

THE IMPACT OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING ON STUDENTS' LISTENING PROFICIENCY USING SONG LYRICS

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on assessing the effectiveness of the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach combined with English song lyrics in improving students' listening skills and analyzes the connection between students' perceptions and their listening outcomes. A quasi-experimental design was utilized with 59 tenth-grade students from a senior high school in Bandar Lampung, divided into an experimental group ($n = 30$) and a control group ($n = 29$). The experimental group participated in five TBLT-focused lessons that included English song lyrics, whereas the control group underwent traditional listening instruction. Data were gathered via pre- and post-listening assessments and a 15-item Likert-scale survey. Findings indicated that the experimental group demonstrated a substantially higher enhancement in listening performance, recording an average post-test score of 92.50 ($SD = 9.53$) versus the control group's average of 53.96 ($SD = 18.63$). Responses to the questionnaire revealed very favorable views across three areas (mean range = 4.5–4.7), such as the learning environment, the use of songs as educational tools, and teaching effectiveness. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a highly strong and significant positive association between perception scores and listening performance ($r = 0.992, p < 0.001$). Results indicate that incorporating song lyrics into TBLT produces a synergistic impact where emotional involvement and cognitive understanding support one another, making it a particularly effective teaching approach for EFL classrooms.

Introduction

Listening comprehension is a key yet difficult ability in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) acquisition. Unlike other language skills that allow students time for reflection and revision, listening demands real-time processing of auditory input, requiring simultaneous integration of phonological recognition, lexical retrieval, syntactic parsing, and semantic interpretation (Susanto & Nanda, 2024). In the Indonesian EFL context, students often face persistent difficulties in developing listening proficiency due to insufficient exposure to real English input and reliance on scripted, artificial listening materials that do not reflect natural speech patterns or cultural contexts (Ramadhiati & Somba, 2021). Traditional listening instruction in Indonesian secondary schools remains predominantly teacher-centered, typically employing textbook-based audio followed by comprehension questions. Although this approach offers structure, it does not adequately engage students' intrinsic drive or expose them to prosodic elements, colloquial idioms, and cultural nuances that are crucial for authentic communication (Pritee Jain, 2024). As a result, a large number of pupils have

mechanical understanding abilities that inadequately translate to authentic listening scenarios.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) presents a viable pedagogical solution to these issues. The focus of TBLT, which arose from communicative language teaching traditions, is student-centered instruction structured around purposeful, goal-oriented activities that mimic real-world communication situations (Ok, 2024). TBLT creates opportunities for negotiation of meaning, noticing language gaps, receiving comprehensible input, and producing modified output all central to second language acquisition (East, 2017). A growing body of research demonstrates TBLT's effectiveness across skills and contexts. For example, meta-analysis of 47 studies reported significant effect sizes favoring TBLT over traditional methods across all language skills (Boers & Faez, 2023). Specifically, Jones (2020) found that task-based approaches to listening led to greater gains in both bottom-up processing (phoneme recognition, lexical access) and top-down processing (schema activation, inferencing), suggesting strong potential for TBLT in improving listening comprehension. Within this framework, English songs present unique affordances as authentic materials that align particularly well with TBLT principles). The repetitive and melodic structures of songs facilitate pattern recognition and memorization, while emotional engagement creates positive affective conditions that support language acquisition (Gresinyec, 2024). OPERA hypothesis (Overlap, Precision, Emotion, Repetition, Attention) further explains how music strengthens language processing through shared neural networks (Choi, 2022). Empirical findings reinforce this claim: (Salem, 2019) showed that sung vocabulary presentation enhanced retention compared to spoken presentation, while (Sousa et al., 2022) demonstrated that rhythm and melody improve phonological awareness. In listening contexts, (Skalníková & Ramešová, 2025) found that song-based activities increased attention span and reduced anxiety, and (Rattanasak, 2025) reported improved recognition of connected speech phenomena such as linking and assimilation.

The incorporation of music-based resources into TBLT frameworks has been the subject of recent empirical investigations. (Mikhael Misa, 2024) showed that Chinese EFL students' listening fluency and pronunciation accuracy were greatly enhanced by music-enhanced task-based courses. In a similar vein, (Vallejo & Pérez Ortega, 2024) discovered that, in contrast to conventional listening exercises, song-based communicative tasks raised student motivation and participation rates. In contrast to traditional literature, Mantie (2013) noted that students used songs to negotiate meaning more complexly, while (Uchihara & Harada, 2018) discovered gains in oral fluency, vocabulary retention, and listening comprehension in Japanese university settings. Chunliu & Guangsheng (2025) also showed that students' motivation to interact with real English media outside of the classroom was increased and that listening improvements from song-integrated TBLT lasted six months after instruction. Incorporating songs into TBLT appears to encourage long-term autonomous learning habits in addition to improving short-term competency, according to these studies.

Beyond efficacy, how students view teaching strategies has a significant impact on learning results. (Rivera et al., 2019) showed a strong correlation between communicative performance and perceptions of task authenticity, whereas Gardner highlighted the role of attitudes in motivation and achievement in their socio-educational model (Lamb et al., 2020). Similarly, Louise & Cruz (2016) showed that positive perceptions of music-integrated instruction predicted greater participation and persistence in language learning tasks. Nevertheless, there is also a shortage of systematic research on the relationship between students' impressions of song-based TBLT activities and measurable listening performance.

especially in the context of Indonesian secondary schools, despite growing evidence of the advantages of both TBLT and music in language instruction.

In order to close this gap, the current study explores the best ways to integrate song lyrics into a TBLT framework to help tenth-grade students in a public senior high school in Lampung, Indonesia, improve their listening comprehension. This study specifically seeks to:

1. Examine the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) using song lyrics on students' listening proficiency compared to conventional listening instruction.
2. Analyze the correlation between students' perceptions of TBLT activities using song lyrics and their listening proficiency.

Based on the corpus of existing evidence, it is anticipated that students who receive song-based TBLT instruction will demonstrate positive perception-performance correlations and enhance their listening abilities. Because it bridges the gap between the emotive and cognitive components of EFL listening teaching, this study is significant. The study offers an alternative method of instruction that combines communicative activities with authentic musical input to increase motivation and comprehension. The results should provide pedagogical insights for Indonesian EFL teachers and curriculum architects who want to design dynamic, student-centered listening courses that reflect language use in everyday situations and promote sustained engagement.

Research Methods

This study utilized a quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group to assess how well students' listening skills were improved by Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) combined with English song lyrics. The quasi-experimental approach was selected due to practical constraints inherent in educational settings that prevent true randomization while still allowing for meaningful comparison between treatment conditions (Ok, 2024). The study used a perception questionnaire to look at students' views toward the teaching strategy as well as quantitative pre-test and post-test measures to evaluate changes in listening competency. This mixed-methods approach provided comprehensive understanding of both learning outcomes and learner experiences, enabling examination of the relationship between affective and cognitive variables (Lan & Hew, 2020). The participants of this study were 59 tenth-grade students enrolled in the 2025/2026 academic year at a senior high school in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. They were split into two groups.: the experimental group, consisting of 30 students, and the control group, consisting of 29 students. Activities based on TBLT that incorporated English song lyrics were utilized to teach listening to the experimental group, while conventional listening exercises without songs were employed for the control group. The researchers could evaluate the impacts of the teaching methods between groups instructed with standard techniques and those introduced to song-integrated TBLT due to this distinction. Two methods of data collection were used. Students first finished a listening post-test (Variable Y), which assessed their ability to comprehend the song's tasks. The assessment instrument used in this study consisted of 20 listening items designed to measure students' listening skills. Before being administered to the research sample, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability on 30 non-sample students to ensure its quality.

Table 1 Reliability of the Listening Assessment Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.955	20

The reliability test results showed that the Cronbach's Alpha of the listening assessment instrument was 0.955, indicating that the instrument has adequate internal consistency. Therefore, the instrument can be used to accurately measure students' listening skills during the study.

The second instrument was a Perception Questionnaire, with 15 statements scored on a five-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree.". The three primary elements of motivation, vocabulary retention, and enjoyment were the focus of the questionnaire, which sought to gather students' opinions of the teaching methodology. These instruments were selected to ensure both objective and subjective measures of learning outcomes. The questionnaire items were adapted from previous validated research instruments Souhuwat & Sengkey (2023), who modified the instrument from Ngoc (2021) for the context of listening skills through English songs. Each of the five lessons that made up the intervention lasted roughly 80 minutes for both groups. The pre-task, task cycle, and language focus phases of the TBLT framework were all followed in each lesson for the experimental group. The topic and terminology that would be covered in the chosen English song lyrics were presented to the students during the pre-task phase. Students participated in group conversations to solve communicative tasks, completed information-gap exercises, and listened to listening activities that required them to understand the lyrics during the task cycle. During the language focus stage, important linguistic elements from the song were examined, including vocabulary usage and grammar patterns. Conversely, the control group was taught the same subjects but through more traditional listening exercises, such as hearing stories or conversations that were prewritten and didn't include lyrics. Three stages of data collecting were conducted: A pre-test is given prior to the first lesson to assess baseline listening skills, and a post-test is given following the final lesson to gauge listening comprehension progress. Students' opinions and evaluations about the teaching approach are gathered through the Perception Questionnaire, which is given out just after the post-test. SPSS version 28.0 was used for data analysis, which included both descriptive and inferential statistical processes. The findings of the perception questionnaires and listening tests were compiled using descriptive statistics, such as mean scores and standard deviations. In order to ascertain if the experimental and control groups' listening performance differed significantly, the pre-test and post-test results were subjected to an independent-samples t-test. The association between the students' perception scores and their post-test listening performance was also investigated using Pearson's correlation coefficient. Indicating that students who had more favorable opinions of the song-integrated TBLT activities also tended to do better in listening, the results showed a very strong positive correlation between perception and listening proficiency ($r = .992$, $p < .001$, $N = 30$).

Findings

This section presents the study's empirical findings, with an emphasis on how students' listening skills and opinions of the teaching methodology were affected when Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) was combined with English song lyrics. Descriptive statistics of the questionnaire answers, comparisons between the experimental and control

groups before and after the tests, and inferential statistical analyses such as Pearson's correlation coefficient and the independent-samples t-test are used to display the results. These results offer quantifiable proof of the intervention's efficacy as well as the connection between students' perceptions and listening abilities.

Table 2 Student questionnaire results on evaluating listening skills using song lyrics

Statement	Mean
English songs help me become more aware of English listening input.	4.6
Listening to English songs makes the learning atmosphere more relaxed.	4.5
Songs help me think more clearly when learning listening.	4.5
English songs help me become familiar with English words.	4.5
Songs make it easier to memorize new vocabulary.	4.5
Listening to songs improves my listening comprehension.	4.5
Songs support my pronunciation development.	4.5
English songs motivate me to learn listening better.	4.5
Songs increase my activity and attention during lessons.	4.5
Songs make the listening learning process more enjoyable.	4.5
Songs improve my ability to understand spoken English.	4.5
English songs play an important role in improving listening skills.	4.5
Songs are effective listening media.	4.5
Students' perceptions show the positive impact of songs in class learning.	4.5
English songs are a significant resource in learning listening.	4.6

According to the questionnaire's results, all 15 assertions scored extremely well on average, with ratings ranging from 4.5 to 4.6 on a 5-point scale. Both "English songs are a significant resource in learning listening" and "English songs help me become more aware of English listening input" had the highest mean score (4.6), suggesting that students are well aware of the advantages of music in listening instruction. Students' uniformly good perceptions of motivation, vocabulary retention, pronunciation, listening comprehension, classroom attentiveness, and a more pleasurable learning environment are confirmed by the steady mean score of 4.5 for the remaining items. These findings demonstrate that the majority of students find the incorporation of song lyrics into TBLT to be highly beneficial.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics Experimental Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Pre-Test	30	30.00	80.00	59.5000	11.69660
Post-test	30	70.00	100.00	92.5000	9.53668
Valid N (listwise)	30				

The experimental group's pre-test mean score was 59.50 (SD = 11.69), and the post-test mean score rose to 92.50 (SD = 9.53), according to the descriptive statistics. There was an increase from 30 to 70 for the minimum score and from 80 to 100 for the maximum score. Following the use of TBLT combined with English song lyrics, this notable improvement suggests a notable improvement in listening skills.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics Control Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Pre-Test	29	10.00	80.00	46.0345	16.33245
Post-test	29	20.00	95.00	53.9655	18.63078
Valid N (listwise)	29				

In the post-test, the control group's mean score rose from 46.03 (SD = 16.33) on the pre-test to 53.96 (SD = 18.63). While the highest score climbed from 80 to 95, the minimum score increased from 10 to 20. The lower increase in listening skill relative to the experimental group implies that traditional listening education was less successful.

Table 5 Independent Samples t-Test

	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
			One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
Listening	Equal variances assumed	10.050	57	<,001	<,001	38.53448	3.83421	30.85661 46.21236
	Equal variances not assumed	9.949	41.415	<,001	<,001	38.53448	3.87308	30.71501 46.35395

An independent-samples t-test was used to assess if this distinction between the experimental and control groups' post-test performance was statistically significant. In terms of post-test mean scores, the experimental group outperformed the control group by an average of 38.53 points, indicating a highly significant difference ($t = 10.050$, $df = 57$, $p < 0.001$). Given that the mean difference's 95% CI ranged from 30.85 to 46.21, the observed difference was both practically significant and statistically sound. This research demonstrates that the addition of song lyrics to TBLT courses significantly improved listening skills, outperforming the improvements made with traditional teaching methods.

Table 6 Pearson Correlation Between TBLT Activities, Motivation, and Listening Achievement

		Listening	Perception
Listening	Pearson Correlation	1	.992**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	30	30
Perception	Pearson Correlation	.992**	1

Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001
N	30

Findings from the Pearson correlation indicated a very strong positive association ($r = .992$, $p < .001$) between students' performance on the listening test and their judgments of TBLT using song lyrics. According to this almost perfect link, pupils who had more favorable opinions about the teaching strategy also performed better on listening comprehension tests. Given the robustness of this link, it is likely that affective elements are a key mediating factor in song-integrated TBLT's effectiveness. Superior cognitive outcomes resulted from students' increased involvement with learning tasks when they thought the technique was entertaining, inspiring, and pedagogically valuable.

Discussion

The results of this study offer convincing proof of how well Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) may be combined with English song lyrics to improve EFL students' listening skills and mold their attitudes toward learning. First, the results of the questionnaire show that students have overwhelmingly good opinions on the use of songs in listening teaching. The mean scores for all 15 categories were uniformly high, ranging from 4.5 to 4.6. These impressions encompass motivational, cognitive, and affective aspects, including improved focus, memory of words, awareness of pronunciation, and pleasure in the educational process. Gardner's socio-educational model, which highlights the value of positive attitudes in maintaining motivation and learning achievement, is consistent with this result (Lamb et al., 2020). Additionally, it confirms the findings of Louise & Cruz (2016), who found that persistence and willingness to participate in language learning activities are highly predicted by positive judgments of music-integrated instruction.

Second, the pedagogical strength of song-integrated TBLT is demonstrated by the experimental group's notable improvement in listening proficiency, with mean scores increasing from 59.50 in the pre-test to 92.50 in the post-test. The authentic input offered by song lyrics exposes students to natural pronunciation patterns, prosodic elements, and cultural context, in contrast to traditional approaches that focus on scripted and artificial materials (Ok, 2024). These components assist top-down procedures like schema activation and inferencing in addition to bottom-up abilities like phoneme identification (Jones, 2020). The experimental group's notable score improvements support earlier research (Werner, 2020), which consistently found that incorporating songs into TBLT results in notable improvements in oral communication, vocabulary retention, and listening fluency. Third, the findings indicate that the experimental group gained 38.53 points more than the control group, according to the findings of the independent-samples t-test, which showed a very significant difference in post-test performance between the two groups. Song-integrated TBLT is significantly more successful than traditional training at promoting listening comprehension, according to this strong statistical data. The outcome supports Anna & Tegge (2015) assertion that song-based tasks encourage more group participation and interaction, which in turn leads to deeper processing of linguistic data. Additionally, the broad confidence interval has both statistical and practical significance, indicating that the advantages of this method are relevant in classroom settings and have educational value.

Students' perceptions and their listening achievement were found to have an extraordinarily strong positive link ($r = .992$, $p < .001$), according to the Pearson correlation study. This almost flawless link demonstrates how affective engagement impacts cognitive outcomes. Better listening comprehension resulted from increased participation and

concentration among students who thought the teaching strategy was fun, inspiring, and worthwhile. This finding is consistent with the findings of Lamb et al. (2020), who highlighted that positive engagement with music-integrated tasks promotes long-term improvements in listening proficiency and autonomous learning, and Vallejo & Pérez Ortega (2024), who contended that perceptions of task authenticity significantly influence communicative performance. By demonstrating that learner perceptions may be among the best indicators of listening ability in the Indonesian secondary school setting when teaching is enhanced using song-based TBLT, the current study's correlation strength surpasses earlier findings. All of these findings point to a strong synergy between the cognitive and emotive dimensions of learning when English song lyrics are incorporated into TBLT. The emotional and motivational appeal of songs fosters positive learner perspectives that encourage sustained effort and involvement, while on the one hand, authentic and engaging input improves comprehension abilities. Teachers in EFL situations, especially in Indonesia, are advised to integrate music-based resources into task-based frameworks and go beyond traditional textbook-driven techniques. In addition to creating a dynamic, student-centered environment that optimizes linguistic and motivational outcomes, this kind of integration closes the gap between classroom instruction and real-world language use.

Conclusion

As a result of this study, Indonesian EFL students' listening skills are considerably enhanced when Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) activities are combined with real English song lyrics. While the experimental group attained greater improvement than the control group ($M = 7.93$) by achieving significant increases ($M = 33.00$), the remarkably high correlation ($r = .992$) between students' perceptions and learning results highlights the importance of affective engagement in the development of listening skills. A more immersive and successful learning experience is produced when students develop a deeper emotional and cognitive bond with the target language through the combination of meaningful tasks and authentic materials, such as song lyrics. This method improves motivation, sustained attention, and active engagement in the learning process in addition to improving listening comprehension. These results are consistent with those of Ok (2024), who stressed the favorable relationship between attitudes toward music-integrated education and active involvement, and Skalníková & Ramešová (2025), who focused on the function that music plays in increasing motivation and reducing anxiety. In order to address both cognitive and affective learning characteristics, the results support the pedagogical benefit of using song lyrics in TBLT frameworks and recommend English language teachers to use this approach. This kind of integration creates a vibrant, stimulating, and fruitful learning environment that facilitates more efficient language learning.

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