ISSN 2960-2351 (online) ISSN 2960-2343 (print)

UDC 78.03 + 78.071.1
DOI 10.59850/SARYN.3.13.2025.290

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ARTICLE

Ethnotherapy in Kazakh Traditional Music: Soundscape and Inner Harmony

The authors have reviewed and approved the final manuscript and affirm that there is no conflict of interest.

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Received by editorial: 30.08.2024
Accepted to publish: 06.09.2025

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Cite Baikuatova, Akmaral, and Raushan Nurtaza. "Ethnotherapy in Kazakh Traditional Music: Soundscape and Inner Harmony." *Saryn*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2025, pp. 48–62. DOI: 10.59850/SARYN.3.13.2025.290.

Keywords Ethnotherapy, Kazakh traditional music, soundscape, inner harmony, cultural identity, sound-based healing, emotional resilience.

Acknowledgements The authors express their gratitude to the editorial board of *Saryn* and the reviewers for their interest in the study, as well as for their assistance in preparing this article for publication. Special thanks are also extended to Serik Nurmoldayev for his contribution and for sharing his insights as the author of the Ethnotherapy method.

Funding This article was published with grant funding from the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, project IRN AP26100607 "Kazakh Musical Language as the Cultural Code of the Nation in the Context of the Spiritual Modernization of Society".

Abstract. This study explores the therapeutic potential of Kazakh traditional music, focusing on the acoustic, emotional and symbolic power of sound and timbre. By adapting ancient musical practices to contemporary conditions, Ethnotherapy promotes emotional support, internal balance and reinforces cultural identity.

The study methodology combines theoretical frameworks from global studies with empirical methods such as observation, questionnaires and interviews. A structured data analysis considers the age, motivation, emotional response and long-term impact, ensuring reliability and relevance of conclusions. Thirty traditional instruments were employed to craft a therapeutic soundscape, aiming emotional layers and archetypal memory. Instruments included various types of membranophones (such as *bass saz-syrnai, mys-syrnai, shynyrau, uildeuik*), idiophones, and wind and string chordophones (*dombyra, kyl-kobyz, nar-kobyz*).

The results demonstrate that participants experienced significant emotional release, improved internal balance and strengthened connections with cultural roots. The therapy consists of three structured stages – introductory, main and final – each designed to guide listeners through emotional purification, reconnection and reintegration. The sounds of national instruments amplify the vibrational resonance between performer and participant, fostering holistic healing without direct verbal intervention. The cultural symbolism of the sessions, including the image of the World Tree (*Baiterek*), reflects a deliberate therapeutic model rooted in Kazakh cosmology.

The findings emphasize the continuing relevance of traditional sound-based healing in addressing modern emotional challenges. Ethnotherapy represents an organic bridge between ancestral wisdom and contemporary needs, offering a universal model of gentle, culturally rooted support for emotional resilience.

Contributions of authors

Akmaral Baikuatova – formulation of the study concept, definition of the key goals and objectives, development of the research methodology and conducting interviews.

Raushan Nurtaza – literature review preparation, comparative analysis of the relevant sources, systematization of the study materials, analysis and interpretation of the research findings.

ISSN 2960-2351 (онлайн) ISSN 2960-2343 (басылған)

UDC 78.03 + 78.071.1
DOI 10.59850/SARYN.3.13.2025.290

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МАҚАЛА

Қазақ музыкалық дәстүріндегі этнотерапия: дыбыстық орта және ішкі үйлесімділік

Авторлар қолжазбаның соңғы нұсқасын оқып, мақұлдады және мүдделер қақтығысы жоқ деп мәлімдейді.

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Редакцияға түсті: 30.08.2024
Басылымға қабылданды: 06.09.2025

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Дәйексөз үшін

Байқуатова, Ақмарал, және Раушан Нұртаза. «Қазақ музыкалық дәстүріндегі этнотерапия: дыбыстық орта және ішкі үйлесімділік». *Saryn*, т. 13, № 3, 2025, 48–62 б. DOI: 10.59850/SARYN.3.13.2025.290. (Ағылшынша)

Тірек сөздер

Этнотерапия, қазақтың дәстүрлі музыкасы, дыбыстық орта, ішкі үйлесімділік, мәдени бірегейлік, музыкалық терапия, эмоциялық қалпына келу.

Алғыс

Авторлар *Saryn* журналының редакциясына және рецензенттерге бұл зерттеуге қызығушылық танытып, мақаланы жариялау барысындағы ұсыныстары мен көмектері үшін шынайы алғыстарын білдіреді.

Қаржыландыру

Мақала Қазақстан Республикасы Ғылым және жоғары білім министрлігі Ғылым комитетінің гранттық қаржыландыруы аясында (ЖТН AP26100607 «Қоғамның рухани жаңғыруы контекстінде ұлттың мәдени коды ретіндегі қазақтың музыкалық тілі») жарық көрді.

Аңдатпа. Бұл зерттеу қазақтың дәстүрлі музыкасының бірегей сауықтыру әлеуетін көрсетіп, оның акустикалық, эмоциялық және символдық қасиеттерін қарастырады. Этнотерапия көне музыкалық тәжірибелерді қазіргі заман талаптарына бейімдей отырып, эмоциялық жеңілдеуді, ішкі үйлесімді қалпына келтіруді және мәдени бірегейлікті нығайтуды қамтамасыз етеді.

Зерттеу әдістемесі жаһандық музыкалық терапия саласындағы теориялық тәсілдерді, бақылау, сауалнама және сұхбат сияқты эмпирикалық әдістермен ұштастырады. Құрылымдалған сауалнаманың талдауы қатысушылардың жас ерекшеліктерін, мотивациясын, эмоционалдық сезінуін және ұзақ мерзімді әсерін бағалау көрсеткіштерін ескере отырып жүргізілді. Бұл зерттеудің нәтижелерінің сенімділігі мен өзектілігін арттырады. Терапиялық дыбыстық ортаны құру үшін отыз дәстүрлі аспаптар қолданылды. Олардың ішіне мембранофондар (бас-саз-сырнай, бас-сырнай, шыңырау, үілдеуік), идиофондар, үрмелі, сондай-ақ шертпе және ішекті хордофондар (домбыра, қыл қобыз, нар қобыз) кірді.

Нәтижелер көрсеткендей, қатысушылар айтарлықтай эмоциялық жеңілдік, ішкі үйлесім және мәдени түп-тамырларымен байланыстың нығаюын сезінді. Сеанстардың символикасы, соның ішінде Дүниежүзілік ағаш (Бәйтерек) бейнесі, қазақ космологиясына негізделген интегративті терапиялық үлгіні бейнелейді. Зерттеу нәтижелері дәстүрлі дыбыстық тәжірибелердің қазіргі эмоциялық сұраныстарды қанағаттандырудағы өзектілігін дәлелдейді.

Осылайша, бұл жұмыс ұлттық мұраны заманауи әдіснамалық тәсілдермен ұштастырып, этнотерапиялық тәжірибелерді бейімдеу мен мәдениетаралық алмасудың жаңа мүмкіндіктерін ашады.

Авторлардың үлесі

А. К. Байқуатова – зерттеу тұжырымдамасын дайындау, негізгі мақсаттар мен міндеттерді анықтау, зерттеу әдістемесін жасау, мақала құрылымын түгендеу және сұхбат жүргізу.

Р. С. Нұртаза – әдебиеттерге шолу жасау, тиісті дереккөздерді салыстырмалы түрде талдау, зерттеу материалдарын жүйелеу және зерттеу нәтижелерін талдау.

ISSN 2960-2351 (онлайн) ISSN 2960-2343 (печатный)

UDC 78.03 + 78.071.1
DOI 10.59850/SARYN.3.13.2025.290

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СТАТЬЯ

Этнотерапия в казахской музыкальной традиции: звуковая среда и внутренняя гармония

Авторы прочитали и одобрили окончательный вариант рукописи и заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

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Поступила в редакцию: 30.08.2024
Принята к публикации: 06.09.2025

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Для цитирования Байкуатова, Акмарал, и Раушан Нуртаза. «Этнотерапия в казахской музыкальной традиции: звуковая среда и внутренняя гармония». *Saryn*, т. 13, № 3, 2025, с. 48–62. DOI: 10.59850/SARYN.3.13.2025.290. (На английском)

Ключевые слова Этнотерапия, казахская традиционная музыка, звуковая среда, внутренняя гармония, культурная идентичность, музыкальная терапия, эмоциональное восстановление.

Благодарности Авторы выражают свою благодарность редакции журнала *Saryn* и рецензентам за проявленный интерес, а также за помощь в подготовке данной статьи к публикации. Особая благодарность выражается Серику Нурмолдаеву за его вклад в настоящую работу и за возможность ознакомиться с его идеями как автора метода этнотерапии.

Финансирование Статья публикуется в рамках научного гранта ЖТН AP26100607 «Казахский музыкальный язык как культурный код нации в контексте духовной модернизации общества».

Аннотация. Данное исследование демонстрирует уникальный оздоравливающий потенциал казахской традиционной музыки, раскрывая ее акустические, эмоциональные и символические свойства. Этнотерапия адаптирует древние музыкальные практики к современным условиям, обеспечивая эмоциональное освобождение, восстановление внутренней гармонии и укрепление культурной идентичности.

Методология исследования объединяет теоретические подходы мировой музыкотерапии с эмпирическими инструментами: наблюдением, анкетированием и интервью. Анализ данных учитывает возрастные группы, мотивацию участников, эмоциональные реакции и долгосрочные эффекты, что повышает достоверность и релевантность выводов. Для создания терапевтической звуковой среды использовались тридцать традиционных инструментов различных типов – мембранофоны, идиофоны, духовые, щипковые и смычковые хордофоны (домбра, кыл-кобыз, нар-кобыз).

Результаты показывают выраженное эмоциональное облегчение, усиление внутренней гармонии и укрепление связи с культурными корнями. Символика сеансов, включая образ Мирового дерева (Байтерек), отражает интегративную терапевтическую модель, основанную на казахской космологии.

Исследование подчеркивает актуальность традиционных звуковых практик для современных эмоциональных потребностей и их потенциал как модели культурно укорененной поддержки, применимой в международном контексте. Таким образом, работа объединяет национальное наследие и современные методологические подходы, открывая перспективы кросс-культурного обмена и адаптации этнотерапевтических практик.

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Introduction

Traditional music holds profound healing capacities, deeply intertwined with cultural memory, emotional expression and sensory resonance. In Central Asia and particularly among the Kazakh people, the use of sacred sound has long been a central part of spiritual and communal life. However, compared to global music therapy practices, the use of music as a cure in this region is underrecognized and insufficiently studied.

This article presents a pilot study exploring how sound and timbre, embodied through thirty traditional Kazakh instruments, serve as powerful mediums for influencing the internal emotional states. The study investigates the following research questions:

1. What emotional and psychological responses are evoked by structured exposure to traditional Kazakh instruments?
2. How do cultural symbols and timbral textures function in the therapeutic mechanism of Ethnotherapy?
3. Can sound-based rituals be integrated into modern psychosocial practices?

This paper presents the theoretical background and empirical study of Ethnotherapy as a culturally rooted, contemporary practice. It examines the stages of the therapy process, participant experiences and the broader significance of traditional music as a living instrument of emotional healing and resilience.

The theoretical foundations and cultural context

Throughout human history, music has been regarded not only as an art form, but also as a means of emotional and physical restoration. Ancient Greek philosophers such as Pythagoras, Aristotle and Plato emphasized the role of musical harmony in establishing balance within the cosmos and the human soul. In early Eastern civilizations – notably India and China – music was deeply intertwined with philosophical and medical systems. For instance, Indian Ayurveda utilized musical modes (*ragas*) for harmonizing the energy centers (*chakras*) and restoring inner equilibrium (Gardner-Gordon and Sundar 397–407).

In the Islamic world and Central Asia, renowned physicians such as Avicenna described music as a non-pharmacological intervention for mental and emotional disturbances. These cross-cultural perspectives reflect a long-standing understanding of music as a bridge between body, mind and spirit – a principle that continues to inform Kazakh traditional music practices.

Kazakh culture preserves a unique understanding of music's role in human life, reflected in the sacred of musical instruments and the concept of the *kui* – an instrumental composition embodying emotional and existential narratives. The term *kui* itself translates as "state" or "condition", underscoring the music's function as a carrier of emotional and internal states.

Historically, Kazakh *baqsy* (shaman) used sound as a means of communication with the spiritual world, as well as a tool for restoring balance within individuals and communities. Sacred instruments like *kyl-kobyz* and *shang-kobyz* were seen as living entities, capable of transmitting cosmic energy through natural materials (wood, leather bone and hair).

In contemporary Kazakhstan, these traditions are revitalized through practices, for instance, Ethnotherapy, which adapt ancestral healing methods to modern needs

while maintaining the original focus in timbral resonance, emotional regulation and internal restoration. The therapy draws upon deep cultural symbols – the *Baiterek* (World Tree) – to evoke archetypal memory and support personal transformation through sound.

This study positions Kazakh traditional music within the broader historical continuum of global healing practices, proposing that its emotional and sensory functions continue to meet the psychological and existential needs of individuals in the modern era.

Statement of the problem

Music therapy, as one of the primary modalities of art therapy, has become increasingly integrated into contemporary healthcare and wellness practices. Despite a global across clinical and community settings, its systematic application within the Central Asian context remains underdeveloped. While rich traditions of healing through music exists in the region, they are practiced unofficially and lack theoretical framing within contemporary psychotherapeutic discourse. There is a gap between ingenious musical practices and structured, evidence-based models of psychosocial support.

Ethnotherapy, as presented in this study, offers a culturally embedded approach rooted in Kazakh symbolic and sonic traditions. However, empirical validations and theoretical integration of such approaches into broader field of music therapy are limited.

Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by exploring how structured use of traditional instruments and compositions, within a culturally coherent therapeutic settings, can foster emotional integration, symbolic awareness and internal stabilization.

Literature review

A growing body of scholarship has explored the role of music in emotional healing and psychosocial development. Kenneth Bruscia's extensive research "*An Introduction to Music Therapy*" (2018) presents music therapy as a process involving the use of musical elements to achieve specific restorative and developmental goals. His study discusses various approaches, including receptive (listening) and active (performing) formats, explaining how music can help alleviate physical discomfort, emotional imbalance, and internal stress. In "*Music as Medic. The History of Music Therapy Since Antiquity*" (2004), Gary Ansdell explores how different societies understood the healing function of music and used it for restorative purposes.

The preventive potential of music is examined by Ivan Tarkhanov in "*About the Influence of Music Therapy on the Human Body*" (1893). His experimental data on the restorative influence of music on muscles and its relation to pitch and timbre provided a foundation for future explorations. Another study of note is Wendy Knight and Nikki Rickard's review "*Relaxing Music Prevents Stress-Induced Increases in Subjective Anxiety, Systolic Blood Pressure, and Heart Rate in Healthy Males and Females*" (2001), which examined how music affects subjective and physiological stress responses. The results confirmed that music acts as calming agent, preventing the usual rise in stress-related indicators.

The emotional-supportive role of music therapy is examined in Christian Gold's "*Effects of Music Therapy for Children and Adolescents with Psychopathology: A Meta-analysis*" (2004), which confirms the positive influence of music therapy on children

and adolescents with psychopathology. Monica Geretsegger's review (2022) examines the role of music therapy for autistic individuals, documenting improvements in communication, engagement and affective attunement. Kenneth Aigen's more recent work on Nordoff-Robbins music therapy (2023) shifts the focus to music-centered practice, wherein musical interaction itself becomes the medium of change rather than a secondary tool. This aligns with the concept of *ethnohearing* and is elaborated on in the Discussion section. Its relevance becomes particularly evident when discussing the culturally encoded perception of timbre and musical archetypes.

In both clinical and traditional models, the therapist plays a central role in guiding the healing process. As noted in contemporary music therapy literature (Bruscia 2018; Aigen 2023), the therapist's attunement, musical presence and relational sensitivity significantly influence therapeutic outcomes. In the context of Ethnotherapy, this role also includes the transmission of emotional and symbolic energy through culturally embedded performance practices.

In contemporary European models, the therapist actively engages with the client through improvisation and dialogic interaction. In contrast, in Ethnotherapy, rooted in Central Asian traditions, the receptive format is emphasized. However, this should not be mistaken for passive listening. Instead, it constitutes a focused and emotionally resonant form of auditory engagement, in which the listener participates through internal imagery, bodily attunement and symbolic perception. This active inner involvement enables therapeutic transformation, grounded in culturally familiar sound structures and ancestral resonance.

The table below offers a comparative overview of core principles across models (see Table 1).

Table 1. The essence of the different approaches to music therapy on modern Europe and Central Asia

Aspect	Europe (Active Format)	Central Asia (Receptive Format with Active Engagement)
Client involvement	Active participation (performing, improvisation)	Internalized participation (listening with reflection, vocal/motor mirroring)
Music selection	Individually tailored	Culturally familiar traditional melodies
Cultural influence	Less emphasized	Based on "ethnohearing" and internal auditory tuning
Therapist role	Facilitator and co-performer	Selector and guide
Therapeutic goal	To harmonize and balance internal states	To activate emotional memory through culturally familiar sounds

Methodology

The study combines international theoretical knowledge with local empirical data. It is based on a pilot session involving ten participants (three males, five females and two children). Given limited sample size, results are exploratory and serve as an initial step toward broader applications.

A structured questionnaire was administrated to assess emotional impact. It included sections on participant demographics, motivation, emotional responses before and after the session, as well as mental imagery, and perceived long-term effects. Responses were coded and grouped by thematic categories using manual content analysis. This allowed to identify the archetypal patterns and recurring emotional themes.

The methodology includes observation to identify participant reactions, as well as a structured questionnaire that provided the following results:

- Traditional music had a noticeable influence on the internal state of participants
- Compositions performed on thirty traditional instruments contributed to an altered perceptual state among listeners
- Traditional music embodies the worldview of Kazakh *baqsy* (shaman), thus, performance using sacred instruments led to inner balance and emotional stability.

An in-depth interview with the therapy's author – Serik Nurmoldayev, the creator of the Ethnotherapy method – was conducted on January 5, 2024 in the OzgeEpic space, which made it possible to understand the session's conceptual structure and identify the core element of its healing resonance – the use of thirty traditional instruments in a systematic and purpose-driven format.

Results

This section presents the results of a pilot Ethnotherapy session conducted with ten participants. The session consisted of three distinct phases – Introductory, Main and Final, each designed to correspond with specific emotional stages. Data were collected through observational notes and a structured post-session questionnaire. Participants responded to 13 questions evaluating emotional states, physiological shifts, imagery and instrument perception. A thematic analysis was used to assess recurring patterns in participant responses.

The Introductory Phase included three compositions. The first is live performance of the Kazakh song "Yapurai" on the *sybyzgy* (longitudinal flute), served to establish a shared tonal field and prepare participants for deep listening. This was followed by two prerecorded compositions – "Baiterek" (symbolizing the World Tree, No. 2) and "Keruen" (translated as "The Caravan". No. 3), performed by musicians from the "Turan" & "Steppe Sons" ensembles. These compositions were described by the creators as authentic transmissions of the musicians' emotional states at the time of recording. Participants frequently described imagery associated with the World Tree and a caravan crossing a desert, despite receiving no prior information. These results suggest the presence of culturally encoded sound archetypes activated through timbral and rhythmic cues.

In the Main Phase, three compositions facilitated a guided emotional progression. The piece "Inir" (translated as "An Early Sunset", No. 4) symbolized primordial fear, elicited tension and music contractions. The subsequent piece "Syrlasu" (translated as "A Heart-to-Heart Conversation", No. 5), was associated with feelings of warmth, grounding and ancestral support. The final composition in this phase, "Zharmak" (translated as "The Divisibility", No. 6) produced the most intense emotional responses – seven out of ten participants exhibited tearfulness, indicating emotional release and affective processing.

The Final Phase focused on integration and return to a regulated state. The lullaby "Ansa Zhanym" (translated as "Long for My Dear", No. 7) featured a simplified two-chord structure and was characterized by participants as comforting and maternal. The final piece, "Tuma" (translated as "The Beginning", No. 8), was described as uplifting and stabilizing. Several participants reported a renewed sense of clarity and personal continuity following the session.

Across all three phases, participants identified *timbre* and *rhythm* as the most influential musical elements. Instruments such as *sybyzgy* and *kyl-kobyz* were consistently named as particularly impactful due to their distinctive tonal color and cultural resonance. Many participants emphasized the unique vibrational quality of instruments made from natural materials – wood, leather, bone and hair, which they associated with a deeper emotional response. This aligns with Saule Utegaliyeva's classification of traditional Kazakh instruments into 'living" (organic, natural) and non-living (synthetic, industrial) categories, where "living" instruments are believed to retain a vital connection to nature and therefore possess heightened expressive and healing capacities (238). The frequent mention of this organic resonance in participants' feedback suggests that the emotional navigation, symbolic processing and sensory attunement are deeply rooted in cultural memory and embodied experience.

The Table 2 demonstrates the presentation of the purpose of each phase, compositions and lines.

Table 2. Presentation of the purpose of each phase, compositions and lines

The block of work	Purpose	Applied compositions	Insight lines
The Introductory stage	Preparation for reflection and self-awareness, formation of the necessary state to enter an altered consciousness	1. "Yapurai" (Kazakh folk song) 2. "Baiterek" ("The Symbol of World tree") 3. "Keruen" (The Caravan")	
The Main stage	Expansion, awareness of negative emotions, intensive expression of internal emotions. Recognition of the source of tension, elaboration and deep understanding of the internal condition	4. "Inir" ("An Early Sunset") 5. "Syrlasu" ("A Heart-to-Heart Conversation") 6. "Zharmak" ("The Divisibility")	Primal fear The state of love The test of life
The Final stage	Relieving emotional tension, overcoming negative feelings. Stabilizing the level of psychological activity, internal balance	7. "Tuma ("The Initial Stage") 8. "Ansa Zhanym" ("Long for My Dear")	Support status A state of balance, self-acceptance, returning to reality and realizing who and what surrounds at the moment

These structural elements, introduced in Table 2, are further interpreted below in the context of the symbolic significance of participant responses.

Discussion

The study reveals the potential of Kazakh Ethnotherapy as a culturally resonant, symbolically charged and emotionally impactful form of therapeutic sound work. While distinct from European clinical models, it shares a universal human foundation: the use of structured sound to facilitate psychological integration and healing. Participants' responses to the Ethnotherapy session demonstrated consistent emotional and symbolic resonance, particularly during the middle and final stages. As supported by the questionnaire data, over 70% of adult participants reported feelings of sadness, nostalgia or emotional release. These experiences reflect not only momentary reactions, but also deep activation of archetypical emotional memory. According to Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconscious, archetypes across cultures are often triggered by symbolic stimuli such as sound, rhythm and mythic form (65).

The concept of sound archetype is thus particularly relevant: participants described visual imagery (e. g., desert journeys, ancestors, cosmic connection) without any prior information about the compositions, suggesting that traditional instruments and musical forms accessed universal perceptual channels. The effect was not limited to semantic understanding but engaged what Zemtsovsky termed "ethnohearing" – a culturally and biologically shaped inner filter of sonic experience (Zemtsovsky 528). The prevalence of emotional response across age groups and ethnic backgrounds supports the hypothesis that culturally rooted musical material can activate internal resonance and emotional transformation even without cognitive preparation.

These mechanisms of musical perception can be conceptualized following Zemtsovsky's model, which includes three interconnected layers:

1. universal sound archetypes;
2. culturally encoded intonational memory (ethnohearing);
3. musical signs interpreted within a specific cultural framework.

See Fig. 1 for a visual representation of Zemtsovsky's model.

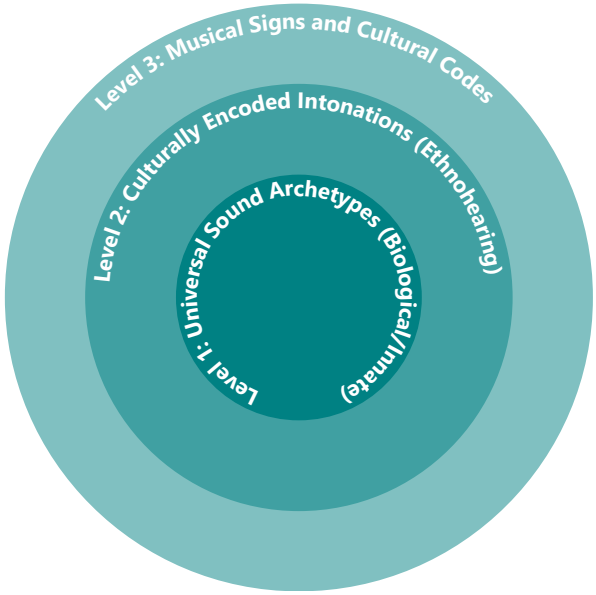


Fig. 1. Zemsovsky's Model of Musical Perception

Furthermore, contrary to the assumption that Central Asian therapy is entirely passive, participants demonstrated multiple layers of active internal engagement, including breath synchronization, focused visualization and post-session verbal expression. These behaviors are consistent with broader understandings of active music therapy, not only limited to instrumental performance, but extending to embodied and emotional participation. This suggests a hybrid modality of Ethnotherapy: combining receptive listening with internalized psychophysical activation.

A meaningful comparative framework is the Nordoff-Robbins model, developed by composer Paul Nordoff and educator Clive Robbins. Rooted in the belief that every person possesses an innate musical sensitivity – "musical child", this approach centers on spontaneous musical improvisation as the core of therapy. In Nordoff-Robbins' sessions, the therapist improvises music in real time, often singing about the client's actions or emotional state, while co-therapist supports behavioral participation. This method is especially impactful for individuals with developmental disabilities, where verbal language may be inaccessible.

While Kazakh Ethnotherapy does not use improvisation, it shares the central tenet of Nordoff-Robbins model: *music itself is the medium of transformation*. The difference lies in structure – Ethnotherapy uses pre-composed or symbolically arranged music.

Beyond this, the study aligns Ethnotherapy with global traditions of musical healing, particularly in ritual and shamanic contexts. As noted by Moreno, many tribal and non-technological cultures continue to practice healing through music without naming it as such (271). In these contexts, the shaman acts as a transdisciplinary figure, combining sound, gesture, chant, image and movement to guide the healing process. The Kazakh healer-musician historically served such a role and modern Ethnotherapy carries traces of this legacy – especially in its symbolic focus, ritual structure and use of "living instruments" made from organic materials.

According to the Bonde and Bruscia, the distinction between music therapy and musical healing lies in their ontological and operational assumptions (Bruscia 564). Music therapy typically operates via a triadic model: client – therapist – music, in which structured interaction leads to psychological insight, growth or symptom reduction (Bonde 216). In contrast, musical healing attributes transformation to vibrational, universal or sacred energies inherent in sound itself. While music therapy emphasizes human agency and measurable change, healing often situates music as a spiritual mediator that reconnects the individual with a cosmic order or ancestral lineage.

The ethnotherapeutic approach bridges these models. On one hand, it follows a structured process with therapeutic intention, on the other, it leverages vibrational qualities and symbolic soundscapes in a way more typical of musical healing.

Ritual structure also plays a central role. As Bonde notes, therapeutic rituals may derive from traditional (shamanic, religious) forms or be adapted for modern practice (217). In Ethnotherapy each composition within the session functions as a ritualized phase: an opening access memory and prepare bode (through the composition "Yapurai"), a central image of symbolic struggle and transformation ("Baiterek") and a resolution through the journey and meaning ("Keruen"). This triadic architecture mirrors both therapeutic models and mythic structures found globally (initiation, crisis, return).

Finally, this approach resonates with ecological music therapy, as defined by Bruscia (233). Music is not simply a technique, it is an environment, a context and a relational field. The idea of "holarchy" – nested levels of musical experience and social integration, applies directly to this setting. Ethnotherapy restores a sense of belonging, cultural identity and internal coherence in a way that bridges personal, cultural and cosmological dimensions.

In summary, this study contributes to the broader understanding of music as a therapeutic agent across diverse models: clinical, spiritual, cultural and artistic. Ethnotherapy is not a universal method, but a culturally situated, symbolically rich practice that demonstrates music's enduring power to restore balance, affirm identity and open emotional pathways toward healing. Future research should deepen comparative analysis of such hybrid models and integrate both subjective and physiological indicators to further evaluate efficacy.

Table 3. Key data from a survey among participants of Ethnotherapy

Gender (quantity)	Age	Purpose of the therapy visit	The impact of the stages	Evoked emotions	The effects of the elements
M	18–24	To discover and experience something new	Final	Sadness and nostalgia	Rhythm
F	25–34	Increase energy and motivation	Final	Sadness and nostalgia	All elements
F	25–34	To feel a connection with roots and culture	Final	Faith in yourself, in life, in success	Sound/timbre
F (2)	45–54	Increase energy and motivation	Introductory	Sadness and nostalgia	Sound/timbre
M (2)	45–54	To feel strength	Final	Poise and balance	Sound/timbre
F	55+	Coping with stress	Final	Sadness and nostalgia	Sound/timbre

Conclusion

This pilot study highlights the therapeutic potential of Kazakh traditional music when integrated into structured healing sessions. By combining acoustic resonance, symbolic imagery, and organic instrumentation, the therapy facilitates emotional release, cultural reconnection and psychological stabilization. Participants reported deep emotional responses – sadness, clarity and revitalization, suggesting that traditional sound practices activate archetypical memories and non-verbal forms of healing. Ethnotherapy offers a culturally anchored model for addressing emotional imbalance through receptive musical engagement. However, limitations in sample size and measurement tools point to the need for expanded clinical trials, inclusion of physiological indicators and deeper theoretical integration with existing psychotherapeutic models.

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