

**ENGLISH SONGS IN SUPPORT OF THE LINGUISTIC
DEVELOPMENT OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS IN
FINLAND**

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<p>In this thesis, I will discuss how music supports language learning in elementary school students, specifically learning English as a second language in Finland. I will discuss a child's development and how language learning relates to that, music's potential as a pedagogical tool in language education, and how the aforementioned is recognized in the national primary education curriculum. This thesis is a literature review, in which I will review previous research, articles, and books on the topic.</p> <p>Music enhances learning and it is relevant to discuss music's potential in support of language learning. I will discuss features of speech that are shared by music and language and how that relates to singing and language learning. The focus of the thesis is on primary school students' language learning; however, a child's development in relation to language learning is an essential concept to understand as a teacher, and therefore, I will discuss development from birth to school age. The national primary education curriculum is an integral part of education in Finland and, therefore, I will discuss it.</p> <p>Research has shown that music supports language learning, specifically spoken communication. Singing improves the features of speech, which are rhythm, intonation, and stress. In addition, through music, language learners can gain the courage to express themselves. Music has a wide potential to enhance learning in many ways. Nevertheless, the national primary education curriculum has very little mention or encouragement to use music in language education. I propose more research to be done on the topic because this topic has relevance currently due to the internalization of the world.</p>	
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Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	4
2	DEVELOPMENT AND THE LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD.....	6
	2.1 The four stages of a child's development.....	6
	2.2 Early language teaching (varhaistettu kielenopetus)	9
3	MUSIC AND LANGUAGE LEARNING.....	11
	3.1 Features of speech that are shared by both music and language.....	12
	3.2 Music as a pedagogical tool.....	13
	3.2.1 Music in support of learning	13
	3.2.2 Music in support of English education	14
	3.3 Syntax and the shared brain activity that both music and language ignite	16
4	THE NATIONAL PRIMARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM	18
5	CONCLUSION	21
	REFERENCES.....	23

1 INTRODUCTION

English's role as a lingua franca grows constantly more significant due to the rapid internalization of the word. Intelligible spoken communication and the courage to use the language are necessary skills in the future. High-quality teaching of language and pedagogy that encourages students to speak English have a central role in language education in Finland. As a music education student and an English teacher-student, I argue that music could support English teaching in an encouraging, creative, and comprehensive way. This literature review is about how English songs support the linguistic development of primary school students in Finland.

In this literature review, I will discuss previous research and its relation to the Finnish national primary education curriculum. The central research questions are as follows. *The key contributing factors that enhance the learning of music and singing, and English and how English songs support the linguistic development of elementary school students in Finland.* As the topic is both music education and linguistic sciences, I will discuss books, articles, and other releases from both fields. I will also include education sciences and educational psychology to enlighten a child's development and linguistic development. As the topic and I as the writer are closely related to pedagogy and education, the national primary education curriculum (perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma) needs to be addressed and discussed.

I will write this thesis as a music education student, but I am leaning heavily toward linguistics. My major is music education and I minor in English. As a future music and English teacher, I am interested in the possibilities that these two school subjects

could have in the future. This thesis is written from the point of view of a teacher, focusing on a teacher's understanding of the student's learning process and development. The larger goal is to understand the similarities of music and language, and to incorporate that into my teaching, as well as provide useful information to others.

This topic interests me for many reasons. First, it captures my academic interests and represents my major (music education) and minor (English). Second, and the root reason for my choice of studies, I am personally invested in music and languages due to my high school experiences. During my years in high school, I was unmotivated to study anything besides music, and I didn't think that I would go on to have an academic career of any kind. Despite having low motivation, I managed to get good grades in English and spoken communication, specifically my pronunciation received good feedback despite my lack of practice. At the time, I did not think much of it, but it greatly impacted me. Once I matured enough and got into university to study music education, I started to reflect on those years, and that sparked an interest. I made a hypothesis, that as a musician I had a lot of practice in recognizing, comprehending, and recreating sounds around me. I chose English as my minor and started to research the relationship between music and English, and how I could further use the information acquired in my pedagogy.

The topic has relevance even recently. Top researchers Huotilainen and Tervaniemi touched on this topic in their Helsingin Sanomat article released on 11.3.2023. They bring up and discuss how music affects learners' linguistic abilities, and how well music as a hobby supports learning and development (Huotilainen & Tervaniemi, 2023). Discussion revolving around this topic seems to be more relevant due to many reasons, such as the cuts resulting from the balancing of state finances hitting the educational field and music education, and the internalization of the world.

2 DEVELOPMENT AND THE LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD

In this section, I will discuss the linguistic development of a child. A child's linguistic development is dependent on the child's development, and therefore, I will discuss the child's development in addition to linguistic development. Piaget's (1953) theory about Child development is present throughout this section, and I will use source material that cites Piaget from a linguistic point of view. This thesis is focused on elementary school students, but early childhood cannot be dismissed when discussing a child's development. The development that takes place during early childhood is the basis for the knowledge and skills learned later (Nurmi, Ahonen, Lyytinen & Lyytinen, 2015, 18). Therefore, I will discuss a child's development from birth to elementary school age.

2.1 The four stages of a child's development

Piaget divides a child's development into four stages. These stages are universal, and moving to the next stage, a child must internalize the functions of a previous stage. The four stages of development are as follows: Sensorimotor stage (ages 0–2), pre-operational stage (ages 2–4), stage of intuitive thinking (ages 4–7), and concrete operations (ages 7 and onwards). (Piaget, 1953.) Speech understanding strategies and production strategies of a child are based on the current stage of their development (Leiwo, 1989, 104). A child needs to learn to distinguish specific sounds of speech and

to recognize spoken communication from other forms of surrounding sounds. To make precise observations, the child must distinguish even the smallest of details from speech. Even as a newborn, a child has the preparedness to receive speech and distinguish characteristic details of language, despite what language is spoken in the child's living environment. (Nurmi et al., 2015, 22.) A child's early years are critical in terms of acquiring their native tongue, and therefore, to approach language learning pedagogically, there needs to be an understanding of what happens during these stages.

Children begin their language acquisition at an early age. During the sensorimotor stage, a child acquires knowledge by observing and handling objects in their environment and by moving actively (Piaget, 1953). A child's linguistic skills have not yet developed much, and they learn by observing and internalizing their surround sounds. Between the age of 8–12 months, infants and toddlers do not react to language form and their reactions are completely dependent on the situation. Between ages 12–18 months, a child's reactions are situational, but they use words, without any grammatical forms, as hints. Nearing the end of the sensorimotor stage, during the age of 18–24 months, a child understands words, but the meaning is determined by the situation. (Leiwo, 1989, 102.) Acquisition of the first language takes place at an early stage, before the age of three up to puberty, and children are born with an innate ability to speak a language (Elgamal, 2019, 149). Early years are critical in first language acquisition, however, at this stage, a child is not yet capable of verbal communication.

Verbal communication begins with simple steps. During the pre-operational stage, a child moves from sensorimotor thinking to representational thinking, and especially during the pre-conceptual period (ages 2–4), the child's language skills expand rapidly (Piaget, 1953). A child understands words, but the context and experiences determine the interpretation of the meaning of the sentence. The child's speech is based on either mimicking adults or processing adults' speech and sequencing fragments of speech that they have observed. (Leiwo, 1989, 102–103.) The period in which a child acquires their first language is called the critical period (critical period hypothesis), and if the first exposure to the mother tongue takes place within the critical period,

the levels of first language attainment are normal (Elgamal, 2019, 136-139). The first steps to verbal communication are distinguishing speech-related sounds from other sounds, and the beginning of the cognitive process of speaking.

A child's thinking develops and expands, and the child is capable of basic communication. During the stage of intuitive thinking, a child understands words and simple sentence structures, but the speaking situation can affect the interpretation and the child generalizes too much in the interpretation of syntactic structures (Leiwo, 1989, 102). The child is still committed to their point of view (Piaget, 1953). At the end of the stage of intuitive thinking, and the beginning of concrete operations, the child reaches preschool age and eventually school age. Thus, the child's first language acquisition has developed far, and they enter a transitional phase of development.

The child's thinking further develops, when a child reaches preschool age, and due to that, children can detach themselves from immediate sensory perceptions (Piaget, 1953). This happens during the stage of concrete operations. Approaching the school age, the focus of language development is on the development of metalinguistic consciousness and on learning the different social and personal uses of language (Leiwo, 1989, 105). The beginning of middle childhood can be considered a clear developmental transition phase, where biological and cognitive development creates opportunities for clearly more independent activities and taking more responsibility for one's activities than before (Nurmi et al., 2015, 72). In a school environment, a child is exposed to wider usage of language, and their language skills are used to communicate with both peers and adults.

The child's linguistic development begins from hearing and distinguishing specific sounds of speech. A child understands words and language before being able to produce them (Nurmi et al., 2015, 37). This requires the ability to comprehend the surrounding world. Moreover, it requires a certain amount of development to happen. After the child can distinguish speech-specific sounds, they begin to produce speech themselves, beginning from using singular words to eventually using simple sentences. It is essential in the development of speaking skills that the development

progresses from situation-bound language to contextual speech, and from there to the situation- and context-independent speech (Leiwo, 1989, 105). Further development enables comprehension of abstract concepts and usage of more complex sentence structures and contexts – language usage is a cognitive process. Acquisition of the first language at an early age is almost universal (Elgamal, 2019, 139), and second language learning begins, at the latest, in school.

2.2 Early language teaching (varhaistettu kielenopetus)

In 2018, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture announced that from 2019 onwards foreign language studies will begin in the first grade (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2018). In the national primary education curriculum (perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma) (POPS, 2014) it is stated that the task of the foreign language (vieras kieli) teaching in grades 1–2 is to arouse the students' positive attitude towards language learning and to strengthen the students' confidence in their abilities to learn languages and to use even minimal language skills boldly (133-134). The second language (toinen kieli) is learned in an environment where language is used outside formal school education, whereas foreign language learning mainly happens in school (Skinnari & Sjöberg, 2018, 14). Thus, English is taught as a second language starting from the first grade.

Early language teaching relates to the child's development, and earlier formal teaching enables more time to learn during the time spent in primary school. Critical age stages tied to biological age are particularly important for language acquisition (critical period hypothesis). In addition, it is a simple fact that those who start formal language learning at a young age have time to study a foreign language quantitatively more when reaching a certain age. (Skinnari & Sjöberg, 2018, 13-14.) Minister of Education Sanna Grahn-Laasonen comments on early language education in 2018: "This historical decision makes children in Finland, regardless of their background, more equal. Children have an astonishing ability to learn, and in the internationalized world versatile language skills is one of the most important skills in the future". (Opetus- ja

kulttuuriministeriö, 2018.) Natural development and time are central factors in language learning, and therefore, early language teaching is a good direction for educational development as the world is constantly more international.

In addition to early language teaching, quality pedagogy should be the central idea of education. The results of studies investigating the starting age are contradictory, and research results indicate that more important factors than early starting age, are age-appropriate teaching, the quality of teaching, and pedagogically skilled teachers (Skinnari & Sjöberg, 2018, 3-14). Early language teaching increases equality between students and provides more time for students to learn a second language. It is a necessary addition to the Finnish curriculum as language studies become more important in the internationalizing world.

3 MUSIC AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Learning music and language have similar processes. Furthermore, music could potentially enhance all kinds of learning. The school's music lessons serve the purpose of learning music and other subjects (Huotilainen, 2007, 43). Evidence that music education's potential could reach beyond oral abilities can be found in both neuropsychological and educational sciences. Training and involvement in musical tasks may result in the acquisition of skills and attitudes that are not directly related to music. (Biasutti & Concina, 2013, 152.) Music listening education develops the brain in multiple ways: personally, culturally, socially, and biologically (Unkari-Virtanen, 2020). Moreover, it could be argued that early musical training could potentially be a crucial factor in the development of the brain. The human mind is claimed to be better developed if musical training begins before the age of seven (Zybert & Stępień, 2009, 109-110). Music has broad potential in the field of education, specifically in language education, specifically English teaching, in Finland.

In Finland, English is present in both English classroom and in music education, in the form of English songs. In Finland, English is heard, used, and learned outside school, and it could be argued that in Finland, English is a second language rather than a foreign language (Skinnari & Sjöberg, 2018, 14). Many popular, culturally important, and widely known songs are in English, and they are sung in music classes. English is present in music education, and vice versa. Music is a comprehensive subject that supports learning. In this section, I will discuss the features of speech that

music and language share, music in the support of learning, and how language and music are related in the light of brain research.

3.1 Features of speech that are shared by both music and language

Music, specifically singing, and speech share similar features. Both activities are produced with the mouth and the same muscles, however, their function is often different – singing has for example a recreational or emotional function, whereas speech is used to communicate meaning. These features, that both music and speech shares are melody or tune, pitch range, interval, tone color, loudness, logical stress, pauses, tempo, rhythm, and empathic length (value of a note) (Panassenko, 2013, 145). The teaching focuses on understanding the basic concepts of level, duration, power, and color. As the skills develop, the conceptual framework is expanded to include the musical concepts of rhythm, melody, dynamics, timbre, harmony, and form. (POPS, 2014, 150.) Music and speech share many features, excluding only key, minor, or major, and harmony (Panassenko, 2013, 145). Therefore, producing speech and singing are highly similar processes.

Rhythm and melody are central in both speech and music. Patel (2007) defines rhythm as the systematic patterning of sounds in terms of timing, accent, and grouping, and both speech and music are characterized by temporal, phrasal, and accentual patterning (96). Melodic features are central to music due to expressing emotions rely often on melody, however, this similarity is shared by speech. The most vivid emotive features of similarity between music and speech are displayed in tonal characteristics, specifically melodic contour (Panassenko, 2013, 152). Patel (2007) approaches melody as how linguistic and musical melodies differ from each other. A musical melody is a group of tones that are in love with each other, whereas a linguistic melody is a group of tones that gets the job done (184). This suggests that the similarity is such an obvious observation, that finding the differences is necessary.

Rhythmic and melodic features of speech are shared by both music and speech and thus, it could be argued that mastering a language, for example, English in the Finnish school system, requires understanding and knowledge of musical elements. Sentence stress and intonation, as well as word stress and tones, are musical components of language that should be mastered, in addition to the knowledge and skill of pronouncing phonemes (sound units) (Milovanov, Pietila, Tervaniemi & Esquef, 2010, 56). Pronunciation is key to intelligible communication, and thus, emphasizing musical elements of speech in language education is an important factor.

In addition to speech production and singing, music, and language share the important feature - perception of sound and distinguishing the key elements. Hearing and distinguishing specific sounds from a sound mass is shared by both music and language. Music seems to include several components that support language skills, such as the refinement of the analysis of the features of sounds, the improvement of auditory memory, and the development of attention skills (Huotilainen, 2019, 145). Music and speech share similar features in both production and perception and thus, their value in pedagogy should not be undermined but rather emphasized.

3.2 Music as a pedagogical tool

3.2.1 Music in support of learning

Music is a great pedagogical tool in and outside the music classroom, due to it supports not only language learning but all kinds of learning and development. Music makes learning easier and effort lighter (Zybert & Stępień, 2009, 99). The potential of music could be utilized in all school subjects. Music is relevant for learning both as an indirect tool and as content to be learned (Huotilainen, 2007, 46). Some researchers suggest that if the rhyme is combined with simple motor activity, especially activity that activates the right hand, learning becomes more efficient due to the similarity of the rhythms of linguistic and motor activity (Huotilainen, 2019, 72).

Rhyming and singing are efficient pedagogical tools in all learning, their usage is not limited to music education.

Learning starts from the learner, and that requires motivation. Motivation is a fundamental factor in learning, and therefore it is important to consider how to motivate language learners into learning languages (Alisaari, 2016, 52). Students often have a personal connection to music, and music could be used as a motivator to study or as a tool to set a specific atmosphere. The atmosphere brought by music is of great importance due to the learner's mood in the learning situation can create the so-called emergence of the flow phenomenon. If this happens, learning moves to a new level and becomes more effective, the learning speed increases, and the difficulty level of the material to be learned can be increased. (Huotilainen, 2007, 40.) Music could be used to motivate students into learning and to set an atmosphere that is good for learning. Moreover, music could lead to unobtrusive learning if students enjoy the task at hand and feel as if they are not being formally educated. Music has a lot of potential in the field of education, and I will focus on how it supports language learning.

3.2.2 Music in support of English education

Music has great potential to be adapted as a pedagogical tool in language education. A child has a natural urge to take an active part in music. Moreover, singing is a highly efficient form of learning as it exercises the auditory system and pronunciation capabilities, and it is more demanding than speech. (Huotilainen, 2019, 146.) In the Finnish education system, English is taught as a second language, and both spoken and written skills are stressed. Music and language have similar features and, thus, this connection could be utilized in education. Spoken communication focuses on intelligible communication, whereas written communication is focused on grammar and fluency in written form.

Spoken communication education has undergone a major shift in emphasis, and accuracy as the focus on pronunciation is replaced by comfortable intelligibility

(Tergujeff, 2013, 17). The essential thing is to have the courage and skill to use the language so that the message gets across (Huotilainen, 2019, 256). This shift affects the pedagogical approach to pronunciation pedagogy. In pronunciation pedagogy, the emphasis has shifted from an emphasis on individual sounds to an emphasis on suprasegmental features of speech – intonation, stress, and rhythm. (Tergujeff, 2013, 17.) Intonation, stress, and rhythm could be introduced to students through songs as Lems (2001) explains (McCormack, Klopper, Kitson & Westerveld, 2018, 44). Musical training support English pronunciation skills. Musical aptitude and English pronunciation skills have a strong interrelationship, unrelated to general intelligence (Milovanov et al., 2010, 59). It could be argued music supports the learning of pronunciation, and therefore, spoken communication.

In addition to pronunciation, listening skills and the ability to distinguish and mimic sounds are central to spoken communication, and language education. Research studies have analyzed the importance of musical training in verbal skills' development in language pronunciation (Biasutti & Concina, 2013, 155). Speech perception correlates positively with speech production. Therefore, it could be assumed that the ability to perceive speech sounds includes the ability to imitate them. (Zybert & Stępień, 2009, 109.) The ability to distinguish specific sounds from the sound mass is a relevant factor in the learning of intelligible pronunciation. Music is highly relevant in the learning of spoken English.

Music as a pedagogical tool should be incorporated into English education in Finland. Musical aptitude and musical training should be regarded as relevant factors in language education (Zybert & Stępień, 2009, 109). Pronunciation and listening comprehension are crucial in the practical use of a language even though they might not be in the most central place in language teaching at school (Huotilainen, 2007, 45). Singing is a beneficial method for language teaching and therefore, it should be adopted more widely and more comprehensively in language classrooms (Alisaari 2016, 54). Zybert and Stępień (2009) conclude, that musical aptitude and musical training should be emphasized in the language classroom (110). Furthermore, Alisaari (2016) argues that singing as a teaching method should be incorporated into language teachers'

pedagogical studies (54). Music has a relevant and important role in English teaching in Finnish schools.

Music's potential in English education is not limited to spoken communication. In their study, Alisaari (2016) concludes that singing is an effective method for developing writing fluency, at least measured by the number of words that were used (51). While music might not support written language skills as directly as oral language skills, there is a correlation between music and written English skills.

3.3 Syntax and the shared brain activity that both music and language ignite

Brain researchers have studied the similar learning processes of languages and music. Music and language share cognitive functions, such as short-term memory and auditory attention. In addition, they use the same auditory systems to gather information. (Biasutti & Concina 2013, 154.) In both, speech and music, the systematic temporal, phrasal, and accentual pattering of sound is included. Key processes that extract rhythmic structure from complex auditory signals are shared by music and language. (Patel, 2007, 176-177.) Linguistic skills could benefit from musical training that focuses on rhythmic recognition and production in addition to strengthening listening abilities (Biasutti & Concina 2013, 161). Singing rhythmically and rhyming in language education could support linguistic development and language learning.

Syntax and the brain activity it requires is an area of brain research that suggests an overlap in neural resources between music and language. Linguistic syntax traditionally means the arrangement of words and phrases to create a well-formed and understandable sentence in a language (Matthews, 1981, 1). Musical syntax and its relation to linguistic syntax is a concept that has aroused interest in researchers. Musical syntax is essentially a model that guarantees the comprehension of music, although it doesn't guarantee musical value or perceptibility (Swain, 1995, 287). Paananen (2009) explains that the most fundamental structures of music, rhythm, and meter, are not limited only to music processing. Linguistic and musical syntax (grammar) occurs in the same

parts of the brain. (Paananen, 2009, 141.) Patel (2007) suggests that although there are domain-specific and distinct representations in musical and linguistic syntax, there is overlap in the neural recourses that serve to activate and integrate these representations during syntactic processing (297-298). There is a clear connection between musical and linguistic syntax, that enables comprehension.

4 THE NATIONAL PRIMARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM

In this section, I will explore the national primary education curriculum (perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma) that all elementary school English education revolves around. My point of view is how music is regarded in the English national primary education curriculum. Furthermore, I will look into how English songs are regarded in the music national primary education curriculum. I will look into the latest release of the national primary education curriculum that is published in 2014 and the additional update from 2019.

In the national primary education curriculum, subjects are separated into their sections and English is under the foreign language section. The task of the subject is to teach students a foreign language, and it bases on using language in different situations (POPS, 2014, 130). The function of a language is to be able to communicate in that language, and this has been addressed in the national primary education curriculum. Foreign language provides ingredients for the formation and appreciation of a multilingual and cultural identity (POPS, 2014, 133). Music and culture are closely related, and to communicate within a certain culture, music could be used to introduce the culture and language, and therefore, has relevance in language education.

In the national primary education curriculum, multiliteracy is stressed. Multiliteracy is taught in language teaching, various texts are discussed, and the different interests of children and young people are considered in the selection of texts. In teaching,

bridges are also created between different languages and for students' free time language use. (POPS, 2014, 133.) For many students, music is a free time activity, and English songs could be used in language education. Students are encouraged to study languages in a variety of ways. In language showers (kielikylpy), you can get to know the language or languages by, for example, singing, playing an instrument, playing, and moving. (POPS, 2014, 133.) Learning languages in different formats are noted in the national primary education curriculum. However, in the national primary education curriculum singing is used as an introductory tool, rather than a pedagogical tool.

The teaching can be carried out in connection with other lessons, as part of multidisciplinary learning units (POPS, 2014, 134). A multidisciplinary approach is encouraged in the national primary education curriculum. There is plenty of room for joy, playfulness, and creativity in language learning (POPS, 2014, 133, 243). The national primary education curriculum encourages and recommends teachers to use creative teaching methods and multidisciplinary approaches to language education. However, music is not very present in the foreign language section of the national primary education curriculum, and much of the multidisciplinary teaching is left within the subject teachers' autonomy.

In the music section of the national primary education curriculum, music education's task is to create qualifications for versatile musical activities and active cultural participation (POPS, 2014, 149). Music is a comprehensive phenomenon and music education is to both teach students about it and to cherish it. In music education, students' musical interests, other subjects, unifying themes, school parties and events, and activities outside school are to be considered (POPS, 2014, 149).

Foreign language, specifically English, is not directly present in the national primary education curriculum. Culture and cultural education are present, and language is a big part of the culture. In addition to musical knowledge and skills, the lessons deal with students' experiences and observations about music as well as the different sound environments of everyday life, also considering the importance of music in our

communities. (POPS, 2014, 150.) However, English and music's potential to support spoken communication is not present in the national primary education curriculum.

Expression and the ability to verbally communicate are important factors in language education. Music, and specifically singing, is an expressive art form and learning expression could support the expression of spoken language. In music lessons, students study music in a variety of ways, which contributes to the development of their expressive skills (POPS, 2014, 149). It could be argued that expression is a multidisciplinary concept within music, and therefore, language education is considered in the music section of the national primary education curriculum. However, it can be interpreted in many ways, and the intention of the national primary education curriculum is not most likely this.

The national primary education curriculum addresses a multidisciplinary approach to teaching and the importance of cultural teaching in both the music and language sections. However, it is not directly expressed or noted that music and singing support spoken communication education. It is left to each teacher to decide whether they want to use songs and rhymes to help students pronounce, express, and talk in English, and thus, students do not have the same premises in language education. Albeit the national primary education curriculum is an enormously vast document that considers all education that happens in Finland, it seems an oversight that music in support of linguistic development is not mentioned.

5 CONCLUSION

The connection between music and language is evident, and music supports learning in many ways. The key contributing factors that enhance the learning of music and singing and English are integrated into a child's development. The music itself is certainly an answer to this question, as it is music that supports learning and memory, music enhances the development of the brain, music supports language learning, and singing supports spoken communication. Learning English, either in formal foreign language education or in informal learning, is supported by the similarities that music and language share. Learning language is a natural part of development, and that development specifically furious at a young age. However, quality teaching and good pedagogy are more important factors in learning than the starting age. Therefore, music and singing in support of English should be further studied and incorporated into language teaching in the Finnish education system.

English songs support the linguistic development of elementary school students in Finland, due to the shared features of music and speech, the vast number of pedagogical possibilities that music provides, and similar brain activity. The shared features of speech, such as rhythm, melody, and intonation have such a crucial role in spoken English, that singing and practicing expression are highly encouraged to be used in the language classroom. The brain reacts similarly when it is exposed to music and language, further supporting the claim that music supports language learning.

English songs, and music, supports the linguistic development of an elementary school student due to the similar processes that music, singing, speech, and language share.

The national primary education curriculum encourages the usage of music in multidisciplinary settings, however, singing and the usage of music as a pedagogical tool are not very present. The national primary education curriculum is a vast document

and therefore, precise usage of music may not be possible to record. This said, more encouragement and possibilities to use music in language education could be proposed.

In this thesis, I have discussed a child's development, the various similarities that music and language learning share, and how the latter is noted in the national primary education curriculum. I believe I have found answers to the research questions I proposed. I propose more research to be done on the topic and the incorporation of music and singing into language education, both in primary school and English teacher education at universities. Furthermore, I will personally further study this topic, as I find it to have a significant role in my life as a music and English teacher.

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