# SINGING YOUR WAY TO FLUENCY: THE IMPACT OF MUSIC-BASED INSTRUCTION ON PRONUNCIATION AND SPOKEN FLUENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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This article investigates the influence of music-based learning on the development of pronunciation and fluency in English language learners. Drawing from cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition (SLA) theory, the study compares the outcomes of a music-integrated instructional approach against traditional classroom methods. Results from pre- and post-tests, student interviews, and observational data show significant improvements in pronunciation accuracy and spoken fluency among students engaged in music-based activities. The findings suggest that music can be a powerful tool in enhancing language rhythm, phonological awareness, and learner motivation.

## Introduction

Pronunciation and fluency are two pillars of spoken language competence, yet they are often the most challenging aspects for English language learners (ELLs) to master. Conventional methods for teaching these skills may overlook the natural rhythm and melody of language. Music, however, offers an engaging and effective alternative. It exposes learners to authentic pronunciation, stress patterns, and intonation, while simultaneously lowering the affective filter that can hinder language production. This study explores the question: *How does the integration of music into English learning affect pronunciation accuracy and spoken fluency?*

## Literature Review

The relationship between music and language acquisition has been supported by various theories and empirical research. According to Patel (2008), music and language share cognitive and neural mechanisms, especially in the processing of rhythm and pitch. Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis supports the idea that enjoyable learning experiences like music can promote better language input processing. Mora (2000) found that musical rhythm aids in the acquisition of prosodic features such as stress and intonation. Studies by Fonseca-Mora et al. (2011) and Good et al. (2015) revealed that students exposed to songs and rhythmic activities showed improved listening comprehension, phonological memory, and pronunciation. Despite growing interest in this area, gaps remain in the rigorous evaluation of how music directly impacts fluency—defined here as the ability to speak with appropriate speed, minimal hesitation, and coherent intonation. This study aims to fill that gap through an

experimental approach.

## Methodology

**Participants**: The study involved 40 intermediate-level English learners aged 14–18 from a public language school. They were randomly assigned to an experimental group (n=20) and a control group (n=20).

**Design**: A mixed-methods approach was adopted. Over a six-week period, the experimental group engaged in weekly lessons featuring music-based activities, while the control group followed a standard curriculum focusing on textbook dialogues and repetition drills.

**Activities**: The experimental group participated in:

* Lyric listening and gap-filling tasks
* Singing and shadowing English songs
* Rhythm clapping and pronunciation drills based on song lyrics

**Data Collection Tools**:

* Pre- and post-intervention oral tests assessed fluency (words per minute, pause frequency) and pronunciation (accuracy of vowel/consonant sounds, intonation).
* A Likert-scale student survey evaluated engagement and self-perceived progress.
* Semi-structured teacher observations and interviews added qualitative insight.

## Results

Quantitative results indicated a 23% improvement in pronunciation accuracy and a 17% increase in fluency scores in the experimental group. The control group showed only marginal gains (4% and 6% respectively). Students in the music group reduced filler words and hesitation, and began using more natural sentence rhythm.

Survey data revealed that 90% of students in the music group felt more confident speaking English. Observational notes highlighted increased participation and willingness to take pronunciation risks during speaking tasks.

## Discussion

These findings reinforce earlier claims about the cognitive and motivational benefits of music in SLA. The rhythm and repetition inherent in music appear to support the development of automaticity in language production. Singing along with songs encouraged natural phrasing and improved prosodic features, likely due to repeated exposure to target sounds in a fun and engaging format.Interestingly, student feedback emphasized that music made them feel "less afraid of making mistakes," which supports the theory that music lowers the affective filter. Compared to mechanical repetition, music-based learning provided richer contextual and emotional cues, aiding long-term retention.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that integrating music into English instruction can significantly improve pronunciation and fluency. It is recommended that English teachers incorporate music-based techniques—such as lyric analysis, singing, and rhythmic repetition—into their regular teaching practices. Future research could explore the long-term retention of pronunciation gains and the effect of different music genres on specific language skills.

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