



Exploring Student Perspectives on Spotify Application in Enhancing Listening Skills: A Case Study in an Indonesian Islamic Junior High School

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Received: 2025-04-24 Accepted: 2025-07-09

DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v13i1.6450

Abstract

English language learning in Papua, Indonesia, presents a unique context where English is treated as a second language under the Special Autonomy framework. Listening is a fundamental skill in language acquisition, and recent technological developments offer new opportunities to support this process. This study explores students' perceptions of using Spotify as a digital tool to enhance their English listening skills. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through observation and structured interviews with eighth-grade students at a junior high school in Sorong, West Papua. The research subject was chosen to students' who use the Spotify App, then they will be interviewed regarding their daily use of the Spotify application in enhancing listening skills. There were 7 students interviewed out of 20 students observed and this research was conducted for 1 month. Findings indicate that students perceive Spotify, particularly its music and podcast features, as an engaging and effective medium for learning. Participants reported improved vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation, highlighting the platform's accessibility and audio-visual features as beneficial for language exposure. The study concludes that Spotify can serve as a supportive tool for developing listening skills in EFL contexts. It recommends integrating such digital platforms into language instruction, particularly in regions where English holds a special educational role.

Keywords: *Spotify Application; Listening Skills; EFL; Digital Media*

Introduction

One of the most important subjects for the development of human resources in school is English. English is a linguistic strength that is becoming increasingly important around the globe since it allows for social, economic, and intellectual advancement. The importance of English as a foreign language is now formally recognized by the Indonesian government by deciding that English lessons have to be learned by all students (Takriyanti et al., 2022). Unlike most islands in Indonesia where English is a foreign language, English in Papua has been promoted under the Special Autonomy Law (*Otonomi Khusus*) as the second language alongside Indonesian (Komarudin Watubun, 2023).

Moreover, listening skills are one of the essential aspects of learning English. Through listening, one can understand English intonation, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Good listening skills also enable one to understand conversations, presentations, and other audio materials in English. By mastering listening skills first, other language skills can be developed correctly. This is supported by research that shows that listening is a mental process that aims to create a sense of comfort for the interlocutor, not to judge or criticize. Therefore, understanding and mastering listening skills is essential to mastering other language skills. In addition, listening skills also involve using all the senses to understand the message the speaker wants to convey (Gultom et al., 2023).

Learning has shifted to using cutting-edge technology, the internet, gadgets, and other resources since the COVID-19 pandemic struck the world, especially Indonesia. Students and college students seem to be incredibly common in this online learning program. Educational media function to clarify messages or information imparted in the teaching and learning process to achieve specific learning objectives (Kodrlé & Savchenko, 2021). Various media are employed in the learning process, categorized into offline options like videos and online alternatives such as Spotify, which will be discussed. Therefore, Spotify is an easy platform to use anytime and anywhere because it can be accessed anytime. Moreover, students nowadays have their gadgets. The impact on students' interest in listening and knowing the world with the same song as the song they heard was also derived from listening and learning that utilizes the Spotify app (Marsela et al., 2024).

Kodrlé and Savchenko (Kodrlé & Savchenko, 2021) state that educational media functions to clarify messages or information imparted in the teaching and learning process to achieve specific learning objectives. Various media are employed in the learning process, categorized into offline options like videos and online alternatives such as Spotify that would be discussed. Spotify is an easy platform to use anytime and anywhere because it can be accessed anytime. Moreover, students nowadays have their gadgets. The impact on students' interest in listening and knowing the world with the same song as the song they heard was also derived from listening learning that utilizes the Spotify app in the research done by

Andriani et al. (Marsela et al., 2024). Moreover, the involvement of the Spotify app can enhance students' ability and understanding in improving their listening skills by providing access to streaming music, podcasts, and digital videos, regardless of time or location.

Listening serves as a mode of communication arising from students connecting the acquired knowledge with what they hear, as highlighted by Lewier and Nendissa (Lewier & Nendissa, 2020). In the context of learning the English language, listening is an initial stage preceding the acquisition of the other three fundamental skills. However, listening skills are still considered difficult, especially by EFL learners in Indonesia, because they require focus and concentration of the listener, which is in line with the opinion (Sawir, 2005).

Many researchers have proven that songs are an effective medium in teaching listening. Yuliarini (Yuliarini, 2022) suggests using songs in listening classes to increase student interest can be applied during the learning process. Research conducted by Alam et al. (Alam et al., 2023) regarding the use of songs on the Spotify application shows that in increasing their interest in listening classes, students often use songs as learning media because it can train students' skills. They can also enjoy learning activities, quickly understand the material's content, and do not feel bored quickly.

Numerous studies examining the utilization of songs demonstrate a positive influence on students' proficiency in the English language, the students can learn English many times by listening to the audio from the app. Then, they can create their own audio, so that they can share the audio with other students in enhancing English skills especially for listening (Yanti, 2024). Furthermore, Mah et al. (Mah et al., 2023) found a significant improvement in students' listening skills after using podcasts on Spotify. Based on these two studies' findings, listening comprehension can be enhanced by using Spotify as a creative learning tool and a source of entertainment. The researcher plans to use English songs and podcasts on Spotify to investigate students' perceptions of their listening skills concerning this explanation.

This study focuses mainly on students' opinions about using English songs on the Spotify app to enhance their listening abilities. Investigating the specific impact of music streaming on EFL learners' cognitive development can provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum designers, and language learners, ultimately improving the effectiveness of language acquisition strategies in the technological world. Students who enjoy listening to music will find it interesting to listen to songs, especially in English, to help them learn the language. Teachers can revolutionize language learning by understanding how Spotify can improve listening skills and cognitive development in an EFL context. Because the brain is not under pressure, it readily accepts this learning process. To ascertain the purpose, the study was guided by two research questions: 1) How are the students'

perspectives on the Spotify App in enhancing listening skills? 2) How the Spotify app can support students' experience in learning English?. Based on the research question above, the researcher aims: 1. to find out students' perceptions of the Spotify application in enhancing listening skills. 2. To find out how the Spotify App can support students' experience in learning Englis.

Method

This research used qualitative methods, qualitative research is typically used to establish the importance of the central idea and to explore the problem and develop an understanding of small individuals in social problem (Klassen et al., 2012). As a conclusion, a qualitative approach used to explore the phenomenon in order to understand the practice and behavior in real social situation for small individuals' problem. Descriptive in this study is used to develop theories that are built from data in the field. Thus, Researchers use this method because researchers only focus on analyzing student perceptions, then the data that researchers use will be presented descriptively.

The research carried out at MTs. Negeri Sorong. It is located at Mariyai, Kel. Malawele, Kec. Aimas, Kabupaten Sorong. The research subject was chosen to students' who use the Spotify App, then they will be interviewed regarding their daily use of the Spotify application in enhancing listening skills. The researcher uses this sampling technique because all of the students have the same opportunity to be selected. The research used observation and interview to collect research data. In this case, the observation conducted by observing students' who use the spotify app. Researchers observed 20 eighth grade students at MTs. Negeri Sorong to see how many students use the Spotify app in their daily activities, Observations carried out in 1 meetings. Interview is one way of collecting data that is conducted through oral communication activities in the form of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Tanzeh, 2018). Data details of students interviewed are presented in table1 below:

Table:1Demographic Participant

Participants	gender	age	grade	Spotify's experience in listening skills	Listening experience
Student 1 (Std 1)	Male	13	8 th	Often	1,5 years
Student 2 (Std2)	Male	13	8 th	Very often	3 years
Student 3 (Std 4)	Female	13	8 th	Very often	2 years

Student (Std 4)	4	Female	13	8 th	Very often	4 years
Student (Std 5)	5	Female	13	8 th	Often	1 years
Student (Std 6)	6	Female	13	8 th	Very Often	2 years
Student (Std 7)	7	Male	13	8 th	Often	1 years

Based on this table, it shows that all participants had experience using Spotify in enhancing listening skills. This makes it easier for researchers to explore the perceptions of students with similar levels of experience towards Spotify. After making observations, the researcher found 9 students who use the Spotify application. 9 of the 20 students were interviewed by researchers. Interview conducted using structured questions with 2 aspects, knowing students' perceptions of the Spotify application in improving listening skills and knowing how the Spotify application can support students' experiences in improving listening skills. Interviews were then conducted to explore students' perspectives and experiences of Spotify in improving listening skills. The interview process used Indonesian so that students better understand the questions asked, then carefully designed which covers the main topics.

The researcher will use interactive analysis model to analyze the qualitative data. Interactive analysis data was consisted of three steps, such as: data reducing, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Matthew B, 1994). After making observations, the researcher found 7 students who use the Spotify application. 7 of the 20 students were interviewed by researchers. Interview conducted using structured questions and are still in the development stage to obtain optimal data. Interviews conducted in person and documented for further analysis lasted approximately 20-30 minutes and were conducted in Indonesian, so that students better understand the questions asked.

Results

The reason using Spotify application

Spotify offers millions of songs from various genres and artists around the world. Students can choose songs in their target language to hear the natural pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm of the language. Listening to music you like also makes the learning process more fun and motivating. Based on the interviewed with the students, The researcher found that the reason they choose Spotify as application to enhance their listening skill. Spotify is easy to access from anywhere and they are free to create playlists of songs they want to listen to. As stated by S2:

"I think using spotify makes it easier to improve my listening skills because the way I get new vocabulary, I immediately look for the meaning I enjoy spotify because it's cool, easy to access and free" (Std. 2, 2025).

Besides being easy to use S1 says choosing Spotify as a medium for practicing listening is a good choice because there is a lyric feature. He use of the lyrics feature to hone his English skills. As he explained:

"Spotify is very easy to use because there are lyrics from the application and to learn independently can improve listening skills, I often listen to English songs on Spotify and it helps me learn English, especially improving my listening skills" (Std. 1, 2025).

Many students more like learning with *Spotify* application because it is more fun and practice. Learning with application can improve her self-study because *Spotify* can be access in anywhere and everywhere. As stated by S6:

"I like to use spotify because it makes it easy for me to find songs or podcasts that I want to listen to. I think the spotify application can improve my English skills, because sometimes at school I don't understand sentences or words in learning English, if on spotify it's more exciting because while listening to songs and seeing the lyrics, it's easier to understand the vocabulary" (Std. 6, 2025).

The Spotify application has many interesting features and is easy for students to use. Students can organize what they want to listen to every day, especially being able to store important songs or podcasts that can improve their listening skills. The use of Spotify applications helps students explore their English skills because it is understood that students can listen to songs whenever and wherever they want. Spotify provides a fun, flexible and authentic environment for students to practice and improve their listening skills, away from rigid and monotonous learning methods.

The students' perspective using Spotify

Traditional listening exercises can often be frustrating. Spotify's accessible and diverse content helps alleviate this, as students can re-listen, use lyrics, or choose easier content when needed, reducing feelings of being overwhelmed. Listening to popular songs or podcasts on topics of interest makes the learning process feel more relevant and less academic. This authentic exposure to language in a natural context is highly valued.

Based on the findings, all the respondents are agreeing that Spotify is the right media to enhance listening skills. Learning by using application other than books is fun and not dry. This can be proven by the increasing listening skill that students get after learning using music from Spotify. An experience stated by S2. He said:

"Spotify is very easy to use because there are lyrics from the application and to learn independently can improve listening skills, I often listen to English songs on Spotify and it helps me learn English, especially improving my listening skills"

(Std. 2, 2025).

This is also supported by the answer from S3, as she explain:

"I think Spotify can improve listening skills because it makes it easier to learn English from vocabulary that we didn't know before. There are several applications that I usually use but enjoy using Spotify more, and indirectly Spotify improves my speaking skills through songs". (Std. 3, 2025).

The Spotify also makes the students have a fun experience in listening a song. Especially, the songs in Spotify are very complete. As S4 explain:

"I also often listen to English songs that are hits using spotify. Then when listening to the song, I usually read the lyrics and it has been translated so that it is easier to understand the lyrics of the song I am listening to" (Std. 4, 2025).

The similar answer also mentioned from S5, She said:

"On Spotify also the quality of the songs is very good, sometimes when I listen to a song the sound quality is good so I don't understand the meaning of the song" (Std. 5, 2025).

Student enjoy utilizing songs to catch their interest in listening to English music as it indirectly trains them. They may enjoy the activity while learning, and most importantly, it makes the subject simpler for them to grasp. When compared to other methods, the usage of songs was chosen to boost students' capacity to acquire a large amount of new vocabulary through entertaining learning activities. In conclusion, student perspectives strongly support the use of Spotify as a valuable and enjoyable tool for enhancing listening skills. Its combination of entertainment, practical language learning features, and accessibility makes it a popular choice for self-directed language practice and a strong complement to formal instruction.

Essential features in enhance listening skill on Spotify

There are several features provided by Spotify. Starting from the completeness and always updating the latest songs, cheap subscriptions, availability of lyrics, and being able to create favorite playlists. The researchers wanted to know more about which features played the most important role in enhance their listening skill on Spotify. Based on the interview, most of the respondents' answers the lyric feature is the most important feature in enhance their listening skill. They said that with the lyrics feature they can understand vocabulary that they have never listened to before. As S1 explain:

"Spotify is very easy to use because there are lyrics from the application and to learn independently can improve listening skills, I often listen to English songs on Spotify and it helps me learn English, especially improving my listening skills" (Std. 1, 2025).

The same idea was stated by S4. She said that:

"My experience while using spotify is quite pleasant because it is easy to access and free. Then when listening to the song, I usually read the lyrics and it has been translated so that it is easier to understand the lyrics of the song I am listening to" (Std. 4, 2025).

In addition, S5 agree that the Spotify application is used as a learning medium at school, As S5 explain that:

"I think the spotify application can be a medium for teaching English at school because it's fun, you can learn English while listening to songs" (Std. 5, 2025).

Furthermore, the study showed the importance of lyric features in keeping students engaged and motivated throughout listening classes. The subject material and sentimental value of song lyrics were proven to catch students' interest, resulting in enhanced involvement and focus throughout the learning process. From a practical perspective, these findings suggest many options for improving language acquisition by including song lyrics. Educators should consider choosing songs that correspond to students' interests and levels of language competence, so maximizing the motivating advantages of lyrical characteristics. Additionally, including songs in English learning may improve students' listening abilities and general language ability

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong evidence that the use Spotify can significantly improve the listening skills of eight grade students of Mts. Negeri Sorong. The main findings will be discussed in this section, along with the theory relevant to the research and also the findings of previous research. Similarly, this study focuses on students' perceptions in enhancing listening skills. Enhanced listening skills can help students have a good understanding of language, effective teaching, and overall good communication. the importance of nurturing listening skills, not only for academic success but also for holistic student development. Educators have the ability to provide better support for their students' overall growth and success (Sanchez et al., 2020). The mobile nature of Spotify allows students to learn on the go – during commutes, while exercising, or even during downtime. This flexibility makes it easier to integrate language learning into their daily lives.

Participants in this study have applied applications or media that are considered effective for training their listening skills. Mobile apps can motivate students to establish their personal learning space, offering benefits to learners. In this digital era, there have been many media and applications that are useful in helping students improve language skills such as listening skills. Spotify application

has an impact on students' interest in listening activities and knowing the world that has the same song as the song they are listening to. If students can apply the Spotify application to improve their listening skills, this will greatly help them when taking listening courses in the classroom. Using educational apps not only familiarizes students with the digital setting but also motivates them to customize their learning surroundings (Hidayat et al., 2022). This is supported by the answers given during the previous interview, both English songs and podcasts on the Spotify application are applications that have helped them improve listening skills.

Employing English songs on platforms like Spotify is seen as a tool to enhance student's listening skills. This is backed by the current educational landscape, which is closely intertwined with digital advancements. Based on the results of this research, students confirmed that English songs are effective in sharpening their listening skills. Therefore, one of the advantages of using songs in the listening class is that it can be a learning medium used for classroom practice. In addition, the utilization of songs in the listening class leads to a rise in engagement. Students become more involved and demonstrate proficiency in listening tasks. Due to these advantages, incorporating songs can serve as a motivational tool for students in acquiring the target language, this is reflected in the results of interview responses that show that students feel motivated to enhance listening skills through songs on Spotify. Songs serve as a tool to enhance listening skills, given their widespread availability for ear training purpose (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021).

Incorporating songs into education can make the learning experience enjoyable for students, especially in the context of listening (Ali, 2020). The use of songs in the classroom offers several advantages, such as introducing diverse activities, fostering informal classroom situations, and alleviating anxiety by creating a positive and joyful atmosphere for students. The study also shows that the use of songs makes students feel happy because it can help them practice their listening skills. In addition, other features on Spotify such as English podcasts are also considered as media that can enhance students' listening skills. Podcasts are a series of audio files available to the public, in the form of podcasts that anyone can download and listen to whenever they want through computers, laptops, and smartphones (Waddingham et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, Spotify has become an unusual but effective way of learning. The platform has a comprehensive range of content, which educators in Indonesia use to complement classroom teaching and introduce students to a range of topics outside the syllabus. Spotify can be a useful learning tool for students, it not only increases their knowledge but also boosts their interest in subjects like English (Lewier & Nendissa, 2020). Spotify can enhance English skills and motivate students to learn in the classroom. In Western nations, educators and students recognize the potential of Spotify's music streaming service in fostering language learning and cultural assimilation. Students who used Spotify to study language

showed better proficiency and retention than those who relied on traditional teaching methods (Shafwati et al., 2023). The enjoyable and interactive features of the Spotify platform help users learn language and cultural aspects effortlessly, thus creating a lively and dynamic learning surrounding.

Effective teaching and learning processes hinge not just on the skills of educators and students but also on the choice of appropriate educational resources (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021). In the process of learning-teaching, the term media is already very familiar in this modern era. Regarding the interview results, students approved that the media available to enhance their listening capabilities are both podcasts and English songs on Spotify. It states that podcasts have significant potential to enhance students' listening abilities.

Furthermore, the enhancement of listening skills can be achieved by listening to English songs, as they function as captivating tools for enhancing this proficiency (Puspitarini & Hanif, 2019). Building on two studies highlighting the beneficial effects of both English songs and Podcasts on listening skills, our research seeks to identify the more effective choice between Podcasts and English Songs for enhancing students' listening abilities. Analysis of interview responses reveals a predominant belief among students that English songs are more efficacious in enhancing their listening skills compared to podcasts.

According to Brown (2006), engaging in activities such as acquiring vocabulary, reading lyrics, and exploring a variety of songs can increase students' exposure to popular music, thereby boosting their confidence in their capacity to comprehend and grasp the world around them. While diverse, some students might find that not all popular music or podcasts are suitable for structured language learning due to complex lyrics, fast speech, or abstract themes. Teachers might need to guide students on selecting appropriate content.

This research provides new information as a foundation for further research that explores the reasons behind the effectiveness of using English songs, which are higher than podcasts, within the Spotify application for enhancing students' listening skills. Understanding the comparison of English songs and podcasts in the learning context that impacts learning outcomes can also be researched by conducting a series of experiments that compare the effectiveness of learning based on English song media with podcast media. Student perspectives strongly support the use of Spotify as a valuable and enjoyable tool for enhancing listening skills. Its combination of entertainment, practical language learning features, and accessibility makes it a popular choice for self-directed language practice and a strong complement to formal instruction.

Spotify, as a rich audio streaming platform, offers great potential to improve English listening skills for various stakeholders. Here are recommendations tailored for teachers, policymakers, and app developers:

1. Teacher: As learning facilitators, teachers have a crucial role in effectively integrating Spotify in the classroom as well as a resource for independent learning. Select relevant and diverse content by creating interactive learning activities and guide students in selecting content.
2. Policemakers: Consider including recommendations for the use of digital platforms such as Spotify as an English learning tool in the national curriculum.
3. Developers: Develop more interactive transcript features, where users can tap on words to see definitions, synonyms, or usage examples

While Spotify is helpful for listening skills, research often does not comprehensively examine how Spotify use interacts with or impacts other language skills (speaking, reading, writing). To address these limitations, future research could use a mixed approach (quantitative and qualitative), include objective listening proficiency tests, compare control and experimental groups, and consider students' demographic and motivational factors in more depth.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the data analysis and the discussion in the preceding chapter, it was determined that there was a noticeable enhancement in students' listening ability following the implementation of the Spotify application. The research concludes that using Spotify contributes to improving students' listening skills. Before the integration of Spotify, students needed more enthusiasm for learning English, particularly in listening comprehension. However, students found it easier to engage with listening materials and developed a greater interest in utilizing the application. This was primarily attributed to Spotify's extensive library of songs, encompassing local and international tracks, allowing students to select English songs aligned with their interests and preferences.

Additionally, Spotify's user-friendly features, such as playlist creation and built-in lyrics, facilitated active student involvement in listening activities and comprehension of song lyrics. Consequently, the benefits of employing Spotify in the classroom were evident: improved student performance, enhanced engagement throughout the learning process, and heightened student satisfaction and interest in learning.

Based on the result of data analysis and conclusions of this research, the researcher also gives some suggestions for some elements related to this research, those are: 1) It is suggested to the teacher to use a Spotify application as one alternative among other teaching that can be used in teaching listening. because the Spotify application is effective to increase the students in listening ability. 2) Utilizing the Spotify application for listening comprehension can enhance students' listening ability in a more engaging manner, fostering an enjoyable learning experience for students. 3) Other researchers are encouraged to explore new

learning methods or strategies to enhance their research endeavours, surpassing the approaches used in prior studies.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to all individuals and institutions that contributed to the development of this research. We are especially grateful to the second author for providing critical insights that significantly deepened the conceptual and analytical dimensions of the study. Appreciation is also extended to the third author, whose efforts in synthesizing and finalizing the manuscript were invaluable in shaping the overall coherence and clarity of the work. This research was initially presented in a seminar proposal forum, where constructive feedback and scholarly discussions played an important role in refining the direction and quality of the study.

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Yuliarini, N. L. E. (2022). The Use of Song in Improving Students' Listening Skill. *Indonesian Journal Of Educational Research and Review*, 5(2), 226–233.
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