CLIL and *Crescendo*: An Exploration of the Contribution of Music to Language Learning in Early Childhood

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Abstract   Acquiring a second language is challenging but vital task to thrive in today's society. Children's exposure to English as a foreign language from early age has become a norm, which, however, faces several obstacles. In this regard, the use of music could be a suitable tool to ensure successful early language acquisition. Through ethnographic research, carried out at Bambini Bicocca Infant School, it was possible to understand the impact of music on English language acquisition. More precisely, in harmony with existing literature, the research highlighted the impact of music on vocabulary retention, phonological awareness and emotional state.

Keywords   Second language acquisition. Music. CLIL. Infant school. English education.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Music and Second Language Acquisition. – 3 Methodology. – 4 Findings and Discussion. – 5 Conclusion.

1 Introduction

Since ancient times, music has been a constant companion to humankind, its melodies echoing through the annals of history (Martinelli 2020).[1] In classical cultures, music was more than just a harmonious arrangement of sounds; it carried deep cosmological, metaphysical, religious, and socio-political implications. The Greeks saw music as a crucial component of the moral universe and the cosmos: Aristotle addressed the issue of music arguing that music should be part of everyone's education, just like reading and writing, since becoming musically trained is crucial to the personal development (Whitfield 2010). Ethnomusicologists, building upon diverse theories regarding music from around the world, have put forth the hypothesis that all people, not only those formally trained in performing and understanding music, are inherently musical (Rice 2014).

Thus, music and songs are fundamental attributes of human nature considered to be as important as speech and language a statement that encapsulates the essence of a phenomenon that has transcended time, culture, and geography, underscoring its universality and profound significance for humankind. As the centrality of music continues to be acknowledged in different contexts (Caputo, Palazzetti, Checchi 2017; Petrušić 2021), the potentials of music education become increasingly apparent, promising long-lasting relevance in pedagogical practices. Research indicates that music can significantly enhance learning skills and can be more effective than traditional teaching methods, opening new horizons for educators and learners alike (Petress 2005).

In language education the role of music has been deeply researched (e.g. Dittinger et al. 2019; Amin, Soh 2020; Ávila-López, Espejo-Mohedano 2022), since it is a language package that bundles culture, vocabulary, listening, grammar, and a plethora of other linguistic and emotional components within the framework of its melodies and lyrics. Both music and language, being dynamic systems of sound units, share similarities in terms of auditory features, rhythm and hierarchical structure (Fiveash et al. 2021).

In light of this conceptual framework, the paper aims to delve deeper into the multifaceted aspects of using music as an educational tool in the intricate process of second language acquisition. The study seeks to shed light on the complex tapestry of interrelated factors that encompass the dynamic relationship between music and language acquisition, specifically focusing on music's role in English language acquisition in one Italian kindergarten of the Municipality of

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[1] Petar Vasilev Lefterov wrote paragraphs 1, 2 and 4, while Susanna Mantovani wrote paragraphs 3 and 5.

Milan. Moreover, it is intended to investigate if and how music education could help in the development of the auditory discrimination and in the vocabulary acquisition process by reducing the Affective Filter (Krashen 1986).

2 Music and Second Language Acquisition

Due to the growing status of English as the language of international communication having adequate English language skills has become a priority for the twenty-first-century citizens. Learning English from early ages is an asset, as emergent bilingualism carries a number of recognized benefits on young learners (Costa, Mariotti 2023), such as enhanced efficiency in attentional control (Stafford 2010) increased proficiency in the mother tongue (Balboni 1999; Turnbull 2016), and better metalinguistic awareness (Robinson Anthony et al. 2020).

This increase in the English language teaching programmes in ECEC has led to the identifications of new pedagogical practises that meet children's needs and make effective use of their resources and strengths. One of the most implemented methodologies in language education in ECEC might be the Content and Language Integrated Leaning – CLIL (Zanoni 2021), an approach, which overcomes the traditional grammar-translation language teaching method and is aimed at integrated learning of language-communication and disciplinary skills in foreign languages (Coyle 2006; Cinganotto 2021). Based on Dewey's experiential learning hypothesis (Dewey 1938), CLIL is a compelling strategy, that, as noted by the Eurydice report (2006), is widespread around Europe, and that utilizes various subjects and tools to support the language acquisition process.

This comprehensive nature makes CLIL a highly effective pedagogical approach for introducing English to children in the 0-6 age group. CLIL's relevance to pre-primary education lies in its inherently flexible and holistic approach (Adami 2022), which aligns seamlessly with the educational guidelines outlined in the Indicazioni Nazionali (MIUR 2018). By fostering trans-disciplinarity the school fosters the integration of different disciplines, encouraging students to acquire a global view of knowledge and to relate concepts and ideas from different fields. In preschool, there is therefore a three-part chorus, weaving together, content, competence and communication, themes that are supported by the adoption of CLIL's dual-focus framework, where both content and language are acquired simultaneously (Coyle, Hood, Marsh 2010). The focus on learning through doing in CLIL aligns with pre-primary education's holistic approach, which prioritizes children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development through action (MIUR 2018). Moreover, research has shown that children acquire a foreign language more effectively in realistic

and natural settings, like the context in which they learn their first language (Mehisto, Marsh, Frigols 2008). CLIL supports this natural learning process by integrating language with meaningful activities such as play, singing, drawing, and building models, thereby making learning both cognitively meaningful and strongly contextualized (Costa et al. 2018).

Choosing music as the content of the CLIL approach, might prove to be a highly effective pedagogical practice for second language acquisition, given the multiplicity of shared elements between music and language, such as speech patterns, rhythms, and melodic contours (Runfola et al. 2012), and, above all, they share the element of sound, which both music and language need in order to thrive (Freddi 2012). Research by neuroscientists have unveiled that both musical and linguistic syntax undergo similar cognitive processing, primarily because they engage the same auditory, perceptual, and cognitive mechanisms responsible for organizing auditory information perceived by our senses (Li, Brand 2007).

Research has shown that the use of pupils' favourite music may facilitate the acquisition of useful vocabulary items (McCormack, Klopper 2015), since the repetitiveness of the lyrics allows continuous revision, which is essential for storing the new vocabulary in long term memory (Mei-ling, 2007). Abidin et al. (2011) conducted research, which involved the use of YouTube songs, with primary students, detecting a significant improvement in the vocabulary competences in the experimental group compared to the control group. Similarly, Setia et al. (2012) found that primary students believed using songs effectively enhanced vocabulary and pronunciation. A study by Köksal, Yağışan, and Çekiç (2013) demonstrated that teaching vocabulary through music significantly increased English vocabulary learning, enhancing vocabulary retention, and improving pupils' attitudes toward English language.

Moreover, music has the power to transform the classroom into a positive, friendly, and cooperative environment, in which children succeed academically, socially, and emotionally (Davies, Spencer 2000). Its use in language classes can relax students, enhance focus, and boost motivation to learn (Mishan 2005). Hence, music and lyrics offer a means of expressing emotions, ideas, and thoughts, and their impact on learners in the language classroom ranges from excitement to relaxation (Abbott 2002). Incorporating music in English lessons proves to be effective because it provides a pleasurable outlet, helping students feel more comfortable using the new language; rock music, in particular, offers a refreshing break from the routine of textbooks (Coromina 1993).

This calm and relaxed environment may lead to further benefits in the acquisition of foreign language. Negative feelings such as anxiety, fear, or embarrassment may hinder language acquisition, whereas

motivation and self-confidence facilitate the process. Beasley and Chuang (2008) noted using songs can make listening activities less challenging and more interesting, helping students with rhythm, intonation, vocabulary, and grammar. Music can also help young learners with spoken production, since singing lessen the pressure of speaking the target language (Fonseca-Mora, Toscana-Fuentes, Wermke 2011). Research by Shabani and Torkeh (2014) indicates that including music in the foreign language classroom can create a conducive learning environment, stimulate creativity, enhance motivation, activate linguistic memory, improve concentration, and develop language skills. Lastly, authentic materials (Cucinotta 2020), such as music, are believed to motivate learners more effectively than artificial ones.

Nonetheless, as emphasized by Morales (2008), harnessing the potential of songs and music in the classroom can yield meaningful results only when approached as more than just a brief three to four minutes of entertainment. Using songs as educational materials demands prior preparation and meticulous curation of the musical environment to be incorporated into the lessons.

3 Methodology

Since the study is set in a well distinguished setting and involves a specific socio-cultural group of participants, pre-school children of families of the upper-middle class and/or the *intelligentsia*, it adopts a Constructivist-Interpretativist paradigm (Creswell 2003). This paradigm is favoured because, from an ontological perspective, reality is socially constructed, and thus, limited to the context, space and time of the target social group (Wagner, Kawulich, Garner 2012). More precisely, in order to reach the research goals, a qualitative method (Creswell 2003) and an ethnographic methodology in educational contexts (Bove 2019) has been adopted.

Data stems from a six-month field research, and it was gathered through participant observations, researcher's diary, photos, video and/or audio recordings. Participant observation was carried out by the researcher both during unstructured activities, such as free exploration done by children in the school yard, and during structured activities, like morning circle time conducted by practitioners. However, the researcher also took on a more hands-on role, assisting the teacher with simple tasks, such as distributing snacks and carrying out the English language music sessions.

The laboratory took place four mornings per week, from 10:30 till 12:15, in a designated music room and followed the Orff-Schulwerk approach (Orff, Keetman 1980). In music education various approaches offer structured plans and diverse experiences to achieve specific

musical goals. The Orff-Schulwerk is a holistic and experiential approach to music education that emphasizes the integration of movement, speech, and rhythm.

A content analysis (Prasad 2008) was done to analyse the data. It is a qualitative research technique that consists of breaking down any kind of massage, be it verbal and/or iconic, into simpler constituent elements. It is not purely descriptive but is intended to arrive at interpretive conclusions through an inferential process (Bolasco 2013).

Prior to the start of the research, families were informed about the research, and informed assent and consent was collected. This process aimed to ensure that all parties involved had a clear understanding of the research objectives, procedures, and potential implications. To ensure the anonymity, participants' names were de-identified using codes.

3.1   Activity Design

The intervention spanned 24 sessions, with four two-hour activities per week, involving 4 to 6 pupils per group. Teachers formed the groups based on synergy between, ensuring a mix of gender and age so older children could assist younger ones. Sessions followed the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy, incorporating rhythm, movement, singing, improvisation, and simple Orff instruments (e.g., tambourines, rhythm sticks, and metallophones). The teacher acted as a guide, fostering active learning through play and creativity.

Phase 1 (Weeks 1-4) focused on developing auditory discrimination and introducing English language sounds through playful and engaging musical activities. Each session opened with The More We Get Together Song, during which children sang repetitive phrases such as "There is" accompanied by seated body waving. Orff instruments were introduced to help children produce contrasting sound patterns (e.g., high/low, loud/soft, fast/slow). The teacher embedded target English vocabulary by describing the sounds produced ("This is a loud sound! Can you make a soft one?"). Movement activities reinforced prepositions and action verbs: "Jump high", "Spin around", or "Walk slowly".

In phase 2 (Weeks 5-12) the focus shifted to thematic learning through music and storytelling. Songs with repetitive, simple lyrics introduced vocabulary related to seasons, animals, and daily routines. For example, a song about the weather integrated terms like 'sun', 'rain', and 'wind' alongside simple sentence structures ("It is raining today!"). Children participated in Musical Storytelling activities, where a story was enriched with sound effects. A narrative about a jungle adventure, for instance, allowed children to create sounds for animal calls.

Phase 3 (Weeks 13-20) encouraged improvisation and creative expression by group composition tasks. The teacher provided linguistic scaffolding by questions like "What do you see in the jungle?" prompting both a musical and verbal response. Improvisation extended to movement activities, where children used body percussion and dance to express emotions and actions described in English. All musical instruments were placed at child height, allowing for autonomous management.

In the final weeks, the focus shifts toward reinforcing language and musical skills through collaborative activities. A typical session might begin with a Musical Adventure, where children embark on an imaginary journey guided by the teacher. For example, they might 'travel' to the ocean, where they sing songs about sea animals, create wave sounds, and act out swimming movements. Vocabulary such as 'fish', 'shark', and 'jellyfish' emerges naturally as the story unfolds, reinforcing vocabulary related to animals, seasons, and actions.

3.2 Context and Participants

The research was carried out at Bambini Bicocca infant school, a private school partly managed by the University of Milano Bicocca. The school's architecture reflects the aesthetic of the Bicocca district, where it is located. The building, rectangular in shape with an inner courtyard, harmoniously blends into its surroundings, despite being the shortest structure in the vicinity. The square design and the use of red brick align with the architectural standards of the surrounding buildings. The inner courtyard serves as an enclosed extension of the viale Sarca Manueli park. To maximize the flow of natural light into the school, the inner perimeter of the building, facing the private courtyard, is entirely made of large windows. The school is divided into two mirrored sections: the north side hosts the 3-6 year old section and the Art Atelier, the south side accommodates the 2-3 year old section, and the Scientific Atelier. There is also a dedicated music atelier where many of the English language activities take place.

Bambini Bicocca Infant School's educational approach is rooted in both national guidelines set by the Italian Ministry of Education as well as the recommendations of the European Council. Central is the integration of the English language through the CLIL principle.

Only the 3-6 age group took part in the research so twenty-five children were involved. In the group only two pupils had a mother tongue different from Italian; HY, could speak only Chinese at the start of the school year, and the other, WY, spoke Chinese and some Italian and English. There was also one child with special educational needs. Lastly, one child, GO, was exposed to English both in and outside school, having not been exposed prior to school enrolment.

4 Findings and Discussion

Through the analysis of the transcribed recordings and the researcher's diary it was possible to give an answer to the following research questions: *Can music education foster and develop the auditory discrimination and the vocabulary acquisition in preschool children? Is music an effective strategy to dismantle linguistic barriers raised due to stress and negative environment in language education?*

Teaching a foreign language in preschool is a complex endeavour, posing challenges for both students and educators. Many assume that simply using the foreign language in daily social interactions will automatically foster language competence in learners. Bandura's Social Learning Theory posits that human learning, including language acquisition, results from a blend of social interactions and cognitive factors (Bandura 1977). Skinner's Verbal Behaviour Theory argues that each child acquires language through reinforcement mechanisms, forming associations between stimuli and responses (Skinner 1992). Additionally, Bruner's Input/Interaction Theory (1983) proposes that language learning is closely tied to a child's interactions with their primary caregiver.

While social interaction theories hold merit, children face many challenges in language learning. They must understand the teacher's explanations and engage in activities while striving to communicate in the foreign language. Simultaneously, teachers shoulder the responsibility of guiding students in overcoming linguistic, cognitive, and above all emotional obstacles by employing precise teaching strategies, since children rejection to participate in English language activities is one of the first steps that may hinder the language acquisition process, as it is seen in Excerpt 1.

EXCERPT 1
February 2019
T: teacher; EO: 4-year-old boy; R: Researcher; C: Children.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	T	((The teacher divides the class for the activities))	
2		Oggi (.) il gruppo uno deve andare con R in miniatelier.	Today (.) group one has to go to the miniatelier with the R.
3	R	((Researcher stands next to the door waiting for group one))	
4	C	((4 out of 5 children from group one go to the researcher))	
5	EO	>Non voglio andare in atelier con R!<	>I don't want to go to the atelier with R!<

This initial resistance observed might stem from multiple factors. The first one might be the lack of relationship between the adult and the children, since the cited excerpt was taken at the start of the activity when pupils still weren't acquainted with the researcher. Furthermore, it is worth noting that in addition to the researcher, two new adult figures have joined the school staff. As a result, the children were unfamiliar with these newly introduced practitioners who were regularly present in their classrooms, making them feel unsure to stay with these new figures. A second hypothesis that may explain the initial resistance might be that a portion of the pupils were newcomers to the school, and thus they were in the process of acclimating to the school's unfamiliar environment. However, as shown in Excerpt 2, some degree of aversion towards the language itself and not the idea to spent time with the researcher was also detected.

EXCERPT 2
February 2019
EO: 4-year-old boy; R: Researcher.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	R	Which drum would you like? The green, the blue, the red or the orange?	
2	EO	Cosa? Non ti capisco!	What? I don't understand you!
3	R	<The green, the blues, the red or the orange? Choose one.> ((researcher points to the drums while telling the colours))	
4	EO	Non ti capisco! ((turns and walks away in the corner))	I don't understand you!

EO wasn't the only one to exhibit some level of dissatisfaction towards the language, it was observed in two other cases, DA (Excerpt 3) and GA (Excerpt 4).

EXCERPT 3
March 2019
DA: 4-year-old girl; R: Researcher.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	R	Let's go and play some music.	
2	DA	Ma co::sa stai dicendo?	But wha::t are you saying?
3	R	We are going to miniatelier with your group, come on.	
4	DA	Agh, perché non parli in Italiano? ((she follows the researcher))	Agh, why don't you speak in Italian?

EXCERPT 4
March 2019
T: Teacher, GA: 4-year-old girl; R: Researcher; C: Children.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1		((T, C, and R sitting in circle waiting to be divided into groups))	
2	T	Il gruppo tre va a fare musica con R.	Group three goes to play music with R.
3	R	((calls children of the group by name, while still sitting))	
4	GA	Non ti capisco, non so cosa stai dicendo. ((GA jumps on R's back))	I don't understand you, I don't know what you're saying.
5	R	And I don't care, you have to come with me. ((Stands up and carries her on his shoulders))	
6	GA	Non ti capisco quando parli in inglese ((laughs))	I don't understand you, while you're talking in English.

On the opposite side, children with lower relational, emotional and psychological barriers not only were eager to take part at the music activities, as shown in Excerpt 5, but had a greater active participation, resulting in a larger amount of verbal contamination and creation (Excerpt 6).

EXCERPT 5
February 2019
T: Teacher, MA: 4-year-old boy; R: Researcher; C: Children.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1		((T, C, and R sitting in circle waiting to be divided into groups))	
2	MA	Oggi posso andare io con R?	May I go with R today?
3	T	Mi dispiace, oggi tocca al gruppo tre.	I'm sorry, it is group three's turn today.
4	MA	°E quando tocca a me?°	°And when is my turn?°
5	T	Domani.	Tomorrow.
6	MA	SI:::	YES:::

EXCERPT 6
March 2019
T: Teacher, MA: 4-year-old boy; R: Researcher; C: Children.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1		((C and R are playing with the drums))	
2	R	WHAT ANIMAL SOUND SHOULD WE PLAY ((while playing the drum))	
3	MA	MUCC	
4	R	What?	
5	MA	Mucc, mucca. ((makes cow noises))	Mucc, cow.
6	R	A::h ((laughs)) cow!	

In the latter example one can see how MA demonstrated metalinguistic reasoning through listening and singing by recognizing patterns between animal names in Italian and English, such as "tigre-tiger" and "leone-lion". He noticed that these words share a similar sound to Italian but end with a consonant instead of a vowel, so when asked, "What animal sound should we play?" he answered with "mucc", referring to a cow, since "mucca" is the Italian for cow.

Whereas in the first two examples with EO the non-understanding of the message in English was also accompanied by a refusal to participate at the activity, in the third and fourth examples there is an awareness of the difficulty in communication between the two parties, but also a decision to willingly take part activity. To overcome the initial barrier to participation, positive behavioural strategies were employed, including warm proximity, a respectful tone of

voice, a welcoming posture, and playful attitudes. The incorporation of music proved particularly effective in creating a positive, friendly, and cooperative classroom environment, aligning with existing literature that highlights music's transformative power in educational settings (Davies, Spencer 2000). Both music and lyrics serve as a means of expressing emotions, ideas, and thoughts, with their impact on language learners ranging from excitement to relaxation (Abbott 2002). Indeed, in the current study, as time progressed, a noticeable increase in interest and eagerness to participate was observed from both DA and EO (Excerpt 7).

EXCERPT 7
May 2019
EO: 4-year-old boy; R: Researcher; WY: 4-year-old girl; C: Children.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	C, R	((sitting in circle playing with the drums))	
2	R	HANDS UP! Shall we play like #tigers# or like °jellyfish° ?	
3	WY	JELLYFISH!	
4	R	°Ok, now everybody quiet, play quietly.°	
5	EO	TIGRE!	TIGER!
6	C	((C laugh and start playing loudly))	

In the reported excerpt, it can be observed a well-established participation in the activities by EO, who plays, laughs and is in the group with the researcher. A certain understanding of the delivery given in English can also be observed, as EO has understood that according to the given voice command the intensity with which the drums are played changes. However, no communicative competence in English was observed as the child gave the commands in Italian.

The impact of music to language acquisition process goes beyond the creation of a positive environment, it could help also within the process of new vocabulary acquisition (McCormack, Klopper 2015). The redundance of text and melodies, accompanied by descriptive dance moves could help children learn basic words in a specific language. During the research children worked on a project concerning marine life, in the music education laboratories this theme was transposed in the teaching songs regarding the sea life, such as *Baby Shark*. It appears that vocabulary acquired from the textual repetitiveness of the chants has been acquired and transposed outside the song (Extract 8).

EXCERPT 8
May 2019
WY: 4-year-old girl; R: Researcher.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	R	What are you reading?	
2	WY	((closes her book in order to show the cover))	
3	R	O::h, a picture book about fish. What is this? ((points to the picture of a shark))	
4	WY	Shark.	
5	R	Yes, and this?	
6	WY	JELLYFISH!	
7	R	Yes. And what about this?	
8	WY	Non lo so.	I don't know.
9	R	It is a whale.	

Lastly, music education has been shown to enhance language acquisition by fostering phonological awareness. The rhythmic and melodic components of music naturally train the ear to differentiate between a wide array of sounds and tonal subtleties, which are essential for mastering the intricacies of spoken language. This kind of auditory training not only tunes the ear to a broader spectrum of sound but also supports more refined phonetic skills. For instance, through activities like listening to various musical patterns or mimicking melodies, learners become better equipped to discern subtle variations in pronunciation and stress, key aspects of phonemic awareness (Posedel et al. 2011) allowing for an overall linguistic proficiency. As it might be inferred by the last two excerpts, in which NA, who doesn't speak French, retreats a sentence heard for the first time with ease, and DA who recognises a similarity at the phoneme level between two words.

EXCERPT 9
April 2019
NA: 3-year-old girl; R: Researcher.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	NA	((NA is playing with puppets))	
2	R	((Takes on puppet)) Hello. My name is P.	
3	NA	((Takes another puppet)) Hello. My name is P.	
4	R	No, your name is NA.	
5	NA	No, your name is NA.	
6	R	No, ton prénom est NA.	No, your name is NA.
7	NA	No, ton prénom est NA.	No, your name is NA.
8	R	((laughs)) Since when do you speak French?	

EXCERPT 10
June 2019
DA: 4-year-old girl; R: Researcher.

No.	Speaker	Vocal/Non vocal action	Translation
1	R	((Playing in the kitchen))	
2	R	Would you like some ice? ((takes a spoon and brings it to DA's cup))	
3	DA	AIS!! Ma che dice? Vuole darmi del mais nel bicchiere?	AIS!! What is he saying? Does he want to put corn in my cup?
4	R	Oh no! Not corn, ice! Cold water.	
5	DA	Ais mais a me sembrano uguali	Ais corn to me it sounds the same.

5 Conclusion

The study explored the multifaceted relationship between music education and language acquisition in kindergarten setting. Drawing from the theoretical foundation that recognizes music as a fundamental aspect of human nature (Rice 2014), the research investigated the potential of music in fostering auditory discrimination (Posedel et al. 2011), nurturing vocabulary acquisition (McCormack, Klopper 2015) and reducing the emotional barriers that might be encountered while learning a new language (Abbott 2002).

Despite the insights gained from the study, it exists a compelling need for further research, which deepen the comprehension of the cognitive impact of music education on language acquisition in early childhood. While qualitative methodologies provide a nuanced understanding of the intricate dynamics at play, supplementing these findings with quantitative and experimental studies would offer a more comprehensive assessment. Controlled experiments and quantitative measurements could elucidate the specific cognitive mechanisms influenced by music, providing a clearer picture of the extent and nature of its impact. Moreover, a longitudinal study might be appropriate, since it would afford researchers the opportunity to track the progress of language development over an extended period, offering insights into the sustained benefits or potential diminishing effects of music education on language proficiency. Hence, the combination of qualitative depth and quantitative rigor, coupled with a longitudinal perspective, would significantly contribute to the understanding of the enduring cognitive implications of incorporating music into language education for young learners.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the broader discourse surrounding the role of music in language acquisition, providing valuable insights that can shape and inform pedagogical practices in early childhood education. The research wants to highlight the powerful connection between music and language development, asserting that teaching with songs does much more than simply entertaining children. When thoughtfully and purposefully integrated into the curriculum, songs are not only engaging but also play a pivotal role in strengthening various aspects of language development, including vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and phonological awareness. In this context, music functions as an auditory scaffold, supporting the process of language learning in ways that are both natural and enjoyable; not purely a supplement to language instruction but rather an indispensable element of a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to learning.

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