Teacher experiences in inclusive classrooms

Using music as a learning activity to teach English as a foreign language

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Abstract

Knowing English in countries with a different majority language becomes more and more important due to the increasing presence of English in every day life. It is, therefore, also very important to have basic English skills for societal inclusion.
This study gives an insight into teachers' experiences in inclusive classrooms and their teaching of English as a foreign language through the use of musical learning activities.

The results of this research project are based on semi-structured interviewes conducted in rural parts of Germany.
The purpose of this study was to find out how teachers used music as learning activities in order to support the foreign language acquisition of students and to promote inclusion within their classrooms.

The main results which emerged from the study are that teachers do not only perceive music to be very helpful for their students foreign language acquisition but also perceive it as supporting inclusive factors and creating a feeling of belonging and affiliation among their students. It was found that students are perceived to learn more and actively use the language as music is an activity they enjoy.

Key words: inclusion, English as a foreign language, education, music, learning activities

Preface

Dedication

I dedicate this paper to all the teachers trying their best every single day to meet every student's needs and to find every student's resources to work with. This is for those people who use their hearts and passion to spread joy in foreign languages among their students, trying to include every single student in their classrooms, even if their schools lack resources or they do not feel equipped enough to do so.

I thank them for giving me insights into their work, their passion, and their experiences.

Acknowledgments

With this paper, I got to combine my love for the topic of learning new languages, my personal experiences and knowledge about it. I had the chance to study in a foreign country, to be inspired by the students and professors around me and by those I met when travelling. I am very grateful for these opportunities.

My friends in the SNE programme, thank you for all the coffee breaks, for sharing my frustration, for your love, and for being on this journey with me.

For her guidance in the process of this project I particularly want to thank my supervisor Jorun Buli-Holmberg from the University of Oslo.

I want to thank all the people who assisted me in getting in contact with the participants of this study.

I also want to thank the very enthusiastic teachers who participated in my study and who (some very spontaneously) welcomed me in their schools and offices.

My family and friends at home, thank you for supporting me through cold and dark winters when being away from home. Thank you for your emotional support and your love for me wherever I go.

I also want to thank my partner who supported me from far away throughout the time abroad for his understanding and his trust in me during the course of this master's programme.

Elisa Unzicker

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List of Abbreviations

ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
SLI	Specific Language Impairments
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
FL	Foreign Language

1　Introduction

Teaching a foreign language and motivating students to learn it is a huge task which gets even more challenging when considering a very heterogenous class that is to be taught. Foreign language didactics have not been confronted with inclusive teaching until recently as educational policies now aim at teaching students in their local schools regardless of their abilities or disabilities, which also leads to English classes being very diverse and English as a foreign language teachers having to consider a wide spectrum of abilities in all regards when teaching.

Knowing English plays an important role in many aspects of life, from more work-related parts where English skills are required for many professions, to aspects of private life where the English language is increasingly more present - for instance in advertisements and music, but also in the linguistic behaviour of people around oneself. High quality English as a foreign language (EFL) education and teaching are therefore fundamental to the active participation of people in society at large.

How to teach foreign languages in inclusive classrooms so everyone cannot only take part in it but actually acquire the language is an important new aspect that needs to be addressed in the study of foreign language didactics. Regardless of this, teachers are already confronted with inclusive classrooms and have to find strategies for participation and teaching without empirically proven methods at hand.

During several work placements the author oftentimes experienced English lessons to be used for many purposes other than teaching English. Especially children with special educational needs were regularly separated from the rest of the class for individual lessons and support which led to them lacking very important language skills. Be that as it may, during another work placement in a Waldorf or Steiner school the extensive use of music activities and rhymes was observed by the author in all subjects, but particularly in foreign language classes. This included songs and rhymes to begin a lesson, as well as poems that were recited at the end. Such kind of activities were ingrained in the lesson structure and those rituals were repeated in a similar manner in every single lesson. The author, whose main task was to observe the teaching, perceived the students as very eager to be active in the classroom activities and to learn the foreign languages of which there were two to three from the very beginning of the students' school careers.

From this personal experience, the author wondered whether the use of music and rhymes may also be useful in inclusive classrooms and whether it possibly has an effect on the language acquisition of students as well as inclusive factors within the classroom. The everyday challenges of inclusive teaching and the importance of knowing English were the leading motivation to investigate further into this topic and to comprehend more thoroughly which effects music may have on learning, teaching, and inclusion.

1.1 Research Goal

The objective of this research project is to understand how music activities are used by teachers in foreign language teaching and to discover the effects music as on the students' language acquisition as well as inclusive factors within the classroom as perceived by the teachers.

Research Problem

To clarify the research objective the following main research question can be formulated:

How are music activities used by EFL teachers to support the acquisition of foreign language skills in inclusive classrooms?

> **Sub-questions**
>
> 1. How do teachers use music in the EFL classroom?
>
> 2. How do EFL teachers perceive the influence of music on different aspects of learning?
>
> 3. How does the use of music encourage the productive language use of students?
>
> 4. How do teachers perceive the influence of music on learning and language use for students with expressive language difficulties?
>
> 5. How does music in language education promote social and academic inclusion, both with regards to students with disabilities and to refugee children?

1.2 Outline of the Study

The theoretical framework for this study is presented in chapter two. While there are numerous studies on music in teaching, as well as on inclusion, and English as a foreign language didactics, there is only little research on the combination of these features. For this reason, the literature for these three main topics is presented – inclusion and learning, music and learning, and foreign language acquisition in general.

Chapter three illustrates the methodology used for the study regarding the choice of research design, the sample, the data collection and analysis. In chapter four the results are outlined within three main sections – the use of music by teachers, the perceived effects it has on learning and language acquisition, and the perceived effects on inclusion.

Chapter five discusses the findings, including limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

2   Literature Review

Issues related to music in foreign language teaching, as well as those related to using music to enhance the first language acquisition of children with language impairments have been addressed in research, most studies either entirely focus on children with language impairments or classrooms of mostly typically developing children, which leads to the perceived effects of music on social inclusion and the effect of music on the foreign language acquisition within inclusive classrooms not being considered a lot.

This study will include research into the motivations for teachers using music in inclusive foreign language classrooms, their personal experiences when using it as a learning activity and the perceived effects it may or may not have on students.

2.1 Cognitive Development

There is a considerable amount of literature describing the role of cognitive development with regard to schools and education. Numerous studies have attempted to explain how children learn and develop to optimise teaching and learning and to increase the learning outcomes for students, some of these will be presented below.

Human development, if trying to define it, are changes that take place between the events of conception and death that occur in a certain order and are adaptive.
Humans, over the course of their lives, change and develop on various levels which can be categorised as physical, personal, social, and cognitive development. Growing older and getting more mature are changes that are naturally occurring.
However, humans do not all develop in the same way, certain steps if taken, are taken at different rates. The development of abilities is nevertheless in a logical order (Woolfolk, Hughes & Walkup, 2013).

While humans are young the brain develops in a rapid way, which slows down over time, but the process of change is a life-long one as the brain in itself is partially flexible. Not every change that takes place in the brain is genetically programmed, some are dependent on the experiences of the individual, which means that the way the brain is structured and organised can be influenced by experience as well as direct teaching. There are certain factors that can

interfere with learning, such as anxiety, while others, such as curiosity, may support the process of change within the brain (Woolfolk et al., 2013).

Different brain areas carry different functions, so in order to use more complex functions, such as speaking in the case of this study, various brain parts have to fulfil tasks together. The largest part of the human brain, the cerebral cortex, is the part responsible for problem solving and language, as well as controlling vision and hearing, and for this reason it is important for the subject matter of this study (Woolfolk et al., 2013).

Considering cognitive development is extremely important when teaching in an inclusive classroom, not only do students not develop cognitively at the same rate, but they may have preferred modes of processing what they are being taught. This implies using various modes of instruction and activating the different senses when teaching.
Woolfolk et al. (2013) suggest that because the brain is quite adaptable, a rich learning environment and different, flexible teaching strategies are likely to support the cognitive development of students.

In order to get a better understanding of the human development two theories of cognitive development will be presented.

Jean Piaget who substantially shaped the field of cognitive developmental science believes humans to have two main tendencies in thinking: organising and adapting.
Organisation in this context refers to the integration of thinking processes, actual experiences, and information into coherent categories or systems, while adaption refers to both assimilation and accommodation, meaning the person fits new information into categories or systems which already exist or the person alters these categories as a response to new information (Piaget, 1964; Rogoff, 2003).

Piaget (1964), besides focusing on these two procedures, found cognitive development to go through four separate stages building up on each other. The single stages will not be introduced any further, but it is to be said that this model of development cannot explain why the way children think is often inconsistent (Rogoff, 2003). According to Rogoff (2003) Piaget's theory also misses the importance of cultural and social settings the child is in, which she highlights as being critical for a child's development.

Vygotsky (1980), however, has a sociocultural perspective on human development and emphasises the fact that culture shapes one's cognitive development, as all activities can be seen as taking place in cultural contexts and there is no way to interpret them outside of these settings. Even thinking processes are, following this approach, developed through social interaction. A child's cognitive development is therefore seen as being nourished by interaction with a "more knowledgeable other", this may be an adult or a peer, someone with a higher ability than the learner themselves regarding a specific task or the like.

Coming from this point of departure, it is necessary to discuss learning and what it means, while also defining the terms of learning and acquisition as used in this study.

2.2 Learning

Before introducing learning theories, it is important to mention that learning and development are closely intertwined, having a complex and very dynamic relationship. While there are various theories about learning, most of them focus on a European American view on academic teaching and learning in schools, being mostly descriptive in nature, but nevertheless providing frameworks for the processes of absorbing, processing, and retaining knowledge.

Given the restricted frame of this paper, only one main view on learning will be presented, which continues to look at the work of the Russian psychologist L. S. Vygotsky whose theory has been briefly introduced in the section above. Due to the subject matter of the study, learning in this regard focuses on formal learning, taking place in educational institutions, whereas Vygotsky and Post-Vygotskian scholars also took informal learning into account.

From the socio-cultural perspective on learning, social interaction within the socio-historical context is the main source of learning and acquiring new knowledge or skills. An individual develops and learns within a community and through meaningful interaction with their social partners, which has been classified as "ontogenetic development" (Johnsen, 2014, p.94).

Learning in social interaction with a more knowledgeable other as introduced above takes place in what Vygotsky calls the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1980). Vygotsky (1980) describes the ZPD as the difference between what a learner can acquire or achieve independently and what they can achieve in cooperation with the more knowledgeable other.

Following Vygotsky's approach, actual learning and development are identified to take place in this zone and can emerge through guidance and support. It is, however, also important to keep the affective processes in mind, the emotional aspects of interaction, and the way this interaction is being experienced by the interaction partners, as it may have a huge impact on learning (Vygotsky, 1980; Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002).

Additionally, Vygotsky (1980) draws our attention to mediation practices within the ZPD, which he assumes to be particularly important for learning which takes place in school settings. He points to mediation searching to include children in a meaningful social activity which supports them in the process of mastering cultural or mental tools in order to gain problem-solving abilities (Vygotsky, 1980).

This view is supported by Rogoff (2008) who describes the concepts of 'guided participation' and cognitive apprenticeships, which refer to a novice learning from a master through partaking in culturally relevant activities.

Collectively, these studies provide important insight into learning and development being closely connected. They highlight how institutionalised learning and teaching should acknowledge the active participation of the learner in their development, considering a wider context beyond the classroom, being responsive to the students' ZPD and educational needs (Daniel, 2014), which should consequently allow inclusive teaching and learning.

2.3 Inclusion

The concept of inclusion used in this study has its point of departure in the assumption that every single human being is complete and valuable the way they are, a full-fledged human being and a competent and valuable member of society. Coming from this conception of human beings, it seems natural to view others as equal to oneself (Schmies, Leidig; 2012). If human dignity is unimpeachable as the German constitution states in article three (Dreier, Wittreck; 2015) this also implies equality and equal chances on an educational level. Inclusion as the general pedagogical and societal approach against any kind of marginalisation, ensuring the right of all people to individual development and societal participation regardless of the personal needs for support in these processes, implies unrestricted access to and affiliation in mainstream kindergartens and schools within the social environment of the individual. These institutions, therefore, have the task to correspond

to the needs of all their members, acknowledging and appreciating each person as a member of the community, both within the framework of school and society (Hinz, 2006).

By drawing on this definition, inclusion as a concept is a counter concept to the three-tier school system one finds in Germany, which separates students as early as the age of ten years into groups sorted by ability (Hessisches Kultusministerium (VOBGM), 2005; Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur (ThürSchulG), 1993).

A large and growing body of literature has been trying to differentiate between integration and inclusion. The aforementioned concept and definition of inclusion implies a macrosocial transition from integration to inclusion, with integration suggesting the "other" to be taken *into* something under the precondition of the other fulfilling certain criteria in order to be considered able for integration (Schmies, Leidig; 2012), whereas inclusion considers the diversity of human kind *normal* and does not expect the individual to adapt to the system, but the system to adapt to people (Höft, 2017).

This view of inclusion is being supported by several international and national legislations, theoretically ensuring not only an inclusive school system with equal chances, but also societal participation (UNESCO, 1994; Bundestag, 2008).

While there nevertheless are various problem fields regarding the realisation of full societal inclusion (Höft, 2017), these will not be made the major subject of discussion as part of this thesis.

2.4 Significant National Framework and Conditions

Germany is a federal state, consisting of 16 states, and even though the German constitution ensures the state's supervision of the entire school system (Dreier & Wittreck, 2015), the individual states have the primary responsibility to form legislations and to administrate the areas of education, culture, and science. Due to my personal experience and knowledge I will focus on the educational systems in Thuringia and Hesse.

These states, like all others, give priority to joint and inclusive education for children and adolescents with disabilities in mainstream classrooms over separation in terms of education (Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur, 06.08.1993; Hessisches Kultusministerium, 01.04.2012).

Besides many national and regional acts on special education favouring inclusion, Germany as a whole has adopted both the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD; Bundestag, 2008) and the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), which form a legal basis for inclusive education and are meant to ensure the accessibility to mainstream education for all children.

While the individual states define the content and goals of foreign language education and have different curricula for the subjects, the "Hamburger Abkommen" (Hamburg agreement; Kultusministerkonferenz, 1964) regulates foreign language learning and its order in school in general.

Considering the use of music in foreign language teaching, the primary school curricula for EFL in Thuringia and Hesse state various competences that can either be connected to using music, such as the competence to use visual and acoustic signals (i.e. pitch), or actively mention songs and rhymes, such as the competence to recite these expressively. The curriculum in Hesse even mentions the principle of orality and the emphasis on play for learning, which one can easily connect to song and music (Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur, 2010, Hessisches Kultusministerium, 1995, 2011). In a similar manner the middle school curriculum states competences that may be acquired through the use of music. Especially with regards to intonation, both curricula have the objective for students to be able to imitate the language's intonation and use it to enhance one's own understanding (Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur, 2011; Hessisches Kultusministerium, 2010).

2.5 Music

While this study is not doing in-depth research in musicology, it is of great importance to define the term itself in order to study its use as a learning activity. Albeit the lack of a general definition of music, for valuable research results one needs to characterise music and give description of what is meant when referring to music throughout this thesis (Khaghaninejad, Fahandejsaadi, 2016).

Even though music seems to be important in many people's lives (Boer, 2009), it also varies across time and culture in the ways it is being used, it is classified in, or the use of consonance and dissonance (Khaghaninejad, Fahandejsaadi, 2016). A number of studies identify the

different functions of music in different cultures, which may or may not coincide, however, Cross (2001) draws our attention to the fact that music occurs to be universally human.

In broad terms, music can be defined as "the creative play with sound" (Khaghaninejad, Fahandejsaadi, 2016, p.64). One can treat any sound as music, as the process of listening to it is highly subjective as are the acknowledgment and reaction to it shown by the individual listening to it. A sound may be considered music whenever imagination and human perception makes or considers it to be musical.

Besides human perception, the term music also refers to certain acoustic criteria, such as frequency, pitch, spectrum, loudness and timbre among others (Burton, 2015). These basic attributes may construct musical sound, but there are other less technical approaches to the definition of music which focus on the listener's experience rather than the features of the sound as defined by acoustic criteria. According to Berio et al. (1985), what is interpreted as music in the present moment may well change over the course of time and be considered noise or vice versa.

The concept of music used for this study is therefore not only focussing on acoustic attributes, but also includes human perception, experience, and behaviour. Anything that is experienced or considered music by the teachers interviewed may accordingly be defined as music, including things like rhyme and rhythmic speech, as well as poetry lying within a grey area between speech and music (Khaghaninejad, Fahandejsaadi, 2016), that is neither entirely speech, nor entirely music.

2.6 Music and Learning

Music as defined above can be integrated into learning and teaching processes which may be beneficial to these processes in various ways as it responds to the means of communication preferably used by students as well as one of their forms of entertainment (Debrecency, 2015). Presenting material and content in a way that takes the students' everyday life up, with music and song being part of many young persons' daily life, may enhance learning processes, but can also be seen as an important way to gain students' attention.

Preliminary work has for instance been undertaken by Iwasaki et al. in 2013 who investigated the effects of music on learning how to read for young students. They suggest that singing, as well as rhyme, rhythm, and melody, benefit early readers' learning processes and support the

retention of curriculum material and content. While the positive effects of singing were emphasised for early reading acquisition, struggling readers were particularly found to improve their reading abilities when given a new song a week combined with the written words.

In the same vein, a number of other studies propose the enhanced retention of content and material through the use of song and arts in teaching and learning (i.e. Anderson et al., 2000; Rinne et al., 2011).

Some scholars even go as far as defining music *as* learning or education, which is not to be confused with the formal learning *of* music. Mithen (2005) explains his approach by suggesting that when using infant-directed speech adults speak in a very melodic way, exaggerating both the rhythm of language and its pitch. He argues that the exaggerated speech, which may be called music due to the aforementioned musical features it shows, supports infants' first language acquisition and therefore music may be called education in this manner.

With the beneficial aspects of music for learning processes in mind, it seems self-evident that various educational methods are based on music and are recognised as teaching methods. Not all of these methods use music in an active way, where a learner actively produces music. An example for this is the approach of suggestopedia (Lozanov, 1978). Lozanov offers a method in which music does not focus on the actual content which is to be learnt and acquired by the student, but on the relaxation of the student to make them more receptive for the study matter. He suggests a use of the subconscious and affective resources through music to improve learning processes.

This approach is rooted in psychology and has been mostly used for language learning. However, it has not been actively used as a conceptual approach for foreign language teaching in public schools in Germany (Geisler, 2008).

There is a large volume of educational concepts which integrate music into language teaching and learning, these are among others the 'Singing grammar' approach by Hancock (1998, 2013) and the 'SingLing' approach by Kind (2003).

Hancock (1998, 2013) presents teacher material for the use of songs to teach grammar, as he suggests that using song in the classroom ensures variety which he argues is important for younger students due to a lack of internal motivation. However, the material he offers also

recognises the other possibilities and options of using music in the language classroom. Besides teaching grammar, he mentions three other main opportunities on how to use music: To enhance listening comprehension through simply listening to songs, to analyse songs and the language of music, and to investigate further into the topic of a song for classroom discussions and similar activities.

Another educational concept that highly integrates art into teaching is that of Waldorf or Steiner schools. Teaching and learning are characterised by their strong aesthetic design, including musical besides other artistic components. However, there has been little quantitative analysis on the effects of methods in Waldorf teaching that are based on arts and especially music (Geisler, 2008).

While it is unattainable to present the Waldorf curriculum and teaching methods used in their entity, one of their basic principles is that arts and handicrafts are no less important than the acquisition of factual knowledge (Dahlin, 2017). This being said, musicality and rhythm are crucial features of teaching, especially for foreign language teaching, which is why when undertaking teacher training at a Waldorf college, one goes through arts training, as the process and product of making art is seen as a way of knowing (Nordlund, 2013).

Although there are various educational approaches to teach with music and the use of music is being supported by a growing body of literature, there are multiple reasons why teachers do not actively incorporate music into their everyday teaching. Komur et al. (2005) and Debreceny (2015) draw our attention to many teachers not feeling comfortable about their own music skills. They list two possible reasons for the discomfort: a lack of training for music integration in teaching and a lack of resources.

2.7 Music and Language

Music and language are found to be closely related, for both forms of expression the perception relies on the acoustic information, at least when considering spoken language. However, the relationship goes even further, besides being perceived in a similar way, they were found to be processed similarly as well. François et al. (2012) investigated the processing of music and speech sounds within the auditory system and showed that music and speech sounds are segmented and processed in similar using the same neural network to

structure the sounds and interpret them (Schön et al., 2010). Coming from this neurolinguistic perspective, processing these stimuli is very similar on a cortical level (Geisler, 2008).

This close connection is supported by a study by Sallat (2011), who demonstrates that children with specific language impairments (SLI) also show impairments in music processing. He, however, also presented the effects that music therapy may have on children with SLI, showing that when used in certain ways, it can have strong positive impacts on the speech processing of these children (Sallat, 2012), even though they do not seem to benefit as intensively as their typically developing peers as transfer effects from music to speech processing are not necessarily present in children with SLI (Sallat, 2011).

Additionally, a considerable amount of literature has been published on the similarities music and spoken language have when considering structural aspects.

Considering the most basic components, those of language are phonemes and those of music are notes. Both systems are rule-based and use their most basic elements to form structures of a higher order (Besson, Schön, 2001). The rule systems to develop higher order structures are different, language follows the rules of syntax and music those of harmony, which one may refer to as the 'grammar of music'.

While there are many similarities on different levels, Jackendoff (2009) showed that from a functional perspective music and language differ fundamentally. Language is mostly used to express propositional meaning, while music expresses subtle meanings through emotion or affection.

Despite the fact, that there seems to be a close connection between processing music and language correctly, several studies also showed the fluency enhancing effect of music and especially singing on people with expressive language difficulties such as stuttering (Glover et al., 1996). This study therefore aims to also include a focus during the research process on all kinds of expressive language disorders as defined by ICD-10 (WHO, 1992) and therefore at communication disorders in which verbal and written expression difficulties are present, while the comprehension of language is within the typical range. Difficulties might concern vocabulary, articulation, memorising words or the production of complex sentence structures.

Furthermore, when it comes to music and language within the classroom, Bossen (2017) suggests that listening comprehension is the basis for the acquisition of spoken and written

language, and that for this reason listening to music in class may get students access to spoken language, using the transfer from listening to music to actual linguistic listening comprehension. She supports the use of songs for supporting all kind of basic language aspects, using rhythmic language games to for instance develop metalinguistic awareness, and sound histories for auditory differentiation.

2.8 Second and Foreign Language Acquisition

With the general similarities and differences between music and language in mind, it is of great importance to understand the processes of first, second, and foreign language acquisition before combining both. There is a large and growing body on the topics of language acquisition with much of the current literature focusing on bilingualism.

The term first language (L1) refers to the child's mother tongue, the language they learn first, before knowing any other. This usually is the language the child uses with their parents or guardians (Hancock, 2006). According to whether the child learns one or two languages as a first language, one can differentiate between a mono- and a bilingual first language acquisition (Klein, 1992).

Due to the additional languages a person can acquire throughout their lifetime, it can be argued that there are definite distinctions that can be made between second and foreign languages. For a person who learns a first language that is not the majority language of their usual place of residence, the second language (L2) will usually become the main means of communication chosen by the people living in a certain community. The majority language of an area is used in the public spaces and "is usually the officially recognized national language of the country" (Hancock, 2006, p. 20).

Second language acquisition from that perspective takes place through natural, everyday communication and does not attempt to conduct the language learning process in a systematic manner (Klein, 1992).

In distinction to that, a foreign language (FL) is a language being taught in a systematic and direct way, mostly taking place in educational establishments. It is usually neither the language of instruction in all classes, nor is it the majority language of the country or area it is being taught in— which often leads to no immediate need to use the language concerned (Hancock, 2006).

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While it is indispensable for the learner to know the second language in their social environment, the foreign language is being learnt outside its natural field of application (Günther; Jung, 2016).

Various schools of thought give different ideas about how a second or foreign language is being learnt that can all be helpful to practicing educators and lead to different teaching implications (Brown, 2000). Research in this field is closely linked to various fields of study such as Linguistics, Psychology, Sociolinguistics, and Education (Brown, 2000).
For this thesis, however, Krashen's (1987, 1988) theory of second language acquisition will be used and elaborated in the following paragraphs.
Krashen formulated five main hypotheses for language acquisition:

The *acquisition–learning hypothesis* differentiates between two independent systems of second language performance, the acquired and the learnt system. The first refers to the results of a subconscious second language learning process comparable to the language learning process a child goes through when acquiring their first language. It therefore requires meaningful interaction in the target language, focussing on the act of communication, rather than the correctness of utterances. The learnt system in contrast to this refers to a conscious process of learning about a language through formal instruction.

The *monitor hypothesis* and the *natural order hypothesis* describe the influence the learning process has on the one of acquisition, giving more importance to the acquired system than to conscious learning, while grammatical understanding is assumed to follow a predictable order in the processes.

While Krashen does not only focus on the former three hypotheses, he also suggests second and foreign language acquisition to take place when learners are being offered input beyond their actual linguistic competence at that specific point in time (*input hypothesis*). This hypothesis is supported by Vygotsky's theory of learning, which assumes learning to take place in the learner's so-called "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1980, p.86) when the learner is guided by someone with more knowledge, a better understanding, or higher ability. The zone of proximal development refers to the difference between what the learner can achieve independently and what he or she can achieve with support from a more knowledgeable partner in interaction, which shows similar underlying ideas to what Krashen

suggests by offering students input beyond their actual competence, their zone of actual development.

Moreover, the *affective filter hypothesis* illustrates the fact that besides input, positive affect is also needed for the acquisition of language, with the variables: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety playing important roles in it.

2.9 Music in the foreign language classroom

Research has shown that especially in early English as a foreign language classrooms music is used frequently and has proven to enhance the overall foreign language acquisition of typically developing students and has been found to have a particularly strong effect on their pronunciation skills (Mora, 2000). Music activities being implemented as part of the classroom routine, alongside scaffolding, is seen as an important strategy and helpful aspect to enhance children's foreign language learning (Cameron, 2002).

Many publications in foreign language didactics consider the use of music in teaching, often with a focus on the motivational and affective aspects of using music as well as on getting familiar with the foreign intonation and rhythm of the language (Klippel, 2000; Geiger-Jaillet, 2003). In order to be especially appealing for children and teenagers and to have an effect on the motivation of students to enhance the learning processes, Timm (1998) put a focus on the classroom use of pop and rock music as a part of youth culture and the learners' everyday reality.

Besides enhancing the learning processes, music and specifically singing is seen to have an element of creating community (Freund-Heitmüller, 1971) and may therefore play a role in promoting social inclusion in the EFL classroom.

Geisler (2008) shows various other reasons why music can offer an educational approach to acquire a foreign language, as it does not only slow down language in many ways, but also structures the language to develop a sense for syntax. When music is being used in the foreign language classroom, it requires repetition, which can help students to memorise what they learnt. However, most importantly, the use of music supports a comfortable and fun learning environment.

3 Methodology

The following chapter describes the research approach and methodology used for the study and discusses it suitability. There will be explanations of how data was collected, analyzed, and findings were interpreted. Furthermore, the reasons for choosing a qualitative approach will be given as well as the reasons for using interviews as a method for data collection. Additionally, the researcher's role, validity, and other ethical considerations will be reviewed.

3.1 Research Design

Following a decision for a research topic and the setting, the appropriateness of a qualitative research design become obvious.

Investigating how individual teachers use music in their foreign language classrooms, a qualitative approach, more specifically a phenomenological design, is used for this study to support the researcher in understanding the nature of the phenomenon within a specific context (Creswell, 2014). As the research questions seek to understand the effects teachers perceive on their students, in contrast to gaining universal understanding of the topic, a qualitative approach was chosen. This describes

> *"[…] an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation."* (Creswell, 2014, p.4)

The phenomenological design as one way of realising qualitative research includes, in addition to the aforementioned characteristics, the researcher to seek to understand meaning both in interactions and events. While analysing the data, the context is of great importance and contextual conditions are meant to be taken into consideration throughout the in-depth

study of the subject. One therefore tries to understand the meaning research participants give to their situations and the phenomenon at study (Gall et al., 2007).

It was decided that the best method for this investigation was to do a phenomenological study due to various reasons. First of all, the research questions result in a qualitative approach if one is trying to answer them in an in-depth way through posing and answering open-ended questions rather than trying to find causal correlations. The questions about how EFL teachers use music as a learning activity and about their perceived effects of it were meant to be answered and described by teachers from different Thuringian and Hessian schools, including various school forms from primary school and middle school to secondary school which leads to the highest school-leaving qualification in Germany. Nevertheless, the geographic position and resources for schools, teachers, and students are fairly similar. The approach allows the researcher to describe the teaching methods used and the individual reasons for it in detail, while not focusing on similarities and differences between schools, but the very individual experiences of teachers.

3.2 Target population

This study is limited to three different schools in a rural area of Thuringia and Hesse, where the researcher was based at the time of the study. However, it will include teachers from different school forms in order to not only get a primary school perspective, in which music is more frequently used as a method of teaching, but to gain an understanding of how music may be used to support learners both with and without special educational needs in diverse classrooms of different ages while trying to overcome the gap between learning and acquiring a language. As the objective for this research is not to achieve universal understanding of the use of music as a learning activity for EFL teaching, a convenience sample of no more than three teachers was obtained. Albeit convenience sampling maybe limiting the trustworthiness of the study as well as possibly producing bias (Creswell, 2014), the method was chosen because of the specific characteristics of the area and in order to find participants from similar schools regarding the student population as well as the resources of schools.

Participants were found through friends and acquaintances of the researcher, while none of the actual participants was known to the researcher beforehand. E-mails and phone calls have

been sent out to teachers and head teachers at the schools concerned to ask for volunteers to participate as well as for permission to conduct the interviews there.

The participants had very different work experience, from 1 to 20 years. This led to the interview situation also being slightly different for the participants. The teachers with more work experience were more confident about their perceptions and their teaching, while for the teacher with the least work experience the interview gave a lot of thought-provoking impulses which they communicated to the researcher after the interview.

The small sample allows a very thorough and in-depth examination of its context and ensures the data collection to occur in the schools' and participants' natural setting in which the phenomenon usually occurs.

Even though I could have chosen schools with a specific pedagogic approach such as Fröbel or Waldorf in which music and art in general play a large role, I decided to choose inclusive state run schools for it to be more representative of the majority of schools in the area.

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher gathered one type of data through interviews to gain an understanding of the participants' perceptions of their use of music as a learning activity.

3.3.1   Interviews

Interviews were the main and fundamental data source for the study and were conducted as semi-structured interviews to gather more in-depth data about the participants' perceptions of their own use of music as well as the perceived effects of it on their students.

There are several interview styles which one can divide into three major categories: unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews.
An **unstructured interview** is led by the interviewer without them having a collection of questions to be asked or any predetermined categories. While being very similar to a conversation, the main goal is to obtain very in-depth responses from interviewees by exploring the general topic and allowing the responders to simply explain their views, experiences, and stories.
A **structured interview** is a more standardised interview which uses a set of questions. With

the interviewer being in full control over the process, answers from this kind of data collection are coded and analysed without difficulty due to the exact same procedure for each interview. (Gall et al., 2007)

Semi-structured interviews are commonly used for qualitative research. The interviewer in this case has a prepared set of questions, usually bound in an interview guide, but can still explore new topics which come up in the interview itself.

The interview guide consists of multiple structured questions to which several probing questions, in an open-ended form, may be added for a deeper understanding of the topic. While the initial questions were the same for all participants, depending on the responses the probing questions varied. This leads to the researcher on the one hand side being able to collect the necessary data to answer the research questions, while on the other hand side gaining more detailed knowledge and data compared to the data gathered from only structured interview questions (Gall et al., 2007). Due to the limited timeframe of the study the researcher did not get the chance to conduct more than one interview with each participant. The semi-structured interview was therefore a suitable method, ensuring to cover certain topics while at the same time being able to explore specific topics further and use the informants' narrative potential.

As the main questions as well as the setup of each interview were the same, the data obtained from each individual interview is still comparable.

The interviews all started by the researcher explaining the study and the purpose of the research project. Participants were informed that they did not have to answer all questions and that the interview was tape recorded. The researcher went through the informed consent sheet with the participants, also giving them time to read it themselves and to ask questions if things were not clear or not fully understood. After giving their consent to participate the interviews started.

They were conducted in the native language of the participants which was German, all quotes in this study are therefore translated into English.

The interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews took place, whereas notes about the interview were added right after each interview to capture the situation and the atmosphere.

The researcher expected the tape recording to affect the interviewees and possibly affect their responses, however, all respondents were very relaxed and comfortable with being recorded.

3.3.2 The Interview Guide

Using semi-structured interviews for my research, the interview guide was constructed before the interviews took place.

With some minor changes to make the questions very clear and open-ended, the researcher conducted a pilot interview with a befriended pedagogue in order to figure out how much time was needed as well as the type of answers the questions would induce.

The time frame for the actual interviews was then set to approximately 25-40 minutes.

Before conducting interviews, the participants were not only informed about the purpose of the study, but also about their part in the study, their rights, the data obtained, how data would be stored, and their privacy to be able to give informed consent to participate in the study.

The first few questions in the guide aim at obtaining information about the participant, their work experience, and background. This was meant to establish an open and more informal situation, free participants from possible tension, and make the atmosphere a relaxed and open one to allow interaction to take place freely.

This was supported by the interviews taking place in the teachers' workplace, their offices or classrooms, to ensure participants to feel comfortable and relaxed.

All interviews were conducted over the course of a week, with the researcher becoming more confident within their role as an interviewer with each participant. They took place after school hours or in between classes or meetings.

During interviews, probing questions were asked for participants to elaborate on a topic or clarify their response (Creswell, 2014).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis began with preparing the data for analysis, the recorded interviews were therefore transcribed. The data files were imported into Nvivo 11, a programme for qualitative data analysis, to store and organise data, as well as coding and adding the researcher's ideas to the written material.

The texts have been reviewed and coded in Nvivo 11, using subject reference and theory-guided analysis (Mayring, 2010).

As the interview guide was set up in themes, the researcher expected the transcription and coding to take place according to these themes. It was, however, not expected to be as time-consuming as it was after all.

Before starting the analysis, all participants were given a letter as a nickname (A, B, C) in order to guarantee their anonymity throughout the process.
While all interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after each interview, the analysis process did not commence until the last interview took place.

3.4.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

The procedure for data analysis was based on the qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2010) including three main processes which can be carried out independently or in combination with each other.

Qualitative content analysis is a systematic text analysis, which can have different sorts of recorded communication as its object, embedding the text into a communicative model. Besides analysing the pure and primary content of the texts, it also takes latent content, such as contextual characteristics, into account (Mayring, 2010).
The first process in Mayring's approach is a *summarising* process, in order to reduce the text material to maintain the main content, but simultaneously creating a corpus manageable in size while still representing the original material. Paraphrasing, generalising, and reducing are the main techniques of analysis for this.
The *explication* process involves the clarification and explanation of the material, commenting on it and ensuring the researcher's understanding of the material. To achieve this, a lexic-grammatical definition is being produced, including an analysis of the linguistic and sociocultural background of the author/producer of the statements used. This is being followed by a determination of the actual material for explication, in order to then do a narrow and a broad context analysis of it. The process is finalised by an explicatory paraphrase, examining the explanation with regards to the entire context.
The third and last process is the process of *structuring*, in which the text is being structured according to form, content, and scaling. The units of analysis are being determined to then

establish the dimensions for structuring, defining categories and the system's features. One then tries to find key examples to instance them for the various categories. Following this, rules for coding are being developed which will be processed and interpreted afterwards. The three techniques for analysis are however not meant to be three steps following one another but are thought to be actual techniques from which one can choose depending on the textual material and the research question.

The following paragraphs will explain the actual analysis procedure for qualitative content analysis in more detail.

Definition of the material

As a first step of analysis, three interview transcripts can be determined as the text material used for the study of the use of music to teach English as a foreign language within the framework of this research project.

The passages selected for analysis are taken from three interviews with teachers and head teachers. For all three interviews, the passages that have been selected are concerned with questions about the teachers' experiences with using music in teaching English as a foreign language within inclusive contexts.
While the passages and interviews chosen are very clear and illustrative, they are certainly not representative.

The individuals involved were the following:

Case 1: A secondary school teacher (female) of EFL, politics, and philosophy
Case 2: A primary school head teacher (female) of EFL, general studies[1], German, and Maths
Case 3: A comprehensive school teacher (female) of EFL and general studies (mainly primary school)

All three are teaching at public schools, which are considered inclusive, even though the degree to which inclusion is being put into practice varies across the institutions.

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[1] A subject taught in Hessian and Thuringian primary education, covering local geography, history, and science.

Analysis of the circumstances of origin

Participation in the interviews was on a voluntarily basis and only occurred with the interviewees' consent. Interviewees have been recruited through convenience sampling in a rural area of Germany.

The interviews were semi structured using a guideline to ensure comparability. All interviews took place in an office at the respective schools. These have been primary, comprehensive, and secondary schools.

Two interviewees were very relaxed from the start of the interview, while the other interviewee took some time to calm down and seemed nervous at the beginning, which might have been also due to the fact that the researcher themselves was quite nervous as it was the first interview of such kind for them.

The interviews were held by the author as part of the research project.

Formal characteristics of the material

The interviews which have been recorded with a dictation machine have then been transcribed with the transcription software f4transcript and imported in NVivo for further analysis.

In order to have transcripts very near to the actual language of the interview situation, pure verbatim protocols have been used, while also using special characters describing the nonverbal aspects. The following inventory of notations has been in use:

(.)	pause, one second
(..)	pause, two seconds
(…)	pause, three seconds
//	Interruption
CAPITAL LETTERS	strong emphasis
(laughs), (in agreement)	characteristics of nonverbal expressions which support the statement

The project's goal is not to achieve universal understanding of the use of music as a learning activity for EFL teaching, but to thoroughly examine the research object as experienced by the interviewees.

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Direction of the analysis

The project is oriented towards the social model of inclusion and special needs education within inclusive contexts. The interviews were intended to encourage participants to report on their experiences within inclusive foreign language classrooms. Using the content-analytical communication model, which is shown below, the analysis may arrive at statements about the emotional, cognitive, and motivational background of the interviewees by using the interview transcripts. For this project, however, the main goal and therefore the main direction of analysis is to produce statements on the actual subject matter, the use of music in inclusive
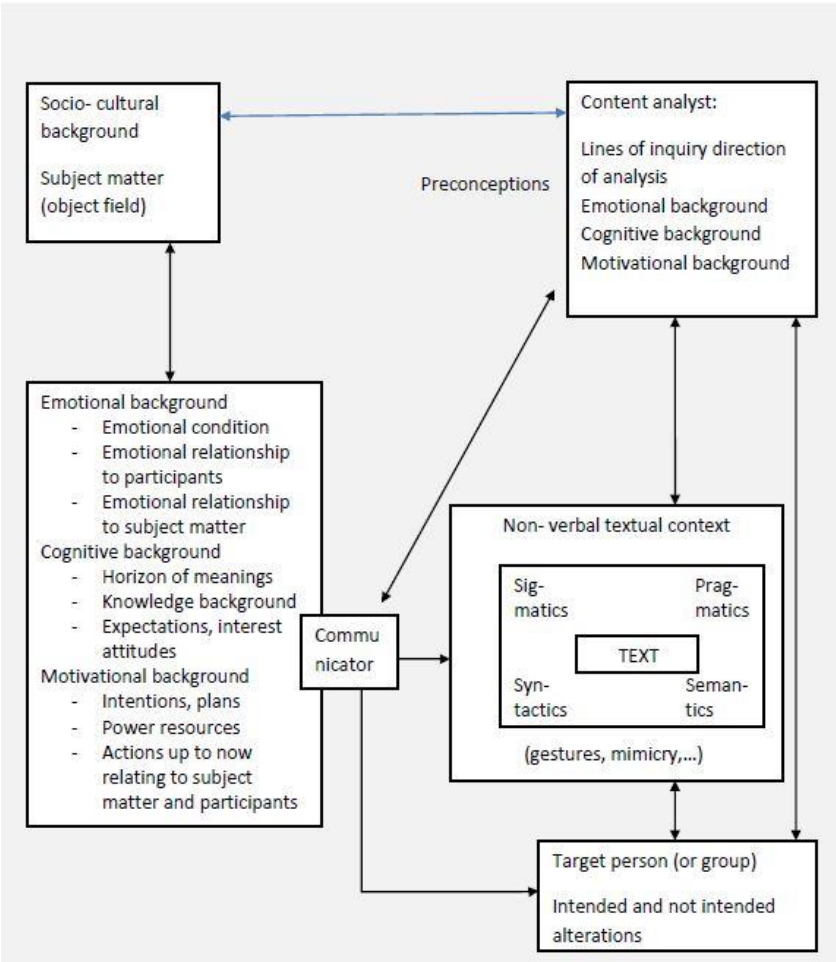

Fig. 1: Content-analytical communication model by Mayring[2]

EFL classrooms, as would be the case for document analysis. These statements will nevertheless be embedded in the contextual factors of their origin and will for this matter also include emotional and motivational aspects for an in-depth understanding of the individual's experiences.

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[2] Mayring (2014), p. 49

Theory-oriented differentiation of the problem

Qualitative content analysis can be characterised by the procedures involved being bound by a set of rules and by the interpretation of its data using a theory in order to arrive at statements on the subject matter.

Using a theory-oriented approach for interpretation is not by any means trying to hinder the researcher's full engagement with the material and their unconstrained view on it, but to allow the researcher to use theories as general statements and thus achieve a position of advantage in knowledge.

In order to do so, the theoretical orientation has to be defined in advance and be embedded into significant empirical research on the topic before dividing one's focus into sub-topics and research problems.

The material used for this project consists of statements of three EFL teachers on their experiences with using music as a learning activity in inclusive classrooms.
Music and Language have been shown to be closely related (François et al., 2012; Schön et al., 2010; Geisler, 2008) and research therefore suggests that it may be helpful for the acquisition of a foreign language (Mora, 2000; Cameron, 2002; Klippel, 2000).

Accompanied by positive effects on affective learning factors (Freund-Heitmüller, 1971; Geisler, 2008) it is not only of interest how teachers use music in their EFL classroom, but also which role they attribute to it, when considering their students' language acquisition processes. This is of even higher interest with Krashen's affective filter hypothesis in mind, stating that one needs positive affect in order to acquire a foreign language.

Assuming music to have a positive impact on affective factors as well as group processes within the classroom, moreover, leads to a point of analysis on the experiences of teachers with the influence music and choir activities can have on inclusion, both socially and academically.

Theoretical differentiation of sub-issues

As aforementioned the sample material contains the remarks of three EFL teachers regarding the topic of music within inclusive EFL classrooms.
While many of the research findings regarding music in EFL teaching do not have a focus on

inclusion nor do they address the effects it may have on inclusive factors, this is of great interest.

Particularly examined in this regard was the role which teachers attribute to music within their classrooms and the learning aspects they perceive as being most affected by the use of music with a specific focus on the actual language acquisition of students.

A further point of analysis was whether they perceived music as having an impact on social as well as academic inclusion.

The overarching question of how music activities are used by EFL teachers to support the foreign language acquisition within inclusive classrooms is, emerging from this, divided into two main sub-issues.

One issue concerns the learning aspects most affected and the actual (productive) language use of students through music, while the other is more concerned with the impact music may have on inclusion and inclusive factors.

Determination of the specific content-analytical procedure

Generally speaking, qualitative content analysis involves three main forms of interpretation: summary, explication, and structuring, which have already been defined in 3.4.1.

Summarising uses a more inductive approach to build categories, starting from the actual text material to form them, while structuring uses a deductive or mixed ductive approach, building categories first and then organising the text material into them. Explication, however, uses the context and its analysis to form categories (Mayring, 2014).

Due to the text material in this research project being very large, summarising it is a very extensive task and would be likely to not achieve the desired results, which is why the researcher organised the material into categories while having the research questions in mind.

The main categories were elaborated inductively from the interview transcripts. Those were sorted further and sub-categories were developed, adding more connections and relations to the categories.

The results will later be presented under the categories of 'the Use of Song, rhyme, and rhythm', 'Language Acquisition', and 'Inclusion' in chapter 4.

The graphic below shows the underlying category system for analysis.
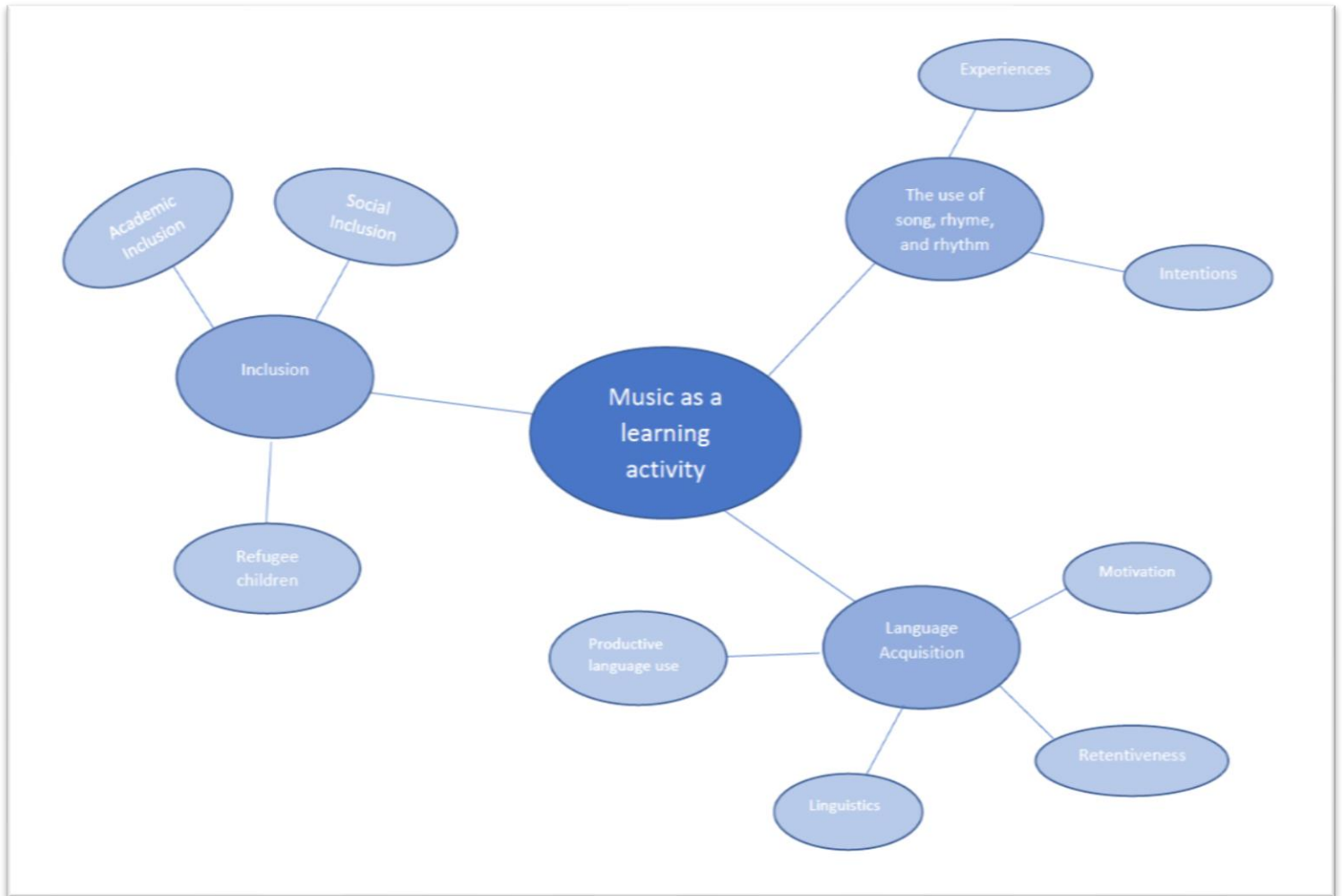
Fig. 2: Categories for analysis

3.5 Verification

3.5.1   Validity

The following paragraphs will describe the strategies and procedures used to ensure validity of the proposed study.

For internal validity, two main strategies were employed: member checking and peer examination (Creswell, 2014).

Member checking includes the participants during the process of analysis to accurately describe the participants' reality. This was employed through a dialogue with the informants concerned.

A fellow student was also used as a peer examiner to enlarge the accuracy of findings and interpretations.

To ensure external validity, the main strategy was "rich, thick descriptions" (Creswell, 2014, p. 202). This will give others a good basis for transferability and comparison.

3.5.2 The Researcher's Role

Another important aspect to consider for the validity of the study is the researcher's role and how it influences research. Especially in qualitative research, the researcher takes the role of the main data collection instrument and will typically be involved extensively with the participants (Creswell, 2014). This intensive experience of involvement makes it necessary to identify values and assumptions of the researcher to determine possible biases in order to make the researcher's contribution positive.

My perception of both, the use of music as learning activities and of EFL classrooms, have been shaped by my personal experiences as a student and through teaching experiences in work placements, in which music played a large role.
I also had the chance to visit the school described in the unit of study section related to a university project and got familiar with the didactic approach to teaching and learning used there.

I believe this understanding of the context and my own role enlarged my awareness and sensitivity to many of the challenges, but also chances teachers in inclusive EFL classrooms may come across and the issues that arose during research.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Even though the proposed study has a pure focus on the phenomenon of using music as a learning activity in EFL classrooms in its natural setting, it still includes data collection processes in which human participants were involved, requiring the researcher to consider the aspects of protection of participants from harm and the security of confidentiality and privacy (Gall et al., 2007; NESH, 2016). The ethical issues related to this research therefore are securing privacy and confidentiality and will be discussed in more detail in terms of informed consent and confidentiality.

As aforementioned, a guideline related to the ethical issues was explained and discussed with participants before the actual interview situation. It is necessary for researchers to inform the participants and get freely given consent from them (Gall et al., 2007; NESH, 2016). This includes information about the research process. the data and information collected by the researcher, as well as data and privacy protection.

When meeting the teachers, the researcher explained the project, its procedures, the duration of their participation, their rights to the information obtained as well as the right to withdraw at any time during the interview (Gall et al., 2007). Following this, they were given a written document stating the aforementioned information to be signed by both, the participants and the researcher, returning one copy of the document to them for assurance.

Besides discussing with participants who will be able to access their data, it is very important for the researcher to, in order to keep participants' privacy, guarantee that people without authorisation will not be able to access the data and information (Gall et al., 2007). To protect informants' privacy, the participants were anonymised during all research and analysis procedures.

4 Presentation of Results

4.1 Teachers' use of music in the EFL classroom

Under the first sub-question of how teachers use music in the EFL classroom the following themes emerged: Experiences and Intentions. These were further sorted into the topics of primary school and secondary school to differentiate between school forms, as well as lesson structue and cultural learning.

4.1.1   The use of song, rhyme, and rhythm

Experiences and Intentions

In order to explore teachers' experiences with music and inclusion in the EFL classroom, the first aspect to be looked upon was the actual use of music in the classroom, how it is being used and the intentions of its usage.

Primary school

While two of the informants work with primary school students (approximately 6-11 years), the other informant works in secondary school (11 – 19 years).
In the primary school context, the informants use music constantly, to structure the lesson, for actual subject manners, to teach new vocabulary or to revise grammatical structures.

„Yes, and our motto is somehow more music with more colleagues on more occasions in more subjects, huh? Hence, more music! Which is why I work with music a lot […]" (cf. Informant C, ll. 22-23)

To ensure everyone to experience themselves as part of the group and actively communicating one of the informants mentions that in order to chorally sing or speak they group the class by various characteristics – girls and boys, everyone with glasses and without glasses, everyone from Place A and B, and so forth.

„I also do this a lot, only the girls and only the boys and then whispering and then shouting, once sad and once happy […]". (cf. Informant B ll. 188-189)

Lesson structure

Besides using music and rhythm for social interaction and natural learning situations the informants working in primary schools also use it to frame their lessons with welcome and farewell songs and to revise what has been learnt before.

„Yeah, we sing a welcome song. […] And for each unit there are […] there are always songs and rhymes and ehm they come into effect in the teaching units.
[…] also for vocabulary revision or small grammatical structures, like short sentences with "have you got" or "it isn't" or something like that, thus when this can be found in the songs […] it consolidates through repetition, also because you repeat songs a lot more [than the actual rules or structures – translator's note]." (cf. Informant B, ll. 24 et seq.)

Music and Rhythm is a main component for the primary school teachers' lessons: *"Ehm! Well, mainly! Of course, we also talk to each other, hold dialogues with another student or so, but it's probably threequarters of the lesson that are connected to rhythm, to song, sometimes to dance, yeah."* (cf. Informant C, ll. 70-73)

Secondary School/Topic Introduction

The secondary school teacher on the other hand states that for them music is not a main element of their teaching, but that they tend to use songs for the introduction of a new topic: *"I did use music every now and then, ehm, preferably for the introduction of a new topic. […] I let the students identify certain topics in the song. I also gave them the lyrics […]"* (cf. Informant A, ll. 29 et seq.)

While singing and songs are not used that frequently, this teacher mentions that especially rhymes, rhythm, and movements are something they use a lot. *"When it's about rhymes, I use them a lot, mainly when it's about mnemotechnic verses […]. Everywhere it's possible I try to give the students somehow rhymes or mnemonic aids. So one can memorise it easier."* (cf. Informant A, ll. 73 et seq.)

4.1.2 Cultural learning and communication

Another important intention for using music as a learning activity is the aspect of cultural learning which is part of the EFL curricula. Nevertheless *"communication is the main goal.*

To be able to communicate with one another. […] for that, one must talk with one another." (cf. Informant C, ll. 136-137)

All informants use rhythmic speaking and rhymes to make it easier for their students to remember what has been learnt, while in the lower grades the informants sing a lot more, in secondary school they speak together, but all of them do it for the same purpose of not ridiculing someone. *"[…] if I just, ehm, say the word correctly and then we do it like this, I say the word correctly and then I say 'one, two, three' and then all of us say it together, so no one is being ridiculed." (cf. Informant A, ll. 301-303)*

4.2 The perceived influence of music on different learning aspects and language acquisition

The second sub-question led to the following categories: motivation, retentiveness, and linguistics which will be presented below.

4.2.1 Motivation

All informants perceive their students as having fun using music in the foreign language classroom, may it be singing themselves or listening to music.

The secondary school teacher mentions that their students react with plenty of ideas and that they seem a lot more enthusiastic about a song compared to most texts used in the classroom (cf. Informant A, ll.111-113).

Another teacher tells about her experience of students singing or humming the songs used in the EFL classroom when meeting them in different contexts, which for them indicates a positive attitude towards the songs and music they have been introduced to by their teacher (cf. Informant B, ll. 89 et seq.).

Furthermore, one of the informants mentions the motivation coming from being surrounded by English music outside of school and the wish to understand the lyrics as another aspect to enjoying music in the classroom as well.
"And that can motivate as well, I believe, when students listen to English songs, which is of course not the case for everyone, but I'm sure it is for some, that they think to themselves that they would like to understand them." (cf. Informant A, ll. 271-273)

As one of the teachers was involved in a project for a musical primary school, the students from their perception were used to singing a lot throughout all subjects and with all teachers and that because of the usualness of musical activities in school the students still enjoy it a lot. *"I have the impression that they have a lot of fun precisely **because** they're used to it."* (cf. Informant C, ll. 82-83)

Summarising, it can be said that all teachers observe their students to be more attentive and more involved when music is used as a learning activity in the EFL classroom. All teachers, regardless of age differences in the student community, perceive the students to actually enjoy the learning activities connected to music, rhymes, and rhythm and to have fun when being involved which the teachers also relate to increased motivational levels and interest in the subject matter.

4.2.2   Retentiveness

When asked about which aspects of actual language acquisition they perceive as being most influenced by music and song, all of them mention the retention of the learnt material, mostly vocabulary.

One of the interviewees suggests that the students may remember the meaning of a word more easily when having the connection to a song that has been worked with in class, while another interviewee comments that the primary school students *"can remember the lyrics a lot better, even if they do not fully understand the content sometimes"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 56-57), which still leads to them getting to know the language and remembering words they have heard before.

All of them agree that their students seem to remember a lot more text as well as grammar structure if something is being sung or even rhymed compared to a prosaic text or similar written or spoken material.

Another interviewee also expresses the belief that adding rhyme and/or rhythm to phrases and using it for vocabulary retention in the classroom also works as a mnemonic aid while adding an aspect of self-learning competence to the situation. Giving good examples with rhymes and rhythm will help the students so that *"they can practically help themselves to learn something like that even further and understand >how can I memorise which content best<"* (cf. Informant A, ll. 165 et seq.).

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4.2.3 Linguistics

While the two teachers working in primary school contexts perceive huge effects on the students' pronunciation and grammar skills, the interviewee who works in secondary school highlights the improved listening comprehension they perceive from the use of music as a learning activity.

However, all three can agree on the positive influence music has on their students' natural intonation and pronunciation in the foreign language. One of them states: *"And of course it [music – translator's note] helps with intonation as well, if it is already given and I know >ah, this melody is what I sing with it< and then I don't have to think about how to pronounce the word really"* (cf. Informant C, ll. 94-97).

This is perceived to have a great impact on the younger children as *"they can imitate this relatively well, like the specific aspects of [foreign – translator's note] pronunciation"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 141-142). Even though one of the teachers even mentions they do not grade the students' pronunciation at the early stages of learning EFL, all informants suggest that listening to music, singing songs and imitating what is heard in the foreign language improves the spoken language within the classroom while aiming at a more natural handling with the language.

Furthermore, one interviewee indicates that through the use of music activities grammatical structures are learnt unintentionally, *"not on a cognitive level, after explaining something, how to form tenses or whatever, but just through repetition"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 110-111).

4.3 Music to encourage the productive language use of students

The third sub-question looked at whether EFL teachers perceive music to generally encourage the students' productive language use.

4.3.1 Singing and FL acquisition

All informants assent with another that they perceive music and especially singing, whether in choir settings in the classroom or home alone, to increase the students' productive use of the foreign language in general.

While choral speaking can get boring very quickly, *"singing always works"* (cf. Informant C, l. 179), which of course is also connected to the fact that students seem to enjoy working with music. Whether it is speaking or singing, students actively using the language is something all interviewees try to achieve in their EFL classrooms.

One teacher mentions that *"when they [the students – translator's note] sing or rap a song, they do it very naturally and do not really think about it a lot. Even if some of the words are not perfectly pronounced. But they might at least dare to do it. And I believe that the practice is very important there, even if there is something wrong every now and then in their language use, at least they practiced and that again creates a certain handling with the language."* (cf. Informant A, ll. 261 et seq.)

All of the informants certainly perceive the aspect of practicing, sometimes without really noticing it, as very helpful, also for connecting structures which occur in a song to the actual situations they usually can be used in common parlance, allowing especially younger students to reproduce these in other communicative situations in the classroom.

"[…] and of course, aspects, or parts from the songs are being adapted. They are repeated and obviously it is recognised in which situations one can use them" (cf. Informant B, ll. 161-163). The interviewees explain that especially in primary school most of the active language use of students is reproducing what has been heard before in the classroom – *"the productive language use is, well, a lot is imitating"* (cf. Informant B, l. 161-162).

Especially in singing activities the interviewees perceive their students to also be more willing to use the language. Not only because they like it, but also because most of the time they would not sing by themselves, but in a group, which in the teachers' experience lowers the pressure of not making mistakes, mostly because it is an activity which includes the language, *"even if it doesn't always have a corrective"* (cf. Informant A, l. 269).

4.4 The perceived influence of music on students with expressive language difficulties in the EFL classroom

The fourth sub-question looks at how teachers perceive music as a learning activity to influence students with expressive language difficulties and their learning and language use.

The themes 'classroom climate', 'pronunciation', and 'whole class activities' emerged from the analysis of the question and are therefore presented below.

The effects mentioned in chapter 4.3 as perceived by the interviewees seem to be very similar for children with expressive language difficulties and disorders in their classrooms. All informants taught or are teaching children with language difficulties or disorders and while they all mentioned a large positive effect of musical learning activities on the typically developing children, most of them can agree on the even larger positive influence on those children who have difficulties with aspects of productive language.

4.4.1   A positive classroom climate

All teachers point out that they generally try to support a classroom climate that is very accepting and inclusive, in which students are not bullied or anyone's pronunciation is made fun of. To ensure a positive climate like this, one teacher states that *"if I know I've got one child who's got extreme difficulties, I only let them speak something together with a partner or in a small group and try to avoid by any cost that a situation arises where one person says something, they don't succeed, and everyone laughs"* (cf. Informant C, ll. 208 et seq.).

Pronunciation

In the primary school context, the two interviewees said they generally do not grade pronunciation, which they believe may of course also support the students' willingness to use the foreign language, especially when struggling with producing the correct sounds.

One teacher brings up the case of one of their students with a lateral sigmatism, "*who has large difficulties with pronouncing English, but who enjoys the English lessons a lot and who doesn't let the fact that she cannot pronounce it very well affect her in any way*" (cf. Informant B, ll. 179 et seq.). This student is being perceived as being especially motivated when engaging in activities which include music, rhyme, or rhythm. Regarding motivation the teacher believes that this particular student would neither be as involved in the classroom activities, nor speak as much if their teaching followed a more traditional approach to classroom teaching and learning in which students do not only experience a lot of direct verbal instruction, but also answer questions one by one.

Another aspect regarding the positive effect musical learning activities may have on children with expressive language difficulties was brought up by one of the informants who stated that *"singing oftentimes works a lot better than speaking, it isn't as obvious, if one sings quietly or just moves one's lips"* (cf. Informant C, ll. 200-201). Being part of a group is therefore perceived as increasing the actual use of the language especially by children with the aforementioned difficulties.

Whole class activities

The teacher working at a secondary school who does not use singing activities in their lessons mentions that the difficulties they experience in their classroom are of a rather simple nature, such as problems to pronounce sounds like 'th' or single difficult words which are then repeated by the whole class. However, they believe "*that if they [the students – translator's note] listen to something in their spare time again and again, that'll help [with pronunciation – translator's note] for sure"* (cf. Informant A, l. 294).

Summarising, the interviewees perceive positive effects to mainly come from group led activities which allow students to use the foreign language without the pressure of pronouncing everything correctly and the fear of being laughed at.

4.5 Inclusion

Sub-question five led to four different topics to shed light upon in the following paragraphs: music and inclusion, social inclusion, academic inclusion, and refugee children in the EFL classroom.

However, in order to present the perceived effects on social and academic inclusion as well as looking at the inclusion of refugee children in the EFL classroom, defining inclusion is necessary and the interviewees' definitions will be presented below.

When being asked about what the term inclusion means to them, all informants presented a similar view on it. Characteristic for an inclusive classroom is for them that all children, regardless of their (dis-)abilities or their background, are being taught together in one school so that everyone can learn and grow up together.

One teacher defines it as follows: *"Well, inclusion means to me, all children learn together, with one another. Whatever their abilities and background. […] Simply all together, everyone with each other"* (cf. Informant A, ll. 319 et seq.).

Especially the two informants working with primary school students add that the range of abilities, previous knowledge, experience and background is large in general, which is why *"for me it's not like I have 17 "normal children" […] and one i-child* [I stands for inclusion/inclusive, referring to a child with disabilities – translator's note] *and we somehow have to include them or whatever, but we're a mixed crowd and everyone is an i-child* [see note above for reference] *in a way"* (cf. Informant C, ll. 246 et seq.). They also explain the existing support system which allows the teacher to ask for a special needs educator to join them in everyday classroom situations *"or when there is something special that needs to be explained, they also take the children out of the group individually or explain something in small groups"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 240 et seq.).

Recapitulating, it can be said that all informants when referring to inclusion talk about their classroom experience and define inclusion as all children learning together, with everyone, regardless of an existing diagnosis, getting the support they need to successfully learn, which may involve individual education plans or small group teaching. Most of them seem to try to not stigmatise or group children into categories of disabled and non-disabled, but rather see every student as an individual with individual needs and resources.

4.5.1 Music and Inclusion – perceived effects

Being asked whether they perceived musical activities in the classroom as promoting inclusion, both social and academic inclusion, only two of the informants actually had experiences they wanted to share, while the other interviewee was very unsure due to the fact their school was not officially named "inclusive" and for that reason they felt as if their experience was not very extensive.

However, the other informants perceive music to have a large impact on inclusive factors within their classrooms. They highlight the social aspect of music and especially group singing activities in which their students all enjoy a certain song and have fun together singing and working with it. The interviewees state that they perceive all their students to

enjoy these activities and therefore to be *"joyfully affiliated with each other"* (cf. Informant B, l. 149) through song and music.

One of them categorises their use of music as *"a medium and […] as a uniting element or also as an element of language support"* (cf. Informant B, l. 342) and through these takes a positive view on music's ability to promote inclusion.

4.5.2   Social inclusion

As aforementioned, one of the interviewees did not feel as if they had enough experience and for that reason the results in the following sections on social and academic inclusion can only present the view of two of the informants.

All interviewees mention throughout the interview that they try to establish a class culture and atmosphere in which everyone feels accepted and as part of the group, where no one is being bullied and children support each other rather than focussing on competitive aspects of school (cf. chapter 4.4.2). While the use of music activities involving the whole group may support the acceptance and respect in the class community, one teacher states that this is something they try to also *"agree on in the class and with parents"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 252-253)*,* they, however, perceive parents and care givers to be a lot less tolerant and open-minded than the students. *"The children are usually very tolerant and open-minded and […] forthcoming, they are empathic and forgive mistakes very easily as well. […] Sometimes parents dig deeper when there is anything special, because they are in some instances not as tolerant* [as their children – translator's note]" (cf. Informant B, ll. 253 et seq.).

They perceive the relationship related work with parents to be especially important regarding social inclusion while not experiencing problems concerning this within the group of students themselves.

However, one informant states that for them, right after retentiveness, affiliation and belonging are the main effects and intentions for using music in the EFL classroom. Doing something all together rather than individually one after the other. Music for that reason is perceived by them to be *"absolutely brilliant"* (cf. Informant C, l. 264) for social inclusion and bringing the class together.

One example of a student is mentioned who speaks neither German nor English and while not being able to communicate verbally in either of these languages, they could easily join the welcome song after a short time only which in the perception of the interviewee led to the student being part of the group rather than being separated.

4.5.3 Academic Inclusion

While music was perceived as immensely supporting social inclusion, the two interviewees answering the questions regarding inclusive factors also agree on the fact that learning activities including music or music-related aspects support academic inclusion in their classrooms.

One informant mentions that their school tries to stay as variable as possible in general to allow students to learn at their pace using the material they need at the time, reducing or increasing complexity when necessary. *"We try to take the pressure off children when we realise that they cannot accomplish what their classmates do"* (cf. Informant B, ll.273-274). They reason it with the experiences of frustration and behavioural difficulties linked to the pressure to always perform at very high levels.

Another teacher points out that because music, rhyme, and rhythm increase retentiveness these learning activities also support academic inclusion by imparting content while being enjoyed by students. They explain that even in other subjects they use songs for every topic which encourage the acquisition of teaching content (cf. Informant C, ll. 280 et seq.).

4.5.4 Refugee children – music in the EFL classroom

Due to various trouble spots across the world, climate change and wars, there were 25.9 million refugees worldwide in 2018, with circa half the population being children under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2019). This leads to refugee children going to school and taking part in school life in Germany as well, which may introduce new questions with regard to inclusion in the EFL classroom.

All interviewees mention their experiences with music and refugee children in the EFL classroom, all perceiving music and choral activities to promote a feeling of belonging and affiliation for the students within the classroom community. One teacher perceives the EFL classroom, and music in particular as especially uniting, because *"it's a different culture for*

everyone, if we sing an English song [...], it's a foreign language and a different culture" (cf. Informant B, ll. 319-320). Another teacher perceives it as particularly helpful to overcome language barriers *"because, ehm, the language of music, that's basically the same in every country"* (cf. Informant A, l. 360).

A different aspect which is described with regard to music and foreign language acquisition is the fact that difficulties are not as obvious when singing or speaking together, which leads to the informant perceiving it as supporting group processes and enhancing inclusion. *"It is of course difficult for them [the refugee children – translator's note], if one learnt Arabic, which has a completely different intonation compared to German or English. And if one would really only do it like this, one person speaks and then the next person, and then the next person, then everyone else notices that it sounds different and maybe isn't as good. And due to us speaking or singing a lot all together, they can simply join the group"* (cf. Informant C, ll. 152 et seq.).

While all interviewees seem to agree on music and choral activities supporting inclusion by overcoming language barriers and ensuring participation in the group for refugee children, their experiences with the actual acquisition of English as a foreign language for refugee children differ widely.

One teacher states that they perceive refugee children to be extremely sensible towards new languages and that in their experience many of these children have had some kind of connection or experience with the English language: *"and through all the things they had to go through so far [...] they often have, ehm, English skills. And they're the ones who are at the forefront, they're well versed in it, know many sentences and words and that's rather an enrichment"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 328 et seq.).

Another teacher describes that they feel as if they ask too much of the refugee students with another language to learn. *"There are no refugee children in our primary school with whom I could communicate in English, where I would realise 'okay, they picked up some English on their way'. They have to learn German now and parallelly English and I feel as if that's just too much"* (cf. Informant C., ll. 164-167).

5 Discussion of Results

In this chapter the results which have been presented in chapter 4 will be discussed under the light of the theory mentioned with regards to foreign language acquisition.

5.1 Communication within the classroom

The teachers agree on using music and other musical activities to allow communication and the actual use of language for all students without forcing anyone into uncomfortable situations of speaking by themselves in front of the class or anything alike. Especially the teachers working in a primary school context repeatedly mention that they do not place a lot of importance on correct pronunciation but rather try to enable situations in which students can actively use the new language.

These findings further support the idea of Vygotsky (1980) who puts an emphasis on learning through social interaction. Music in this context could be used as a means of social interaction, including the students in meaningful social activities, helping them to use the new language skills they acquired and encourage further learning processes.

Further supporting this theory, both teachers in primary school agree that inductive learning methods and teaching through play are most important for their age group, which is also closely connected to action-oriented learning to allow students to incidentally acquire the language while experiencing oneself as an active part within social interaction.

5.2 Acquisition-learning-hypothesis and music

Taking Krashen's (1987, 1988) theory of second and foreign language acquisition as a point of departure, the aforementioned statements by the interviewees support his acquisition-learning-hypothesis, in which he differentiates between acquiring a language and consciously learning a language, pointing out the importance of focussing on the communicative act instead of the correctness of what is being said.

Singing in general may be seen as acoustic and verbal communication, also delivering information about the singer's emotional state and their attitudes, allowing meaningful interactions with one another (Welch, 2005). This focus becomes visible in whole class singing, rhyming, or choric speaking, where the act of producing language together is most

important, which has been mentioned several times by all interviewees. Even in the secondary school context the teacher mentions that albeit things not being perfectly pronounced, when singing together it is more about the students daring to use the language. *"I believe that the practice is very important [...]"* (cf. Informant A, l. 264) with this kind of practice creating a very natural environment for using the foreign language.

The ways music is being used by the interviewees in their classrooms seems to do exactly that, creating a natural environment to practice what has been learnt through meaningful interaction with classmates. The teachers perceive the interaction to become meaningful and motivating for the students because they enjoy singing together, even outside the classroom. *"I hear them all the time when I'm in the classroom, if it's not the English lesson, they're humming it [the songs they sing in class – translator's note]"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 89 et seq.). This kind of usage may therefore lead to musical learning activities bridging the gap between consciously learning the language and acquiring it more naturally, because the students use it outside of the contexts for conscious language study.

Krashen generally gives more importance to the acquired system than the learnt system, with communication as the main goal of language learning, rather than explicitly learning grammatical structures and rules, which all interviewees also mention.

5.3 Input hypothesis and music

Furthermore, Krashen's input hypothesis (1987, 1988) states that in order to acquire a foreign language the student requires input which is beyond their actual knowledge at that point.

One teacher points out that one cannot expect too much of the students, especially when they just start learning English, their productive language is not very extensive. *"It's not that they could go and talk to a native speaker in English about any special topic"* (cf. Informant B, ll. 163-165). While the students' linguistic knowledge at that point is still very limited as well as their vocabulary, with the large input they get through music they can not only imitate what they hear, but even transfer aspects and structures from musical learning activities to other classroom situations.

With the majority language being different outside the classroom there is no apparent need to use the foreign language and with the students at the beginning not being able to have meaningful conversations beyond introducing themselves or anything alike, music offers

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input that can go beyond vocabulary extension and very simple conversations. Even though in parts not being fully understood or being way beyond the students' linguistic competence, the informants perceive their students to enjoy learning activities that are connected to music, rhyme, and rhythm.

Music as a learning activity therefore fulfils the requirements of Krashen's second hypothesis for successfully acquiring a foreign or second language, while also supporting Vygotsky's (1980) concept of the ZPD. Being exposed to input beyond their knowledge while being enrolled in social activities may therefore enhance the children's EFL acquisition.

5.4 Positive affect and music

Another important aspect of language learning is positive affect, which Krashen (1987, 1988) outlines in the affective filter hypothesis.

5.4.1　　　　Motivation

He describes that in order to acquire a language one needs positive affect towards it. Krashen believes that motivation plays a large role in it and is something the interviewees mentioned repeatedly. They perceived their students to be very motivated with regards to music inside the classroom. Especially when compared to more traditional approaches using mostly text the teachers found their students to be a lot more involved and more enthusiastic about learning when music was being used during EFL lessons.

This has, however, also been connected to the permanent exposure to the English language and particularly to English music outside of school, which one teacher perceived as increasing motivation for their students.

Student motivation in that regard may certainly also be connected to the material being more authentic than textbook material, as well as music being something students can connect to, as it oftentimes matches their interests and needs a lot better than the aforementioned.

While the role of motivation for language acquisition has been controversially discussed among scholars, a meta-analysis of various studies showed the correlation between achievement and motivation to be higher than between achievement and other measures (e.g. integrativeness) (Masgoret, Gardner, 2003). Motivation in this light can be defined as follows:

"Motivation refers to a combination of the learner's attitude, desires, and willingness to expend effort in order to learn the second language. It is generally considered to be one of the primary causes of success and failures in second language learning" (Richards, Schmidt, 2002, p. 343).

Undoubtedly, motivation has more than one source, but it seems nevertheless to be very important to try to increase students' motivation to learn the foreign language. Especially at the beginning of learning the foreign language, extrinsic motivational factors, such as that it may be very important to know English later on in life, are most likely too vague for students to be motivated by them, which is why it is even more important to find ways to increase students' intrinsic motivation to learn EFL. One way to do so, according to the results of this study, is the use of music as a learning activity, because all interviewees perceive their students to be highly motivated by it and to enjoy working with these activities a lot.

Although the findings of this study showed that teachers experienced their students to be very motivated when using music, earlier studies mention the importance of a rich learning environment to support the student's cognitive development and learning (Woolfolk et al., 2013) as children due to their individual cognitive development may have different modes of processing and learning which they prefer. Music as a learning activity can be one means to offer such rich environment.

5.4.2 Self-esteem

Another aspect critical for positive affect as mentioned by Krashen (1987, 1988) is self-esteem which may certainly also be connected to musical learning activities.

Self-esteem has been discussed in similar matters as motivation, leading to various definitions and views on the topic. It may be defined as "the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and of being worthy of happiness" (Branden, 2013, p. 440). Naturally, this phenomenon is a lot more complex and involves many more nuances than can be expressed here. However, if one's self-esteem and self-confidence shows in the attitudes one has towards oneself, it is important to be aware of the aspects and dimensions of self-esteem when teaching, regardless of the subject, which includes awareness of the teacher's own self-esteem.

While this is something to be taken into consideration in any subject, it seems to be extremely important for language learning, because it involves so much risk taking. Students are aware of the fact they cannot yet express themselves fluently and might even be misunderstood due to their lack of suitable vocabulary or simply their pronunciation. The language learner in these situations is not in control and has to use a form of communication they might not be comfortable with just yet. (Arnold, 2007)

Especially for children with low self-esteem music may offer a very helpful approach, because during musical group activities the discomfort students may experience is most likely not as large as it is when being asked to speak all by oneself in front of peers.
Even though all interviewees mention their attempts to create a very positive classroom climate without bullying and which everyone can freely express themselves, make mistakes, and still be heard, teachers can only control certain parts of everyday school life and regardless of their efforts, talking in front of the whole class may still create very unpleasant situations for some of their students.

5.4.3   Expressive language difficulties

With this in mind, it is even more important to look at what the informants say about students who struggle with pronunciation and expressive language in general. Not having to perform well while everyone listens certainly lowers the pressure for these children, but having the possibility to speak, sing, and use the language in a group is likely to help the students even more. Music activities encourage the use of the foreign language, while offering a safe space where it is not apparent whether one actually sings very loudly or whether one just moves one's lips. The interviewees all perceive these activities to increase the actual productive use of language for their students who have difficulties with pronouncing the foreign language.

While especially the primary school teachers in this study perceive music to have a positive effect on students with expressive language difficulties due to the safe environment it offers to try the newly acquired language skills, Sallat (2011) showed that children with SLI do not have the same processes of transfer between music and language as their typically developing peers. The primary school teachers were found to use music most of the classroom time, while it was only used infrequently in the secondary school context. This may cause difficulties for students with SLI in the transition from primary to secondary school considering their EFL classes.

5.4.4   Anxiety

Anxiety towards a subject like EFL is likely to counteract against positive affect which however is likely to be needed for successful language acquisition (e.g. Krashen, 1987, 1988). As aforementioned learning a language and being in the EFL classroom is linked to risk taking for the students and may therefore also lead to anxiety and discomfort. However, if teachers manage to create a learning environment through music and group activities in which bullying has no place and people generally are not being made fun of, this may also reduce the anxiety connected to language acquisition. When a whole class or larger groups are speaking or singing certain phrases or songs as a whole group, students who are insecure do get the chance to take part without being forced to actively join in from the beginning. They may listen various times and then join the choir or may not sing/speak in the choir at all, which the group situation gives them the chance to do.

This, of course, does not meant, teachers should not expect their students to do certain things, but as the interviewees also showed, it is important to not underestimate anxiety and discomfort and to first of all make sure everyone is comfortable in the situation of using the language before making anyone speak in front of their peers. The primary school teachers for example mentioned, they do not grade pronunciation in their school context, but rather try to increase their students' enjoyment of learning a foreign language by giving them multiple opportunities to try everything out for themselves with the massive comfort of having a group around them.

5.5 Use of music in the EFL classroom

From the theory and the interviews, the understanding of the topic at hand got a lot wider and more detailed. While the definition for music in general is still somehow unclear, with regards to this study it refers to anything that plays with sound in the EFL classroom context, such as melodic singing, rhyme, or rhythm.

An initial objective of this study was to determine whether and how EFL teachers use music in their classroom and the role it plays in their teaching.

All teachers who have been asked, regardless of their years of experience, use music in their classrooms, to structure classes, to facilitate content learning, to make the language production less anxiety-arising, and to give linguistic input. Rhymes as mnemonic aids are

perceived as helpful and music activities in general are used to increase the retention of content material.

Especially in the early years of language acquisition (primary school) music and other musical activities play an enormous role in the interviewees' classrooms, taking up most of the EFL classroom time, while active dialogue and direct instruction on any linguistic structures or rules barely take up any time.

5.5.1 Aspects of learning most affected by music

The second question in this research project was which aspects of learning the interviewees perceived as being most affected by the use of music within their classrooms, whereas learning includes the linguistic aspects of the EFL teaching as well as more general aspects that influence learning processes. A common view amongst interviewees was that music has the largest effect on the retentiveness of students, mostly related to vocabulary and vocabulary extension. Remembering words or structures from songs or rhymes is being perceived as a lot easier for the children than doing so from text or other spoken or written word in general. Even if not entirely understood, the teachers observe their students to know the songs' lyrics and to even be able to recall grammatical structures for other suitable situations.

Another reason music is being used in the classrooms of these teachers is that they perceive their students to be a lot more motivated to learn the language, because they enjoy music, rhyme, and rhythm. Singing or speaking in a group seems to be less anxiety provoking than other learning activities that may be used.

5.5.2 The productive language use of students

The third and fourth question sought to determine the effect of music as a learning activity on the productive language use of students in general as well as the effect it might have on students with expressive language difficulties and disorders.

Issues related to students with expressive language difficulties were not particularly prominent throughout the interviews, however, when coming up the informants all mentioned a very positive effect of music on these children if they taught any at all. The results showed that using musical activities within the classroom leads to a greater use of productive language for all students, especially including these students who may struggle with

pronunciation or anything alike. Not being anxious about speaking or singing certainly supports a person daring to use the language in the classroom, especially when being surrounded by friends and people they know. The teachers all recognise the fact that even those students who struggle are willing to try and to use English as their means of communication when they get the chance to do so in a music activity.

Furthermore, teachers perceived music to support their students in a more natural intonation and correct pronunciation. This also accords with earlier observations, which showed that music helps learners with the intonation of a foreign language (Mora, 2000). In accordance with the curricula of Hesse and Thuringia (Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur, 2011; Hessisches Kultusministerium, 2010) which state the importance of intonation and pronunciation skills for the EFL classroom, music may therefore be a teaching tool to enhance students' skills in this regard.

5.6 Inclusion

In reviewing the literature, the author was not able to find data on the relationship between musical learning activities and inclusion. However, the results of this study indicate a positive impact of musical learning activities on inclusion, both academic and social inclusion. It is found that the teaching practices related to music immensely support inclusion and a feeling of belonging to a group as perceived by the teachers. What is surprising in this regard is that a very common view amongst the interviewees was that musical learning activities especially enable the inclusion of refugee children in the EFL classroom.

If one considers that not everyone develops at the same rate (Woolfolk et al., 2013), offering full-class activities that everyone can actively take part in is very important for inclusive factors. Music can offer such learning activities and supporting this view, teachers perceived it to promote inclusion within their classrooms.
Even if children cannot actively sing or even speak, they could be included in this kind of activity, either by using an instrument (e.g. egg shakers or a drum) or by including alternative and augmentative communication methods in choir activities (e.g. using a talker for certain parts of a song, signing the chorus, etc.).

Inclusion refers to the active participation of everyone in a certain activity, which music may offer even if some of the children cannot or do not want to sing.

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6 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to get a deeper understanding of how teachers use music as a learning activity to teach English as a foreign language and of the effects they perceive these activities have on their students. This covers the areas of the perceived effect music has on learning for all children within the inclusive classroom and in particular children with productive language difficulties and disorders, the effect it has on the linguistic skills of students, and the promotion of social and academic inclusion.

6.1 A positive impact on language acquisition

The study has shown that for the specific schools and teachers the use of music as a learning activity was very helpful not only for language acquisition but for matters of inclusion as well. It was shown that teachers perceive their students to be a lot more involved and enthusiastic about the teaching content when music was being used compared to more traditional approaches through text and direct grammar instruction. One of the more significant findings that emerged from this study is that teachers perceive music to increase the students' productive language use while reducing anxiety and building a safe classroom climate free of bullying.

6.2 A positive impact on inclusion

Another major finding was that using music was not only perceived to support linguistic skills, but mostly to support inclusion - creating a feeling of belonging to a group and class, active participation without being forced into situations of discomfort. It has also been found to simplify the process of inclusion for refugee children in the teachers' classrooms.

Therefore, it seems that generally speaking music is a very strong and powerful tool, not only to teach, but to build and create groups and teams while pursuing the same target of learning the foreign language.

Returning to the question posed at the beginning of this study, how music activities are used to support the FL acquisition of students in inclusive classrooms, it is now possible to say that especially in primary schools music seems to be one of the main activities in the classroom.

Music and especially songs are being used in a ritualised way to facilitate the children's FL acquisition, giving the EFL lessons a recurring structure through welcome and farewell songs or procedures.

The study has also shown that teachers use musical activities, such as songs or rhymes, to teach actual content matters. It is used to rehearse common grammatical structures or extend the students' vocabulary. Another more significant finding was that teachers use music to support the retention of material.

6.3 Concluding reflections

Before I started the research project, I expected teachers to also use these kind of activities for cultural learning practices, which I believed to make the language acquisition more interesting for those learning it. While teachers use music for cultural learning, it was not one of their main motivators to do so and did not take up as much classroom time as expected.

Regarding the role teachers attribute to music as part of their teaching and the FL classroom environment, this project has shown that it differs between primary and secondary school contexts. Primary school teachers were found to use music as a main activity in their daily teaching, while for secondary school teaching it was only found to be used for certain activities, such as a specific introduction to a topic. However, songs in general were found to not take up a lot of time in the secondary school context, while rhymes and rhythm were frequently used by the interviewee, mostly to revise grammatical structures or to internalise certain linguistic sequences.

This project was also undertaken to examine which learning aspects teachers perceived as being most affected by music. It was shown that motivation and retentiveness were perceived as such. Music was found to increase student motivation for learning a FL and supporting the retention of material, vocabulary, and grammatical structures for them.

Another important aspect which has been highlighted by the interviewees was the increased productive language use of all students regardless of difficulties with expressive language. Through choir and group activities, music was perceived to create a safe environment in the classrooms in which no student was bullied or made fun of for language difficulties, but everyone could joyfully use their newly acquired skills together.

Additionally, one finding which emerged from the study was the positive impact music activities were perceived to have on inclusive factors inside the classroom. It was found that music did not only support academic inclusion through decreasing the pressure on students as they learn through activities they enjoy, but it was also found to increase social inclusion factors by supporting group building processes, creating feelings of affiliation and belonging among the students. A surprising outcome of this project was the great impact that teachers perceived music to have on the inclusion of refugee children in their EFL classrooms, especially due to the universality of music and the ritualised learning processes within the lessons which facilitate the arrival of students in their new classroom communities.

Taken together, these results suggest a large positive impact music can have on the FL acquisition of students in general, but even more importantly, the large effect it can have on inclusion and inclusive teaching through rituals and group activities, allowing every student to play an active part in the learning activity.

It would be interesting to assess the effects of music learning activities on inclusive factors in a larger study than the present one.
However, this study shows the importance of music not only for FL acquisition but most of all of group activities for affiliation and belonging within a community. Learning in this manner includes children in meaningful social activities, which will, following Vygotsky's theory (1980), support their learning and development immensely.

6.4 Limitations

This study has some possible limitations. As it used a qualitative approach to research, it is highly dependent on the researcher's skills and their experience. This was one of the first studies the author conducted, so it may be still influenced by the researcher's personal biases even though they tried to avoid this kind of influence through the strategies mentioned in chapter 3.6.

Another limitation to this study is the sampling method used and the size of the sample. While the findings may indicate that the use of musical learning activities in the inclusive classroom is very useful, the results have to be interpreted with caution. Due to a small sample size and possible bias in responses they might not be transferable to all EFL classrooms.

Furthermore, the study does not consider students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and for whom the use of music may not be supportive and helpful, but rather challenging when not accompanied by signs or sign language.

The current study has also only focused on spoken language, not including written language, which however is part of the learning process in the EFL classroom. It therefore does not consider the difficulties of students with dyslexia, which can be challenging in foreign language teaching.

It can be suggested that music is very helpful not only for language acquisition in general, possibly bridging the gap between learning and acquiring a language, the classroom situations, however, are heterogenous and one cannot conclude from this study that the teaching practices used are good for everyone. To illustrate, the interviewees for instance do not work with children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing who require a very different approach to music but are also taught in inclusive classroom settings.

Further research should be done to investigate the relationship between music and inclusion as well as the prerequisites for teachers and students to work with music in inclusive settings to enhance language learning.

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8   Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Informed Consent Form (English)

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

»Teacher experiences in inclusive classrooms – Using music as a learning activity to

teach English as a foreign language« ?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to learn about teachers' experiences when using music as a tool for language learning and its effect on all classroom aspects in inclusive settings. In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

Music is an often-used activity in English as a foreign language classrooms, especially for young learners. Many studies show that it supports the language learning of students in mainstream classrooms.
I want to investigate in the experiences of teachers who work in inclusive classrooms and your personal experiences when using music in these classrooms. I want to learn about your experiences considering all classroom aspects, how you perceive its effects on the academic success of students as well as the classroom climate and factors of inclusion.
This project is part of a master's thesis at the University of Oslo.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The University of Oslo (UiO) is the institution responsible for the project.

The principle investigator is Elisa Unzicker.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being invited to take part in this research because I feel that your experience as a teacher in inclusive classrooms can contribute much to my understanding and knowledge of the ways music may influence language learning from the teacher's perspective.

What does participation involve for you?

I am asking you to help me learn more about your experiences in using music as a learning activity in inclusive classrooms. I am inviting you to take part in this research project. If you accept, you will be asked to participate in an interview with myself, Elisa Unzicker.

During the interview I will sit down with you in a comfortable place at your work place.
If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the interview, you may say so and I will move on to the next question.

No one else but the interviewer will be present. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except Elisa Unzicker will have access to the information documented during your interview. The entire interview will be tape-recorded, but no one will be identified by name on the tape. The audio file will be kept on a computer which is not publicly available and which is protected through at least one password/pin code.
The tapes/audio files will be destroyed after transcription and analysis.

Types/categories of personal information collected:

Personal data; such as name, contact details (phone number, e-mail address)

Footage; audio recording
The research takes place over maximum one month in total. During that time, I will visit you once for interviewing you. The interview itself will last for approximately 30-45 minutes.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).
- The only person who will have access to the personal data is the principle investigator, Elisa Unzicker.
- Personal information about you will be pseudonymized and will not be shared with anyone. The information that I collect from this research project will be kept private and no one except for the researcher themselves will have access to the data. It will only be saved on not publicly available computers and saved with additional passwords/pin codes.

- Participants won't be recognisable in publications.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end in November 2019. Audio recordings and personal data will be securely deleted/destroyed at the end of the project.

Your rights
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:
- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the University of Oslo, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:
- University of Oslo via Elisa Unzicker
  elisaun@student.uv.uio.no
  +4915259525843
  Supervisor: Jorun Buli-Holmberg
  jorun.buli-holmberg@isp.uio.no
- Our Data Protection Officer: Maren Magnus Voll, personvernombud@uio.no
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email:
  (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader
(Researcher/supervisor)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project »Teacher experiences in inclusive classrooms – Using music as a learning activity to teach English as a foreign language« and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

☐ to participate in an interview
☐ to participate in an observation

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 31.05.2019.

(Signed by participant, date)

8.2 Appendix B – Interview guidelines (English)

Warm-up			
Main Questions	**Additional Questions**	**Clarifying Questions**	**Intentions**
- Can you tell me a bit about your teaching experience at this school?	- How long have you been teaching here for? - Which subjects do you teach? - How would you describe your experience with students with expressive language difficulties? - What's the age range you teach?		To make the situation more comfortable To collect demographic information
Use of Music in EFL			

- Can you tell me how and when you use music in your EFL classroom?	- What types of music do you use?
	- How do the activities look like in which music is included?
	- Can you describe your intentions for using music?
	-
		- Can you give me an example of that?
		- Can you expand a little on this?
		- Can you tell me anything else about this?
			To explore how and when music activities are being used
			    Certain times
			    Which types

The Role of Music in EFL			

- In your classroom, which role do you attribute to music and music activities (including rhymes, poetry)?	- Do you perceive the students as enjoying the work with music?
	- How would you describe the music activities you use and
		- Can you give me an example of that?
		- Can you expand a little on this?
		- Can you tell me anything
			To explore for which reasons music is being used
			    -Warm up
			    -To repeat

	their intentions? - When considering content related issues, how you perceive the role that music takes in your lessons? - Which role do you attribute to music in regards to classroom organisation?	else about this?	Academic Vocabulary -To teach speed And flow -Cultural Understanding -as writing Prompts -…
Aspects of Learning affected			
- Which aspects of learning do you perceive as most affected by music?	- How do you perceive the effect of certain music activities on the social aspects of your classroom and the classroom environment? - How do you perceive the influence of music on group building processes? - In your experience, how is the effect of music and similar activities on the different aspects of language? Such as: lexis, prosody, phonology, and syntax - In your opinion, how does the use of music relate to cultural learning as part of the EFL curriculum? - How does it relate to going from learning to acquiring a	- Can you give me an example of that? - Can you expand a little on this? - Can you tell me anything else about this?	To explore what teachers perceive as being affected by the use of music Social aspects/ language aspects

	language?		
Productive Language Use			
- How do you perceive the effect the use of music has on the productive language use of students, if any?	- How do you perceive the effect on the security of students in regard to speaking themselves?	- Can you give me an example of that? - Can you expand a little on this? - Can you tell me anything else about this?	To explore the perceived outcome on language production
Music and Expressive Language Difficulties			
- How do you perceive the effect of music that you mentioned before on students with expressive language difficulties?	- Can you describe the similarities and differences you experienced compared to students who do not have difficulties with productive language? -	- Can you give me an example of that? - Can you expand a little on this? - Can you tell me anything else about this?	To understand how teachers perceive the aforementioned effects of music in relation to expressive language difficulties
Music to Promote Inclusion			
- How do you define inclusion? - In your opinion, does the use of music (especially in group/choir activities) promote inclusion?	- How do you understand the concepts of social and academic inclusion? - How do you perceive the effect of music on the social inclusion and group strength in your classroom? - How do you think it may influence students academically? Does it promote inclusion in this manner?	- Can you give me an example of that? - Can you expand a little on this? - Can you tell me anything else about this?	To explore what teachers think about the influence of music on academic and social inclusion