



# The Authenticity of Singing in a Non-Native Language

Salla Flinkman

BACHELOR'S THESIS May 2023

Degree Programme in Media and Arts Music Production

### **ABSTRACT**

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Degree Programme in Media and Arts
Music Production

FLINKMAN, SALLA:

The Authenticity of Singing in a Non-Native Language

Bachelor's thesis 29 pages, appendices 1 page May 2023

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the authenticity of singing in a non-native language and highlight the attitudes towards Finnish artists who sing in English. If hesitating between native and non-native language, this thesis can clarify the artist's thoughts and give them tools to improve their interpretation. In order to study this relatively abstract subject, four different artists and music business professionals were interviewed about their experiences.

In addition to the interviews, a survey was made to study the reactions and preferences of regular music consumers. After listening to two versions of the same song, one in English and the other in Finnish, the respondents answered 12 multiple-choice questions and one optional open-ended question. The goal was to see how much the singing language affects their listening experience and if there is a difference between the Finnish and non-Finnish speaking respondents. Majority (90%) of the respondents were Finns, which showed in the results. While the English version was preferred musically, the Finnish version was evaluated as more authentic and touching.

The study revealed that the experience of the authenticity can be both inner and external matter that is affected by the listener's and the artist's background, language skills and emotional state. By practising their language skills, the artist can not only develop their credibility and confidence but also unlock hidden potential and open doors to new perspectives.

Key words: authenticity, singing language

# **CONTENTS**

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	INTERVIEWEES	5
	2.1 Alec Moborg	5
	2.2 Katariina Sorsa	5
	2.3 Tommi Läntinen	6
	2.4 Noora Louhimo	7
3	THE EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHENTICITY	9
	3.1 Inner feeling and intuition – How to be your true self?	9
	3.2 Audience perspective	12
4	CAN THE AUTHENTICITY BE LEARNT?	14
5	SONGWRITING PROCESS	15
	5.1 Pull Me Under: English version	15
	5.2 Pull Me Under: Finnish version	16
6	SURVEY: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SINGING LANGUAGE IN MUSIC	19
	6.1 Respondent background information	19
	6.2 Results of song comparison	20
	6.3 Free-form feedback	23
	6.4 Survey summary	24
7	DISCUSSION	25
RE	REFERENCES	
APPENDICES		29
	Appendix 1. Work samples	29

### 1 INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of my musical journey in 2011, I started songwriting in my native language Finnish, never considering any other options. However, soon after encountering my first writer's block, I wanted to try out something new. Out of curiosity, I decided to try if I could make at least one song in English. My English was far from perfect, but I was still able to put my feelings and experiences into words. I found the songwriting process exciting and intuitive, and my writer's block quickly turned into a new world of opportunities.

I never really planned to aim for the international market or sing in English. I just found songwriting in English liberating and creative and felt that the short syllables, rhythm and pronunciation of English words matched better with my style of composing music. Through English, I started to find my own voice and style and my songs became more consistent.

I kept writing both in Finnish and English, but in 2013 I released my first single "Blind Crowd" and decided to focus more on English. Back then, I was studying event production and songwriting in Ikaalinen, Finland. I got a lot of feedback on my language choice from different music business professionals. Some artists and A&Rs told me that it is not genuine to sing in English and Finns want Finnish lyrics only. Some claimed that the people who sing in English usually write about soulless, superficial topics and try to hide their real emotions behind the lyrics. Sometimes, new artists just try to imitate their idols ending up being just a cheap copy of them.

All these arguments made me want to dig deeper to the experience of the authenticity and examine the attitudes, possibilities and challenges of singing in a non-native language, and how the artist can develop their expression and reliability. Very little prior research was found on this topic, so I wanted to hear other artists' thoughts and motives behind their choice of language and compare them to my own.

### **2 INTERVIEWEES**

## 2.1 Alec Moborg

Alec Moborg, known by his stage name Louie Blue, is a talented, self-taught R&B and electro pop artist from Turku, Finland. He is one of the most promising new Finnish artists after releasing his first full-length album DIVISION 8 with Booa Music and Sony Music Finland. Louie Blue has aroused interest in and outside Finland and keeps aiming for the international market. (Team Agency. 2023.) I interviewed him face to face in his studio in Turku, Finland.



PICTURE 1. Louie Blue (Markus Paajala). Quickly rising artist has charmed with his debut single *Confused* (Fräntilä, J. 2021).

### 2.2 Katariina Sorsa

Katariina Sorsa works as a Music Export Manager at Music Finland. Her goal is to develop the export of songwriters, film and media composers and music publishers. She runs Music Finland's songwriting camps and works with different music industry events such as Music & Media Finland and Nordic Music Trade

Mission to Los Angeles. Katariina Sorsa is also known as a singer of a Finnish metal band Ikinä. (Sorsa, K. 2022.) I interviewed Sorsa face to face in Helsinki.

Music Finland is a Finnish organisation which mission is to promote the awareness and success of Finnish music worldwide. Their services vary from consultation, funding and networking to capacity building and boosting international business. (Music Finland n.d.)



PICTURE 2. Katariina Sorsa (Music Finland n.d.). Music Finland's Export Manager Katariina Sorsa has extensive experience in Finnish Music Export.

### 2.3 Tommi Läntinen

Tommi Läntinen has a remarkable, over 40-year career as a Finnish rock singer, musician and a songwriter. He is most known from the rock band Boycott and his successful solo career. Läntinen has experience of singing both in English and in Finnish. He is also one of the artists seen on a popular Finnish TV show "Vain elämää". (Läntinen, T. 2022.) I met Läntinen in Iso Omena library, Espoo, Finland.



PICTURE 3. Tommi Läntinen (Marek Sabogal n.d.). Tommi Läntinen has gathered experience in music business for over 40 years.

# 2.4 Noora Louhimo

Noora Louhimo is one of the most internationally well-known and appreciated Finnish female metal singers and she's best known from a metal band Battle Beast (Mankkinen, J. 2021). In March 2021, Louhimo went back to her own musical roots and released her first solo blues rock album "Eternal Wheel of Time and Space". In addition to being a passionate singer and a songwriter, she is also an enthusiastic rock singing and performing teacher. (Louhimo, N. 2022.)



PICTURE 4. Noora Louhimo (Toni Repo 2021). Noora Louhimo, the frontwoman of a Finnish metal band Battle Beast, released her first solo album in 2021.

### 3 THE EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHENTICITY

# 3.1 Inner feeling and intuition – How to be your true self?

Before going deeper into the question of authenticity, we need to understand what the word "authentic" means – and it is not that simple.

The term 'authentic' is used either in the strong sense of being "of undisputed origin or authorship", or in a weaker sense of being "faithful to an original" or a "reliable, accurate representation". To say that something is authentic is to say that it is what it professes to be, or what it is reputed to be, in origin or authorship. But the distinction between authentic and derivative is more complicated when discussing authenticity as a characteristic attributed to human beings. For in this case, the question arises: What is it to be oneself, at one with oneself, or truly representing one's self? (Guignon & Varga 2020.)

Many starting and even experienced artists encounter times, when they start to question who they really are and if they are making right career decisions. We often hear adults preach younger people how they can't know something because they are still "so young and lost". But what is the age when we are finally not lost? Whose advice and footsteps are the ones that we should follow to achieve our dreams? When there are a lot of people around giving their opinions and advice, it may leave us confused and lose our confident. After receiving plenty of feedback on our "own thing" as an artist, it may become difficult to tell which thoughts were originally our own and which have come from outside.

So, how can we recognise our inner voice from others' opinions? Like Alec Moborg stated in the interview, we usually know when we are pretending to be something we are not. It might be a situation or something that someone has said which makes us seek for a shelter. (Moborg, A. 2022.) After all, being authentic asks courage to be open and vulnerable to judgement and self-awareness to see the right direction. According to Moborg (2022), being a human is a constant change.

In their article "Kinds of Authenticity", George E. Newman and Rosanna K. Smith bring up the ambiguity of term authentic. For instance, when evaluating the authenticity of a painting, two observers can have completely different perspectives. One can think about the artist's motives and whether he/she was genuinely passionate about creating the artwork and the other can ask whether the painting is original (made by a certain artist) or reproduction. (Newman, G. & Smith, R. 2016.) Similarly, the concept of authenticity in music depends on our perspective. For instance, a genuine artist or a singer can be considered as a person who is not copying other artists, or someone who exudes passion and seems to write songs merely to express themselves, not to earn money or please the gatekeepers.

Like Tommi Läntinen stated in the interview (2022), authenticity means being your true self. But what if the artist wants to dye their hair like Elvis? What if they want to wear a mask like Corey Taylor from Slipknot? If the artist changes their whole appearance, are they still being their true self? Noora Louhimo is known for her alterego "Battle Bitch". While Noora Louhimo herself can go out in casual, comfy clothes and wearing little to no makeup on her face, this fantasy-like stage character is all about majestic horns, fake lashes, decorative corsets and fishnet stockings. Louhimo says that on stage, having an alterego can help the artist to bring up their real self and she also encourages her students to find their own alteregos. She adds that it doesn't mean one has to start to dress up or talk differently, but it's more like "an extension" that helps the artist to encounter their possible fears and limitations and to be the best version of themselves. (Louhimo, N. 2022.)



PICTURE 5. Battle Beast (Battle Beast n.d.). The Battle Beast vocalist Noora Louhimo has a fantasy-like stage character.

So, if the alterego can unlock the artist's hidden potential, can singing in a nonnative language have the same kind of an effect? Based on the report "Cognitive Benefits of Language Learning: Broadening our Perspectives" by Bencie
Woll FBA and Li Wei (2019), the answer is yes. The Professors found out that
bilinguals and people who study and speak foreign languages often exhibit increased creativity, empathy and flexibility. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume, that singing in other languages could also help the artists in discovering
new ways to express themselves. Adapting to a different language and through
that, to a different mindset, can bring out traits that weren't apparent before.
And again, from the perspective of authenticity, we can then ask if these newly
discovered traits are a genuine part of the artist or not. Tommi Läntinen says
that language is like a passport to culture and humanity. What matters is what
you say, not how or in what language you say it. If someone wants to sing in
other than their native language, no one can tell them that they can't or that it is
not authentic. (Läntinen, T. 2022.)

Katariina Sorsa remarks that we don't have to sing about our regular daily life to be authentic. Actually, there is an interesting discrepancy between realness and what is expected from the artist. Everybody wants the artist to be relatable and real, but at the same time, something magical and extraordinary. Sorsa thinks that the authenticity comes somewhere deep from our thoughts, feelings and experiences. It's something that we want to share to other people – and there is the magic. (Sorsa, K. 2022.)

# 3.2 Audience perspective

A point that rose from all the interviews is that the experience of authenticity can be an internal or external matter. In a concert, one can feel deeply moved and related – while the other can feel completely disconnected to the artist. Like Tommi Läntinen stated, sometimes there are people in the audience, who don't understand the language and there's nothing you can do about it. Thus, he understands the importance of his Finnish songs and career for Finns, since Finnish is the native language and "the language of the heart" for most of them. (Läntinen, T. 2022.)

For Alec Moborg, connecting with the audience and striving for the authenticity are important factors that affect his songwriting. When singing on stage, he tries to memorize a certain feeling or an image that he had when writing the song. That way he is able to really feel the song himself and then to deliver that feeling to his audience. For this reason, performing cowritten songs can be more challenging. Sometimes, when writing music with others, the focus is more on the production, hooks and melodies rather than the lyrics, so to the artist, the final song can feel more superficial and less personal. Therefore, it is important to find trustworthy people who understand, because then you can open up and share your real stories. (Moborg, A. 2022.)

From the listener's point of view, Noora Louhimo also calls for real emotions of the artist. She reminds that singing is not only about hitting the right note, but like a storyteller, the artist can give meaning to the words with different accents and nuances. If she can't hear the feeling through the story, she finds the performance somehow fake. (Louhimo, N. 2022.)

Listener's expectations and knowledge on the speaker's background can also change both their listening experience and their own representation. For example, knowing that the speaker is non-native makes the listener use fewer details in their own speech and remember less details of what the non-native speaker says (Lev-Ari S. & Keysar B. 2012). This phenomenon applies to the relation of the singer and the audience as well. Noora Louhimo admits that as a Finn, she focuses more on the language and her pronunciation when performing in front of a native English-speaking audience. However, she believes that delivering the message to the audience is far more important than the perfect pronunciation. Some of the English-speaking fans have even told her that they find Finnish accent exotic and unique. (Louhimo, N. 2022.)

Knowing the background and nationality of the speaker also affects the listener's attitude on their pronunciation. A study shows that when evaluating Finnish English accent, Finns have more critical and negative attitude than the native English speakers. (Toivonen, L. 2019.) This could partly explain the general view that Rautio (2014) and Riikonen (2018) bring out – for the Finns' it is more difficult to succeed in Finland by singing in English.

### 4 CAN THE AUTHENTICITY BE LEARNT?

What if the artist has all the personal stories, strong emotions and passion for music, but still can't convince the audience? Can authenticity be learnt and is there anything the artist can do to be more real? Noora Louhimo told that there have been times when she has questioned her own authenticity. Instead of making music only for herself she wants to serve her audience and have a deeper meaning to what she does. To find that meaning and to get in touch with her intuition, she has, for example, stayed in a cabin alone with her dog, switching all the devices off and just embracing silence. In these modern days, many people fill their daily life by listening to music and podcasts, watching TV shows, spending time on social media and so on, and it is easy to forget to listen to their inner voice. (Louhimo, N. 2022.)

According to Katariina Sorsa, a good way to improve the authenticity is to study the language. If the artist decides to sing in their non-native language, the motive should not be that "it just sounds nice". To get the communication to a fluent level, the artist should love the language and to be ready to immerse to it. If moving abroad is not an option, practising the language through movies, language lessons, music etc. is important. (Sorsa, K. 2022.)

### 5 SONGWRITING PROCESS

# 5.1 Pull Me Under: English version

I wrote the song Pull Me Under originally in English. It was a time, when I felt like I was repeating some toxic patterns, living unhealthy life and constantly ignoring my inner voice and true needs. I was also thinking about my younger sister to whom I have always wanted to be a good role model and above all, a support and a shelter. But since I could not be there for myself, I felt like I could not be there for her or anyone else either. I believe that presence and love for ourselves and others are themes, that everyone must think through at some point of their lives. For me, there are many levels in this song, but in the end, everything leads to the same wisdom: love yourself to love others. Here are the original lyrics of Pull Me Under:

Pull me under the water, water
Let me see her, embrace her with my love
All the damage I've caused to her
Can't be undone but I still try
To be a mother that she deserves
So she can go on with her life

I wasn't there but I'm here now
I'm gonna keep my eyes on you
Whatever happens, don't give it up
Follow your dreams and make them true

Like a stone I'm sinkin' in too deep
Oh, please forgive me for takin' you with me
It always breaks my heart in two
To see the tears there in your eyes
Better days will come to you
Someday soon the sun will rise

16

I wasn't there but I'm here now
I'm gonna keep my eyes on you
Whatever happens, don't give it up
Follow your dreams and make them true

Pull me under

Pull me under

Pull me under

Pull me under

I wasn't there but I'm here now
I'm gonna keep my eyes on you
Whatever happens, don't give it up
Follow your dreams and make them true

After writing the song, the production was put together in three locations. At first, we recorded the drums and bass in vStudio, Valkeakoski with Mikael Björkman. I sent the files to a musician-composer-producer Ville Palin, who played the guitars and did the rest of the arrangement. I recorded and edited all the vocals and Ville did the final mixing. The song was mastered by Jaakko Viitalähde in Virtalähde Mastering.

### 5.2 Pull Me Under: Finnish version

Despite the will and curiosity to translate my songs from English to Finnish, I had previously failed to do it. This time, I wanted to really challenge myself and decided to make the lyrics work in Finnish. To keep the natural flow in the song, I picked the main themes and started from scratch instead of trying to aim for a direct translation.

To me, the process was more rational than intuitive, and I managed to force myself to finish the lyrics. Due to the difference in the pronunciation and mouth placement of each sound, I had to lower the pitch to be able to sing effortlessly, which gave me a new perspective to the English version as well. Singing in lower pitch was closer to my natural speaking tone so I started to focus more on

the words. The production was identical to the original version, excluding some of the vocal effects that didn't work due to the small changes in the singing rhythm. Here are the lyrics of the Finnish version Noustaan pintaan:

Vie mut kauas pohjaan tumman veen Luokse lapsen hiekkaan vajonneen Ja mä lupaan ja vannon sen Hän sydämeensä rauhan saa Vielä olen sen arvoinen Että hän oppii luottamaan

Sut kadotin, mut tässä nyt oon
Voin kuivata sun kyynelees
Äläkä pelkää, mä en katoo
Viereltäs enää uudelleen
Pimeellä tiellä näytän valoo
Ja suojaan sun askelees
Mitä vaan käy, en juokse pakoon
Vaan äidin lailla taistelen

Upposin kuin laiva aaltoihin
Ja pinnan alle painoin sinutkin
Sitä mitä mä väärin tein
En enää muuksi muuttaa voi
Silti sä olit ja oot tärkein
Anna mun kantaa sut täältä pois

Sut kadotin, mut tässä nyt oon
Voin kuivata sun kyynelees
Äläkä pelkää, mä en katoo
Viereltäs enää uudelleen
Pimeellä tiellä näytän valoo
Ja suojaan sun askelees
Mitä vaan käy, en juokse pakoon
Vaan äidin lailla taistelen

Noustaan pintaan Noustaan pintaan Noustaan pintaan Noustaan pintaan

Sut kadotin, mut tässä nyt oon
Voin kuivata sun kyynelees
Äläkä pelkää, mä en katoo
Viereltäs enää uudelleen
Pimeellä tiellä näytän valoo
Ja suojaan sun askelees
Mitä vaan käy, en juokse pakoon
Vaan äidin lailla taistelen

The most significant difference between the Finnish and the English lyrics is the length of the chorus. To me, repeating the same words in Finnish felt superficial and I wanted to describe my thoughts more specifically. A couple of the respondents wrote in the survey's free-form section that they felt like the Finnish version was written in a different mindset, having more positive and hopeful mood to it. Since the English version was the original, it is likely that I had subconciously processed the story and the emotions further.

### 6 SURVEY: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SINGING LANGUAGE IN MUSIC

The purpose of this study was to collect information about regular music consumers' attitudes and preferences and to see, how much the singing language affects the listener's experience of the authenticity and credibility. In the survey, the participants listened to the two versions of the same song, one in English (Pull Me Under) and the other in Finnish (Noustaan pintaan). Based on what they heard, they answered 12 multiple-choice questions and one optional openended question. The survey was made with Google Forms and shared on social media.

# 6.1 Respondent background information

The survey got 90 participants, from which 81 told their first language to be Finnish, 7 English and 5 other than Finnish or English. To get a reliable comparison between the Finnish and non-Finnish listeners, more foreign respondents would have been preferred. All the respondents were between the age of 18-79, the age group 30-39 being the most represented with 30%. The respondents taste in music varied widely – pop (27%), rock (23%) and metal (21%) being the most preferred genres.

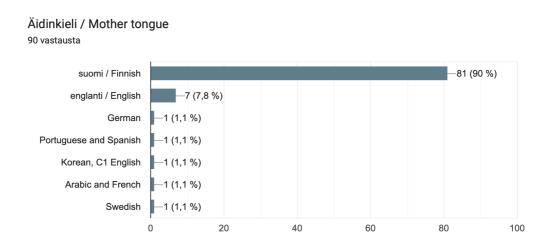


FIGURE 1. Mother tongue. 90% of the respondents were native Finnish speakers.

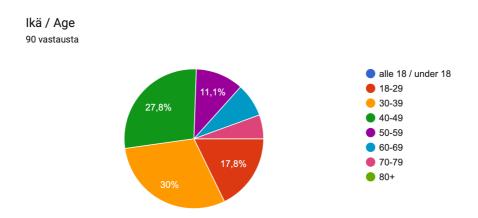


FIGURE 2. Age. More than half of the survey respondents were adults between the age of 30-49.

Mikä musiikin tyylilaji seuraavista vaihtoehdoista on sinulle mieluisin? / Which of these genres do you prefer the most?

90 vastausta

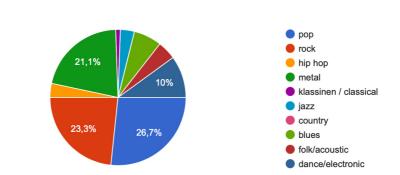


FIGURE 3. Music genre preference. The respondents taste in music varied widely.

# 6.2 Results of song comparison

The first question in the song comparison section asked the respondents to choose which version, Finnish or English, they preferred overall. Most of the respondents being Finns, the answers were surprisingly evenly distributed. While 39% of the respondents liked both versions equally, 34% chose the Finnish version and 27% the English version.

Kummasta versiosta pidit kokonaisuutena enemmän? / Which version did you prefer overall? 90 vastausta

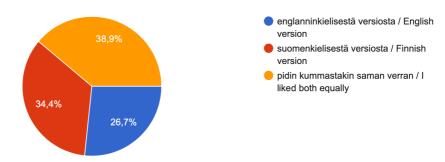


FIGURE 4. Song comparison. Most of the respondents liked both versions equally.

Next, the respondents were asked to evaluate the songs' musical quality including the rhythm of the words, singer's voice and phrasing. The majority 43% of the respondents preferred the English version, 31% liked both versions equally and 26% chose the Finnish version.

Kumpi versio oli musiikillisesti parempi? (Arvioi sanojen rytmitystä, laulajan ääntä ja fraseerausta.) / Which one was musically better? (Evaluate the rhythm of the words, singer's voice and phrasing.) 90 vastausta

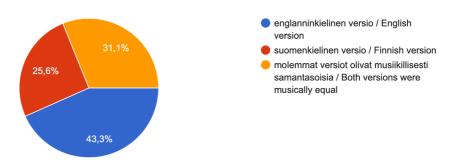


FIGURE 5. Musical evaluation. Most of the respondents preferred the English version.

When the respondents were asked to evaluate the authenticity and the credibility of the story and the singer's interpretation, 41% chose the Finnish version and 24% chose the English version. The rest 34% found both versions musically equal.

Kumpi versio tuntui uskottavammalta? (Arvioi laulajan tulkinnan vakuuttavuutta, ja sitä, tuntuiko tarina aidolta.) / Which version felt more authentic? (...er's interpretation and if the story felt real or not.) 90 vastausta

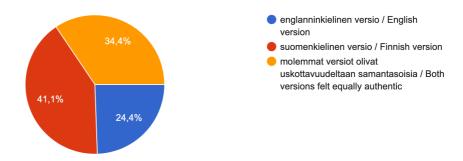


FIGURE 6. The authenticity. Most of the respondents found the Finnish version more authentic.

To see the differ in emotional reaction that the songs evoked, the respondents were simply asked which version touched them more. More than half of them (60%) were more touched by the Finnish version, while only 13% chose the English version. For 27% of the respondents the versions were equally touching.

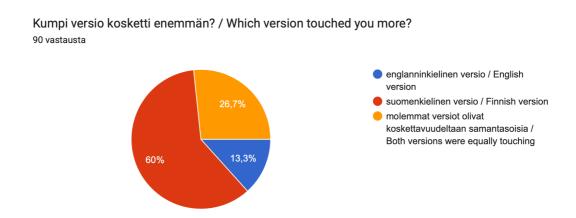


FIGURE 7. Emotional response. More than half of the respondents were more touched by the Finnish version.

Final multiple-choice questions studied weather the respondents understood the lyrics or not. Both versions were well comprehended. Most of the respondents (86%) understood the Finnish lyrics and 74% understood the English lyrics. The slightly bigger percentage in Finnish version was expected, since most of the respondents were Finns.

Ymmärsitkö/saitko selvää suomenkielisen version sanoista? / Did you understand the lyrics of the Finnish version?

90 vastausta

Kyllä / Yes
En / No
Osittain / Only partially

85,6%

FIGURE 8. Understanding the Finnish song lyrics. Most of the respondents comprehended the Finnish words.

Ymmärsitkö/saitko selvää englanninkielisen version sanoista? / Did you understand the lyrics of the English version
90 vastausta

Kyllä / Yes

En / No

Onittein / Only porticilly

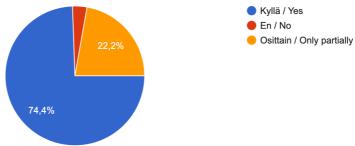


FIGURE 9. Understanding the English song lyrics. Only 3% of the respondents did not understand the English words.

# 6.3 Free-form feedback

At the end of the survey, it was possible to leave free-form comments to better justify the given answers. The topic seemed to evoke interest, since 68 of all the 90 respondents chose to give feedback and describe their opinions and thoughts in their own words. Some of the respondents reckoned the Finnish version was written before the English, while some of them said the exact op-

posite. So, to the respondents it wasn't that obvious that the English version was the original.

As the Figure 5 shows, the English version was preferred musically, and the free-form comments clarified the results. Some of the Finnish respondents told that in the English version they focus more on the music and in the Finnish version their attention goes to the lyrics. Some stated that the English lyrics fit better to the music genre and overall style and mood of the song. The grittiness and harshness of Finnish words was pointed out many times in the comments, which was one of the reasons why some of the respondents enjoyed the softer and more flexible English version more. To some people on the other hand, the harshness and the strong consonants of Finnish language were exotic and more powerful, which made the Finnish version more emotional and reliable.

# 6.4 Survey summary

The survey revealed that for most Finns, Finnish lyrics are better comprehended and thus more touching. The harshness of Finnish language can be found powerful and unique but also musically disturbing, whilst singing in English sounds softer but may lack personality. Based on the results of the survey, we could say that the Finnish version is more authentic, but the English version sounds better. Especially in the free-form section, there were a lot of opposing views, which shows that evaluating music or its authenticity is complicated. A feature that one listener finds disturbing, can be the reason why the other one likes the song. The personal preferences, background, language skills and even the current mood of the respondent can significantly affect their listening experience.

### 7 DISCUSSION

Evaluating the artist's credibility or realness is a complicated, if not an impossible mission but as a conclusion, it is safe to say that singing in a non-native doesn't make the artist less authentic. As mentioned before, the experience of the authenticity forms both inside the artist's and the listener's mind, so it's all about preference and whether one believes in themselves or not. When someone comments on the artist's realness, the background and motives of the judge should be taken to consideration. After all, the concept of the authenticity is a very personal, abstract matter, and everyone can decide what they consider to be real or fake.

Despite the hard work and challenges that singing in a non-native language can bring, learning new languages has a lot of advantages. Foreign languages open gates to new perspectives, humanity and culture and increase creativity and empathy. Even though the global success is possible in any language, singing for example in English can make it easier to break through to the international market. For me as an artist and a songwriter, diving into English has helped me to overcome my writer's block and to find my own musical style. Since singing in English is technically and phonetically different, I have also found new ways to use my voice. All the things that I've learned through making music in English, I can bring to my native language and vice versa.

By studying their preferred language, the artist can gain confidence, write more in-depth lyrics and improve their credibility. This applies to any language. To me, this thesis was a great way to explore my own attitudes and challenge myself as a songwriter. After years of making music in English, I found new inspiration to write more songs in Finnish.

What comes to the survey, the results were very much in line with my own experiences and expectations. While I find composing and singing in English more effortless than in Finnish, it's more difficult to write unique lyrics. When writing in Finnish, I can show more personality and feel more confident about my pronunciation and grammar, but the structure of the Finnish words makes the compos-

ing and singing more challenging. I support Tommi Läntinen's (2022) thought that authenticity means being true to yourself. Knowing what you really want and being aware of your own weaknesses and strengths is the key to improve as an artist. When you know what you want, you can commit to the learning process, start creating your own path and appear real to yourself and others.

### REFERENCES

Battle Beast. N.d. Media. Read on 22.5.2023. https://battlebeast.fi/media

Fräntilä, J. 2021. Rumba. Debyyttilevyään viimeistelevä superlupaus Louie Blue julkaisi uuden singlen ja videon – odotettu albumi loppuvuodesta! Read on 13.11.2022. <a href="https://www.rumba.fi/uutiset/debyyttilevyaan-viimeisteleva-superlupaus-louie-blue-julkaisi-uuden-singlen-ja-videon-odotettu-albumi-loppuvuodesta/">https://www.rumba.fi/uutiset/debyyttilevyaan-viimeisteleva-superlupaus-louie-blue-julkaisi-uuden-singlen-ja-videon-odotettu-albumi-loppuvuodesta/</a>

Guignon, V. & Varga, S. 2014. Authenticity. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Read on 3.6.2022. <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/authenticity/">https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/authenticity/</a>

Lev-Ari, S. & Keysar, B. 2012. Less-Detailed Representation of Non-Native Language: Why Non-Native Speakers' Stories Seem More Vague. Discourse Processes, Vol.49 (7). Read on 20.5.2023. <a href="https://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.tuni.fi/doi/pdf/10.1080/0163853X.2012.698493?needAccess=true">https://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.tuni.fi/doi/pdf/10.1080/0163853X.2012.698493?needAccess=true</a>

Louhimo, N. Artist. 2022. Interview 17.10.2022. Interviewer Flinkman, S. Tampere.

Läntinen, T. Artist. 2022. Interview on 14.10.2022. Interviewer Flinkman, S. Espoo.

Mankkinen, J. 2021. Yle. Battle Beastin Noora Louhimo runttasi ääntään, ja nyt se kuuluu hänen laulussaan: soololevyllä mellastavat moottoripyöräilevät alienit ja Janis Joplin. Read on 22.5.2023. <a href="https://yle.fi/a/3-11823571">https://yle.fi/a/3-11823571</a>

Moborg, A. Artist. 2022. Interview on 27.5.2022. Interviewer Flinkman, S. Turku.

Music Finland. N.d. Mikä on Music Finland? Read on 21.5.2023. <a href="https://musicfinland.fi/fi/meista">https://musicfinland.fi/fi/meista</a>

Newman, G. & Smith R. 2016. Kinds of Authenticity. Philosophy compass, Vol.11 (10). Read on 13.11.2022. <a href="https://compass-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.libproxy.tuni.fi/doi/pdfdirect/10.1111/phc3.12343">https://compass-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.libproxy.tuni.fi/doi/pdfdirect/10.1111/phc3.12343</a>

Paajala, M. 2021. Rumba. Debyyttilevyään viimeistelevä superlupaus Louie Blue julkaisi uuden singlen ja videon – odotettu albumi loppuvuodesta! Read on 13.11.2022. <a href="https://www.rumba.fi/uutiset/debyyttilevyaan-viimeisteleva-superlupaus-louie-blue-julkaisi-uuden-singlen-ja-videon-odotettu-albumi-loppuvuodesta/">https://www.rumba.fi/uutiset/debyyttilevyaan-viimeisteleva-superlupaus-louie-blue-julkaisi-uuden-singlen-ja-videon-odotettu-albumi-loppuvuodesta/</a>

Rautio, S. 2014. Yle. Suomalaisartistit vaihtavat laulukieltä – syynä parempi menestymismahdollisuus? Read on 21.5.2023. <a href="https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2014/07/21/suomalaisartistit-vaihtavat-laulukielta-syyna-parempi-menestymismahdollisuus">https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2014/07/21/suomalaisartistit-vaihtavat-laulukielta-syyna-parempi-menestymismahdollisuus</a>

Repo, T. 2021. Aamulehti. Istutko sarvet päässä kotona, Noora Louhimo? Menestystä niittävän Battle Beastin tamperelainen keulahahmo kertoo nyt, kuka on

uniin tuleva Bertta ja mikä on unelmien täyttymys. Read on 22.5.2023. <a href="https://www.aamulehti.fi/musiikki/art-2000007820314.html">https://www.aamulehti.fi/musiikki/art-2000007820314.html</a>

Riikonen, J. 2018. Helsingin Sanomat. Suomessa on vaikea menestyä englanniksi laulamalla, mutta kriitikoiden kehuma The New Tigers ei ole harkinnut suomen kieleen vaihtamista. Read on 21.5.2023. <a href="https://www.hs.fi/nyt/art-2000005657359.html">https://www.hs.fi/nyt/art-2000005657359.html</a>

Sorsa, K. 2022. Artist. Interview on 16.6.2022. Interviewer Flinkman, S. Helsinki.

Team Agency. N.d. Louie Blue. Read on 21.5.2023. https://www.team.fi/artist/louie-blue/

Toivonen, L. 2019. Domestic and Foreign Attitudes Towards Finnish English Accents. Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences. Tampere University. Master's thesis. Read on 21.5.2023. <a href="https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/105753/1558072872.pdf?sequence=18isAllowed=y">https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/105753/1558072872.pdf?sequence=18isAllowed=y</a>

Wei, L. & Woll, B. 2019. Cognitive Benefits of Language Learning: Broadening our perspectives. The British Academy. Read on 18.3.2023. <a href="https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/287/Cognitive-Benefits-Language-Learning-Final-Report.pdf">https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/287/Cognitive-Benefits-Language-Learning-Final-Report.pdf</a>

# **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1. Work samples

Pull Me Under (English version)

https://youtu.be/DsglRXeY9Hk

Noustaan pintaan (Finnish version)

https://youtu.be/DsgIRXeY9Hk