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English-Song Listening Habits and Listening Comprehension Among EFL University Students: A Reassessment of Correlational Evidence

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between self-reported English-song listening habits and documented listening achievement among university students learning English as a foreign language. The source study employed a quantitative correlational design, a 13-item questionnaire on song-related engagement, and academic listening scores. Although 26 students were described as participants, the published correlation worksheet contained 24 complete paired observations. Reanalysis of those 24 pairs produced a small negative Pearson correlation ($r = -0.111$, two-tailed $p = 0.606$), rather than the strong positive coefficient ($r = .98$) stated in the source report. The mismatch was attributable to an incorrect application of the correlation formula and inconsistencies in the reported sample counts. Questionnaire frequencies indicated that many students enjoyed English songs and used them for vocabulary and pronunciation practice, but the items also measured attitudes and strategies rather than listening frequency alone. The available paired data did not support a statistically significant linear association between the recorded questionnaire scores and listening scores. The study highlights the importance of accurate score pairing, transparent measurement, and reproducible statistical analysis in research on informal English listening exposure.

Keywords: English songs; listening comprehension; EFL students; listening habits; correlational research

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji hubungan antara kebiasaan mendengarkan lagu berbahasa Inggris yang dilaporkan mahasiswa dan capaian menyimak yang terdokumentasi. Penelitian sumber menggunakan desain kuantitatif korelasional, angket 13 butir mengenai keterlibatan dengan lagu, dan nilai mata kuliah menyimak. Meskipun jumlah partisipan dinyatakan 26 mahasiswa, tabel perhitungan korelasi hanya memuat 24 pasangan data lengkap. Analisis ulang terhadap 24 pasangan tersebut menghasilkan korelasi Pearson negatif yang sangat lemah (r = -0.111; p dua arah = 0.606), berbeda dari korelasi positif sangat kuat (r = 0,98) yang dilaporkan sebelumnya. Perbedaan tersebut berkaitan dengan penerapan rumus korelasi yang tidak tepat dan ketidakkonsistenan jumlah sampel. Tanggapan angket menunjukkan ketertarikan mahasiswa pada lagu berbahasa Inggris untuk kosakata dan pelafalan, tetapi sejumlah butir mengukur sikap dan strategi, bukan semata frekuensi menyimak. Data berpasangan yang tersedia tidak mendukung hubungan linear yang signifikan antara skor angket dan nilai menyimak. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya ketepatan pasangan skor, pengukuran yang jelas, dan analisis statistik yang dapat direplikasi.

Kata kunci: lagu bahasa Inggris; pemahaman menyimak; mahasiswa EFL; kebiasaan menyimak; penelitian korelasional

INTRODUCTION

Listening comprehension is a central component of second-language development because learners must segment a continuous acoustic signal, recognize lexical forms, integrate grammatical information, and construct meaning in real time. Unlike written input, spoken language is transient and often contains reductions, connected speech, and variable pronunciation. Research on second-language listening therefore distinguishes the availability of auditory input from the strategic and linguistic processes needed to understand it (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012; Field, 2008).

Songs provide an accessible form of informal language exposure. Learners can encounter recurring lexical sequences, rhythm, connected speech, and culturally meaningful expressions through music on personal devices. Repetition and enjoyment may increase opportunities for engagement; however, hearing a song repeatedly is not

equivalent to comprehending unfamiliar spoken discourse. Musical features can support attention and memory while also introducing challenges, including unusual phrasing, altered stress, and instrumental masking (Murphey, 1992; Medina, 1993; Ludke et al., 2014). In an Indonesian classroom action study, Ariani and Iswandi (2020) reported improved listening performance following English-pop-song activities. Their intervention findings offer pedagogical context but cannot establish that students who independently listen more frequently will necessarily obtain higher course scores.

Studies of second-language listening emphasize that exposure quality, learner proficiency, attention, and strategy use matter alongside the amount of input. For instance, listening strategy instruction can improve learners' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate comprehension (Thompson & Rubin, 1996). Research on audiovisual and extensive listening likewise suggests that comprehension depends on how learners process input, not merely how often they encounter it (Chang & Millett, 2014; Vandergrift, 2007). These considerations are especially relevant when a questionnaire combines song-listening frequency with enjoyment, perceived usefulness, singing, pronunciation imitation, and vocabulary retention. Purba and Zaki (2022) also described learners' positive experiences of appreciative listening through songs, whereas Afriyuninda and Oktaviani (2021) examined university students' perceptions of English-song use. These studies foreground perceived usefulness and instructional engagement rather than the precise cross-sectional association examined here.

The source investigation was conducted with English education students at Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika during the 2022/2023 academic year. It sought to establish whether students who listened to English songs more frequently also obtained higher listening scores. The source reported a near-perfect positive correlation, but its published worksheet and questionnaire summaries contain numerical inconsistencies. This article retains the empirical setting and study question while transparently reassessing the available evidence. Unlike classroom interventions and perception-focused studies, its contribution is methodological and contextual: it examines what the

original recorded scores can actually establish about informal song exposure and listening achievement, and it identifies the measurement decisions needed for stronger future research.

The research question was: To what extent were the recorded English-song listening questionnaire scores associated with documented listening achievement among the students represented in the available paired-score table?

METHOD

The study used a quantitative correlational design in an English Language Education program at Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika. The source identified a fifth-semester population of 57 students across two classes (26 in Class A and 31 in Class B) in the 2022/2023 academic year. It described selection of Class A, although its method section also mentioned 40 students and used both purposive and cluster sampling terminology. The abstract and findings described 26 participants. For the statistical reassessment reported here, the analytic sample was restricted to the 24 paired observations actually printed in the source worksheet. No missing scores were imputed.

Students completed a 13-item questionnaire concerning English-song listening, learning interest, use of songs on devices, attention to lyrics, singing, pronunciation practice, and vocabulary-related activities. The original instrument used ordered response categories, but not all items represented behavioral frequency consistently. Listening achievement was obtained from academic documentation. The source included a separate course-grade record for 26 students; the 24 Y scores in the correlation worksheet were not identical to those final course grades. Accordingly, the analysis refers specifically to the recorded Y scores in the worksheet and does not assume that the separate grade record can be substituted without a verified matching key.

The original questionnaire summary was reviewed descriptively. For the primary association, the 24 X–Y pairs in the published worksheet were re-entered and the Pearson product–moment coefficient was recalculated using mean-centered scores. A two-sided

significance test was computed for transparency. Pearson correlation was treated as a descriptive linear association, not evidence of causation. Because the questionnaire scoring rubric, scale validation, and the matching of all 26 student records could not be verified from the available document, findings are interpreted cautiously.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive patterns in song-related engagement

The questionnaire covered several distinct aspects of engagement with English songs. In the original frequency tables, 21 of 26 students selected the highest category for singing English songs, 17 selected the highest category for perceived vocabulary-related usefulness, and 13 selected the highest category for paying attention to song lyrics. In the weekly listening item, 13 students selected "often," six "sometimes," one "seldom," and six "never." These are counts reproduced from the source tables; their printed percentages frequently do not correspond to a denominator of 26. The categories also show that song enjoyment, vocabulary practice, and listening frequency should not be treated as interchangeable constructs.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Responses to the English-Song Listening Questionnaire

Questionnaire indicator	Reported highest-category count	Denominator
Singing English songs	21	26
Perceived vocabulary usefulness	17	26
Attention to song lyrics	13	26
Listening to songs during the week	13	26

These responses indicate that songs were familiar to many students as informal language resources. Nevertheless, a preference for singing or a belief that songs help vocabulary development does not establish how many minutes of comprehensible English input learners received. Future instruments should separate exposure frequency, duration, attention to lyrics, active strategy use, and perceived benefits.

Recalculation of the recorded association

The source worksheet contained 24 paired observations, with X totals of 1,924 and Y totals of 1,282. The published sums of squares and cross-products were 155,628, 70,144, and 102,605, respectively. These totals are internally consistent with the 24 displayed pairs. However, the source obtained r = .98 by dividing the uncentered cross-product by the square root of the product of uncentered sums of squares. This operation is not the Pearson correlation coefficient; Pearson r must account for the variables' means.

Recalculation using the conventional centered formula yielded r = -0.111 (n = 24, p = 0.606, two-sided). The observed relationship was weak and negative and was not statistically significant at the .05 level. The published r = .98 and accompanying significance claim therefore cannot be supported by the 24 printed score pairs.

Table 2. Descriptive Totals and Recalculated Pearson Correlation for Complete Score Pairs

Indicator	Value
Complete score pairs	24
ΣX	1,924
ΣY	1,282
ΣX^2	155,628
ΣY^2	70,144
ΣXY	102,605

Recalculated Pearson r	-0.111
Two-tailed p	0.606
Coefficient reported in source	0.98 (not reproducible as Pearson r)

The discrepancy matters substantively. If the uncorrected value were accepted, the study would suggest an almost deterministic relationship between song listening and academic comprehension. The corrected coefficient supports no such conclusion. This does not show that songs are ineffective; it shows only that the available paired scores do not demonstrate the proposed positive linear association. With a small analytic sample, the result is also imprecise and should not be generalized beyond the observed students.

Interpretation in relation to listening research

The descriptive responses and the correlation result address different questions. Questionnaire counts suggest that students used songs for enjoyable contact with English and for pronunciation or vocabulary-related practice. The correlational result concerns whether higher composite questionnaire scores co-occurred with higher recorded listening scores. A student might listen to songs frequently without attending to the lyrics, while another might engage less often but use deliberate listening and lexical-analysis strategies. Such differences could weaken a simple frequency–achievement relationship. The positive classroom results reported by Ariani and Iswandi (2020) and the song-based appreciative-listening experiences documented by Purba and Zaki (2022) therefore should not be read as contradicting this non-significant correlation: they investigated different learning processes, designs, and outcomes.

The distinction is consistent with process-oriented accounts of listening, which emphasize perceptual decoding, inferencing, monitoring, and comprehension repair (Field, 2008; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Song-based activities may be pedagogically valuable when paired with tasks that direct attention to meaning, connected speech, and

vocabulary, but this particular dataset does not estimate an instructional effect. The source study was observational, contained no intervention comparison, and did not measure change over time. Similarly, the listen–read–discuss classroom strategy investigated by Terasne et al. (2018) highlights how structured processing tasks can differ from unstructured exposure, although its outcome concerned reading rather than listening comprehension.

Several limitations qualify the findings. First, the sample count was inconsistent across the source sections, and only 24 complete pairs were available for independent recalculation. Second, the questionnaire mixed behavioral exposure with preferences, attitudes, and language-learning activities; evidence of construct validity and internal consistency was not provided. Third, the relation between the 24 Y values and the separate 26-student course-grade document was not established. Fourth, the single-institution sample and cross-sectional design prevent causal inference. A future study could use a clearly defined listening-exposure diary, a validated listening comprehension test, transparent anonymized score matching, and a preregistered analytic plan. In addition, these are secondary analyses of reported records, not a new data-collection exercise; the source questionnaire and student-level matches should be checked against the original records before a definitive inferential claim is made.

CONCLUSION

The available evidence did not establish a significant positive association between English-song listening questionnaire scores and recorded listening achievement. Although the source document reported $r = .98$, the 24 published paired observations yielded a recalculated Pearson coefficient of $r = -0.111$ ($p = 0.606$). The questionnaire nevertheless showed that many students engaged with English songs and perceived them as useful for language practice. The central implication is that pedagogical enthusiasm for songs should be distinguished from empirically demonstrated associations with comprehension. More precise exposure measures, verified listening

assessments, complete score pairing, and reproducible statistical procedures are necessary before stronger conclusions can be drawn.

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