

## **Developing a language-aware learning environment in early childhood education and care**

**Language awareness belongs to everyone!** Every child has the right to be heard and seen as themselves.

**A language-aware learning environment takes into account:**

- Physical environment
- A safe atmosphere created by adults
- Interaction between children
- Pedagogical activities

During the school year 2025–2026, Lahti has developed a language-aware learning environment. The daycare centres chose how the development task was carried out in their own unit. The task was documented by various visual means and distributed to the early childhood education staff for information. We want to invest in language awareness in the future as well.

In Sharehop language-aware development work in Lahti will be presented by a teacher of Finnish as a second language in early childhood education Päivi Mikkola, a special education teacher in early childhood education Riitta Hellsten and an early childhood education teacher Mari Muurman.

## **Co-operation with parents and network on child's language development**

In this shapeshop, we present the multi-professional forms of co-operation used in early childhood education and preschool education in the City of Lahti to support the language development of multilingual children. The development of the child's language identity is supported in co-operation with the guardians.

The City of Lahti's early childhood education and preschool education is staffed by:

- Finnish as a second language teachers who support multilingual children's Finnish language learning and support staff in matters related to multilingualism
- language assistants who support the development of the child's native language
- special education teachers

In addition, there is co-operation with the child health clinic and, if necessary, speech therapists.

The presenters of this shapeshop are Jenni Kautto, a special education teacher in early childhood education, and Tiia Melasniemi and Katja Rinne, teachers of Finnish as a second language.