

The Correlation Between Students Habit of Listening to English Songs and Their Listening Comprehension Skills of Second Semester Students at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI

Nurjihan Widya Larasati^{1*}, Moh. Hanafi¹

¹*Institusi Universitas Bhinneka PGRI, Indonesia*

jihanwidya17@gmail.com*

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Abstract

This study explores how frequently students listen to English songs and how it influences their ability to understand spoken language. The participants were second-semester students from the English Education Study Program at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI and applied a correlational quantitative approach. Data were gathered using two instruments: a structured questionnaire to measure students' listening habits and a standardized listening comprehension test. A total of 21 students participated as respondents through a total sampling approach. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation formula. The results revealed a strong and statistically significant relationship between the frequency of listening to English songs and students' listening test scores ($r = 0.981$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that students who regularly listen to English songs tend to demonstrate higher comprehension abilities. These findings support the acceptance of the study's hypothesis. The research highlights the pedagogical potential of integrating music-based input into language learning and opens avenues for further exploration on how informal listening practices contribute to language development among EFL learners.

Keywords: Correlation, English songs, listening habits, listening comprehension skills

1. Introduction

Listening is one of the most essential skills in learning a foreign language, as it forms the foundation for spoken interaction, vocabulary acquisition, and contextual understanding. Far from being a passive act, listening requires active attention and cognitive processing to decode, interpret, and respond to auditory input. As emphasized by Fenyi et al. (2021), listening involves not only hearing but also constructing meaning through understanding and inference. In English language education, especially at the university level, listening comprehension becomes even more critical due to the complexity of pronunciation, variety in vocabulary, and diversity of spoken forms learners are exposed to. Yet, developing strong listening skills remains a challenge

for many learners due to limited exposure to authentic materials and insufficient engagement in meaningful listening activities.

Among the various approaches proposed to enhance listening abilities, one engaging and accessible strategy is the habit of listening to English songs. English music offers students exposure to authentic pronunciation, colloquial expressions, and cultural elements in a way that is both enjoyable and motivating. Harmer (2015) argues that music provides repetitive and rhythmical language input, which supports retention and encourages deeper engagement. In this context, listening to English songs regularly can contribute to the natural development of language skills, including pronunciation, grammar recognition, and overall listening comprehension, as supported by Mahjabin (2019), who found that repetitive listening to songs improves learners' fluency and accuracy in English, and by Sinaga et al. (2020), who emphasized the role of music in enriching students' vocabulary and idiomatic understanding.

A number of earlier studies have shown that engaging with English songs can enhance learners' understanding skills. Research conducted by Silvia (2017), Putri (2019), and Lapuk et al. (2023) identified notable associations between how often students listen to songs and their listening proficiency results. However, these studies primarily focused on senior high school students and did not thoroughly explore the nature of the listening habit, such as its frequency, duration, or the specific genres and features of the songs listened to. Furthermore, few studies have examined this phenomenon among university students, especially those enrolled in English education programs. This gap presents an opportunity to investigate how structured and consistent exposure to English songs might influence listening comprehension in more mature learners who are actively engaged in language development at the tertiary level.

In response to this need, this study centers on students in their second semester who are enrolled in the English Education program at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI. This research was conducted because there is a lack of empirical data on how university-level learners, especially those training to become English educators, develop listening comprehension through informal and autonomous practices such as listening to English songs. While previous studies have examined similar variables at the secondary education level, few have addressed how consistent listening habits influence comprehension skills among prospective English teachers, who are expected to model strong listening proficiency in their future classrooms.

This research adopts a working definition of "listening habit" as the act of listening to English songs at least three times a week for a minimum of three consecutive months. Songs selected typically fall under the pop genre, known for their clear pronunciation and comprehensible lyrics. Drawing upon the Habit Formation Theory Wood et al. (2022), repeated exposure within consistent contexts is understood to lead to automaticity, allowing language input to be internalized more naturally over time. Additionally, the Dual-Process Theory of Listening Comprehension Nguyen (2020) suggests that comprehension arises from the interplay between bottom-up (sound decoding) and top-down (contextual prediction) processes both of which can be trained through repeated listening to structured audio like songs.

Supporting theories, such as the Multisensory Learning Theory (Shams et al. 2008) and Schema Theory (Anderson et al. 2016) further affirm that integrating auditory input with contextual knowledge and emotional engagement as songs often do can enrich learners'

processing of language. Moreover, the Input Hypothesis (Rachman et al., 2023) proposes that language acquisition flourishes when learners receive comprehensible input slightly above their current proficiency level. Songs, by virtue of their accessibility and appeal, may serve as an ideal medium for delivering such input, especially when learners engage actively and repeatedly.

Despite its benefits, building a listening habit through music also faces certain challenges. Students may encounter difficulty with unfamiliar accents (Denton, 2023), idiomatic or poetic expressions (Guerguet, 2023), or may listen passively without engaging with the linguistic content (Khaghaninejad et al., 2016). Environmental distractions and inconsistent access to appropriate learning environments can further reduce the effectiveness of this method. Therefore, understanding how students' habits formed through consistent exposure to English-language music relate to their ability to process spoken English input becomes critical in enhancing language learning outcomes.

This study aims to determine whether there is a significant relationship between students' habit of listening to English songs and their listening comprehension skills. The findings are expected to offer practical insights for students seeking alternative ways to improve their listening proficiency, for teachers looking to diversify their teaching media, and for future researchers interested in the pedagogical role of music in language acquisition. Based on this goal, the hypothesis proposed is as follows: there is a significant correlation between students' habit of listening to English songs and their listening comprehension skills.

2. Method

This study was conducted at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI, specifically within the English Education Department, in the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Data collection took place in March 2025, with both the listening comprehension test and the questionnaire administered to the research participants within a one-week period.

This research employs a quantitative, correlational approach to determine the relationship between two variables: students' habit of listening to English songs (independent variable) and students' listening comprehension ability (dependent variable). This type of research does not manipulate variables but instead observes and analyzes their natural associations within a defined context. The approach is rational, because it builds upon previous literature and theories to formulate hypotheses; empirical, because it collects and analyzes measurable data from real participants; and systematic, as it follows a structured procedure from sampling through analysis.

The participants in this study consisted of all second-semester undergraduates enrolled in the English Language Education program at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI. This group was selected because students at this level have already been introduced to basic listening skills through formal instruction and are beginning to engage in independent language input outside the classroom, such as through music or media. Studying them allows for better insight into how informal listening habits influence comprehension during a formative stage of language development.

Two main instruments were used to collect data: a questionnaire and a listening comprehension test. The questionnaire, adapted from Putri (2019) and Goh & Vandergrift (2021) was designed to measure students' habits of listening to English songs. It included 20 items covering frequency, duration, song type, and motivation, rated using a 5-point Likert scale. The

operational definition for a listening habit in this study is: engaging in listening to English songs at least three times per week, consistently for three months, with preference toward pop songs containing clear pronunciation and educational lyrics.

The listening comprehension test, developed and validated with input from an expert in the field, consisted of 20 multiple-choice items based on an academic listening passage titled *The Story of Fairy Tales*. The test was constructed to assess students' ability to identify main ideas, comprehend specific details, infer implied meanings, and interpret messages. The listening material was carefully selected to ensure it contained appropriate vocabulary, clear articulation, and a moderate speed of delivery. The assessment applied the interval classification system suggested by (Arikunto, 2010), categorizing scores into five levels: scores of 90–100 as very good, 80–89 as good, 70–79 as fair, 60–69 as poor, and below 60 as very poor.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments, expert judgment was conducted during the development phase. The validation process was carried out by Moh. Huda Choi, M.Pd., who serves as a faculty member in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI and possesses expertise in English language teaching and assessment. With her academic background in English Language Education and professional experience in teaching listening courses and supervising undergraduate research, she evaluated the questionnaire and listening test to ensure their content validity, clarity of instructions, and appropriateness for the target respondents.

The collected data were processed through both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis was applied to provide an overview of students' performance, including calculations of the mean, standard deviation, as well as the minimum and maximum scores. For the inferential part, the Pearson Product-Moment correlation was selected to examine the association between the two main variables, as the dataset satisfied the normality assumption based on the Shapiro-Wilk test, which is particularly suitable for small sample sizes. The strength of the correlation (r) was interpreted according to commonly accepted classification: 0.00–0.199 (very weak), 0.20–0.399 (weak), 0.40–0.599 (moderate), 0.60–0.799 (strong), and 0.80–1.000 (very strong). A p -value below 0.05 was considered indicative of a statistically significant correlation.

The research procedure followed a systematic sequence: (1) defining the research topic, (2) conducting a literature review, (3) preparing and validating the instruments, (4) collecting data through questionnaires and listening tests, (5) analyzing the data using SPSS 26, and (6) interpreting the results to draw conclusions. The entire process was conducted in adherence to scientific principles and academic rigor to ensure the validity and reliability of findings that contribute to current discussions in language learning research.

3. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between students' English song listening habits and their ability to comprehend spoken English. The participants consisted of 21 second-semester students enrolled in the English Education Department at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI. Data collection involved two instruments: a questionnaire designed to assess the frequency and nature of students' listening habits, and a comprehension test aimed at evaluating their English listening proficiency.

Research Results

The descriptive statistics for both variables are presented below:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Listening Habit and Listening Comprehension

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Listening Habit (X)	21	66	91	77.71	7.46
Listening Comprehension (Y)	21	66	93	77.14	7.54

The students' average score for their listening habits was 77.71, suggesting that the majority of participants engaged in English song listening with relatively high consistency. In comparison, the mean score obtained in the listening comprehension test was 77.14, which falls within the "fair to good" classification according to the applied assessment rubric. Prior to conducting the correlation analysis, a normality check was performed using the Shapiro-Wilk test to ensure that the data met the required assumptions for parametric testing:

Table 2. Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)

Variable	Statistic	Sig. (p-value)
Listening Habit (X)	0.957	0.467
Listening Comprehension (Y)	0.962	0.550

Since the p-values were greater than 0.05 for both variables, the data were considered normally distributed, making it appropriate to apply Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variables	r	Sig. (2-tailed)
Listening Habit ↔ Listening Comprehension	0.981	0.000

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was 0.981, indicating a very high positive correlation between students' habit of listening to English songs and their listening comprehension skills. The p-value was $0.000 < 0.05$, confirming that the correlation is statistically significant.

Discussion

The findings confirm that a strong and consistent habit of listening to English songs is significantly associated with higher levels of listening comprehension. This supports the hypothesis and directly answers the research problem, which sought to examine whether such a correlation exists among university-level EFL students.

The very high correlation coefficient ($r = 0.981$) suggests that the more frequently and attentively students engage with English songs, the better their ability to process spoken language. This result aligns with previous studies by Silvia (2017), Putri (2019), and Lapuk et al. (2023), which reported similar positive relationships between musical exposure and language proficiency.

However, this study extends those findings by focusing on a university student population and by incorporating frequency, song type, and duration into the measurement of habit.

From a theoretical standpoint, the result supports the Habit Formation Theory (Wood et al., 2022), which emphasizes that behaviors repeated consistently within stable contexts become automatic. The students in this study listened to English songs three or more times per week over at least three months, reinforcing language input through repetitive exposure.

Moreover, the data align with the Dual-Process Theory of Listening Comprehension (Nguyen, 2020), where learners benefit from both bottom-up decoding and top-down inferencing. Listening to English songs helps students recognize vocabulary, interpret meaning through context, and develop intuitive understanding of grammar and intonation patterns.

The study also confirms the Input Hypothesis (Aziz, 2023), this theory suggests that learners acquire language more effectively when they are exposed to input that is understandable but slightly above their present level of competence. In this regard, English songs provide authentic linguistic material that is both engaging and within reach, making them a valuable medium for facilitating language growth.

Practically, the results suggest that English educators can incorporate music as a supplemental medium in listening instruction. Since pop songs with clear pronunciation and structured lyrics were most beneficial, teachers can design song-based listening activities to reinforce comprehension strategies, vocabulary building, and cultural understanding.

This correlation also highlights a value-added insight: encouraging autonomous language practice outside the classroom, such as through music, can significantly enhance formal language learning. This becomes especially important in contexts where formal exposure to native speakers or real-life listening environments is limited.

To conclude, the findings have thoroughly addressed the research problem and confirmed the achievement of the study's aim. The significant positive correlation between students' English song listening habits and their listening comprehension contributes both to theoretical discussions in language acquisition and to practical applications in instructional settings, particularly in promoting learner independence.

4. Conclusion

The outcomes of the data analysis and hypothesis testing indicate a statistically significant and very strong positive relationship between students' engagement in listening to English songs and their performance in listening comprehension. In other words, students who consistently and frequently listen to English songs tend to demonstrate a higher ability to understand spoken English materials.

This finding emphasizes the importance of integrating informal language exposure, such as English songs, into students' learning habits to improve their auditory skills. For educators, it suggests that encouraging learners to interact with English music beyond classroom settings may serve as a beneficial support strategy in improving their listening skills.

Future studies are encouraged to investigate other musical genres, age groups, or levels of language proficiency to explore whether similar positive effects can be observed. Additionally,

longitudinal research could provide insights into how sustained listening habits influence listening development over time.

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