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THE INFLUENCE OF LISTENING TO ENGLISH SONGS ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' LANGUAGE SKILLS: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS IN PALANGKA RAYA

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ABSTRACT

English songs are widely used as informal learning resources and may influence students' language development through both linguistic exposure and affective engagement. This study aims to investigate students' perceptions of the influence of listening to English songs on their language skills in the English Education Study Program at the University of Palangka Raya. The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire administered to seventh-semester students from the 2022 cohort(N=50). The instrument was tested for validity and reliability using Cronbach's alpha before being analyzed through descriptive statistics. Based on the quantitative results, ten students (N=10) were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Quantitative findings reveal that 94% of students had positive perceptions, while 6% reported negative views regarding the use of English songs in language learning. Qualitative results revealed that listening to English songs supported vocabulary development, listening comprehension, pronunciation, speaking confidence, and overall language improvement. However, some students viewed songs primarily as entertainment and reported challenges, including distractions, exposure to informal language, and mismatches with their learning preferences. Overall, the study indicates that English songs can serve as a beneficial supplementary medium for language learning, depending on learners' preferences and the extent of instructional integration.

Keywords: *English songs, Students' perceptions, Language skills*

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology in the era of globalization has significantly transformed the way people communicate, access information, and engage with cultural products, enabling the widespread exchange of cultural products. Among various forms of digital content, music has become one of the most accessible and influential forms of media, especially for Generation Z students who grow up surrounded by streaming platforms and social media. Listening to music is no longer merely entertainment but a routine activity embedded in students' daily academic and social lives. As a significant portion of popular songs consumed by this generation is in English, students are frequently exposed to authentic English input, including pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation. This habitual exposure suggests listening to English songs may offer meaningful potential for supporting language learning, particularly in developing listening skills.

From a language-learning perspective, listening is a fundamental skill that underpins the development of other language competencies. It serves as the primary channel for receiving linguistic input and plays a crucial role in supporting speaking development (Darti & Asmawati, 2017). Tyagi (2013) explains that listening involves multiple stages, including recognizing sounds, understanding meaning, recalling information, evaluating messages, and responding appropriately. However, many learners experience difficulties at various stages of listening due to limited vocabulary knowledge and inadequate pronunciation awareness. These challenges often hinder comprehension and, in turn, affect speaking (Lengkoan, 2017). Therefore, the integration is to make listening input more meaningful and accessible.

One medium that has attracted considerable attention is English songs. Songs provide exposure to natural pronunciation, varied intonation, stress patterns, and authentic language use. In addition to linguistic input, songs can enhance motivation and engagement by aligning

with learners' interests and everyday habits. Previous studies have reported positive effects of song-based learning on students' listening performance, vocabulary acquisition, and overall engagement (Triwardani & Yuningsih, 2022; Karim et al., 2022; Yuliarini, 2022; Rorintulus & Wuntuj, 2023). These findings suggest that songs can serve as an effective instructional medium when integrated into structured classroom activities.

However, despite these potential benefits, the use of songs in language learning is not without challenges. Songs often contain informal expressions, slang, reduced forms, and non-standard grammar, which may confuse learners. In some cases, music may also distract students rather than support focused learning. Moreover, the effectiveness of songs can vary depending on learners' preferences, proficiency levels, and learning contexts. These mixed possibilities indicate that the role of English songs in language learning should not be viewed as universally positive but as context-dependent and shaped by learners' individual experiences.

Although numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of English songs in improving language skills, most of them focus primarily on measurable learning outcomes, such as test scores or vocabulary gains. Limited attention has been given to learners' perceptions of songs as a learning medium and how they personally experience the integration of songs into the language learning process. Understanding students' perceptions is important because their attitudes, preferences, and emotional responses may influence how effectively songs contribute to their language development. This issue is particularly relevant in the Indonesian EFL context, where opportunities for authentic English exposure outside the classroom are relatively limited, and songs may serve as an accessible informal learning resource.

To address this gap, the present study adopts a more comprehensive perspective by examining not only the influence of listening to English songs on students' language skill development but also their perceptions of using songs as a learning medium. By focusing on university students in an English Education Study Program, this research aims to explore how learners evaluate the benefits and challenges of listening to English songs and how these perceptions relate to their language learning experiences. Therefore, this study addresses the following research questions: What are the students' perceptions of the influence of listening to English songs on their language skills?

Method

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings. This design was selected because the researcher aimed to initially identify general trends in students' perceptions through a questionnaire and then gain deeper insights into those results through interviews. By integrating both strands, the study achieved a more comprehensive understanding of how listening to English songs influences students' language skills.

The participants in the quantitative phase were seventh-semester students of the English Education Study Program at the University of Palangka Raya from the 2022 cohort. The inclusion criteria required students to have completed major language skills courses and to be familiar with English songs as part of their learning or daily activities. The questionnaire was distributed to one cohort consisting of 100 students through class communication groups (WhatsApp); however, only 50 questionnaires were returned and deemed valid for analysis, resulting in a 50% response rate. Of these respondents, 35 were female, and 15 were male. This number was considered sufficient to describe general perception trends within the cohort. For the qualitative phase, 10 participants were purposively selected from the questionnaire respondents based on the extremity of their answers regarding the influence of listening to English songs on their language skills. Students who selected "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" on key items were prioritized to ensure the inclusion of contrasting perspectives. This strategy enabled the researcher to explore both the perceived benefits and perceived limitations of using English songs as a language learning resource, providing richer explanations for the quantitative results.

The main instrument for the quantitative phase was a structured questionnaire using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). The items measured students' listening habits and their perceived influence of English songs on listening skills, vocabulary development, and pronunciation. The questionnaire was adapted from previous studies and adjusted to suit the context of informal language learning through songs. Before data collection, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability. The validity coefficient obtained was 0.279, indicating acceptable item validity, while the reliability test yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.850, demonstrating high internal consistency. For the qualitative phase, semi-

structured interview questions were designed to explore students' personal experiences, learning strategies, perceived benefits, and challenges when using English songs for language learning.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to present general trends in students' perceptions. Before analysis, the data were screened to ensure completeness and consistency of responses. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Creswell's framework (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). First, interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. Second, the transcripts were read repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' responses. Third, significant words and phrases were identified and labeled as initial codes. Fourth, similar codes were grouped into categories, which were then developed into broader themes. Finally, the themes were reviewed, refined, and interpreted to represent overarching patterns in students' perceptions. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings was conducted through triangulation, where interview results were used to explain, support, and deepen the interpretation of the questionnaire findings, thereby strengthening the overall conclusions of the mixed-methods study.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study in two integrated parts, following the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. It begins with the quantitative results from the questionnaire, which provide an overview of students' general perceptions of listening to English songs and their perceived influence on their language skills, highlighting overall trends and response patterns. This is followed by the qualitative results from semi-structured interviews, which were conducted to further explain and deepen the quantitative findings. Through thematic analysis, the qualitative data reveal students' personal experiences, interpretations, and contextual factors that clarify why English songs are perceived as either beneficial or challenging for language learning. Together, these two strands offer a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of English songs as a medium for language development.

The quantitative results section presents the main findings derived from the questionnaire data. In this part, the results are displayed in visual and tabular forms to provide a clear overview of students' responses. A diagram is used to illustrate the overall distribution of students' perceptions, while tables summarize specific aspects of how listening to English songs is perceived to influence different language skills. These quantitative findings highlight general trends and serve as the foundation for the more detailed explanations provided in the subsequent qualitative section.

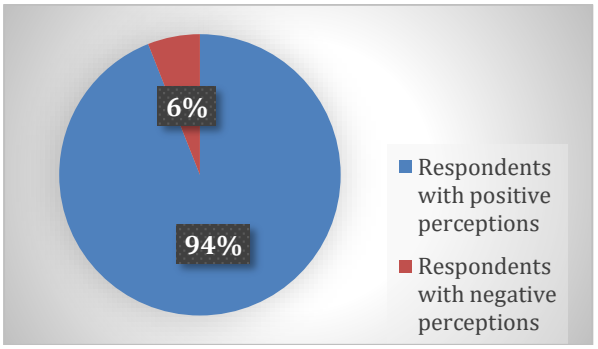

Figure 1. Overall Students' Perceptions toward Listening to English Songs (N=50)

Based on Figure 1, the questionnaire's overall results of the questionnaire show that the majority of students (94%) expressed positive perception expressed positive perceptions toward listening to English songs, accounting for 94% of the total respondents. In contrast, only 6% of the respondents demonstrated negative perceptions. These findings indicate that listening to English songs is generally perceived positively by students and is considered beneficial for the development of their English language skills. This overall result provides a general overview of students' perceptions and serves as a foundation for further analysis in the following sections.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of the Influence of Listening to English Songs on Language Skill Development Across Questionnaire Aspects

No	Aspects	SD	D	A	SA	Total
1	Habit, Attitude, and perceptions initial influence (affective factors)	2%	10%	46%	42%	100%
2	Listening Comprehension	2%	8%	46%	44%	100%
3	Vocabulary	2%	4%	46%	48%	100%
4	Pronunciation	2%	14%	36%	48%	100%
5	General Impact & Overall Improvement	0%	18%	52%	30%	100%

The data indicate that most students hold positive affective attitudes toward listening to English songs, with 46% agreeing and 42% strongly agreeing. This suggests that songs are not merely entertainment but gradually become part of students' informal learning habits. The emotional enjoyment derived from music appears to increase motivation and create a more relaxed learning

atmosphere, which supports incidental language exposure outside the classroom. Only a small proportion of students reported negative perceptions, indicating that affective resistance to learning through songs is relatively low.

Students' responses in this aspect also show a strong positive tendency, with 46% agreeing and 44% strongly agreeing that English songs support listening development. This finding suggests that exposure to songs helps learners become more familiar with natural spoken English, including rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns. Through repeated listening, students may gradually improve their ability to recognize words and understand spoken input. The small percentage of disagreement indicates that comprehension difficulties exist for some learners, possibly due to fast tempo or unclear pronunciation.

Vocabulary is the aspect with the most prominent positive perception, as 46% of students agreed and 48% strongly agreed. These results indicate that students clearly view English songs as a rich source of new words, idiomatic expressions, and contextualized language use. Songs appear to stimulate curiosity, encouraging learners to look up unfamiliar words and remember them more easily through repetition and melody. Negative responses are minimal, suggesting that vocabulary learning through songs is widely accepted among students.

In the pronunciation aspect, positive perceptions remain dominant (36% agree; 48% strongly agree), although the percentage of disagreement is slightly higher than in other categories. This suggests that while many students believe songs help them notice correct pronunciation and practice through imitation, not all learners experience the same level of improvement. Differences in accent, singing style, or unclear articulation in songs may limit their usefulness for some students. Nevertheless, the overall trend continues to support the role of songs as an informal pronunciation model.

Regarding overall language development, most students expressed positive perceptions (52% agree; 30% strongly agree). This indicates that English songs are widely viewed as contributing to broader language growth, including fluency, confidence, and general comprehension. Students seem to perceive songs as a supportive, supplementary resource that enhances learning beyond specific sub-skills. However, some disagreement suggests that several learners attribute their progress more to formal instruction or other learning methods than to songs alone.

The qualitative findings in this study were derived from semi-structured interviews conducted with selected participants to provide deeper insights into the quantitative results. This phase aimed to explore students' personal experiences, perceptions, and reflections regarding the use of English songs as a language learning resource. Through thematic analysis, several recurring themes emerged that illustrate both the perceived benefits and challenges of listening to English songs in supporting language development. These themes help explain how and why students view English songs as either a meaningful learning tool or merely a form of entertainment, thereby enriching the overall interpretation of the study's findings.

Table 1 presents a structured overview of students' perceptions of listening to English songs as a language learning resource. The table is organized into five key aspects: affective factors, listening comprehension, vocabulary development, pronunciation, and overall language improvement. For each aspect, the table contrasts positive and negative perceptions to provide a balanced representation of students' viewpoints. This format allows readers to clearly see how perceptions are distributed across different areas of language learning and serves as a foundation for the more detailed qualitative explanation that follows.

Table 2 The Influence of Listening to English Songs on Students' Language Skills

No	Aspects	Students with positive perceptions	Students with positive perceptions
1	Habit, Attitude, and Perception Initial Influence (Affective Factors)	English songs became part of daily learning habits and increased motivation.	Songs were treated as entertainment, not as learning tools
2	Listening Comprehension	Helped students recognize intonation, tone, and spoken English patterns.	Difficulty understanding lyrics due to fast tempo and unclear pronunciation.
3	Vocabulary	Songs introduced new vocabulary and useful expressions.	Listening to songs distracted concentration during learning activities.
4	Pronunciation	Helped students notice correct pronunciation through repeated exposure.	Exposure to songs did not significantly improve pronunciation.
5	General Skills Impact & Overall Improvement	English songs contributed positively to their overall English language development, including fluency, creativity in writing, comprehension, and grammatical awareness.	Language improvement was attributed to other learning methods instead of songs.

Based on Table 2, the findings show that students' perceptions of listening to English songs

as a language learning resource fall into both positive and negative categories across five key aspects: affective factors, listening comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall language development. Many students reported that songs increased motivation, became part of their daily exposure to English, and supported their listening skills, vocabulary growth, pronunciation awareness, and broader language abilities such as fluency and writing creativity. In contrast, a smaller group perceived songs mainly as entertainment, experienced difficulty understanding fast or unclear lyrics, felt distracted during learning, or believed that songs did not significantly improve their pronunciation or overall proficiency. These contrasting perspectives highlight that the effectiveness of English songs as a learning medium depends largely on learners' attitudes, engagement, and individual learning preferences, which are further explored in the qualitative findings.

Students with positive perceptions described listening to English songs not only as entertainment but also as a meaningful learning experience. For many of them, songs gradually became part of their daily habits, creating regular exposure to English outside the classroom. This repeated exposure contributed to incidental learning, where language improvement occurred naturally without formal study. As P1 stated, *"I initially listened to English songs for entertainment, and then unconsciously acquired new vocabulary and became familiar with the singers' accents."*

In addition to habitual exposure, affective factors played a crucial role in shaping positive perceptions. Students emphasized that songs influenced their emotions and created a relaxed, enjoyable learning atmosphere, which increased their motivation to engage with English. P4 mentioned, *"My mood changed according to the song's vibes; I learned idioms from the lyrics."* while P7 added, *"I learn new vocabulary and practice pronunciation; my mood changes depending on the genre."* These findings suggest that emotional engagement with music supported language learning by reducing stress and enhancing attention to language input.

Students perceived that English songs helped them become more familiar with natural spoken English. Songs exposed them to authentic pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, and accent variation that were not always emphasized in classroom recordings. P2 stated that songs were more effective than classroom listening for understanding phrases and accents, while P5 explained that songs helped them understand how native speakers use intonation in real communication. Through repeated listening, students reported gradually improving their ability to recognize words and follow spoken English more naturally. These findings indicate that songs served as meaningful sources of authentic auditory input.

Vocabulary development emerged as another major benefit reported by students. Many participants described actively interacting with song lyrics to understand meanings and usage. P1 stated, *"I find unfamiliar slang or idioms from songs, look up their meanings in a dictionary, understand the song's meaning, and practice pronunciation."* Other participants explained that they paused songs, searched for word meanings, wrote down new vocabulary, and later used these words in conversations or academic tasks. These experiences indicate that songs encouraged autonomous vocabulary learning driven by curiosity, repetition, and contextual exposure.

Students also perceived that English songs contributed to their pronunciation development. Many reported imitating singers as a strategy to improve their speech. P1 explained, *"I imitate the singer's pronunciation as a native speaker to learn correct pronunciation,"* while P2 stated that copying accents and word stress increased confidence in speaking. Participants P4–P6 described repeating difficult sounds, memorizing lyrics, and practicing pronunciation while singing along. P7 added that this practice gradually improved their pronunciation and made them feel more confident when speaking English. These findings suggest that songs served as informal pronunciation models that helped students internalize natural speech patterns.

Beyond specific sub-skills, students also perceived broader improvements in their overall language skills. They believed that listening to English songs supported fluency in speaking, creativity in writing, listening ability, and overall confidence in using English. P3 shared, *"English songs inspire me when writing; I understand idioms and phrases from lyrics, which helps me generate ideas for my writing tasks."* P6 added that understanding lyrics helped them organize writing and use new vocabulary in presentations. Other participants explained that repeated listening and singing along made them more fluent and comfortable when communicating in English. These findings indicate that songs contributed not only to specific sub-skills but also to holistic language development and self-assurance.

Overall, students with positive perceptions viewed English songs as a motivating, enjoyable, and effective informal learning medium. Their

experiences show that songs provided authentic input, encouraged independent learning strategies, and supported both linguistic development and emotional engagement with the language.

Some students perceived that listening to English songs did not significantly influence their language skills because they viewed songs primarily as entertainment rather than learning tools. Although they were familiar with English songs, they did not intentionally use them for language development. As P8 stated, *"Songs are just for entertainment and to fill my free time,"* while P9 explained that they listened *"only for enjoyment, not to be studied."* Because learning was not purposeful, these students did not perceive noticeable improvement in their English skills.

Several students felt that English songs interfered with their concentration during academic tasks. Instead of supporting learning, music sometimes distracted them, especially when completing activities that required focus, such as writing. Some students felt that songs disrupted concentration, especially during tasks that required focus, such as writing. P8 shared, *"When I was writing in the past tense, the song used future tense, and it distracted me,"* while P10 noted, *"I focus more on the music and melody than on the words."* These experiences led students to believe that songs could reduce productivity rather than enhance learning.

Students in this group also felt that the language used in songs was often informal and less suitable for academic contexts. P10 mentioned that *"many words in songs are informal and do not fit academic tasks,"* which reduced the perceived relevance of songs for university assignments. In addition, some participants reported difficulty understanding lyrics due to fast tempo, unclear pronunciation, or unfamiliar accents. P7 stated that singers sometimes *"sing too fast or use a different accent,"* which made comprehension difficult rather than helpful.

Learning style preferences further influenced negative perceptions. Some students preferred structured and visually supported learning methods such as videos with subtitles, audiobooks, or textbooks. P9 explained a preference for audiobooks to focus more clearly on words, while P10 stated that videos were more effective because of visual support. Others also preferred music in other languages or were focusing on learning another foreign language, which reduced their engagement with English songs. Overall, although this group acknowledged that English songs contain language input, they considered them less effective due to distraction, informal language, comprehension challenges, and mismatches with their preferred learning styles.

The contrast between these two groups explains why the same activity, listening to English songs, led to different learning experiences. Students with positive perceptions engaged actively with songs, paid attention to lyrics, and used them as a source of language input. In contrast, students with negative perceptions listened passively, focused mainly on entertainment, or preferred other learning strategies. These differences highlight that the effectiveness of English songs as a learning medium depends not only on the material itself but also on learners' attitudes, goals, and learning preferences.

Discussion

The quantitative and qualitative findings can be interpreted through established theories of second language acquisition and affective learning. The high positive perceptions align with Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, where the low-anxiety, enjoyable nature of music creates an optimal state for receiving comprehensible input. Songs provide authentic, repetitive, and emotionally resonant input, facilitating incidental vocabulary acquisition and subconscious pattern recognition. From a motivational perspective, Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory offers a lens to understand student engagement; songs can satisfy the need for autonomy (self-directed learning outside class), competence (understanding lyrics), and relatedness (connecting to global culture). Thus, the results extend these models by demonstrating how an informal, non-academic medium can effectively operationalize their core principles in an autonomous learning context.

The findings of this study reveal that 94% of students held positive perceptions toward listening to English songs, while only a small proportion (6%) expressed negative perceptions. This indicates that English songs are generally viewed as a beneficial and engaging medium for English language learning. Students' positive perceptions were closely associated with their perceived improvement in several language skills, particularly vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, and speaking confidence. Students reported that frequent exposure to English songs helped them acquire new vocabulary and expressions in an enjoyable and meaningful context. The repetitive nature of song lyrics, combined with melody and rhythm, enabled learners to remember words more easily and understand their usage in authentic language situations. This suggests that repetition and contextualized input play an important role in

vocabulary development and listening comprehension, especially when learners are exposed to language in a relaxed and engaging environment.

In addition, students perceived that listening to English songs contributed significantly to the improvement of their listening comprehension and pronunciation. Through songs, learners are exposed to natural English sounds, stress patterns, and intonation that may not always be emphasized in formal classroom instruction. As a result, students became more familiar with authentic pronunciation models, which helped them distinguish sounds more accurately and imitate correct pronunciation. This exposure also increased their speaking confidence, as students felt more comfortable practicing pronunciation and using expressions encountered in songs during communication.

Overall, the positive perceptions expressed by students indicate that listening to English songs functions not only as an enjoyable activity but also as a supportive learning strategy for language development. The relationship between positive attitudes and perceived language improvement suggests that affective factors, such as enjoyment and motivation, play an important role in enhancing students' engagement and learning outcomes. Therefore, English songs can be considered an effective supplementary tool, particularly for developing listening-related skills and oral confidence.

The findings of the present study are consistent with previous research highlighting the effectiveness of English songs in language learning. Yuliarini (2022) found that the use of English songs in instructional activities improved students' listening achievement and vocabulary development. The study emphasized that songs provide meaningful exposure to authentic language and enjoyably promote listening practice, thereby increasing students' motivation and engagement. Similarly, Rorintulus and Wuntu (2023) reported that English songs positively influenced vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation improvement, and listening comprehension. Their findings also highlighted the role of songs in introducing cultural aspects of the target language, which enhanced students' cultural awareness and willingness to participate actively in English learning activities. Furthermore, Clara et al. (2015) demonstrated that teaching speaking through English songs significantly improved students' speaking ability. Their classroom action research showed that songs created a supportive and enjoyable learning atmosphere, encouraging students to participate more actively and confidently in speaking activities. Improvements were observed not only in speaking fluency but also in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

In addition, Brigita G. (2022) found that students perceived English songs as enjoyable and calming, which positively influenced their listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Their study revealed that exposure to English songs, particularly outside the classroom, helped learners understand the main ideas of lyrics, recognize authentic pronunciation, and apply individual learning strategies to enhance listening skills. These findings carry implications for pedagogy and curriculum design. For English language teaching, songs should be strategically integrated as a supplementary tool, not merely as entertainment. Instructors can design activities that guide students from passive listening to active analysis, such as targeted gap-fills for specific grammatical structures, lyric analysis for colloquial vocabulary, or shadowing exercises for pronunciation and prosody. For curriculum designers in teacher education programs, these results underscore the need to train future educators in selecting appropriate song materials and designing scaffolded tasks that maximize linguistic payoff. Furthermore, educators can explicitly teach metacognitive strategies, like those described by students who actively looked up words or imitated pronunciation, to help all learners, including those currently passive, engage more effectively with authentic media. This approach leverages the inherent motivational benefits while ensuring focused skill development.

In summary, the consistency between the present findings and previous studies suggests that English songs are effective in enhancing students' linguistic competence while simultaneously increasing motivation and engagement. Integrating English songs into English language instruction can therefore be considered a promising strategy to create a meaningful, enjoyable, and supportive learning environment that contributes to students' overall English language proficiency. While this study offers valuable insights into student perceptions, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample is limited to English education students at one university in Palangka Raya, which may introduce sampling bias and limit the generalizability of findings to other student populations or cultural contexts. Second, the data rely on self-reported perceptions and self-assessed skill improvement, which are subject to biases; the study does not include objective measures of actual language proficiency gains. Third, the questionnaire and interview protocols, while validated, may not have captured all the

nuanced factors influencing the learning experience.

Future research should address these limitations. Studies could employ mixed-methods designs that combine perception surveys with pre- and post-testing of specific language skills (e.g., vocabulary recall, pronunciation accuracy, listening comprehension) to correlate perception with measurable outcomes. Expanding the sampling to include students from diverse majors and universities would enhance external validity. Additionally, experimental or quasi-experimental research could compare the efficacy of structured versus unstructured use of songs in the classroom to develop evidence-based best practices for pedagogical integration. Finally, investigating teacher perspectives and current practices regarding the use of songs in language teaching would provide a complementary view, informing more holistic recommendations for curriculum design and teacher training.

Conclusion

This mixed-methods study demonstrates that English Education students at the University of Palangka Raya overwhelmingly perceive listening to English songs as a positive and beneficial practice for language learning. The findings confirm that songs function as a significant source of authentic, comprehensible input, most notably enhancing vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and pronunciation awareness, while also boosting motivation and speaking confidence through enjoyable, repetitive exposure. Crucially, the study also identifies key contingencies for this tool's effectiveness. The divergence between highly positive and more neutral perceptions hinges not on the medium itself, but on learner intentionality and strategy. Effective outcomes are linked to active engagement, such as deliberate vocabulary lookup and pronunciation imitation, whereas passive listening for mere entertainment yields minimal perceived gains. Furthermore, the informal nature of lyrics and individual learning style preferences present considerations for academic application.

Therefore, the main contribution of this study is its dual emphasis: it strongly supports the affective and pedagogical value of songs as a supplementary learning resource while simultaneously highlighting the critical role of guided, strategic use to bridge the gap between informal exposure and academic skill development. For practice, the result implies educators should move beyond occasional use and purposefully integrate songs with metacognitive strategy training, teaching students how to actively mine lyrics and analyze speech patterns. For theory, the findings reinforce models of incidental and affective learning, illustrating how autonomous, pleasurable activities can lower the affective filter and promote acquisition outside formal settings. While limited by sample scope and self-reported data, this study clearly outlines a path for future work. Research should now focus on designing and measuring the outcomes of structured pedagogical interventions that harness the motivational power of songs while directing learner attention to specific linguistic features, ultimately translating high perception into demonstrated proficiency gains.

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