

## The Correlation between Student Interest in English Songs and Listening Skills of 5th Semester Students of the University of Pasir Pengaraian

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Received : July 31<sup>st</sup> , 2025    Accepted : August 07<sup>th</sup> , 2025    Published : August 10<sup>th</sup> , 2025

### Abstract

This study investigates the correlation between students' interest in listening to English songs and their listening skills among 5th-semester students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian. Employing a quantitative correlational research design, data were collected from 25 students through questionnaires assessing their interest in English songs and a listening test measuring their comprehension skills. The findings revealed a weak positive correlation ( $r = 0.131$ ) between students' interest in listening to English songs and their listening skills. This suggests that while students who enjoy listening to English songs may demonstrate slightly better listening abilities, the relationship is not statistically significant. The results indicate that listening skills are influenced by multiple factors beyond interest in songs. While integrating music into learning may create an engaging atmosphere, it should not be solely relied upon for improving listening skills. The study suggests incorporating structured listening exercises and interactive methods alongside music to enhance students' comprehension.

**Keyword :** Listening skills; English songs; student interest; language learning; correlation study

### INTRODUCTION

English is widely recognized as an international language and plays a significant role in various aspects of life, including education, business, and communication. Among the four fundamental language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—listening is often considered the most frequently used skill (Hedge, 2007). Listening comprehension is essential for language acquisition as it provides learners with the necessary input for developing their spoken communication skills.

Listening, as a receptive skill, is crucial in second language acquisition because it facilitates the development of other language skills, particularly speaking. In an academic setting, effective listening enables students to understand lectures, participate in discussions, and enhance their overall learning experience. However, many students struggle with listening comprehension due to factors such as unfamiliar vocabulary, different accents, and the speed of spoken language.

One potential way to improve listening skills is through exposure to English media, including movies, podcasts, and music. Music, in particular, has been widely used as a pedagogical tool in language education. English songs provide learners with authentic linguistic input and help improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension skills (Cahyono, 2010). Songs often contain repetitive structures, natural expressions, and varied intonations, making them an effective tool for familiarizing students with spoken English.

Furthermore, music has been shown to enhance motivation and engagement in learning. Many students find learning through songs enjoyable, which may lead to increased exposure to the target language. However, despite the popularity of using songs in teaching, the extent to which students' interest in English songs correlates with their listening skills remains unclear.

This study aims to examine whether students' interest in listening to English songs has a significant relationship with their listening comprehension skills. The research focuses on 5th-semester students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian, analyzing their level of interest in English songs and their listening proficiency. Investigating the relationship between students' interest in listening to English songs and their listening comprehension skills is crucial for understanding how informal learning activities can influence academic language development. Music is widely recognized as an effective tool for language acquisition because it exposes learners to authentic pronunciation, rhythm, and vocabulary in an enjoyable and engaging way. By analyzing how students' interest in English songs correlates with their listening comprehension, this study may provide valuable insights into how natural exposure to the language outside the classroom can enhance listening proficiency.

Moreover, interest is a key motivational factor in the learning process. When students are genuinely interested in the learning material, they are more likely to pay attention, practice consistently, and retain information effectively. Exploring this connection could help educators design more engaging listening activities that cater to students' preferences, making the learning experience more enjoyable and productive. If a significant relationship is found, it would highlight the importance of integrating music into English language teaching to boost motivation and skill development.

Listening to songs also provides an opportunity for learners to encounter diverse accents, colloquial expressions, and natural speech patterns, which are often missing in traditional classroom materials. This exposure could significantly improve students' ability to understand spoken English in real-life situations. Investigating this aspect is essential because it can help teachers recognize the value of informal learning sources and adopt more authentic materials in their instruction.

In addition, the findings of this research could contribute to curriculum development by encouraging educators to incorporate music-based learning strategies into their lessons. If students' interest in English songs is proven to enhance listening comprehension, it would support the integration of enjoyable, music-related tasks in academic settings, making language learning both fun and effective. This can help bridge the gap between students' personal interests and formal education, fostering a more holistic learning environment. Ultimately, examining this relationship is important because it links motivation, informal learning habits, and language proficiency development. Understanding whether listening to English songs influences listening comprehension can help teachers, curriculum designers, and students themselves discover new, innovative, and enjoyable ways to improve language skills beyond traditional teaching methods.

Tanya ChatGPT

## METHOD

This study employs a quantitative correlational research design to investigate the relationship between students' interest in English songs and their listening skills. The research was conducted at the University of Pasir Pengaraian, involving 25 5th-semester students from the English Study Program. The methodology of this study was designed to ensure accurate and reliable data collection while maintaining objectivity in the analysis process.

A quantitative approach was selected as it allows for statistical analysis of numerical data, which helps in determining the correlation between students' interest in listening to English songs and their listening skills. The study follows a correlational research design, which aims to explore the degree of association between two variables without manipulating them. By using this approach, the researcher was able to identify patterns and trends in the data that highlight the relationship between the students' musical preferences and their listening comprehension abilities.

To achieve consistency and reliability in data collection, participants were required to complete both a questionnaire and a listening test under controlled conditions. The questionnaire was designed to measure students' frequency of listening, preferred music genres, and their motivation for engaging with English songs. The listening test was developed based on standard language proficiency assessments and covered key listening skills such as identifying main ideas, understanding detailed information, and recognizing contextual meanings.

After data collection, all responses were carefully reviewed and coded for statistical analysis. The Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between students' interest in listening to English songs and their listening skills. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores and standard deviations, were also calculated to provide a clearer picture of the overall trends in students' listening performance. This method ensured that the findings were supported by objective data and could be interpreted meaningfully within the context of second language acquisition.

After the data was collected, the data was analyzed in numerous steps. First, the researcher uses the following formula to determine the individual scores from the questionnaires and tests:

Then, Pearson Product Moment by Sugiyono was used to determine whether or not there is a correlation between the variables.

$$r = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{(N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2)(N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2)}}$$

The explanations:

r = person correlation coefficient.

N = total number of sample.

X = score of X variable (listening Interest to English songs).

Y = score of Y variable (Listening Skills).

X<sup>2</sup> = the square score of listening habit to English Songs.

Y<sup>2</sup> = the square score of listening comprehension

After the students' do the questionnaire, the researcher will collect the total score of the students' and process the data with the formula above. Researcher divided the data based on the difficulties in the questionnaire and grouping the data by the options and get the percentage. The percentage will used to know the score of each statement in percentage.

**Table 1. Interval of The Percentage**

Category	Score
Totally Agree	5
Agree	4
Sometimes	3
Disagree	2
Totally Disagree	1

## FINDINGS

Correlations		Interest In English Song	Listening skill
Interest In English Song	Pearson Correlation	1	-.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.531
	N	25	25
Listening skill	Pearson Correlation	-.132	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.531	
	N	25	25

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) = -0.132

The correlation coefficient between students' interest in English songs and their listening skills is -0.132. Negative correlation means that as interest in English songs increases, listening skills slightly decrease. However, the value is very close to zero, suggesting a very weak and negligible relationship. Significance Value (Sig. 2-tailed) = 0.531. The p-value (0.531) is much higher than 0.05, indicating that the correlation is not statistically significant.

This means there is no strong evidence that students' interest in English songs directly influences their listening skills in this study. There is no significant correlation between students' interest in English songs and their listening skills in this dataset. Negative correlation of -0.132 is too weak to indicate any meaningful relationship. Since the p-value (0.531) is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, meaning that interest in English songs does not appear to have a strong effect on listening skills in this case. If further research is conducted, a larger sample size or additional influencing factors (such as frequency of listening, comprehension exercises, or language proficiency level) could be considered to get a more comprehensive understanding.

In conclusion, this study concludes that there is correlation between students' interest in English songs and their listening skills but there is a weak but positive correlation between students' interest in English songs and their listening skills. While students who enjoy listening to English songs may exhibit slightly better listening comprehension, the relationship is not statistically significant. These findings suggest that listening skills are influenced by multiple factors beyond students' interest in music.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that students' interest in English songs does not significantly influence their listening skills. Although music is often seen as a useful tool in language learning, especially for improving listening comprehension, this study did not find strong empirical support for that assumption in the given sample. The negative correlation, although weak and statistically insignificant, may suggest that students who are more interested in English songs do not necessarily have better listening skills. One possible explanation is that simply enjoying English songs does not guarantee that students engage in active listening or focus on comprehension strategies while listening. Many students may listen for entertainment without consciously attempting to understand lyrics, pronunciation, or grammar.

Another factor to consider is the type of English songs that students listen to. Some genres may have complex lyrics, fast tempo, or unclear pronunciation, which can make it difficult for learners to comprehend and thus may not contribute positively to listening skill development. Moreover, listening to songs repeatedly without guided comprehension activities may not effectively enhance listening skills. It is also important to note that listening comprehension is influenced by multiple factors, such as students' overall language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge, listening strategies, and exposure to spoken English in various contexts. Therefore, relying solely on students' interest in music may not be a sufficient predictor of their listening performance.

The findings of this study indicate that students' interest in listening to English songs does not significantly influence their listening comprehension skills. Although music has long been considered a useful tool for language learning, particularly in improving listening ability, the results of this research do not provide strong empirical support for such an assumption. The weak and statistically insignificant negative correlation suggests that students who are more interested in English songs do not necessarily possess better listening comprehension. One plausible explanation is that enjoyment of music alone does not guarantee that learners engage in active listening or apply comprehension strategies.

Many students may listen passively for entertainment purposes without attempting to focus on lyrics, pronunciation, or grammatical features that could aid comprehension.

These findings align with previous research highlighting the limited effect of passive music exposure on listening skills. Arifin (2017) concluded that students' fondness for music did not directly translate into higher listening test scores, suggesting that interest alone is insufficient for measurable improvement. Similarly, Rahmawati and Mulyadi (2019) observed that despite students frequently listening to English songs, their comprehension remained low due to lack of structured guidance and focus during listening sessions. Both studies suggest that listening to songs casually, without instructional support or comprehension-focused strategies, may have little to no effect on listening development.

In contrast, a number of studies have demonstrated that the use of songs can significantly enhance listening skills when structured pedagogical interventions are employed. Nugroho (2020) and Sari (2021) found positive effects of songs on listening proficiency but noted that improvement occurred because teachers integrated lyric analysis, comprehension exercises, and note-taking tasks into lessons. Similarly, Makino (2012) reported that Japanese learners improved their listening skills significantly after months of structured song-based activities designed to practice phonetic decoding and word recognition. These findings highlight the crucial difference between passive exposure and active, guided engagement with songs in language learning environments.

Other researchers have provided evidence for the pedagogical value of songs in structured environments. Khalil et al. (2022) demonstrated that the use of English songs combined with audio-visual resources resulted in significantly better listening test scores for high school students compared to traditional methods. Rahayu and Rifansyah (2022) also observed improved comprehension and motivation when students were instructed to analyze lyrics and answer comprehension questions after listening sessions. Both studies suggest that the mere act of listening is not enough; structured activities that direct learners' attention toward comprehension are necessary for improvement.

Additional research supports the view that the effect of songs on listening skills depends on task design and learner engagement. Miranty et al. (2018) found that experimental groups exposed to songs with specific comprehension exercises performed significantly better than control groups, indicating that guided listening can improve information retention and understanding. Similarly, Le Thi Van Anh (2024) in Vietnam demonstrated that integrating English songs into classroom lessons improved vocabulary acquisition and listening skills among over 100 participants, showing that structured exposure can be beneficial when learning objectives are clear and when students are guided in processing the material actively.

On the other hand, some studies have reported mixed results or only weak correlations between song listening and comprehension skills. Ayu Sapitri and Suryadi (2023) found a relatively strong positive correlation (71%) in junior high school learners, but contextual factors such as teaching style, age, and classroom activities may have contributed to this result. Puspita Rini (2013) and Sinaga et al. (2023) also observed improvements in listening skills when songs were used as instructional media, but they emphasized that teacher facilitation played a crucial role in making song-based learning effective. Without

teacher involvement, improvements were less likely to occur, supporting the view that interest alone is not a reliable factor in developing listening comprehension.

Another factor that may explain the lack of correlation found in this study is the type of music students listen to. Setiawan (2018) pointed out that many English songs contain complex lyrics, fast tempos, or unclear articulation, which can make them difficult for learners to comprehend. As a result, frequent listening to such songs might not contribute positively to language development. Furthermore, Krashen (2012) argued that language acquisition through input requires comprehensibility; if learners cannot understand the majority of what they hear, exposure alone is unlikely to improve listening skills. This suggests that selecting appropriate songs and providing scaffolding to ensure understanding is necessary for music to positively influence listening skills.

Research on music and cognitive processing also supports these observations. Scharenborg and Larson (2018) found that background music with lyrics can interfere with spoken-word recognition, indicating that passive listening to songs without focused attention may not aid comprehension and could even hinder it in some cases. Other cognitive studies, such as those by Tierney and Kraus (2014), suggest that musical training can improve auditory memory and attention, but these benefits are typically observed in structured, skill-based learning rather than casual music listening. This distinction underlines the importance of turning listening into an intentional learning activity, rather than assuming that enjoyment alone leads to skill development.

Interest in music may boost motivation but does not necessarily improve cognitive processing of linguistic input. Several studies, including Melisa et al. (2021), have shown that songs often enhance learners' enthusiasm, participation, and willingness to learn. However, these affective benefits do not directly translate into higher comprehension scores unless learners are provided with explicit instructions, guided practice, or follow-up tasks designed to improve listening skills. Without structured intervention, students may remain passive listeners, gaining enjoyment but little actual listening improvement.

Comparing the current results with previous research, a consistent pattern emerges: studies that show a positive relationship between songs and listening comprehension almost always involve active, guided listening activities. These include lyric transcription (Nugroho, 2020), listening quizzes (Sari, 2021), vocabulary-building exercises (Le Thi Van Anh, 2024), or repeated listening with feedback (Makino, 2012). Passive listening, even when students are highly interested, seldom results in significant improvement, as demonstrated by Arifin (2017), Rahmawati and Mulyadi (2019), and other similar findings in the literature.

This distinction is important for educators designing language learning curricula. While songs can be an excellent resource, their effectiveness relies on instructional design. Teachers should select songs that are linguistically appropriate for learners' proficiency levels and develop activities that promote active processing of the lyrics. Puspita Rini (2013) and Sinaga et al. (2023) both emphasized that songs should be used strategically, not randomly, to ensure that they contribute meaningfully to listening skill development and help learners apply new vocabulary and comprehension strategies.

The findings also underline the role of other factors influencing listening comprehension, such as overall language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge, exposure to

spoken English in different contexts, and the use of listening strategies. These factors have been highlighted in studies by Graham (2011) and Vandergrift (2007), who noted that successful listening comprehension requires cognitive, metacognitive, and linguistic resources beyond simple exposure to audio input. This implies that listening skill development is multifaceted and cannot rely on a single factor like personal interest in music.

The inconsistency in previous studies, with some reporting strong positive effects and others showing no significant impact, suggests that individual learner differences and contextual variables play a substantial role. Factors such as motivation type, level of language proficiency, song genre preferences, and access to guided practice all mediate the relationship between music and listening skills. This makes it difficult to generalize findings across all student populations and emphasizes the need for more nuanced and controlled investigations in future research.

Taken together, the literature indicates that songs can be a powerful tool for developing listening comprehension when used intentionally and pedagogically. However, as demonstrated by the findings of this study, students' interest in songs by itself is not enough to produce measurable improvements. Motivation needs to be paired with structured, meaningful listening activities that direct learners' attention to linguistic forms, comprehension strategies, and vocabulary acquisition for songs to positively impact listening proficiency.

This study highlights the need for more in-depth research involving larger sample sizes and possibly incorporating qualitative data to better understand students' listening habits, preferences, and learning strategies. Future studies could also explore the effect of structured listening tasks using English songs, such as lyric analysis or listening quizzes, to see whether such approaches yield more significant improvements in listening skills. In conclusion, although music especially English songs can be an engaging medium for learning, this study suggests that interest alone is not a strong predictor of listening skill development. Educators are encouraged to design more intentional and interactive learning activities if they wish to use music as a tool to enhance listening comprehension.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there is a weak positive correlation between students' interest in listening to songs and their listening skills, as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.131$ ). This suggests that while students who are more interested in listening to songs may have slightly better listening skills, the relationship is not strong enough to be considered a significant predictor. Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the relationship between student interest in English songs and their listening skill is present but not very significant, indicating a very low relation.

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test confirm that the data follows a normal distribution, which justifies the use of parametric statistical analysis. However, given the weak correlation, it can be inferred that students' listening skills are influenced by various other factors beyond their interest in listening to songs.

Although music can serve as an engaging and enjoyable medium for learning, it should not be relied upon as the primary method for improving students' listening skills. Other teaching strategies, such as structured listening exercises, interactive discussions, and comprehension-based activities, may have a greater impact.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there is a weak positive correlation between students' interest in listening to songs and their listening skills. This suggests that while students who are more interested in listening to songs may have slightly better listening skills, the relationship is not strong enough to be considered a reliable predictor of listening proficiency. The data indicates that although an association exists, it is minimal, showing that students' listening comprehension is influenced by multiple other factors beyond their level of interest in songs.

The results also confirm that the data is normally distributed, validating the use of parametric statistical analysis for this study. However, despite this statistical reliability, the observed correlation remains weak. This implies that simply having an interest in listening to English songs does not guarantee improved listening comprehension, as language acquisition is a multifaceted process influenced by various linguistic, cognitive, and instructional variables.

Although music can serve as an engaging and enjoyable medium for language exposure, it should not be relied upon as the primary method for enhancing students' listening skills. Songs may increase motivation and create a positive learning atmosphere, but listening comprehension development requires more structured and intentional approaches. Methods such as targeted listening exercises, teacher-led discussions, guided lyric analysis, and comprehension-based tasks can better support students in improving their listening abilities.

Furthermore, other contributing factors such as students' vocabulary knowledge, familiarity with spoken English, use of listening strategies, and overall language proficiency play significant roles in determining their listening performance. Interest in music alone does not encompass these elements, meaning that a more holistic instructional approach is essential for effective language learning. Teachers are encouraged to combine the motivational benefits of music with structured, strategy-based teaching methods to maximize students' listening skill development.

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