



## The Effect Of Using Ted Talks Application On The Listening Skills Mastery Of Second Semester Students In The English Education Study Program

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### Abstract

This study investigates the effect of using the TED Talks application on the listening skills mastery of second-semester students in the English Education Study Program at the University of HKBP Nommensen. TED Talks, as an authentic multimedia platform, provides learners with real-life English exposure through engaging videos covering diverse topics. A quantitative experimental method was employed, involving two groups: Class B as the experimental group and Class A as the control group. The experimental group, consisting of 25 students, was taught using TED Talks, while the control group of 31 students received instruction through conventional methods. Both groups took a pre-test and a post-test to measure the development of their listening skills. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group's average score, increasing from 59.6 to 70.24, compared to the control group's rise from 57.16 to 64.38. The t-test analysis produced a t-observed value of 2.571, which exceeded the t-table value of 2.005 at a 0.05 significance level, indicating a statistically significant difference. These results support the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) and demonstrate that the use of TED Talks positively impacts students' listening skills. Therefore, TED Talks can be considered an effective and innovative tool for enhancing listening instruction in EFL university settings.

**Keywords :** TED Talks, Listening Skills, Multimedia

### INTRODUCTION

Listening is a receptive skill that involves understanding spoken language and plays a vital role in effective communication. According to Azzahra et al., (2023:40), listening is one of the most essential language skills to master, defined as the process of actively and attentively hearing. As one of the four fundamental language skills alongside speaking,

reading, and writing. Listening is often considered the most challenging to acquire due to its complex and dynamic nature. Unlike other language skills, listening takes place in real time, requiring learners to process and interpret information instantly, without the opportunity to review or repeat what was heard.

Effective listening is not merely the act of hearing words; it also involves interpreting contextual cues, variations in intonation, stress patterns, and pragmatic meaning. Additionally, it requires a solid understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure to fully grasp the speaker's intended message. Listening is not a passive activity; rather, it is an active cognitive process that engages multiple linguistic and mental functions simultaneously. Given these demands, developing listening skills is crucial not only for effective communication but also as a foundation for achieving overall language proficiency (Du & Qian, 2022).

Furthermore, listening is a process that requires active mental and intellectual engagement. Learners must think critically and attentively in order to accurately understand spoken messages. Therefore, listening should not be regarded as a passive activity, but rather as a complex and interactive process that involves comprehension, interpretation, and response to received information.

In everyday life, individuals are constantly engaged in listening across various contexts, including within families, educational settings, and broader communities. In fact, listening is used more frequently than other language skills, emphasizing its importance in effective communication and the overall learning process (Andriani, Yuniar, & Abdullah, 2021).

Nevertheless, despite its vital role, the mastery of listening skills still faces several challenges. These include lack of concentration, difficulty in understanding oral instructions, low motivation to learn, and limited interest in listening materials. In some cases, conventional teaching methods also contribute to these issues by making listening activities less effective and less engaging. To overcome these obstacles, innovative strategies and the use of engaging, learner centered materials are essential to improve students' listening competence (Rerung, 2018).

Based on the researcher's observation in a second-semester English class at the English Education Study Program of the University of HKBP Nommensen, many students had difficulty understanding audio materials. When recordings were played, some appeared confused and responded slowly, and only a few were able to answer the questions correctly. Most students also seemed passive and unenthusiastic, reflecting low engagement and confidence in their listening skills.

These difficulties are likely caused by several factors, such as the infrequent use of English in daily conversation, limited vocabulary, and difficulty understanding pronunciation and intonation in the audio materials (Muamaroh, Mukti, & Haryanti, 2020). As a result, the students' listening skills are underdeveloped, hindering their ability to comprehend spoken information effectively. These findings are also supported by student test data, which show that most of them received low scores in listening assessments. The following table presents the students' listening scores:

**Table 1. Recapitulation of Students' Listening Scores**

No.	Initial Name of The Students	Score
1	IVR	44
2	TRS	44
3	PNS	48
4	MAS	56
5	LWS	44
6	NS	52
7	ABS	48
8	DS	40
9	SGH	40
10	HSN	56
11	JSI	60
12	JSH	60
13	AR	64
14	ECH	60
15	ES	60
16	BES	64
17	BGS	52
18	YP	52
19	KMS	48
20	JILG	52
21	DHL	44
22	GYS	64
23	HWS	68
24	SEP	36
25	COP	52

The scoring process uses a formula proposed by Arikunto (2023 : 221) as follows:

$$\text{Mean of the test} = \frac{\text{Total Score}}{\text{Total Number of the student}}$$

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1.298}{25} = 51.92$$

Based on the average score of 51.92, it can be concluded that students' listening skills remain relatively low. One contributing factor is the continued use of conventional listening instruction methods, which typically involve playing audio recordings followed by a few comprehension questions. These methods lack varied and interactive activities that promote active and strategic listening. Furthermore, the absence of visual media such as videos reduces students' ability to comprehend spoken messages, as non-verbal cues like facial expressions and body language are unavailable.

In line with this, Lestari (2020:25) emphasizes that the primary goal of listening instruction is to teach students how to listen effectively by making them aware of and able to manage the processes that support listening comprehension. This underscores the need for teaching approaches that go beyond content delivery and actively engage students in understanding, interpreting, and responding to auditory information.

To address these challenges, integrating technology into the learning process has emerged as a promising solution. Tampubolon sahan et al. (2018:177), argue that technology significantly supports the teaching of listening and speaking, and its influence on language proficiency and the use of language labs has gained growing attention. Through technological integration, learning becomes more engaging, flexible, and autonomous, enabling students to interact with content in more dynamic and meaningful ways.

In today's digital era, multimedia applications have become integral to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Popular platforms such as Cake, BBC Learning English, TED Talks, Elsa Speak, and Beelinguapp support the development of the four core language skills, including listening. These applications offer interactive and authentic input, which boosts student engagement and enhances learning outcomes (Br Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020).

This study specifically focuses on the use of the TED Talks application to improve students' listening skills. TED Talks provides a wide variety of videos and podcasts presented by native speakers on diverse topics such as technology, health, and design (Hadi et al., 2021:46). The authentic content, supported by subtitles, helps learners understand both meaning and context. Compared to other platforms, TED Talks stands out due to its topical diversity and relevance to students' interests, which increases motivation and promotes deeper comprehension. This approach not only aims to enhance students'

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listening proficiency but also allows them to gain interdisciplinary knowledge, resulting in a more meaningful learning experience.

Supporting this view, Tilwani et al. (2022:06) demonstrated that using TED Talks significantly improved EFL students' listening skills in Jakarta. Many students reported being more motivated to learn English when engaging with videos that matched their personal interests. This method has been shown to enhance both listening comprehension and learner motivation.

Given the effectiveness of TED Talks in supporting the development of listening skills and the growing demand for more engaging and interactive strategies, it is important to explore how this platform can be applied in various educational contexts, including local universities.

Based on this background, the present study was titled: "The Effect of Using TED Talks Application on the Listening Skills of Second Semester Students in the English Education Study Program at University of HKBP Nommensen." This research was motivated by three key factors: (1) observation data showed that students continued to struggle with listening comprehension, (2) teaching methods were predominantly monotonous and lacked student involvement, and (3) previous research indicated that TED Talks was an effective tool for improving listening skills. Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to investigate the effectiveness of this application in the specific context of English language instruction at the University of HKBP Nommense

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

A systematic plan or framework for carrying out a scientific investigation is referred to as a research design. In this study, a quantitative experimental approach is employed. As stated by Arikunto (Lomashvili, 2022) experimental research is designed to examine causal relationships by deliberately manipulating one variable to observe its effect on another. In this case, the independent variable is using the TED Talks app, while the students' listening abilities are the dependent variable. With this method, the researcher can evaluate how much using TED Talks affects students' listening comprehension growth.

This study is divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. While the control group learns listening through conventional methods such as using textbooks and audio recordings, the experimental group uses the TED Talks application. Conventional methods typically rely on teacher centered instruction, where students listen to pre-recorded materials from textbooks and answer comprehension questions without the aid of interactive multimedia. The experimental procedure includes a pre-test, a treatment, and a post-test. The pre-test is used to evaluate the students' listening skills before the

treatment begins, and the post-test is used to measure their improvement afterward. If the students score higher on the post-test than on the pre-test, it indicates that their listening skills have improved, demonstrating that the TED Talks application enhances listening instruction.

Arikunto (Priatna & Patmawati, 2020) defines a population as all the people or things that are the primary subjects of a study and have particular traits. This study's population consists of 56 second-semester students enrolled in the University of HKBP Nommensen's English Education Study Program.

From this population, two classes were used as research samples. Class B was selected as the experimental group because, based on initial observations, the students in this class were expected to demonstrate lower listening skills compared to those in Class A. Therefore, Class B received a treatment using the TED Talks application as a learning medium to examine its effectiveness in improving students' listening skills. Meanwhile, Class A served as the control group, allowing for an objective comparison and more valid findings from the experimental results (Hariyanto, Wijaya, Y Yahfizham, & Zaini, 2021).

A sample is a portion of the population chosen for study by a researcher. According to Arikunto (Pratiwi & Nur, 2019) a sample is part of the population used to conclude the research conducted. This approach allows researchers to collect data without examining the entire population.

The total sampling technique was employed in this study, meaning the entire population of 56 students was used as the research sample. This method was chosen since it was possible to include every student in the study due to the relatively modest population size. The division of groups was based on existing classes, each having a balanced number of students and similar characteristics. Consequently, Classes A and B were selected as the research samples. A listening test was given to collect data for this project. The listening test consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions designed to measure students' understanding of the material that was presented. The questions covered aspects such as identifying main ideas, important details, and inferences from the information heard. After administering the pre-test and post-tests to the students, the researcher collected their response sheets to be used as study data. Both the control class and the experimental class took the tests (Palupi, 2021)

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Data**

This study used a quantitative experimental method. The population consisted of 56 second-semester students enrolled in the English Education Study Program at University of HKBP Nommensen. Classes A and B were selected as the research samples. Class A served as the control group, while Class B was the experimental group. The control group was taught using conventional media, whereas the experimental group was taught using the TED Talks application. Both groups took a pre-test and a post-test to measure the differences in their listening skills, but only the experimental group received the intervention (Mo, 2025).

### Data Analysis

Data analysis was used to determine the effect of using the TED Talks application on students' listening skills. The test results aimed to identify the differences between students in the experimental class and those in the control class. To verify this, a t-test formula was applied. Based on the data calculations, the results were as follows:

### Tabulation Score

To facilitate the analysis process, research data needs to be arranged systematically. One way to do this is through data tabulation. According to Arikunto (2023:279), tabulation is the process of organizing data by arranging it into tables to make it more systematic, easier to interpret, and easier to analyze. The following is the tabulation of scores from the experimental group and the control group.

**Table 1. Calculation of Experimental Group**

No.	Students' Initial	Pre-Test (X <sub>1</sub> )	Post-Test (X <sub>2</sub> )	Difference Score (d=X <sub>2</sub> -X <sub>1</sub> )	Square of Difference (d <sup>2</sup> )
1.	BS	76	80	4	16
2.	JS	76	80	4	16
3.	GYS	56	72	16	256
4.	PNS	60	64	4	16
5.	DL	68	76	8	64
6.	NS	52	64	12	144
7.	LWS	68	72	4	16
8.	ABS	56	68	12	144
9.	SGH	52	68	16	256
10.	BGS	64	76	12	144
11.	IVRM	56	64	8	64
12.	SEP	48	60	12	144

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13.	COP	52	64	12	144
14.	HWS	52	68	16	256
15.	TRS	56	68	12	144
16.	HN	60	76	16	256
17.	ES	60	68	8	64
18.	YP	58	76	18	324
19.	EH	72	80	8	64
20.	AR	56	68	12	144
21.	MS	68	76	8	64
22.	KS	48	60	12	144
23.	JILG	52	68	16	256
24.	JS	76	84	8	64
25.	DS	48	56	8	64
	Total	1490	1756	266	3268
	Mean	59,6	70,24	10,64	130,72

Based on Table the cumulative pre-test score of the experimental group was 1490, with an average score of 59.6. After the treatment using the TED Talks application, the total post-test score increased to 1756, with an average of 70.24. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores (d) was 266, while the sum of the squares of the differences (d<sup>2</sup>) was 3268 (Lumbanraja & Reynoso, 2019). These results indicated a significant improvement in students' vocabulary skills after the implementation of the media. The calculation of the average pre-test and post-test scores for the experimental group is as follows:

$$Mdx = \frac{\sum d}{N} = \frac{266}{25} = 10.64$$

The sum of squared deviations from the experimental group was calculated as follows (Arikunto 2023 : 355):

$$D_x^2 = (\sum d^2) - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N_y}$$

$$D_x^2 = 3268 - \frac{(266)^2}{25}$$

$$D_x^2 = 3268 - \frac{70756}{25}$$

$$D_x^2 = 3268 - 2830.24$$

$$D_x^2 = 437.76$$

### Comparation Score

To determine whether the use of the TED Talks application had a significant effect on students' listening skills, a t-test formula was applied. The t-test calculation was carried out as follows (Arikunto, 2023 : 354):

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left[\frac{Dx^2 + Dy^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right] \left[\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right]}}$$

$$t = \frac{10.64 - 7.22}{\sqrt{\left[\frac{437.76 + 941.42}{31 + 25 - 2}\right] \left[\frac{1}{31} + \frac{1}{25}\right]}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.42}{\sqrt{\left[\frac{1379.18}{54}\right] \left[\frac{56}{775}\right]}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.42}{\sqrt{[25.54][0.07]}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.42}{\sqrt{1.78}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.42}{1.33}$$

$$t = 2.571$$

### Testing the Hypothesis

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the t-test formula to determine whether the hypothesis should be accepted or rejected. This study applied the t-test calculation with degrees of freedom ( $df = Nx + Ny - 2 = 25 + 31 - 2 = 54$ ) at a significance level of 0.05. The results of the t-test showed that the calculated t-value was lower than the critical t-table value.

t-count > t-table ( $p = 0.05$ ) with df 54

2.571 > 2.005 ( $p = 0.05$ ) with df 54

Since the calculated t-value was greater than the critical t-table value, it can be concluded that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. This indicates that the use of the TED Talks application had a significant effect on the listening skills of second-semester students at the University of HKBP Nommensen.

### Test of Validity

Validity analysis was conducted before the instrument was used in the study to ensure that it accurately measured students' listening skills in the context of materials delivered through the TED Talks application. The researcher focused on content validity to guarantee the quality and appropriateness of each test item.

Content validity was examined by aligning the test items with the learning objectives, curriculum standards, and relevant listening skill indicators in the context of TED Talks-based material. The test consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions designed to assess various aspects of listening skills, such as identifying main ideas, capturing specific details, recognizing the speaker's purpose, understanding inferences, and analyzing tone and attitude (Darmayenti, Besral, & Yustina, 2021).

To validate the content, the instrument was reviewed by two experts, two English lecturers experienced in teaching with authentic media. The validators evaluated each test item based on its relevance to the TED Talks material, clarity of the questions, language accuracy, and appropriateness of difficulty level for university students. Based on the suggestions and feedback from the experts, several items were revised to better reflect the listening skill indicators and the context presented in the TED Talks videos (Juliana, 2021).

### **Test of Reliability**

Reliability analysis was conducted to examine the consistency and dependability of the research instrument in measuring the intended variable. In this study, the researcher employed Cronbach's Alpha, calculated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), to obtain accurate and reliable results. The analysis revealed that the reliability score was 0.90, which falls into the category of very high reliability. According to Sugiyono (2013:183), a coefficient value above 0.80 indicates that the instrument is reliable and suitable for research purposes.

In other words, the instrument developed in this study is highly reliable in measuring students' listening skills. This very high level of reliability demonstrates that the test items are consistent and trustworthy in assessing students' listening comprehension. Therefore, the instrument can be considered a dependable tool for measuring the impact of the TED Talks application on students' listening comprehension.

### **Discussion**

This study aimed to analyze the effect of using the TED Talks application on the listening skills of second-semester students at the University of HKBP Nommensen Medan. Data were collected through listening tests to address the research question: Does using TED Talks application effect the listening skills of second semester students at the University of HKBP Nommensen?

The findings revealed that the average score of the experimental group (70,24) was higher than that of the control group (64.38). This indicated a positive effect of using TED Talks on students' listening comprehension. Furthermore, the result of the independent samples t-test showed that the t-value (2.571) was greater than the t-table value (2.005), which confirmed a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Therefore,

students who were taught using TED Talks showed significantly better mastery of listening skills compared to those who were taught using conventional teaching methods. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2018).

These positive results aligned with the growing recognition that TED Talks were an effective tool for enhancing listening skills. TED Talks provided learners with authentic materials that reflected the use of English in real-world contexts with a variety of topics and situations (Hovakimyan, 2022). With diverse speakers and accents, the materials exposed students to natural language, varied speech patterns, and rich vocabulary. In addition to listening comprehension, TED Talks also help develop related skills such as note-taking, discussing, and summarizing, while the engaging and relevant content increased motivation and created a more dynamic classroom atmosphere (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021).

However, although significant improvement was observed, the effect in this study appeared to be more moderate compared to previous research on the effect of using the TED Talks application on the listening skills mastery of second-semester students in the English Education Study Program at University of HKBP Nommensen. For instance, Rashtchi et al. (2021) investigated the integration of TED-Ed videos with language activities and found that the group receiving audiovisual input followed by speaking tasks achieved the highest scores both in the immediate post-test ( $M = 38.38$ ) and the delayed post-test ( $M = 38.07$ ). These findings suggested that combining audiovisual materials with productive language use could lead to stronger and more lasting learning outcomes. Therefore, although TED Talks were beneficial for listening comprehension, their effectiveness could be further enhanced when integrated with student-centered activities that encouraged active language production.

Similarly, research by Nikmah (2020) research “The influence of using ted talk toward students` listening comprehension at eleventh grade of sma yadika bandar lampung”. Using a quasi-experimental design and independent sample t-test analysis, a 2-tailed significance value of  $0.007 < 0.05$  was obtained, indicating a significant difference between the experimental group using TED Talks and the control group using audio songs. Although this increase was significant, the resulting effect tended to be more moderate than previous research, so the effectiveness of TED Talks can be further maximized when combined with learning activities that encourage active student participation.

The differences in results between this study and previous research could have been influenced by several factors, such as the type of media TED-Ed, which was more structured and visual, compared to TED Talks, which were more authentic, the educational

background of participants, as well as the teaching methods used. Nevertheless, both this study and earlier research consistently confirmed the potential of TED-based media in improving language skills, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Although the effect size in this study was relatively moderate, the findings were still consistent with Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. Specifically, the results supported the Multimedia Principle, as well as the Personalization and Voice Principles. According to Mayer (cited in Ali, 2022:55), learning became more effective when words, images, and audio were presented together rather than separately. In this study, TED Talks provide visual input (e.g., video, animation, images) along with verbal input (spoken language by native speakers), enabling learners to process vocabulary through two channels simultaneously. However, the use of multimedia through TED Talks did not produce as strong an effect as reported in some previous studies (Mortazavi, Nasution, Abdolazadeh, Behroozi, & Davarpanah, 2021).

In conclusion, although the influence of TED Talks on listening skills was statistically significant, its impact was still considered moderate compared to other studies that used more interactive audiovisual media. Nevertheless, TED Talks remained a valuable learning resource as they provided authentic, multimodal, and relevant input for the EFL context. For more optimal results, educators were recommended to combine TED Talks with student-centered activities that promoted active language production. Future research could explore the integration of TED-based media with other platforms or learning strategies that better matched students' preferences, learning styles, and needs (Tilwani et al., 2022).

The significant statistical results also confirmed that the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Thus, it was concluded that the use of the TED Talks application had a real effect on improving students' listening skills in English, further highlighting its relevance as an effective learning medium in the EFL context.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the data analysis in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that the post-test score was higher than the pre-test score. This indicates that the Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, and the Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the TED Talks application has a significant effect on the listening skills of second-semester students at the University of HKBP Nommensen.

## **Suggestion**

Based on the conclusion of the study, the researcher offers several recommendations for English lecturers, students, and future researchers as follows:

1. For English Lecturers. English lecturers are encouraged to integrate the TED Talks application into listening instruction. The authentic materials presented in TED Talks delivered directly by native speakers provide exposure to various accents, intonation patterns, and speaking speeds, which can improve students' listening comprehension. In addition, the wide range of topics offered in TED Talks can be adapted to academic contexts, making listening activities more relevant, engaging, and meaningful.
2. For Students. Students are advised to actively utilize the TED Talks application as a tool for independent learning to improve their listening skills outside the classroom. Regular exposure to TED Talks content can help students identify main ideas, understand supporting details, and recognize various speaking styles and patterns. Strategies such as watching with subtitles, replaying difficult parts, and taking notes can be applied to develop effective and independent listening habits.
3. For Future Researchers. This study can serve as a reference for future researchers in examining the effectiveness of instructional media in enhancing students' listening skills. It is recommended that future studies consider the use of TED Talks or other relevant learning media as part of listening instruction strategies. Furthermore, integrating such media with interactive approaches such as group discussions, listening journals, or comprehension assessments may lead to more in-depth and comprehensive findings regarding the development of students' listening abilities

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