center prior to her enrollment in dance classes. During my first meeting with her and her mother, Mariam explained, “Isabella started to play [violin] when she was five, but it just didn’t work out. I thought she liked it but,” Isabella loudly interjected, “I did NOT like it.” During our next conversation, I referred to her past violin classes. “Why didn’t you like it?” I asked. “It was boooooooriiiiiiiiing!” Isabella replied, “It took up so much time to be like, SO boring!” I probed further to better understand her disinterest in the classes. She explained, “Because it was like this.” Isabella stood up and pretended to hold a violin and bow. She rolled her eyes as she moved the imaginary bow up and down. “Blah blah blah. Twinkle, twinkle little star. It was like, a baby class!” she complained. To support her opinion, Isabella referred to her sister, Catarina, and her experiences with the violin as well. “She didn’t like it either. I don’t think our family was made for violin.”

A beautiful baby grand piano sat in Isabella’s living room. Her younger sister took private lessons, but Isabella admitted that she was not interested in doing the same.
During one of our meetings I asked her if she had ever played her family’s piano. “Nope!” she exclaimed. Quite surprised, I questioned her again. “Never?” I asked. Isabella clarified, “Well, yeah, but anytime I do, I just do this.” She extended her arms and pretended like she was banging on the keys of an imaginary piano. “Here, let me show you,” she said as she sat down on the ground and organized a number of shoes and small dolls in a horizontal row. “See, pretend these are the keys. This is a key and this is another key,” she explained as she pointed to each shoe. She then began to hit each of the props with the palm of her hand and shouting “Blah blah blah!” Isabella giggled, “I pretty much just bang on it.”

**The Playful Musiker.** Although Isabella does not self-identify as a musician, singer, improviser, or composer, her behavior throughout our weekly meetings revealed that she was indeed, a very active music-maker. At first, Isabella exposed me to her musical behaviors primarily through the recordings she created with her iPad. One of the first videos she shared consisted of her and her friends performing a song they learned at a recent Girl Scout meeting. With their fists together, moving them up and down to simulate the mouth of a small shark, the girls sang,

```
Baaaaay-beee shark, do do, do do do do
Baby shark do do, do do do do
Baby shark do do, do do do do
Baby shark
```

The tempo of the song began to speed up while the girls extended their fingers and clapped their hands to mimic a larger shark's chomping jaws. They continued,

```
Maaaaaa-maaaa shark do do, do do do do
Mama shark do do, do do do do
Mama shark do do, do do do do
Mama shark
```
The tempo continued to accelerate and the girls extended their arms,

  Paaaaa-paaaaaa shark do do, do do do do
  Papa shark do do, do do do do
  Papa shark do do, do do do do
  Papa shark

Isabella suddenly stopped the unfinished video and explained how the girls rewrote their own ending to the song. She described, “Then there is this one part that we made up after. Like, we sing there’s another shark, and then we’re getting caught, and then we’re dead.” Isabella dropped her head down to her shoulder and giggled.

  By the end of our third meeting together, Isabella had become quite disinterested in the music book project. Our usual unstructured conversations relating to her day-to-day life and iPad artifacts seemed to have become monotonous to her. She voiced her boredom and restlessness and was even reprimanded by her parents after refusing to respond to my prompts. Wanting to end our meeting positively and productively, I quickly changed subjects and asked if she knew of any other songs similar to the shark song she previously shared. Isabella looked up in excitement and exclaimed, “Of course!” She swiftly resituated herself on the couch, crossed her legs, and began to perform a hand clapping game with an imaginary partner. While performing a continuous pattern of crossing her arms, patting her thighs, and clapping her hands, Isabella sang:
Having performed the song and hand clapping motions myself many times as a young girl, I sat down next to her and joined her for the second verse. Before we could make it past the third line, Isabella pulled her hands away and corrected me. “No! Not elephants!” she exclaimed. “To watch the boys, boys, boys, pull down their pants, pants, pants,” she chanted as she broke into hysterical laughter. A moment later, Isabella composed herself and began the second verse again:
Before I could inquire about her modified “Miss Mary Mack” verse, Isabella began singing a different song,

**She asked her mother, mother, mother, for** fifty cents, cents, cents, to watch the boys, boys, boys, pull down their pants, pants, pants, they got in trouble, trouble, trouble, and went to jail, jail, jail.

Before I could inquire about her modified “Miss Mary Mack” verse, Isabella began singing a different song,

**I went to a Chinese restaurant to buy a loaf of bread, bread, bread, they asked me what my name was, and this is what I said, said, said**
Unable to remember the next line, Isabella paused for a second and then continued on; this time spoken with no apparent meter or melody, “My mom is Chinese, my dad is Japanese and I’m just a mixed up kid!” As she spoke the last line, she placed her pointer fingers on the edges of her eyelids and stretched them up and down. “Get it?” she asked me. “Because this is Chinese (stretches her eyelids up) and this is Japanese (stretches her eyelids down) and I’m mixed up (stretching one eyelid up and the other down).” I interrupted her laughter and asked where she learned the two songs. “Just at school,” Isabella said casually. Before I could ask a follow-up question, Isabella jumped off the couch and shouted, “Wait! I know the school one!” She ran around the couch and opened two French doors leading out to the back porch. “Come on!” she exclaimed.

A large tree house equipped with an abundance of outdoor toys including balls, pool floats, and dolls stood near the pool in the back corner of the yard. Isabella rummaged through the toys and pulled out two jump ropes. She handed one to me and took the other for herself. “Look!” Isabella exclaimed as she began jumping rope. She attempted to jump and say her chant simultaneously, but kept getting her feet caught up in the rope. Curious to hear the entirety of the rhyme, I volunteered to jump while she chanted. Upon my third successive jump, she began to chant:
Assuming that was the end of the chant, I stopped and said, “Whew! Did I make it all the way through?” Isabella shook her head and said, “Nope! Because then you would go to college, then you being a parent, and then it goes on with child, then grandparent”

Determined to jump it herself, Isabella tried again, but this time she sang,

Surprised from the added melody, I attempted to clarify, “Oh, is that how it goes? It’s really a song?” “No,” Isabella replied. “You’re supposed to just say it, but I just thought of that right now.” Being our third meeting together, I had not seen Isabella this engaged before. She seemed genuinely excited to talk and share her music with me as we sang, clapped, jumped, and laughed together.

Initiated by Isabella from that point forward, our playtime in the backyard became a regular occurrence in our remaining meetings. The next time I visited Isabella’s house,
she insisted she had a new composition to share with me. “Well instead of school, school, I made one called life. I just made it up yesterday,” she explained. Isabella grabbed my hand, led me to the backyard, and pulled a jump rope from her toy box. A moment later she began to chant a similar rhythmic pattern with her newly modified lyrics.

Life, life, the golden rule  
Bed and house, water food  
Baby, toddler, kid, older kid  
Teenager, parent, grandparent,  
Great grandparent, great great grandparent

Isabella interrupted herself by tripping over the jump rope. Not wanting to start the rhyme over, she decided to describe the rest of the chant to me. “So anyways, it’s like you do that all the way through and when you get to the end, you scream DIE and jump as fast as you can until you mess up,” Isabella said while giggling.

My following visit, Isabella told me she preferred to begin our meeting in the backyard. “I have a poem for you…I made it up, just right now,” she said proudly as we walked through her living room and out to the backyard. A moment later she retracted her statement, “Well, I don’t have anything yet, but I’m going to make it up while I’m doing it.” Impressed, I asked her if this was something she did often. “Yes! And this one is going to be called The Flying Bird,” she replied. Isabella jumped on the tire swing and began to sing:

\[
\text{Fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing}
\]

She interrupted her song to ensure I understood its context. “It’s like you are a bird and you are flying,” she said before continuing her improvised tune:
Near the end of our session, her mother called us in from the backyard to ensure that she would not be late for dance practice. On our way in, Isabella repeated the phrase over and over while experimenting with a range of dynamics and pitches.

Hoping to hear positive improvements regarding Isabella’s behavior, Mariam asked how our meeting went. After revealing that Isabella had been sharing a number of her compositions and improvisations with me, Mariam replied, “The two older ones [Isabella and Catarina] do that all, like, ALL the time. Making up their own songs.” She turned to Isabella and asked, “Did you show her your M&M thing yet?” Without even uttering a response, Isabella quickly ran into her room and emerged with a spiral notebook. “We did this on the bus,” she explained as she flipped through the pages of her notebook. “In your school notebook?” I asked. “No, this is her song notebook,” Mariam clarified. Isabella stopped on one of the pages and explained how she and her friend rewrote “Miss Mary Mac” for M&Ms (See Figure 4.11).
Isabella’s Song Notebook: “Miss Mary Mac and the M&M Dance”

Ms. Mary Mac and the M&M Dance

Ms. Mary Mac (x3) all d
all dressed in black (x3)
with silver buttons (x3)
all down her back (x3)
she asked her mother (x3)
for 50 cents (x3)
to see the m+ms (x3)
do the m+m dance (x3)
they danced so good (x3)
they taste so good (x3)
they fell on their feet (x3)
’cuz they’re so good to eat (x3)

Isabella turned to the next page (See Figure 4.12) and began performed another chant.

Upon finishing, Isabella clarified that she and her friend borrowed the rhyme from

*Monster High*, a television series on the cable network, *Nickelodeon*. 
Upon reflecting on our musical play episodes, I discussed Isabella’s creative behaviors with her mother. Mariam explained,

Ever since she was little, Isabella takes a lot of materials, like a piece of paper, and she creates things with it. It’s actually funny how I didn’t even notice that she does it with music too until we started working together and I started thinking about it more. Like, when she was younger she would be thrilled with just a roll of scotch tape or blank paper and I think she does the same thing with music in a way. It is just so interesting to see how she turns songs into something else. Like the M&M songs.

Although Isabella does not recognize herself as any sort of singer or composer, she exhibited these behaviors regularly in our meetings as well as with her friends and family.
Isabella’s Music in Identities

**Expressing group membership.** Isabella frequently referred to herself as an “older kid” and took offense when treated like or grouped with those younger than her. During one of our meetings, she criticized her school bus seating chart that was organized by grade level. “We are only aloud in the front,” Isabella complained. “Who?” I asked. She crossed her arms, rolled her eyes, and replied in an irritated tone, “The little kids and that includes me. They think I’m a little kid…I’m in the third grade, jeez.”

Isabella disassociates herself from “little kids” through her disinterest and rejection of their music. One afternoon, as we sat on the couch in the playroom, I probed Isabella as to what contributed to the “boring” nature of the violin classes she eventually quit. She referenced playing repertoire such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and admitted to it being “like a baby class.” Later in our conversation, Mariam and Patricia, Isabella’s youngest sister, joined us in our conversation where the same tune was referenced again. Mariam mentioned that “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” was one of the three songs she regularly sang to Isabella and her sisters when they were babies. “It’s one of the same ones I sing to her little sister now…and Itsy Bitsy and this elephant song in Spanish,” she explained. Seemingly uninterested in the conversation, Isabella sat on the floor in the corner and buried her head in her iPad screen. Mariam looked over to Patricia, who was playing in the opposite corner of the room and asked, “Patricia! Puede cantar la canción del elefante [can you sing the elephant song]?” The little girl smiled from ear to ear and began to laugh and jump up and down while Isabella rolled her eyes and shook her head disapprovingly. Mariam sang,
Although Patricia seemed to enjoy her mother’s spontaneous performance, Isabella hardly acknowledged the singing. “It’s cute, I think it is used to get kids counting in Spanish and to calm down or go to bed or something,” Mariam interjected. She smirked and looked over to Isabella. “It worked, right?” she asked while she giggled to herself. Practically ignoring her mother’s question, Isabella unenthusiastically shrugged her shoulders and continued to stare down at her iPad.

Just as she rejects music for babies and younger children, Isabella exhibits similar behaviors and attitudes towards music she correlates with adults. During our initial conversations, Isabella characterized kid and adult parties based on their musical playlists. She described music “you would hear at a kid’s party” as “fun, fast, and upbeat,” and the Latin music her father typically played at “barbeques for grown-ups” as “boring” and “slow.” Isabella often voiced her distaste for Latin music in a number of our successive conversations and I soon recognized the trend of Isabella’s refusal to not simply Latin music, but her father’s music.
In our next meeting, we stumbled upon a Latin music station while streaming local FM radio stations on Isabella’s iPad. In a rather unenthused voice, Isabella commented, “My dad would like this.” “Not you?” I responded. “Nope, I don’t!” she replied. A couple of weeks later, Isabella and I colored pieces of construction paper out on her family’s back porch as we had our conversation. She worked on writing her name in bubble letters with a single hot pink crayon as I drew swirls and stars with different shades of blue and green. “So do you and your mom like any of the same music?” I asked. “Nope, nope, nope,” Isabella replied without looking up from her paper. “And your dad?” I continued. Isabella looked up at me and screeched, “No way!” She hurriedly jumped up from the couch and grabbed a nearby teddy bear. “He listens to stuff like this…Tango! His music!” Isabella teased as she hummed a dramatic tune and mockingly strutted across the room, cheek to cheek with her fuzzy dance partner.

Isabella is an expert in her own music. Although she does not mind sharing her music with others, such as Catarina and myself, she certainly commands authority over it. Upon showing my interest in her learned and improvised songs and chants, Isabella was eager to teach me, yet never hesitated to stop and correct me. “Okay now I’m going to sing you something,” Isabella shouted as she climbed up the rope ladder hanging from the side of the tree house. She reached the top of the ladder, threw her head back and sang:

```
Ah - sev-en - ya! De - de di de - de doh
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Isabella looked down at me from the ladder. “Do you get what I’m saying?” she asked. “I’m not sure,” I replied, “but it kind of sounds like the first song on the *Lion King*.” Isabella nodded her head, smirked, and repeated the line a few more times while
swinging back and forth. I joined in with her and she stopped almost immediately. “No!” she screamed down from the ladder. “It’s tay-day-dee-tay-day-DOH.” Isabella began her descend down the ladder as I repeated the phrase back again. She jumped from the ropes and shook her head. “No!” she exclaimed. This time, she stood directly in front of me, pointed to her lips, and articulated each syllable in slow motion. “Tay-Day-DOH…so it’s like teddy, do you get it?” she asked in a rather unconvinced tone. It never seemed to matter to Isabella that I exhibited some adult authority over her or that I was an experienced music teacher. When it came to her music, I was the novice and she treated me as one.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will present the themes that emerged across the four cases and link those themes to the broader research literature. I will begin by restating the study’s purpose and research questions, after which I will provide a cross-case analysis for each of the guiding questions with interpretations of these findings. The chapter will conclude with implications for research on music in childhood, music teaching and learning, and curriculum.

Restatement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this collective case study was to examine the musical lives of second-generation immigrant children in Miami, Florida, to gain greater insight into music’s role in the negotiation and construction of their identities. In support of this central purpose, the following sub-questions guided the study:

1. How do second-generation children experience music in the different contexts of their lives?
2. How do second-generation children explore, develop, and express their identities through musical experience?
3. Why are second-generation children’s musical experiences meaningful and valuable in their lives?

Cross-Case Analysis and Discussion

Research question 1. How do second-generation children experience music in the different contexts of their lives? The children’s musical experiences took place in formal, informal, and non-formal music settings with a range of social contexts (See
Tables 5.1-5.3). Although the children’s musical identities and surroundings influenced the ways in and extent to which they experienced music, the nature of their experiences can be explained through two broad categories of music-making and music listening.

Within their musical experiences, the children exhibited two overarching, and often interrelated, roles as music-makers and music listeners.

Table 5.1. Children’s music in their homes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Repertoires commonly heard</th>
<th>Musical instruments and resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ava</td>
<td>US popular music (Taylor Swift, Carrie Underwood, Pussy Cat Dolls, Ariana Grande, Rachel Platten, Shawn Mendes; Meghan Trainor); Disney (Descendants, Camp Rock); Broadway (Wicked); TV shows (Glee, The Voice, Latin American Idol)</td>
<td>Guitar and keyboard (father’s house only). TVs (living room and bedroom) and personal iPad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>US popular music (Meghan Trainor), Disney (Lion King, Descendants) and Nickelodeon (Monster High) soundtracks, Children’s rhymes and jump rope songs (Miss Mary Mack, School), Spanish lullabies (Un Elephante), Classic Rock (Casey and the Sunshine Band), and Salsa (father’s preference)</td>
<td>Baby grand piano, stereo system, TVs (living room and playroom), personal iPad, family computer, and musical toys (karaoke machine, musical “Simon Says” game).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Classical music, Classic Rock (Rot Hot Chili Peppers), US popular music and censored hip-hop, some Latin popular music, Salsa, and traditional Ecuadorian music (parents’ preference)</td>
<td>Two personal violins, brothers’ violin and cello, keyboard, soprano recorder, TV and video games/ Nintendo Wii console (living room), personal iPad, and family computer (parents’ room).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolas</td>
<td>US popular music, Classical music, Disney soundtracks, Popular Latin and traditional Mexican music (mother’s preference), Rap and Hip-hop (father’s preference)</td>
<td>Keyboard, TV and video games/ Nintendo Wii console (living room), Radio/CD players (living room and bedroom), CD collection (Disney soundtracks and Spanish children’s, songs), personal iPad, and family computer (parents’ room).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2. Children’s music in their schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Repertoires commonly heard</th>
<th>Musical instruments and resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ava</td>
<td>American Top 40 radio (informally with herself and friends at bus stop/lunch courtyard)</td>
<td>Personal iPad, friends’ iPods, Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>Violin and general music classes. Prerecorded and child created music on bus ride and recess (hand clapping/jump roping games)</td>
<td>Violin, iPad, Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>General music class US Popular music (Whip/Nae Nae), Music from applications (Vines, Musical.ly)</td>
<td>Recorders, iPad, Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolas</td>
<td>General music class (Classical Music - Bach, Beethoven, Mozart)</td>
<td>None of mention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3. Children’s music in their communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Repertoires commonly heard</th>
<th>Musical instruments and resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ava</td>
<td>Community choir (Michael Jackson, Broadway, Folk Songs, Vocal Ensemble Music)</td>
<td>None of mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>Dance repertoire- Frozen, Katy Perry Dance rehearsal- Classical piano, mixture of “kids ones” and music chosen weekly by acrobatics instructor.</td>
<td>None of mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Violin/Orchestra: Classical Music</td>
<td>Strings, piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolas</td>
<td>Afterschool program: Pop and rock (Katy Perry, Avicii) Church: Danza for presentations, additional church music not discussed.</td>
<td>Afterschool: Keyboards and guitars Church: Danza ensemble instruments (e.g., Conch shell, drums)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Music-maker.** Although music-making seemed to take different forms in each of the cases, my observations and conversations made it quite clear that the children were active music-makers, each in their own right. They sang, played, and moved in formal
and informal settings, individually and with others, through two music-making avenues: performing and creating music.

*Music performer.* Whether it was Daniel playing Bach on the stage at his concerto competition, Ava singing “The Star Spangled Banner” with her choir at a sporting event, Nicolas playing “Final Countdown” in the living room for his parents, or Isabella dancing and singing “Baby Shark” in front of the camera, the children performed a variety of musics for a range of audiences, and sometimes, for no one other than themselves.

The children believed they could project certain moods and feelings to others through their musical performances. Nicolas’ father revealed that Nicolas offered to play his keyboard any time his newborn baby brother cried “to soothe him.” Nicolas explained, “I know it helps because when I play it, I can see him close his eyes and kinda calm down.” Daniel believed the perks of performing were two-fold. To him, performing was a personal experience as much as it was a social experience. He admitted performing, “Not just makes people’s days, but it makes your day too.”

The children often described the personal feelings incited by their performances. “When you’re playing an instrument, you get this feeling and this emotion that makes you feel different, like a different person,” Daniel explained. Isabella and Ava embodied this description during their spontaneous performances throughout our meetings. Isabella did not care to share much when sitting and talking with me, but she seemed to open up and let herself go while she improvised songs and chants in the backyard. Ava’s behaviors in her impromptu performances gave a similar impression. She seemed to become entranced while singing and ignored any and all distractions, including my interjections, until she finished what she had started.
Though some performed music was in service to others, Ava seemed to view performing as more of a self-serving experience. She admitted that “being the center of attention and in the spotlight” attracted her to performing. “I always get a little nervous right before I perform...but when I’m there, it’s like, I’m the star!” she exclaimed. At times, the act of performing seemed to overshadow the music which she performed. Daniel spoke of a similar instance where he performed his violin at a school assembly, stating “Everyone knows me and I’m popular in school because of that.”

This is similar to Davidson’s (2002) study of solo performers, which reported that children’s musical performances, both formal and informal, enhanced their enjoyment and understanding of the music. They believed they could communicate emotions and ideas to others as well as invoke certain feelings within themselves. Furthermore, the children’s performances were, at times, self-serving experiences that helped attract attention, increase popularity, and boost their self-esteem.

Music creator. In addition to recreating others’ music, the children’s performances incorporated the music they created through composing, improvising, and arranging as well. Ava wrote songs, Daniel produced sound effects, Isabella parodied songs, and Nicolas improvised chord structures. Each musical creation was unique to its composer and their musical experiences. As Campbell (2010) said,

Just as children build their ships and planes of red and white Lego blocks or shape a new monster from a canister of yellow Play-Doh, they also make up their own songs and rhythms from the music they already know. The rhythms and tunes of their musical parts emerge in their made up songs. (p. 252)

It was clear in my observations that popular media and music influenced much of the children’s created music. Just as the girl who modeled her songwriting form and style after Kelly Clarkson (Davis, 2015), the children who improvised television theme songs
in Singapore (Lum, 2007), or the young boy who altered the tunes from his favorite DVD on his keyboard (De Vries, 2011), the children in this study drew from popular music and media for their musical compositions and improvisations as well. Ava’s songs emulated those written by Taylor Swift. Daniel’s sound effects were strikingly similar to the Mission:Impossible theme song. Isabella’s parodies resembled Nickelodeon and Disney tunes. Nicolas’ improvised chord structures were inspired by his popular music analyses. Some compositions directly copied and manipulated popular tunes, some appropriated compositional techniques characteristic to popular music, and others were reminiscent of popular music styles or elements.

The children’s creative musical experiences were largely informal and self-initiated, whether spontaneous or planned. Informal music settings opened spaces for the children to explore music improvisation and composition without restrictions. “I like to play mostly at home because I can play whatever,” Nicolas laughed. “In class I’m only allowed to work on that one thing and nothing else.” Moorehead and Pond’s (1978) research identified the importance of context in children’s spontaneous musical utterances and creations. Unrestricted or unstructured musical environments offer spaces that can encourage and inspire children’s solitary and social musical creations. Informal music settings proved invaluable for the children, as they not only welcomed, but inspired musical creativity and autonomy.

**Music listener.** Music listening played an integral part in the children’s musical experiences. Whether at the forefront or in-service to other musical and nonmusical behaviors, the children listened to music, alone and with others, in a variety of contexts for a range of functions. Their listening behaviors can be described in three primary roles:
regulated listener, engaged listener, and analytic listener. These listening roles are not exclusive and often intersect with one another.

Regulated listener. As regulated listeners, the children used music as a means to explore and adjust their moods. Nicolas listened to music as a form of relaxation, particularly before bed when he “gets distracted by [his] imagination.” Daniel believed music turns a bad day better: “They switch and the feeling is so good.” Furthermore, Ava sensed changes in her feelings while listening as well, “It will give you so many mixed emotions...first it will make you happy and then it makes you like, ‘Uh!’” In addition to relaxation, pleasure, and entertainment, the children in this study also spoke of music that incited feelings of nostalgia. Daniel explained, “I really like [“Tears in Heaven” by Eric Clapton] because it reminds me of someone that died that I really liked...it makes me sad, but it makes me happy too, you know?” Nicolas expressed similar thoughts concerning “Cup Song,” a remake of “You’re Gonna Miss Me When I’m Gone” made popular by the movie Pitch Perfect. “The song talks about missing someone and sometimes my mom will go back to Mexico and I will miss her so I'll listen to this song,” Nicolas explained.

Juslin and Laukka (2004) found that emotions most commonly associated with feelings such as happiness, calmness and relaxation, nostalgia, pleasure, love, and longing tend to dominate individual’s emotional responses to music. As Dunn (2011) stated,

It is not surprising that a common manifestation of emotional response to music would be selecting music for the purposes of mood regulation, perhaps to lift, calm, excite, or match one’s mood; to help one cope with profound feelings of loss; or even to make the time pass more quickly.

Similar to the children and young adolescents surveyed in Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, and Tarrant’s (2003) study, the children used music as a means to explore and alter their
emotions. However, unlike the findings of North, Hargreaves, and O’Neill (2000), which found the use of music for mood regulation more common in young females than males, the children in this study frequently discussed their regulated music listening experiences, regardless of gender. Actually, the boys in this study were able to better articulate and explain their feelings associated with listening experiences when compared to the girls.

*Engaged listener.* As engaged listeners, the children employed a variety of planned and spontaneous behaviors along with and in response to the music in which they heard. They sang, clapped, played along with the music and sounds around them. Ava believed singing along with music was “the whole point” behind listening to it. “Why even have music on if you are not singing with it?” she explained. Similarly, Nicolas played along with CDs, the radio, and pre-recorded music on his keyboard because he liked “to line it up and be with it.”

Similar to the observations of Campbell (2010), Custodero (2009), and Marsh (2008), kinesthetic responses were fundamental to much of the children’s engaged listening. Nicolas spoke of its function to incite physical response, as it was “hard to sit still” when listening to music. Daniel’s improvised movements in reaction to the sounds of his video games and Isabella’s spontaneous dances during our listening sessions personified this thought as well. Frith (1996) views movement and dance as an “enhanced form of listening” (p. 223). Just as the children in Davis’ (2015) study, the children’s movements reflected not only what they heard, but also what they felt.

Designing and performing choreography was a regular practice for the children as well. Isabella admitted to choreographing dances with her friends “at sleepovers and stuff” as well as her sister and roommate, Catarina. “We do dances at night when we should be
sleeping in bed,” Isabella said with a mischievous grin on her face. Ava spoke of similar memories and “dance sessions” with her older sister as well. Daniel described dancing the choreography to “Whip/Nae Nae” as part of his peer culture at school. “Everyone does it,” he explained, “it’s one of the crazy things we do.”

Similarly to the findings of Lum (2007) and Campbell (2010), the rich and varied soundscapes of the children’s homes, schools, and communities stimulated their spontaneous and planned musical responses individually and with others. The children’s individual listening experiences motivated them to actively engage with music, inspired many of their spontaneous musical behaviors, and ultimately, provided an outlet for musical expression. Additionally, the children’s social listening experiences set a stage for musical collaboration and social interaction. Engaged listening in social settings offered the children experiences to interact and communicate with others through musical experience.

*Analytic listener.* As analytic listeners, the children analyzed musical style, patterns, and other elements to recreate it themselves. Similar to De Vries’ (2010, 2011) observations of children who repeatedly listened to Top 40 radio and CDs to figure out melodies on their keyboards and Davis’ (2015) more recent observations of children’s use of mobile devices and YouTube to learn their favorite popular songs, the children in this study learned to recreate music through their analytic listening experiences as well. Although repetition was key to their learning, the children came up with additional strategies to aid their efforts. Using the prerecorded music on his keyboard, Nicolas described, “I’ll slow it down and take away the left hand...it’s easier to learn it that way.”
Furthermore, Ava explained, “I search for the songs on YouTube that have the lyrics so I know what they are saying and I can learn it easier.”

Davis (2015) observed how technology served as “a constant source for learning” that afforded the children opportunities to exercise musical choice and independence (p. 269). Websites such as YouTube and music performance applications including The Voice served as common platforms for informal music learning for the children in this study. As playing by ear is a common learning process in informal music making (Green, 2002), analytic listening was a primary outlet for independent music learning for the children in the study who did not read traditional music notation. Nicolas admitted, “I just learn by hearing mostly. ‘Cause I haven’t really learned that much about the actual letters and the types of notes yet.” Similar to Davis’ (2015) observations, the children in this study, with the exception of Daniel, learned music almost exclusively through analytic listening experiences and repetition. They were able to be autonomous music learners regardless of their music literacy—learners who chose the music they wished to learn as well as the pace and strategy in which they learned it.

_Ecological contexts._ Acculturative strategies reflect immigrants’ attitudes, behaviors, and values concerning their heritage and host cultures. Berry (2003) conceptualized the multiple responses one may have to the acculturation process as four approaches: assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration. Assimilation refers to those who restrain their heritage cultures to identify and interact with the surrounding dominant culture, while separation occurs on the opposite end of that spectrum. Integration concerns those who maintain their heritage culture while learning about and integrating aspects of their surrounding cultures and marginalization describes
individuals who give little effort to interact and practice either culture.

Children’s musical lives often align with their developing identities, and for immigrants, their acculturation strategies (Frith, 1996; Minks, 1999). Both Minks (1999) and Lum and Campbell (2009) observed that children who preferred music from both their heritage and host cultures largely practiced integrative acculturation strategies and closely identified with both cultures, while those who preferred music associated with only one culture practiced separation or assimilation strategies. The children in this study practiced acculturative strategies associated with integration, though at times, their musical behaviors and attitudes seemed to downplay their ethnic heritage cultures and resemble more assimilative strategies. Abril (2002) observed similar trends in bilingual children’s musical preferences concerning English language and Spanish music, as did Portes and Schauffler (1996) who found second-generation youths in South Florida largely preferred to speak in English, regardless of their proficiency in their heritage language.

Children of immigrants respond differently to the acculturation process due to a myriad of factors including their surrounding community and social contexts. Youth who identify with integrative strategies typically reside in ethnically mixed communities, while many who live in more ethnically similar communities different from their own identify with separation strategies (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). Much of previous research focusing on first- and second-generation immigrants in the United States (Kelly-McHale, 2011; Lum & Campbell, 2009; Minks, 1999) and beyond (Lum, 2007; Marsh, 2001) took place in regions or situations where the host culture differed by background, physical features, and cultural practices. The context of multicultural Miami,
Florida, is quite different from other parts of the United States. It is home to a large, diverse Spanish population that is considered the majority population in the region, although they are considered a minority group in the United States. Furthermore, Spanish language and culture is prevalent in homes and communities. Hispanic families in Miami cross all socioeconomic classes, as did the children in this study.

The children in this study did not seem to negotiate or question their immigrant status, as they perceived it as a normal characteristic of their lives and others’. During a conversation with Isabella regarding her hobbies and talents, I ensured her that being bilingual was a “special talent.” Isabella rolled her eyes and said, “Everybody can speak two languages.” She paused and then clarified her statement, “Well except Grandmas, they mostly speak Spanish. But parents and kids do both.” Ava viewed Miami’s population as, “a bunch of different people with a bunch of different cultures.” She commented on the similarity of individual’s physical features and admitted she finds it difficult to discerning others’ ethnic backgrounds. “Cause here you don’t really know...You don’t really know who’s what and who’s from where... for all I know the person next to me could be Costa Rican, but I don't know,” she explained. Perhaps these normalized views of immigration and ethnicity coupled with diverse social contexts evoked less of a need for the children in this study to question, hide, or remain loyal to their ethnic identities and cultural practices, and in turn, their musical identities, behaviors, and preferences.

The ethnic makeup of children’s communities seemed to play an influential role on their musical experiences and identities. Similar to this study, the surrounding social context of Abril’s (2002) study concerning bilingual children’s musical preferences could
be described as, “an American ‘minority’ group living in a city with a ‘majority’ status (p. 67). In both Abril’s (2002) and the current study, the children expressed their preference of English language music to Spanish music. These findings are inconsistent with Abril and Flowers’ (2007) study that found bilingual students who lived in the Midwestern United States to identify more strongly with Spanish language music when compared with English and instrumental versions (Abril & Flowers, 2007). The ‘majority status’ of the children in this and previous studies (Abril, 2002) seemed to influence the ways children viewed themselves and others around them as well as the musical choices they made.

**Research question 2. How do second-generation children explore, develop, and express their identities through musical experience?** Musical identities can be conceptualized in two major domains: identities in music (IIM) and music in identities (MII). IIM illuminate how and to what extent individuals define themselves within the musical domain, while MII describe how individuals’ musical experiences act as a means or resource for developing other aspects of their identities. Each informs and influences the other, as the impact of music in one’s life is dependent on a number of musical, personal, and social factors (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

**Exploring identities in music.** Children’s daily environments and social contexts largely influence who they are, how they behave, what they prefer, and who they might become (Archer, 1999; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In relation to music, this phenomenon resembles the concept of *musical enculturation*, which Green (2001) defines as an individual’s attainment, or lack there of, musical knowledge and skills through the musical experiences and practices of his or her everyday environments and social
contexts. Due to limitations based on their age and independence, children’s everyday experiences and social interactions primarily occur in and between the physical environments of their homes, communities, and schools (Archer, 1999; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). However, with the growing presence of technology, digital spaces are increasingly woven throughout the children’s physical environments (Andersson, 1986).

As children experience life through their daily environments and social contexts, they begin to evaluate how they might identify themselves through their experiences. According to Archer (1999), children’s identity evaluations are largely based on motivations and emotional connections affiliated with their choices. In this study, musical confidence, success, future aspirations, support, and group membership motivated the children’s continued engagement in music and encouraged positive identification with their IIM. The aesthetic attraction and emotional connection the children developed with their music inspired their interests, engagements, and positive IIM identification as well.

Based on emerging themes from the data—and supported by the research of Archer (1999) and Green (2001)—the figure below illustrates the cyclic process of the children’s IIM exploration (See Figure 5.1). Daily musical surroundings and experiences help children gather information about music, whether it is musical knowledge and skills or certain feelings evoked by musical experiences or memories. This information is considered during IIM evaluations and ultimately guides children’s identity choices as to whether or not they choose to integrate aspects into their IIM.
**Developing identities in music.** Children learn who they are and who they want to be by comparing themselves with others. Through social comparisons, children realize characteristics that make them similar or different to those around them and the social groups they do and do not belong to (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Tajfel and Turner (1985) refer to these similar and different groups as ingroups and outgroups.

In this study, the children realized and developed their IIM largely through comparisons of two groups: those they perceived as less-skilled than themselves and highly-skilled others they emulate and idolize. Festinger (1954) conceptualized these trends as downward and upward social comparisons. The children’s downward social comparisons largely contributed to increased self-concept in music and upward comparisons inspired and guided them to improve and achieve in regards to their IIM.
Ava performed downward social comparisons with others she viewed as less skilled, which in turn, increased her self-esteem and thus further developing and strengthening her singer identity (Festinger, 1954). Although in previous research Lamont (2002) found that musical self-concept typically decreases as children age and become more aware of their abilities and more accurate in evaluating them, Ava’s confidence continued to increase. Perhaps this is due, in part, to her social contexts and downward comparisons. Additionally, Ava performed upward social comparisons with those she considers highly skilled or having high status in her singer ingroup (Festinger, 1954; Tajfel, 1981). In Ava’s social contexts, high-status symbols consisted of her favorite celebrity singers and choir teachers. She imitated the behaviors and values of her role models and adopted their characteristics into her own IIM in hopes to achieve similar success in the future, and in turn, strengthen her singer identity.

Daniel’s peers and brothers belonged to what Tajfel and Turner (1985) would describe as his musician outgroup, while his music teachers and other professional music figures consisted of his musician ingroup. When it came to music, Daniel preferred to affiliate himself with those in his musician ingroup. Although he did not mind helping and encouraging individuals in his outgroup, he excluded them due to their lower levels of musical knowledge and skill. These downward comparisons fueled Daniel’s confidence and self-esteem in his own musical abilities. Additionally, Daniel holds special connections with those he considers part of his ingroup. As members of the same group, he acknowledged how he and his teachers shared similar skills, thoughts, stories, and experiences regarding music and admitted that he could relate to his music teachers in ways he could not with his friends and family. Their shared musical knowledge and
experience created a bond that transcended their student-teacher relationships, despite their differences in age.

Nicolas performed many of his social comparisons regarding the keyboard with his friends and classmates. In turn, he often performed downward comparisons, or social comparisons with those he viewed less skilled or knowledgeable (Festinger, 1954). Nicolas realized that he played better and learned faster than his peers, which in turn, enhanced his musical confidence and identity. He often spoke of helping others and the “good feeling” that always accompanied his good deeds. Nicolas never spoke of a specific teacher or performer that he idolized or emulated; however, he strived to improve his playing abilities so that he could soon, “play with two hands like real piano players do.”

The children learned who they were and who they wanted to become by comparing themselves with others (Festinger, 1954). Through social comparisons, children realized characteristics that make them similar or different to those around them and the social groups they did and did not belong to, otherwise known as their ingroups and outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The children in this study developed their identities in music through a continuous cycle of musical experiences and upward and downward social comparisons of those considered in their musical in- and outgroups (Festinger, 1954; Tajfel & Turner, 1985) (See Figure 5.2).

Constructing conceptions of identities in music. Similarly to the findings of Shouldice (2014) and D’Alexander (2015), children’s perceptions of IIM relate to their own experiences. In this study, the children constructed conceptions of IIM through their everyday musical experiences and social contexts. These experiences and interactions
afforded the children to create their own, nuanced IIM criteria, which served as references during their own social comparisons (Festinger, 1954; Tajfel, 1981).

Figure 5.2. Process of IIM development

Expressing identities in music. The children’s IIM influenced their musical behaviors, preferences, and values, and vice versa (Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002). The children expressed their IIM through the music they engaged with and preferred as well as the meaning and value they attributed to their musical experiences. In some cases, the children’s social contexts influenced their identity expression, while others’ remained relatively consistent throughout multiple contexts. This idea aligns with previous theories that conceptualize identities in two parts: consistent, unchanging and ever-changing, socially contextual (Erikson, 1968; James, 1880).

Schwartz, Montgomery, and Briones (2006) conceptualized that the personal aspects of one’s identity controls internal coherence and consistency and, in turn, affects the ways one views his or herself as well as those around them (Schwartz et al., 2006).
Ava and Nicolas seemed to have a more consistent, or committed IIM than the other children. Perhaps this was due, in part, to their singer and keyboard player identities being at the forefront of both their personal and social identities.

Ava seemed to have a clear focus on the types of musical experiences she preferred. She expressed her singer-songwriter identity and committed to it through her musical preferences and behaviors as well as the meaning and value she attached to singing. She enjoyed her singing-based experiences and was extremely confident in her singing and songwriting abilities. Ava engaged in singing-based experiences frequently, both formally and informally, and preferred it to other musical experiences. Although she thoroughly enjoyed engaging with music, Ava rejected her school’s only musical elective due to its instrumental emphasis. Additionally, she admitted that her experimentation with instruments is in service to her singing and songwriting. Ava preferred music that features vocal artists and songwriters and envisioned how she planned to incorporate singing and songwriting into her future. Similarly, Nicolas’ behaviors mirrored Ava’s. He preferred piano-based music experiences to other avenues of music making and listening. Nicolas also admitted his aesthetic attraction to the piano and unwillingness to learn other instruments.

Older children and adolescents exhibit commitment to their identities through behaviors, goals, values, and beliefs (Archer, 1999). Supported by Archer’s (1999) identity commitment criteria for early adolescents, Ava, and Nicolas to a lesser extent, demonstrated a commitment to their IIM through five themes: (1) knowledge, (2) musical activities, (3) emotional connections, (4) future aspirations, and (5) resistance to be swayed. They committed to their IIM through their motivation to learn, engagement in
IIM-specific activities, and the special feelings and connections they attached to their musical experiences. Additionally, they were rather unwilling to engage with music where IIM-specific activities were absent. Lastly, Ava and Nicolas projected how their IIM would be integrated into their future.

In contrast to Ava and Nicolas, Daniel described his multiple interests in various avenues of music and sports. Although parts of Daniel’s IIM was committed to classical music and his violin playing in similar ways as Ava and Nicolas, his IIM and subsequent musical behaviors, activities, preferences, and perceptions varied depending on where he was, who he was with, and the genre of music at hand (Finnäs, 1989). When it came to the violin, he voiced his strong preference for playing classical music and was unwilling to explore other musical genres or create his own composition on the instrument. In formal music settings, which were largely influenced by Western classical music, Daniel often gravitated towards his teachers while excluding his peers. However, when Daniel was not playing his violin or participating in formal music experiences, he was more playful and informal with music. He manipulated music alone and with his peers and brothers to invoke pleasure and excitement. Furthermore, his musical preferences shifted in these environments to more hip-hop, rock, and U.S. popular music.

Isabella did not self-identify as a musician, singer, improviser, arranger, or composer, yet her musical behaviors revealed otherwise. She created dances, improvised songs, arranged and parodied music with her sisters and friends. It is not unusual for children who lack a sense of IIM to engage with music in complex ways beyond school and other formal music experiences, as documented in prior research with children (Campbell, 2010). Perhaps this lack of identification stems from her conceptions of what
it means to be a musician, which could possibly be affected by her negative formal music training experiences and lack of musical success (Lamont, 2002).

**Music in identities.** The children’s music in identities represented how they used musical experience as a means for developing aspects of their identities (Hargreaves et al., 2002). In this study, music experience provided the children with an avenue for identity negotiation and construction, socially as well as musically. They used their musical experiences as a means to explore, understand, and express aspects of their cultural identities including ethnic, gender, and youth identities.

Ava used music as a medium for exposure and exploration of her ethnic identity. Just as the immigrant families used music as a way to stay connected to their heritage cultures in Lum’s (2008) and Custodero’s (2009) work, Ava’s father, Antonio, used Hispanic music as a way to expose her to her ethnic heritage. Antonio acted as her primary culture bearer and attempted to connect her interests in singing to television shows such as “Latin American Idol” and Spanish radio stations in hopes to engage her in Spanish popular culture and improve her Spanish language skills. Furthermore, Ava learned about and engaged in cultural practices through traditional music, dance, and dress.

Ava admitted to not being particularly interested in or entertained by Spanish music, especially in comparison to music in English. Although she never voiced a negative opinion of Spanish music and considered it part of her ethnic identity, she often complained of the language barrier, as she was not fluent in Spanish. This aligns, in part, with Abril and Flowers’ (2007) findings that imply monolingual, English-speaking children prefer songs in English and instrumental music over music in unfamiliar
languages. In contrast to these findings, Ava equated her lessened interest in Spanish music to that of instrumental music. “Spanish music is kind of like listening to an orchestra, like you don’t understand what ‘words’ they are saying, you just listen to the music,” she explained. I suspect this strong preference for music in English above all other musics is highly influenced by her committed singer identity.

Unlike the fifth grader in Minks’ (1999) study, who was embarrassed by and ultimately rejected his immigrant mother’s music, Nicolas and Daniel acknowledged the importance of knowing and actively engaging in ethnic cultural music traditions, even if it was not their preferred way of making and listening to music. Their cultural experiences were hands-on and typically occurred when initiated by their parents. In contrast to Lum’s (2008) findings, the children did not utilize technology to explore and connect with their heritage culture. Rather, their digital interactions were reserved for U.S. media content.

Isabella used music to establish group membership and express her youth culture (Custodero, 2009; Gaunt, 2006; Grugéon, 2001; Harwood, 1994; Marsh, 2001, 2008; Tarrant et al., 2002). Her musical behaviors, values, and preferences conveyed her own youth status while often rejecting or excluding those related to her youth outgroups, namely adults and “little kids” (Campbell, 2010; Gluschakof, 2016). Isabella became more invested in our meetings once she realized I was interested and impressed by her learned songs and spontaneous improvisations. She did not mind sharing her music with me; however, she made it evident that I was still an outsider to her culture. As the expert of her youth culture, Isabella stepped into a more authoritative role in our meetings while
she shared and taught me her music. She tended to boss me around and insistently corrected me and ignored my musical ideas and input.

In addition to refusing me as a part of her culture, Isabella rejected the music of her youth outgroups. She voiced her distaste for “baby music” as a way to disassociate herself from the “little kids,” as she was proud of her “big kid” status. Isabella also rejected Spanish music. However, through further questioning and observation, I realized that the Spanish music exposed to Isabella were largely associated with two of her youth outgroups: babies and adults. A gap in age-appropriate repertoire was created once she outgrew Spanish lullabies and children’s songs. It seemed that she went from hearing “Un Elephante” to listening to romantic tangos. Although the repertoire aligns with her ethnic identity, aspects of her youth identity seem to be at the forefront of her preferred musical experiences.

Perhaps Isabella’s prevalence of her youth identity over her ethnic identity can be explained through Allport (1979), who theorized that children develop a sense of ethnic identity and loyalty to their ethnic ingroup by the age of 10. Isabella, an eight-year-old, exhibited much different behaviors towards Spanish music than the other three children in the study, ages 10 and 11. In contrast to the three who acknowledged the cultural value of Spanish music, albeit they may not prefer or initiate engagements with it, Isabella regularly admitted her strong distaste for the music.

Research question 3. Why are second-generation children’s musical experiences meaningful and valuable in their lives? As Campbell (2010) stated, “For children, musical meaning is deeply related to function...they are buoyed by it, comforted in it, reflective through it, and exuberant as a result of it” (p. 226-7). The children found
meaning and value in their musical experiences for its personal and social functions. In this section, I use Merriam’s (1964) social functions of music as a thematic organizer to discuss music’s power to regulate mood, entertain, incite aesthetic enjoyment, represent social groups, and teach and transmit culture.

**Emotional expression.** Children and adolescents have long used music as a form of emotional expression (Campbell, 2010; Hargeaves et al., 2003; O’Neill, 2000). As regulated listeners and active music-makers, the children in this study used music to explore, alter, and convey emotions and ideas. They described feelings of pleasure, entertainment, relaxation, and nostalgia incited by their musical choices and surroundings and explained how music had the power to communicate emotions and illustrate stories. At times, the children chose specific music to engage with in order to change or emphasize their mood, while other times, they expressed their feelings through spontaneous and planned musical performances.

**Entertainment.** In many instances, the children used music to entertain themselves and others. Just as in the observations of Koops (2014), Davis (2015), and Lum (2008), they listened to music to relieve their boredom during long car rides, wrote songs to pass the time, created chants or sound effects to accompany their games, and procrastinated their chores to play, listen, and move to music. Additionally, they used music as way to amuse others through their live and recorded performances of original compositions and recreated music.

Music was often the focus of the children’s digital play through YouTube and musical applications. The children learned melodies, song lyrics, and choreography through music videos found on YouTube and practiced singing and playing familiar tunes.
through applications that evaluated the accuracy of their performances. Although these experiences were often meant to pass the time, more often than not, children’s digital music play resulted in experiences were the children explored and evaluated their musical tastes and practiced and refined their musical skills.

**Aesthetic enjoyment.** As Campbell (2010) stated, “Children are drawn to music for its power to bring fuller enjoyment to their lives” (p. 227). Although the children in this study used music as a means of play and entertainment, they also enjoyed music on a deeper emotional, intellectual, and artistic level through listening and performing. The children spoke of the inherent beauty of listening to certain musical products and sounds as well as the deep connections they feel when playing such beautiful music themselves. Daniel mentioned that the feelings evoked from his classical music experiences are “so good,” Ava could only sigh and coo when attempting to explain the feelings evoked from songs she described as, “so sweet,” and Nicolas admitted to practicing his keyboard just to hear the “soothing” sound of his piano. The children were surely attracted to music and motivated to engage with it as a result of their appealing aesthetic qualities.

**Represent social groups.** O’Neill (2002) stated, “As children and adolescents negotiate a sense of self and identity in relation to music, they respond in ways that sustain and perpetuate these differences” (p. 79). Isabella rejected the music she associated with babies and adults and embraced popular music along with music from Disney and Nickelodeon. She created and recreated music with her peers and younger sister and often made me feel like an outsider when she shared and taught her music to me. Daniel shared his love of popular music with his peers and siblings, but often excluded them in his engagements with classical music, which was often associated with
formal music experiences. Daniel described the “special bond” he shared with formally trained musicians, regardless of age, including his violin and school music teacher.

The children used music to establish and express group membership. They rejected the music of those considered in their outgroup and often excluded outgroups from their music, while they idolized and emulated those considered their ingroups. Tarrant, Hargreaves, and North (2001) observed similar trends with adolescents that associated their ingroups with music highly valued by the ingroup and their outgroups with music negatively valued by the ingroup. However, rather than conflicts between peer groups, the social groups in this study largely differed by age and musical background.

*Teach and transmit culture.* The children used music as a way to learn and transmit cultural values, traditions, and expectations, and in turn, navigate one or more aspects of their cultural identities including ethnic (Custodero, 2009; Lum & Campbell, 2009), gender (Dibben, 2002; Gaunt, 2006) and youth identities (Tarrant et al., 2002). They acted as both receivers of culture from older siblings, parents, peers, and media figures and transmitters of culture to their younger siblings and friends.

The children’s parents also saw music as a resource for teaching ethnic culture. They urged their children to listen to and engage with music of their heritage to instill culture and improve Spanish language skills. With the exception of Isabella, the children expressed their appreciation and respect for the music of their heritages. However, they did not necessarily choose to engage in it. As Ava admitted, “[Spanish music] wouldn’t be my first choice, but I do like it. It’s just that I’d rather listen to something else.” This
trend has occurred throughout contemporary research with children, regardless of their backgrounds.

Popular music seems to serve as a shared frame of reference for children all over the world—from first graders in Singapore (Lum, 2007), to refugee children in Australia (Marsh, 2012), to young adolescents in England (Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003), to second-generation immigrant children in the United States (Kelly-McHale, 2011; Lum & Campbell, 2009). Popular music is almost omnipresent in the lives of many children today through digital avenues including radio, television, movies, video games, mobile devices, social media, and audio and video streaming via the Internet. The genre’s accessibility and familiarity attracts children to listen to and recreate this music on their own and with others.

The children’s use of technology in this study helped teach and transmit musical practices largely associated with their youth cultures. In contrast to Lum’s (2008) observations of families who utilized technology to explore and connect with their heritage, the children in this study largely used technology to engage with U.S. popular culture. They often searched YouTube to revisit songs heard through movies, television shows, commercials, radios, and friends’ mobile devices. They also chose to play and sing along with a majority of U.S. Top 40 hits through musical performance applications such as The Voice and Magic Piano by Smule.

**Implications for Music Teaching and Curriculum**

**Concerning music learning.** As three of the most prevalent physical spaces in children’s lives, music educators should consider encouraging connections between school, home, and community settings to relate familiar ideas to new and abstract
concepts, stimulate interest, and reinforce practice and learning. Connections may be made culturally, including youth and ethnic cultures, and digitally.

**Youth cultures.** Although the nature of children’s play changes overtime, they continue to play with and manipulate music, even as they mature. Older children and adolescent’s musical play have a higher degree of musical sophistication than the sound explorations of a preschooler and the simple songs improvised by a first grader. Ava’s original songs mirrored the verse-chorus form of her favorite popular music. The lyrics discussed mature feelings and her melodies were musically expressive, flowing, and natural. Isabella and her friend served as the directors of their original musical based on M&M candy characters. They parodied songs, wrote out the lyrics and a script, and organized “all the first graders” as their singers and actors. Nicolas played, paused, and repeated his favorite songs on YouTube to learn and recreate the melodies and chord structures of the songs on his keyboard. Daniel made short music videos with his friends similar to the ones they view on their Musical.ly application. In summary, what do these examples of musical play mean for the music educator?

Music educators should consider encouraging musical exploration and play in their classrooms at all ages. Older children and adolescents may explore music creation, decision-making, and analysis in a more sophisticated manner to stay challenged and engaged in individual and group activities. At this stage in their development, they have just begun to explore and better understand emotions, identities, and social relationships and their language and musical vocabulary is increased and varied. Music educators can introduce new, and perhaps unconventional, explorative and creative music mediums into the classroom in response to students’ evolving musical play through songwriting,
graphic notation, making parodies and rearranging songs, creating a musical score and
dramatizing a music video, producing songs, and utilizing electronic sampling, to name a few.

**Ethnic cultures.** The children’s parents stimulated their Spanish musical
ingagements almost exclusively. Although the children respected music of their heritage,
they do not necessarily choose to engage with it. They understood, valued, and cared,
about their cultural traditions, but they did not seem to intrinsically enjoy them enough to
perpetuate engagements themselves. Perhaps this stems from the age-appropriateness of
the activities presented to the children by their parents.

Youth and ethnic cultures do not seem to overlap for the second-generation
immigrant children in this study. A gap in age-appropriate cultural music and traditions
was created once the children outgrew Spanish lullabies and children’s songs.
Introducing older children and adolescents to music of their own and others’ cultures can
be done in a more relatable, engaging manner through careful consideration of the
appropriateness of repertoire and musical activities. Rather than incorporating cultural
music appropriate for babies and preschool-aged children, music educators should
consider finding more complex and engaging repertoire. Perhaps introducing songs and
games created and played by children can fill the existing gap of cultural repertoire often
found in children’s homes and communities.

**Digital cultures.** Music educators may want to be aware of their students’ digital
cultures and resources outside of the music classroom. Educators who are knowledgeable
to what technology is available and familiar to their students can use that information to
create home and school activities and assignments that inspire and reinforce music
learning and engagement. Examples of this may be opening spaces for music exploration through music-streaming listening stations, music-making by recreating popular songs by ear, or music production via websites such as Incredibox and applications such as Garageband.

Music educators may also try to connect their students’ digital cultures to their ethnic cultures in and beyond the music classroom. The children in this study used technology to engage largely with U.S. popular culture, rather to explore and connect with their heritage cultures as children did in other studies (Campbell & Lum, 2009; Lum, 2008). There seemed to be a divide between heritage and digital cultures in this study and perhaps music educators can help bridge that gap through musical and technological guidance. Encourage music listening and research through the audio files and liner notes contained in the Smithsonian Folkways digital collection and allow students to explore popular music and “tween” cultures of other countries.

Concerning music function. Music educators may open spaces in the classroom for students to explore and discuss the functions of music in their lives. Perhaps educators could integrate a project where children interview their family members or others in their communities regarding their musical lives. Questions may be focused to examine a particular function of music, such as mood regulation, or broader to explore the ways different individuals incorporate music in their lives. Activities such as this may shine light on the ways students consciously and subconsciously use music in their own lives as well as connect and relate different musical cultures to one another.

Concerning identity. Music educators who help facilitate students’ musical experiences can gain greater insight into how they explore and understand who they are
through music while simultaneously expanding their understanding of a variety of musical concepts. Children’s identities in music (IIM) are nuanced and influenced by a variety of musical, social, and cultural factors. Music educators can guide student explorations of various types of IIM and possibly challenge their ideas to focus or expand their views. For example, discuss what it means to be a singer by viewing various models of singers (e.g., an opera singer, an individual singing in the car, a famous pop star, and a member of a school choir). Educators may also assign IIM activities, projects, and presentations for students to explore, evaluate, and share their own IIM through song-sharing, playlist compilations or designing their own personal music maps.

Conceptualized as music in identities, the ways children use music to explore, develop, and express their cultural identities varies as well. It is important to note that connecting with students’ cultures does not solely pertain to their heritage cultures and ethnic identities. Educators should consider students’ array of cultural identities, including youth and gender identities, in their music classrooms as well. Rather than a curriculum focused solely on repertoire, perhaps teachers can introduce a more project-based curriculum to acknowledge the complexities of the ways students experience, interpret, and understand music.

**Implications for Further Research**

**Child-centered research.** One of the most important aspects to consider while researching with children is the appropriateness of the research method. Not all techniques frequently used with adults are appropriate for children. Extended observations and interviews are common practices among child-centered researchers in the field of music education (Campbell, 2010; Griffin, 2009); however, researchers often
find it difficult to gain access to the worlds of children (Clark, 1999; Corsaro, 2005). In this study, I attempted to avoid potential issues concerning rapport and communication through the incorporation of iPad technology.

The iPads were dually used as recruitment and research devices. My first meeting with each of the children largely focused on the iPad applications I hoped they would use throughout the study. Along with the introduction of the device, my own personal music examples and childhood pictures seemed to help me connect with the children. Although our meetings did not always revolve around the children’s iPad, it helped stimulate our initial conversations. Additionally, prompting the children’s involvement with iPad projects seemed to motivate daily artifact collection and encourage their investment in the study.

The iPads provided snapshots of the children’s daily lives and events I would most likely not see or hear otherwise. Ava shared “selfies” and videos of her music-making, Isabella presented “pictures of pictures” from her past, Nicolas displayed screenshots of his digital interactions, and Daniel revealed pictures of his surroundings. During our meetings, the children shared details and stories about their artifacts. Sometimes, their descriptions were short and vague; other times, their stories turned into long conversations concerning a variety of musical and non-musical topics. Although our meetings did not always revolve around the children’s iPads, the device helped stimulate our conversations.

Incorporating iPad minis posed some drawbacks as well. The value of the devices created limitations for the children. Nicolas’ mother did not want him taking his iPad out of the house, as she had hers stolen years before. The other parents spoke of similar
concerns as well. Although parental restrictions may be an issue with devices of any value, I believe the use of iPad minis, rather than a cheaper tablet or mobile device, heightened this issue. Researchers might want to consider the value of their research materials when working with children, especially if intended to be mobile. I originally chose this specific device for its compatibility with a wide variety of applications; however, the limited mobility of the devices posed restrictions for this particular study.

**Children’s music in music education research.** Researchers may gain a more holistic view of children’s musical lives by considering the dynamic sociocultural contexts of their homes and communities (Lum, 2007). However, studies focusing on children’s musical experiences and perspectives beyond formal music education are only beginning to emerge (Campbell, 2010; De Vries, 2011; Illari & Young, 2016; Lum & Campbell, 2009). This study contributes to our continued search to better understand children’s musical experiences through the perspectives of second-generation immigrant children. Findings indicate that the children engaged in diverse music-making and listening experiences for wide array of personal and social purposes, including the negotiation and construction of their musical and cultural identities. Further research is warranted on how second-generation immigrant children, and children’s cultures as a whole, use music to explore and understand themselves and others in the world around them.
References


APPENDIX A

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM
University of Miami
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
Navigating Identities: The Musical Lives of Four Second-generation Immigrant Children in Miami, Florida

The following information describes the research study in which you and your child are being asked to participate. Please read the information carefully. At the end, you will be asked to sign if you agree to allow your child to participate.

PURPOSE OF STUDY:
You and your child are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to examine the musical experiences of second-generation immigrant children to gain greater insight into the ways they use music in the home to explore and develop their identities.

PROCEDURES:
The length of time you and your child are expected to participate in this study is approximately nine weeks. Your child will be expected to complete various tasks using an iPad and participate in weekly interviews conducted in your home. A timeline of these meetings and tasks associated with each is attached for your reference.

This study includes several forms of participation:
• Meetings: Weekly meetings with the primary investigator will be held in your home. These meetings will consist of confirming consent for participation in this study, training participants in using the iPad, and interviews with you, your children, and other members of your household.
• iPad Mini: Your child will be asked to document their musical experiences in their homes with an iPad Mini. For example, if your child was listening to the radio, they may decide to take a picture of the radio to document their listening experience. Furthermore, they will be asked to complete several tasks throughout the study using apps such as Garageband, Photo 365, and Book Creator. Please reference the attached worksheet for more information on how this software will be used with your child.
• Interviews: Most interviews will be with your child and will focus on their musical experiences. The iPad will be used as a way to stimulate conversation by viewing different artifacts (i.e., pictures, recordings, drawings) and talking about them. Additionally, you and others in your home will be asked to contribute to conversations and discussions from time to time.
• Additional Audio: Interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder and transcribed for research purposes only.

RISKS AND/OR DISCOMFORTS:
We do not anticipate any personal risks or discomforts from taking part in this study. You and your child will be asked to participate interviews and observations throughout the study and have the right to skip any question you or your child does not wish to answer and discontinue use of audio/video recorders at any time.

BENEFITS:
It is possible that you and your child will benefit from this study by giving greater insight into the roles music plays in the lives of second-generation children. This insight can aid in
understanding how children use music to learn about themselves and those around them and provide implications on the creation and delivery of culturally responsive music programs.

CONFIDENTIALITY:
You and your child’s privacy are of utmost concern. Information gathered throughout the study will be used for research purposes only. Several processes will be followed in order to ensure confidentiality and comfort throughout the study.

- Pseudonyms will be used to protect you and your child’s identity
- No information will be taken from the iPads without your and your child’s consent
- No information will be published without your and your child’s consent
- All information gathered throughout the study will be stored and encrypted using password protection software and will only be accessible to you, your child, the investigator.
  - Upon completion of study, information will be kept for research purposes and stored under password protection on the investigator’s main hard drive. However, any information that reveals you or your child’s identity will be deleted.
- Audio recordings during interviews in your home may be requested to be turned off at any time.
- Although you and your child will be asked to take pictures and videos capturing musical experiences in your home, you and your child are not required to be present in them.
- You have the choice to withhold or delete any pictures, videos, and recordings produced on the iPad at any time.

By signing this consent, you authorize the Investigators(s) and her staff to access information collected throughout the study your as may be necessary for purposes of this study.

COSTS:
There are no costs associated with your participation in this study. All research equipment will be provided for you.

COMPENSATION:
You and your child’s time and cooperation will be compensated with the iPad Mini used in the study. Upon completion of the study, the iPad Mini may be kept for personal use. If you or your child decides to withdraw from the study prior to completion, the iPad Mini must be returned to the investigator and eligibility to keep the device is forfeited.

RIGHT TO DECLINE OR WITHDRAW:
You and your child’s participation in this study is voluntary. You and your child are free to refuse to participate in the study or withdraw consent at any time during the study. Furthermore, the investigator reserves the right to remove you or your child from the study without consent at any time that they feel it is in the best interest for you and your child.
If you are an employee or student at the University of Miami, your desire not to participate in this study or request to withdraw will not adversely affect your status as an employee or grades at the University of Miami.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Sandra Sanchez (s.sanchez14@umiami.edu; 727.742.1877) will gladly answer any questions you may have concerning the purpose, procedures, and outcome of this project. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject you may contact Human Subjects Research Office at the University of Miami, at (305) 243-3195.

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT:
I have read the information in this consent form and agree to participate and allow my child to participate in this study. I have had the chance to ask any questions I have about this study, and they have been answered for me. I am entitled to a copy of this form after it has been read and signed.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

__________________________________________________________
Name of child

__________________________________________________________
Signature of parent or legal guardian                      Date

__________________________________________________________
Printed name of parent or legal guardian

__________________________________________________________
Signature of person obtaining consent                      Date

3.23.2015

__________________________________________________________
Printed name of person obtaining consent

IRB Approval Date
APPENDIX B

MINOR ASSENT LETTER
University of Miami  
Assent to Participate in a Research Study

**Project Title:** Navigating Identities: The Musical Lives of Four Second-generation Immigrant Children in Miami, Florida  
**Investigators:** Dr. Carlos Abril and Sandra Sanchez

We are doing a research study about music in people’s homes. A research study is a way to learn more about people. If you decide you want to be part of this study, you will be asked to document your musical experiences in your home by taking pictures and maybe even recording them with an iPad Mini. We will then meet each week for about two months to talk about your music.

There are some things about this study you should know. If you complete the study, you get to keep the iPad Mini for your time and effort. You will be expected to complete different tasks on the iPad such as documenting music around your house and navigating different iPad applications. Also you would need to be willing to meet with me each week to talk about music and the things you did with the iPad. I am also giving you the worksheets we will use in our iPad projects if you are interested to see what you will be asked to do.

Not everyone who takes part in this study will benefit. A benefit means that something good happens to you. We think these benefits might be learning more about what different people do with music and why it has value to them. When we are finished with this study we will write a report about what was learned, but it will not include your name or that you were in the study.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you decide to stop after we begin, that’s okay too. No one will be mad at you if you decide not to do this study. You may ask questions about the study at any time.

Do you have any questions?

If you decide you want to be in this study, please sign your name.

I agree _______ I do not agree ________ to participate in this study which I have read or which has been explained to me by Sandra Sanchez.

__________________________  ____________________  
(Sign your name here)  (Date)

__________________________  ____________________  
(Signature of Person Obtaining Assent)  (Date)
APPENDIX C

AUTHORIZATION FOR RECORDING
**Authorization for Audio/Video/Photography Recording in a Research Study**

I hereby authorize the University of Miami, Department of Music Education and Music Therapy, to take still photographs, videotapes, and/or sound recordings of me/ (my child).

I authorize the University to use in any manner said photographs, film, video or tape recordings, in whole or in part as follows *(Please read and check box next to appropriate permission statement)*:

- [ ] For the purpose of teaching, research, scientific meetings and scientific publications, including professional journals or medical books
- [ ] For research purposes only.

I agree that the University of Miami, its Trustees, officers, employees, faculty and agents will not be responsible for any claims arising in any way out of the taking and use as described above of such photographs and/or recordings. I understand that I will not have an opportunity to inspect and approve such photographs or recordings prior to their use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of Participant:</th>
<th>Printed Name of Participant:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of Witness:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of Parent (if applicable):</th>
<th>Printed Name of Parent (if applicable):</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
Navigating Identities: The Musical Lives of Four Second-Generation Immigrant Children in Miami, Florida

Verbal consent for conversation and/or interview

Hi, my name is Sandra Sanchez and I am involved in a research study called Navigating Identities: The Musical Lives of Four Second-Generation Immigrant Children in Miami, Florida with my professor, Carlos Abril, at the University of Miami.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:
(Insert name of child) is acting as a co-researcher with me so I may learn more about the music in his/her daily life. I am asking you take part in this study because of your relationship with (insert name of child). Would you mind sharing some of your thoughts regarding your musical experiences with (insert name of child)? It will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

With your permission, I will be recording our conversation so I may play it back and type out your responses later for research purposes only. Is that okay with you? Keep in mind that you have the right to review and withhold these recordings or choose to not be recorded at all. Either way, you may still participate.

Participation involves minimal risks and benefits to you and is completely voluntary. You can decline to participate or stop participation at any time if you wish to do so without any negative consequences to you.

By continuing with our conversation, you give your consent for participating in this study. Do you have any questions?
APPENDIX E

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE FLYER
You are invited to participate in a research study involving the music in your life. This study is sponsored by the University of Miami and focuses on the music of individuals ages 8-12 that were either born in another country or have a parent that was born in another country. If you decide you want to be apart of the study, there are a couple things you and your parents should know:

1. You will be a co-researcher with one student from the University of Miami

2. The study will last about two months
   • During these two months, you will be visited in your home by your research partner from UM once a week to talk about the music in your life. Sometimes your family and other people in your life will be asked about music too.

3. You will be asked to use an iPad mini to show the different music in your life through pictures, videos, recordings, and apps on your iPad.

4. Once the study is over and you complete your job as a co-researcher, you get to keep the iPad mini.

THANK YOU 😊

If you and your parents are interested in participating and have any questions, please contact:
Sandra Sanchez
727-742-1877 -or- s.sanchez14@umiami.edu
APPENDIX F

MEETING LOG
## Meeting Log

### AYA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mtg Type</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Others</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-3</td>
<td>6:30-8:30</td>
<td>Intro Meeting</td>
<td>Grandma’s (living room)</td>
<td>Mom, Grandma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>5-7:00</td>
<td>Chorus Observation</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Chorus teachers, members, Grandma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-23</td>
<td>5:30-7:00</td>
<td>Interview #1</td>
<td>Grandma’s (living room)</td>
<td>Grandma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-30</td>
<td>4-6:00</td>
<td>Interview #2</td>
<td>Mom’s (bedroom)</td>
<td>Mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-5</td>
<td>6-8:00</td>
<td>Interview #3</td>
<td>Mom’s (bedroom)</td>
<td>Mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-18</td>
<td>12:40-2:15</td>
<td>Interview #4</td>
<td>Dad’s (living room)</td>
<td>Dad, sister</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-4</td>
<td>5:30-7:30</td>
<td>Interview #5</td>
<td>Grandma’s (living room)</td>
<td>Grandma, Mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>4:30-7:30</td>
<td>Interview #6</td>
<td>Mom’s (living room)</td>
<td>Mom</td>
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### ISABELLA

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<tr>
<td>9-14</td>
<td>4:30-5:40</td>
<td>Intro Meeting</td>
<td>Parents’ (playroom)</td>
<td>Mom, sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-21</td>
<td>4:15-5:30</td>
<td>Interview #1</td>
<td>Parents’ (playroom)</td>
<td>Mom, sisters</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>5:45-7:45</td>
<td>Acro and Ballet Class Observation</td>
<td>Community Center</td>
<td>Dance teachers and dance students</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-3</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Interview #2</td>
<td>Parents’ (living room)</td>
<td>Mom, dad, sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>4:15-5:25</td>
<td>Interview #3</td>
<td>Parents’ (porch)</td>
<td>Mom, sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-26</td>
<td>4:15-5:30</td>
<td>Interview #4</td>
<td>Parents’ (porch)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-5</td>
<td>4:15-5:30</td>
<td>Interview #4a</td>
<td>Playroom/Bedroom</td>
<td>Mom, sisters</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-19</td>
<td>4:15-5:15</td>
<td>Interview #5</td>
<td>Playroom/ outside</td>
<td>Mom, sisters</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-30</td>
<td>3:45-5:30</td>
<td>Interview #6</td>
<td>Living room, car, Kitchen area,</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Time</td>
<td>Mtg Type</td>
<td>Place</td>
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<td>5:30-6:45</td>
<td>Intro Meeting</td>
<td>Starbucks</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Interview #1</td>
<td>Parents’ house (Daniel’s bedroom)</td>
<td>Mom, dad, brothers</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-29</td>
<td>7-8:15</td>
<td>Violin Lesson</td>
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<td>11-10</td>
<td>6-7:15</td>
<td>Interview #4</td>
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<td>Mom</td>
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<td>6-7:15</td>
<td>Interview #5</td>
<td>Bookstore</td>
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**DANIEL**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-23</td>
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<td>Parents’ house (living room)</td>
<td>Mom, Dad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3-5:15</td>
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<td>Mom</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-11</td>
<td>4-6:30</td>
<td>Interview #2</td>
<td>Living room/bedroom</td>
<td>Mom, Dad (at end)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>4-6:00</td>
<td>Interview #3</td>
<td>Living room</td>
<td>Mom, Aunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-11</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Afterschool Show</td>
<td>School courtyard</td>
<td>Mom, Aunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-12</td>
<td>3-5:30</td>
<td>Interview #4</td>
<td>Living room</td>
<td>Mom, Dad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NICOLAS**
APPENDIX G

OBSERVATION PREPARATION MATRIX
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Determine the purpose of the participant observation activity as related to the overall research objectives.</td>
<td>Refer to data matrix (See Appendix J)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Determine the population(s) to be observed.</td>
<td>Participants and key figures in their lives. Key figures will be different in each case, but may include parents, caregivers, siblings, friends, extended family, extra-curricular groups, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Consider the accessibility of the population(s) and the venues in which you would like to observe them.</td>
<td>I may not be able to observe participants while they are in school due to IRB restrictions and the fact that data collection will lead into the summer when school is not in session. Most other community establishments are open to the public, but I will not force myself into these places until I am invited by the participants and their families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Investigate possible sites for participant observation.</td>
<td>This may include places within participants’ home in addition to places in their community (i.e., playgrounds/parks, after care, church, school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Select the site(s), times(s) of day, and date(s), and anticipate how long you will collect participant observation data on each occasion.</td>
<td>Dependent on case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Consider how you will present yourself, both in terms of appearance and how you will explain your purpose to others if necessary</td>
<td>Dependent on case. Refer to verbal consent script for explanation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Plan how and if you will take notes during the participant observation activity</td>
<td>Dependent on observation type and place of observation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Mack et al. (2005, p. 27)*
My Music Book Project

The categories on the next page are only to help us get started on this project. Feel free to add categories I left out. Create a chapter in your book for each category with Book Creator. The chapters can be in any order you wish (remember you can add more chapters!). For each chapter, fill the pages with your choice of:

**Text**- (a) Names of people, places, or things (b) titles, lyrics, genres of music, (c) short stories, memories, or descriptions of music experience

**Images**- (a) Pictures of objects or places related to musical experience, (b) pictures of actual musical experiences alone and with others (faces not required), (c) drawings of musical experiences, (d) clip art relating to musical experience

**Recordings**- (a) Audio or video recording alone and/or with others like your friends and family engaging with music, (b) Garageband creations
### My Music Book Chapters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Memories</td>
<td>Songs you remember being sung to you or played a lot in your house when you were younger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Music you sing/play/listen to with your friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Music you sing/play/listen to with your family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Music you remember doing at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Music you sing/play/listen to around your neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media/Internet</td>
<td>Music you read and talk about, create, watch, or listen to while surfing the internet, watching TV, on the computer, playing video games, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorized</td>
<td>Songs or pieces of music you can sing or play by memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent</td>
<td>Music you have heard or played in the last 24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>Music you like to share with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing</td>
<td>Music that you have introduced others to or taught others about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREATEST</td>
<td>Music or certain recordings you could not live without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT so Great</td>
<td>Music that you do not like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Secrets</td>
<td>What others might be surprised to know about the music you like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE
Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to help me with this project. During our conversation, I am interested in learning a little more about you and the music in your life. I will be recording our conversation so I may play it back and type out our responses later. Is that okay with you? Remember, the assent form you signed makes sure that your name or identity will not be revealed in the final paper and participation is voluntary. If at any time you are feeling uncomfortable, just say so and we can stop. Thank you again for your help, this interview should take about an hour, are you ready?

Questions

Exploring backgrounds (adapted from Kelly-McHale, 2011)

1) In my paper, I am going to be writing about you and I want to be sure that I describe who you are accurately. Could you help me with this?
   - Tell me about yourself. What words best describe you?
   - What are some of the things that you like to do?
   - How about your family?

2) When I was in school, I remember having a celebration where everyone shared things that represented where their families came from. My grandfather is from Spain, so my mom helped me make his chicken and rice recipe and my grandmother is from Germany, so I shared a song she used to always sing and play on the piano. If you had to choose things that
represented where your family is from, what would you share on a day like that?

3) I would love to hear a story about where your family is from. Could you share one with me?
   - Where is your family originally from?
   - When did they come to the United States?
   - Have you ever gone back to (insert heritage country) to visit?

   Great! Thank you for sharing.

### Introducing the My Music Book Project

You will be working on a project using the iPad over the next couple of weeks to help me learn more about the music in your life.

- **Present and discuss My Music Book Project Worksheet**
- **Open Book Creator application for iPad and follow tutorial together:** (1) add content (2) position content (3) working with images (4) using the Inspector (5) give it a go! (6) building your book (7) reading your book (8) getting more help
- **Work with participant to get their book started** (create cover page, label each page as a chapter listed on the worksheet)

Remember that you can change the order of the chapters. Is there anything that should be moved? If so, why? Can you think of any chapters I forgot to list? If so, what are they and why are they important to your music book?

Great job today! Over the next week, start adding parts to your book!
Interview #2-8  
Date ____________

**Setting:**

**Introduction:** “Thank you for continuing to help me with this project. Today we will be looking at and talking about your Music Book Project. Remember that I will be recording our conversation so I may play it back and type out our responses later. Is that okay with you? Also, the assent form you signed makes sure that your name or identity will not be revealed in the final paper and participation is voluntary. If at any time you are feeling uncomfortable, just say so and we can stop. Thank you again for your help, this interview should take about an hour, are you ready?”

**Questions**

1) Can you show me a chapter that you added to this past week?
2) Choose one of the artifacts that you added and tell me more about it. (Refer to My Music Book Questions below to probe more specifics about the artifact).  
   *Repeat for other artifacts in that chapter*
3) Is there anything else in another chapter you would like to share? *Repeat above*

***Use constant comparative method following interviews to help guide future shifts in interview questions and observations***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Can you show me a chapter that you added to this past week?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Choose one of the artifacts that you added and tell me more about it. (Refer to My Music Book Questions below to probe more specifics about the artifact).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Repeat for other artifacts in that chapter</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Is there anything else in another chapter you would like to share? <em>Repeat above</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### My Music Book Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Early Memories** | Songs you remember being sung to you or played a lot in your house when you were younger  
• What was it?  
• What did it sound like? What instruments or voices did you hear? Can you sing/play it?  
• Where were you?  
• Who was there?  
• What you were thinking and feeling?  
• How old were you?  
• Why do you think you remember this song?  
• What do you think it says about you or your personality? |
| **Friends**     | Music you sing/play/listen to with your friends  
Describe or show me  
• What it is  
• What the music sounds like  
• What is happening and what you are doing  
• Who is there  
• What you are thinking and feeling  
• Why you included it in your book  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important |
| **Family**      | Music you sing/play/listen to with your family  
Describe or show me  
• What it is  
• What the music sounds like  
• What is happening and what you are doing  
• Who is there  
• What you are thinking and feeling  
• Why you included it in your book  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important |
| **School**      | Music you remember doing at school  
Describe or show me  
• What it is  
• What the music sounds like  
• What is happening and what you are doing  
• Who is there  
• What you are thinking and feeling  
• Why you included it in your book  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important |
| **Community**   | Music you sing/play/listen to around your neighborhood  
Describe or show me  
• What it is, what it sounds like  
• What is happening and what you are doing  
• Who is there  
• What you think and feel  
• Why you included it in your book  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important |
| Media/Internet | Music you read and talk about, create, watch, or listen to while surfing the internet, watching TV, on the computer, playing video games, etc. | Describe or show me  
• What it is, what it sounds like  
• What is happening and what you are doing  
• Who is there  
• What you are think and feel  
• Why you included it in your book  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important |
|---|---|---|
| Memorized | Songs or pieces of music you can sing or play by memory | Describe or show me  
• What it is, what it sounds like  
• Where you hear it/ where you learned it  
• When you heard/learned it  
• Who was with you  
• Who taught it to you (if anyone) or how you memorized it  
• Why you have it memorized  
• Who else has it memorized  
• Who may not have it memorized  
• What you think and feel when you hear it or perform it yourself  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important  
• Can you perform it for me? |
| Recent | Music you have heard or played in the last 24 hours | Describe or show me  
• What it is, what it sounds like  
• Where you heard it, how you heard it, when you heard it  
• Who played it  
• Who was with you  
• What you think and feel when you hear it  
• What you think it says about you or your personality  
• Anything else you think is important  
• Can you play or sing any of it for me? |
| Sharing | Music you like to share with others. | Describe or show me  
• What it is, what it sounds like  
• Where you hear it/ where you learned it  
• When you heard it/learned it  
• Who you heard/learned it with  
• Why it’s important for you and why it’s important for you to share it  
• Who you share it with, why you share it with them  
• Who you might not share it with. Why  
• What you think and feel when you hear it or perform |
| **Showing** | Music that you have introduced others to or taught others about | Describe or show me:  
- What it is, what it sounds like  
- Where you hear it/where you learned it  
- When you heard it/learned it  
- Who you heard/learned it with  
- Why it’s important for you and why it’s important for you to share it  
- Who you teach it to, why you teach them about it  
- Who you might not teach it to, Why  
- What you think and feel when you hear it or perform it yourself, why  
- What you think it says about you or your personality, why  
- Anything else you think is important  
- Can you perform it for me? |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **GREATEST**     | Music or certain recordings you could not live without       | Describe or show me:  
- What it is, what it sounds like  
- Where you hear it, how you hear it, when you hear it  
- Who plays it  
- Why you like it  
- Who else likes it, why  
- Who else may not like it, why  
- What you think and feel when you hear it, why  
- What you think it says about you or your personality, why  
- Anything else you think is important  
- Can you play or sing any of it for me? |
| **NOT so Great** | Music that you do not like                                  | Describe or show me:  
- What it is, what it sounds like  
- Where you hear it, when you hear it, how you hear it  
- Who plays it  
- Why you do not like it  
- Who else does not like it, why  
- Who else may like it, why  
- What you think and feel when you hear it, why  
- What you think it says about you or your personality, why  
- Anything else you think is important  
- Can you play or sing any of it for me? |
| **Music Secrets**| What others might know about the music you like               | Describe or show me:  
- What it is  
- Why it’s a secret  
- Who else knows, why  
- Would that surprise anyone you know?  
- Who might enjoy hearing that secret?  
- What you think it says about you or your personality, why  
- Anything else you think is important |
APPENDIX J
DATA COLLECTION MATRIX
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do I need to know?</th>
<th>Why do I need to know it?</th>
<th>What kind of data will answer this?</th>
<th>Where can I find it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.) How do second-generation children experience music in the different contexts of their lives? | • To provide an understanding of how 2nd gen. children engage with music in different contexts.  
  • To provide an understanding of how 2nd gen. children’s environments influence their musical experiences.  
  • Insight into the similarities and/or differences of musical experiences in the contexts of community, family, peers, media, and school.  
  • Helps inform RQ 2-3. | Main  
  • Direct and participant observations  
  - Field notes  
  • Artifacts  
  Supporting  
  • Interviews  
  • Informal interactions/semi-structured interviews | Children  
  • Key figures in children’s lives (i.e., family, friends, caretakers)  
  • Home  
  • Community  
  • iPad |
| 2.) How do 2nd gen. children explore their identity through musical experience? | • Provide 2nd gen. children’s perspectives of their musical experiences and how they contribute to their sense of self and/or personality.  
  • To gain greater insight into how 2nd gen. children use music to explore and learn about themselves and others.  
  • To better understand how 2nd gen. children use music to represent themselves and/or their social groups and distinguish themselves from others.  
  • Helps inform RQ 3. | Main  
  • Interviews  
  • Informal interactions/semi-structured interviews  
  Supporting  
  • Artifacts  
  • Direct and participant observations  
  - Field notes | Children  
  • Key figures in children’s lives (i.e., family, friends, caretakers)  
  • iPad  
  • Home  
  • Community |
| 3.) Why are these musical experiences meaningful and valuable in their lives? | • To provide greater insight into the functions of 2nd gen. children’s musical experiences and the qualities that make them meaningful and important.  
  • To better understand the social context’s influence on the meaning and value of the children’s musical experiences.  
  • Provide 2nd gen. children’s perspectives of their musical experiences.  
  • Helps inform RQ 1-2. | Main  
  • Interviews  
  • Informal interactions/semi-structured interviews  
  Supporting  
  • Artifacts  
  • Direct and participant observations  
  - Field notes | Children  
  • Key figures in children’s lives (i.e., family, friends, caretakers)  
  • iPad  
  • Home  
  • Community |

* Based on Tobias (2010, Appendix J, p. 607)