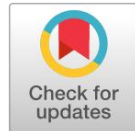


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Students' Perceptions of the BBC Learning English Podcast Application for Improving Listening Skills: A Survey of English Education Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: Listening is a foundational yet challenging skill for learners of English as a foreign language, and mobile applications offer flexible, self-paced opportunities to practise it. However, empirical evidence on how students experience the BBC Learning English Podcast application remains limited.

Purpose: This study aimed to investigate English education students' perceptions of the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a medium for improving listening skills.

Method: A quantitative descriptive survey design was employed. The participants were 38 students of the English Education Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang. Data were collected through a 30-item questionnaire consisting of positively and negatively worded statements, with four response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and were analysed using descriptive percentages.

Results: All respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that they used the application to improve their listening, that it helped them, and that it developed their listening skills; 97.4% agreed that it improved their English listening ability. Most respondents also rejected the negatively worded statements. Nevertheless, 26.3% found the application boring, and respondents reported drawbacks such as excessive advertisements and the need to download audio before listening.

Conclusion: Students generally perceive the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a useful and flexible medium for supporting listening practice. As the findings rest on self-reported perceptions, future experimental research is needed to measure actual gains in listening performance.

KEYWORDS

BBC Learning English Podcast, Learning Media, Listening Skills, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, Student Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

English is widely used as a foreign language in higher education, and learners are expected to develop all four language skills. Listening is a receptive skill that underpins comprehension and communication, yet it is frequently described as the most demanding skill for EFL learners. Where opportunities to interact with proficient speakers are limited, learners often struggle with unfamiliar accents, speech rate, and vocabulary (Delgadillo & Illera, 2024). Listening is also neglected in many EFL

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EFL classrooms, which compounds these difficulties (Alamri, 2025). The challenge is affective as well as cognitive. Flipped listening instruction, for example, has been shown to reduce foreign language listening anxiety (Bolandifar & Salehi, 2024). Support for lower-proficiency learners has typically taken the form of metacognitive intervention (Milliner & Dimoski, 2024), online metacognitive listening practice (Pei et al., 2023), and collaborative listening with multimedia input (Shamsi & Bozorgian, 2024).

The spread of mobile technologies has created new ways to practise listening. Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) gives learners flexible access to materials anywhere and at any time (Li, 2023). A meta-analysis of 20 experimental studies found a moderate-to-large advantage of MALL over traditional methods for EFL listening (Li et al., 2023). Positive effects have also been reported for speaking (Benlaghrissi & Ouahidi, 2024), and MALL has been examined for vocabulary development (Mohammadi et al., 2024). In higher education, the integration of technology into English learning has entered a period of rapid growth, although instructional design remains critical (Wang & Kabilan, 2024). Studies of specific applications point in a similar direction. Instructional mobile apps with audio files improved the listening comprehension of rural tertiary students in India (Raj & Tomy, 2024). Independent learners using Duolingo improved on receptive and productive measures, and this was linked to session completion, accuracy, and positive user experience (Smith et al., 2024). Saudi EFL learners who took AI-driven listening exams also improved their listening (Abdellatif et al., 2024). Mobile apps are also perceived positively as supplementary tools (Bai, 2024).

Access to an app, however, does not guarantee benefit. Few learners use L2 learning apps long enough to benefit fully, and acceptance depends on perceived usefulness, ease of use, and a supportive environment (Hwang, 2025). Learners value the convenience of studying on their own schedule but may find gaps between their expectations and actual outcomes (Yuen & Schlote, 2024). University students generally hold positive perceptions of smartphone apps for informal English learning (Alghasab, 2025). Learners' own perspectives on technology-mediated listening tasks are therefore informative (Ebadi et al., 2023).

Podcasts are among the most widely used digital audio resources for this purpose. Podcast-based work has been associated with gains in EFL linguistic competence, especially speaking and listening, among secondary school students (Chaves-Yuste & de-la-Peña, 2023). Among low-proficiency college students, it has been associated with improved post-test results, enjoyment, and motivation (Delgadillo & Illera, 2024). Combining extensive mobile listening with podcast creation improved listening comprehension, speaking, and critical thinking (Sendag et al., 2024). Undergraduate EFL students also found podcasts helpful in an action research study (Oraif & Alrashed, 2025), and podcasts have been examined as tools for informal learning (Meden et al., 2024). At the same time, authentic audio materials such as podcasts support motivation and real-life communication but may be difficult because of cultural differences, background knowledge, and cognitive load (Alamri, 2025).

BBC Learning English is a freely available source of such materials. In one study, short podcasts of about three to six minutes from the BBC Learning English application improved high school students' listening comprehension and increased their motivation to learn English (Bozavlı, 2024). Yet most podcast and MALL studies rely on experimental interventions, and fewer examine how English education students themselves experience a specific, freely available podcast application, including its features and drawbacks. This matters because acceptance and sustained use determine whether an app can support learning (Hwang, 2025). The present study therefore investigates the perceptions of English education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang regarding the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a medium for improving listening skills, and the features and limitations they associate with it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design to investigate students' perceptions of the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a supplementary medium for developing English listening skills. The research was conducted between January and June 2026 and focused on students' experiences, perceived benefits, application features, and challenges associated with its use. A descriptive survey design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to examine respondents' perceptions without introducing an experimental intervention or directly measuring improvements in listening performance. Previous studies have employed questionnaire-based surveys to examine students' perceptions and experiences of mobile applications for English learning (Klimova & Polakova, 2020; Susanti et al., 2025). The research procedure consisted of identifying the research problem, determining the research design, selecting participants, preparing the questionnaire, collecting data, analysing responses, and reporting the findings, as illustrated in Figure 1.

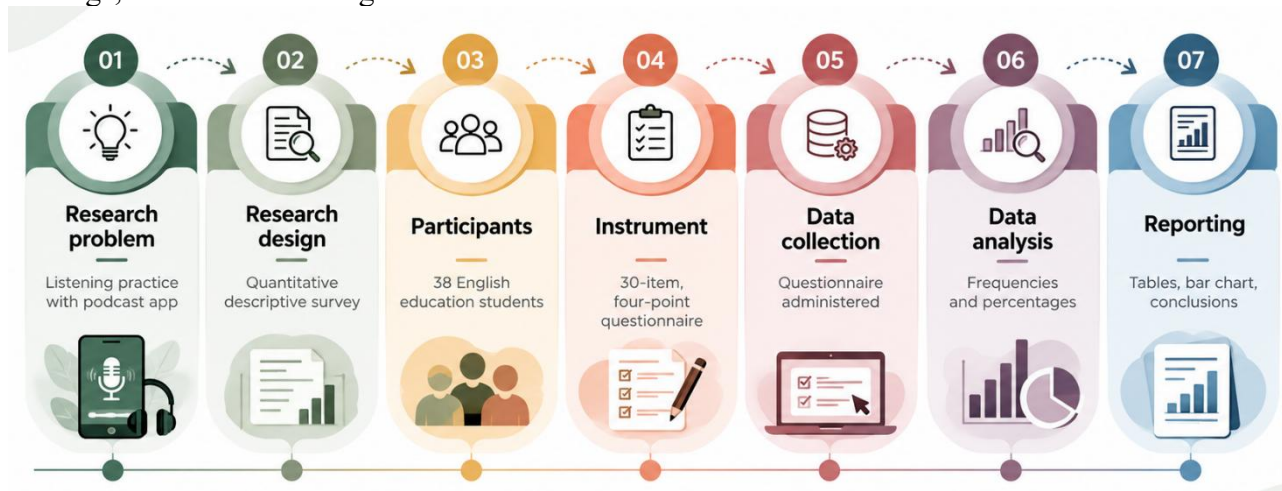


Figure 1. Research procedure

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at the English Education Study Program of Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang, Indonesia, between January and June 2026. The research setting was selected because the study focused on university students' experiences and perceptions of using the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a supplementary digital learning resource for developing English listening skills. The study involved students enrolled in the fourth and sixth semesters of the English Education Study Program. These students represented the target population for investigating perceptions of podcast-based listening activities in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning context.

The target population consisted of 50 students enrolled in the study program. A census approach, also referred to as total population invitation, was employed by inviting all 50 eligible students to participate in the survey. This approach was considered appropriate because the target population was relatively small and accessible, allowing the researchers to provide every member of the population with an opportunity to participate. Rather than selecting participants through random or purposive sampling, the researchers distributed the questionnaire to the entire target population. However, because participation was voluntary, the final number of respondents depended on the students' willingness to complete and submit the questionnaire.

Of the 50 students invited to participate, 38 completed the questionnaire and were included in the final analysis, resulting in a response rate of 76%. The remaining 12, representing 24% of the target population, did not submit responses. The final dataset therefore consisted of 38 respondents from the fourth and sixth semesters who had experience using the BBC Learning English Podcast application for English listening practice. Previous experience with the application was relevant to

the study because the questionnaire required students to evaluate its perceived usefulness, audio materials, accessibility, supporting features, and limitations based on their experiences.

The selection of the research participants was aligned with the descriptive purpose of the study. Students who had used the BBC Learning English Podcast application were considered capable of providing relevant information regarding their experiences with digital listening materials. Their responses were intended to describe how the application was perceived as a learning resource, including its potential contribution to listening practice, learning motivation, and independent language learning. The study did not categorise participants according to their English proficiency levels or measure their listening performance through standardised tests. Consequently, the participants' responses were interpreted as self-reported perceptions rather than objective evidence of improvement in listening proficiency.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and students were informed about the objectives and academic purposes of the research. The questionnaire was designed to collect information about students' learning experiences without requiring personally identifiable information in the reported findings. Informed consent was requested before the questionnaire was completed, and respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be treated confidentially. The collected data were used for research purposes and presented in aggregate form to protect participants' identities. No individual responses were disclosed in the reporting of the findings.

Although the study invited the entire target population, the final analysis was based on the 38 students who completed the questionnaire. Accordingly, the findings primarily represent the perceptions of the participating students rather than those of all 50 students in the target population. The absence of responses from introduces the possibility of nonresponse bias (Fosnacht et al., 2017), particularly if students who did not participate had different experiences or perceptions of the application. This limitation was considered when interpreting the findings and determining the extent to which the results could be applied beyond the participating students.

Instrument

Data were collected using a structured, closed-ended questionnaire consisting of 30 statements designed to examine students' perceptions of the BBC Learning English Podcast application. The questionnaire addressed several aspects of application use, including perceived usefulness for listening practice, learning motivation, accessibility, audio content, supporting features, and technical limitations. The instrument contained 15 positively worded statements (items 1–15) and 15 negatively worded statements (items 16–30). The inclusion of negatively worded statements was intended to examine the consistency of participants' responses and reduce the tendency toward uniform agreement (Suárez-Álvarez et al., 2018; Vigil-Colet et al., 2020).

Each statement was measured using a four-point Likert-type scale consisting of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (Koo & Yang, 2025). The absence of a neutral response category encouraged participants to express a position regarding each statement. For scoring purposes, positively worded statements were assigned values ranging from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree), while negatively worded statements were reverse-coded when calculating composite scores. The questionnaire structure is presented in Table 1.

The instrument development procedure was structured around the research objectives and the main dimensions of students' experiences with podcast-based listening activities (Arndt, 2023). Content validation was proposed through expert review to evaluate the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the questionnaire statements. Item validity could be assessed through corrected item–total correlations, while internal consistency reliability could be examined using Cronbach's alpha (Taber, 2018). Cronbach's alpha should be interpreted cautiously, because a single threshold such as 0.70 cannot by itself demonstrate instrument quality, and interpretation should also consider the instrument's dimensionality (Taber, 2018). The final validity and reliability results must be reported from the actual questionnaire data before the instrument can be described as empirically validated.

Table 1. Structure of the Questionnaire

Component		Description
Number of items		30 statements
Positive statements		15 items (1–15)
Negative statements		15 items (16–30)
Measurement scale		Four-point Likert scale
Response categories		Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree
Main dimensions		Application use, perceived benefits, motivation, supporting features, accessibility, and limitations
Proposed validity assessment		Expert review and corrected item–total correlation
Proposed reliability assessment		Cronbach’s alpha

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was conducted between January and June 2026 at the English Education Study Program of Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang, Indonesia. The study employed an online questionnaire to collect quantitative data concerning students’ perceptions of the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a supplementary medium for improving English listening skills. All 50 students in the target population were invited to participate in the survey using a census approach. The questionnaire was distributed electronically to facilitate accessibility, provide flexibility in completing the survey, and allow respondents to submit their answers independently. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the research and the intended use of their responses for academic purposes.

The questionnaire consisted of 30 closed-ended statements covering students’ experiences with the application, perceived benefits for listening practice, learning motivation, accessibility, supporting features, and limitations. The instrument included 15 positively worded statements (items 1–15) and 15 negatively worded statements (items 16–30). Each statement was assessed using a four-point Likert-type scale consisting of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). The four-point response format was used to obtain respondents’ positions regarding each statement without providing a neutral category. A total of 38 students completed the questionnaire, representing a response rate of 76% of the target population, while the remaining (24%) did not respond. All 38 completed questionnaires were included in the final descriptive analysis.

Following data collection, the questionnaire responses were organised, coded, and tabulated according to their respective items and response categories. For positively worded statements, the response categories were assigned numerical values of 4 for strongly agree, 3 for agree, 2 for disagree, and 1 for strongly disagree. Negatively worded statements were assigned reverse scores of 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively, for the purpose of maintaining a consistent direction when interpreting favourable perceptions. This coding procedure distinguished positive and negative perceptions while preserving the original response frequencies for item-level analysis. Responses were subsequently examined to identify patterns of agreement and disagreement regarding the usefulness, features, and limitations of the BBC Learning English Podcast application.

The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques, particularly frequency distributions and percentages. Descriptive statistics were selected because the primary objective of the study was to describe students’ perceptions rather than establish causal relationships or test hypotheses. Since individual Likert-type questionnaire items produce ordinal data, frequencies and percentages were considered appropriate for presenting the distribution of responses across categories (Eiselen & Van Huyssteen, 2023). The percentage of responses for each category was calculated using the following formula:

$$P = (f / N) \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of responses

f = Frequency of responses in a particular category

N = Total number of valid responses

The formula was applied separately to each questionnaire item using the 38 valid responses as the denominator. For example, when 30 of the 38 respondents selected agree for a particular statement, the percentage was calculated as follows:

$$P = (30 / 38) \times 100\% = 78.95\%$$

This calculation indicated that approximately 78.9% of respondents agreed with the statement. The same procedure was applied to the remaining response categories to determine the percentage distribution for each of the 30 questionnaire statements. Frequencies were retained alongside percentages to ensure that the reported results could be traced to the actual number of respondents.

The analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the responses to the 15 positively worded statements were analysed to identify students' favourable perceptions of the BBC Learning English Podcast application. Particular attention was given to statements concerning the perceived contribution of the application to listening practice, the availability of audio materials, learning motivation, flexibility of access, and supporting features such as episodes, series, and accompanying text. Second, the responses to the 15 negatively worded statements were examined to identify perceived limitations and determine whether the overall response patterns were consistent with those obtained from the positive statements. Disagreement with a negatively worded statement was interpreted as a favourable perception of the corresponding aspect of the application, whereas agreement indicated an unfavourable perception.

The results were presented in descriptive tables and a bar chart to facilitate interpretation and comparison across questionnaire items. The tables displayed the frequencies and percentages of responses in each category, while the bar chart illustrated the distribution of responses to the positively worded statements. The interpretation focused on identifying dominant response patterns and aspects of the application that received relatively high or low levels of agreement. Particular consideration was given to students' perceptions of listening support, learning motivation, application features, and potential difficulties associated with audio downloads and internet access. This presentation approach was intended to provide a clear description of students' experiences while maintaining transparency in the reporting of quantitative findings (Koo & Yang, 2025).

No inferential statistical tests were performed because the study did not involve an experimental intervention, comparison group, or direct assessment of students' listening performance. Accordingly, the findings were interpreted as evidence of students' perceived experiences and perceived usefulness of the BBC Learning English Podcast application rather than objective evidence of improvements in listening proficiency. The conclusions were therefore limited to the perceptions of the 38 participating students and were not intended to establish causal effects or generalise the findings to broader student populations. The possibility of nonresponse bias was also acknowledged because 12 of the 50 invited students did not complete the survey.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 presents the responses of the 38 students to the 30 questionnaire statements. Items 1–15 are positively worded and items 16–30 are negatively worded. Each percentage was calculated from the frequency in a response category and the 38 valid responses, as described in the Method section. All respondents had used the BBC Learning English Podcast application for English listening practice.

Table 2. Students' Responses to the Statements about the BBC Learning English Podcast Application, n (%)

No	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	I use the application to improve my listening ability.	8 (21.1)	30 (78.9)	–	–
2	I feel that the application helps improve my listening ability.	9 (23.7)	29 (76.3)	–	–
3	The application provides audio for improving listening ability.	5 (13.2)	33 (86.8)	–	–
4	The application motivates me to keep learning English listening.	6 (15.8)	31 (81.6)	1 (2.6)	–
5	The application has many features that make it easier to choose the audio I want to listen to.	11 (28.9)	27 (71.1)	–	–
6	The application requires audio to be downloaded before it can be played.	2 (5.3)	36 (94.7)	–	–
7	The application has a text feature that helps in listening to the audio.	6 (15.8)	32 (84.2)	–	–
8	The application helps develop my listening skills.	5 (13.2)	33 (86.8)	–	–
9	The application requires an internet connection before the audio can be played.	3 (7.9)	33 (86.8)	2 (5.3)	–
10	I prefer using the application to using other learning methods.	9 (23.7)	27 (71.1)	2 (5.3)	–
11	The application does not make me bored when I use it.	4 (10.5)	24 (63.2)	10 (26.3)	–
12	The application has an episode feature that helps me remember the audio I have listened to.	4 (10.5)	32 (84.2)	2 (5.3)	–
13	The application has a series feature that keeps the audio from being monotonous.	2 (5.3)	35 (92.1)	1 (2.6)	–
14	The application helps me improve my English listening ability.	6 (15.8)	31 (81.6)	1 (2.6)	–
15	The application has a text feature that I use to match the audio with the text.	4 (10.5)	30 (78.9)	4 (10.5)	–
16	I do not use the application to improve my listening ability.	3 (7.9)	8 (21.1)	25 (65.8)	2 (5.3)
17	I feel that the application does not help improve my listening ability.	1 (2.6)	4 (10.5)	29 (76.3)	4 (10.5)
18	The application does not provide audio for improving listening ability.	–	3 (7.9)	32 (84.2)	3 (7.9)
19	The application does not motivate me to keep learning English listening.	–	3 (7.9)	29 (76.3)	6 (15.8)
20	The application has many features that do not make it easier to choose audio.	–	4 (10.5)	26 (68.4)	8 (21.1)
21	The application does not require audio to be downloaded first.	–	7 (18.4)	26 (68.4)	5 (13.2)

22	The text feature in the application does not help in listening to the audio.	–	1 (2.6)	32 (84.2)	5 (13.2)
23	The application does not help develop my listening skills.	–	1 (2.6)	30 (78.9)	7 (18.4)
24	The application does not require an internet connection to listen to audio.	–	4 (10.5)	29 (76.3)	5 (13.2)
25	I dislike using the application more than using other learning methods.	–	3 (7.9)	28 (73.7)	6 (15.8)
26	The application makes me bored when I use it.	–	3 (7.9)	31 (81.6)	4 (10.5)
27	The episode feature does not help me remember the audio I have listened to.	–	4 (10.5)	28 (73.7)	6 (15.8)
28	The application does not help me improve my English ability.	–	–	32 (84.2)	6 (15.8)
29	The application is not supported by the features I need.	–	2 (5.3)	31 (81.6)	5 (13.2)
30	The application does not support students in improving their listening ability.	–	1 (2.6)	30 (78.9)	7 (18.4)

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree. The frequencies for this item sum to 37 and should be verified against the raw data.

Students responded very favourably to the statements about the contribution of the application to listening. All 38 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that they used the application to improve their listening ability (item 1), that it helped improve their listening ability (item 2), that it provided audio for listening practice (item 3), and that it helped develop their listening skills (item 8). Item 14, which referred to improvement in English listening ability, was endorsed by 37 respondents (97.4%), and one respondent (2.6%) disagreed. The negatively worded counterparts were rejected by most respondents. For example, all 38 respondents (100%) rejected item 28, and 35 respondents (92.1%) rejected item 18, which stated that the application does not provide audio for improving listening ability.

The statements on motivation and preference were also favourable. Thirty-seven respondents (97.4%) agreed that the application motivated them to keep learning English listening (item 4), and 36 respondents (94.7%) preferred it to other learning methods (item 10). Item 11, which stated that the application does not make users bored, was the most divided of the positively worded statements. Twenty-eight respondents (73.7%) agreed with it, but 10 respondents (26.3%) disagreed. The negatively worded statement about boredom (item 26) was rejected by 35 respondents (92.1%), so the boredom results were less consistent than the other results.

All respondents agreed that the application had many features that made it easier to choose audio (item 5) and that its text feature helped them listen to the audio (item 7). The series feature, which keeps the audio from being monotonous, was endorsed by 37 respondents (97.4%; item 13), and the episode feature, which helps students remember the audio they had heard, by 36 respondents (94.7%; item 12). Thirty-four respondents (89.5%) used the text to match the audio with the written version (item 15), while 4 respondents (10.5%) disagreed. The negatively worded feature statements (items 20, 22, 27, and 29) were rejected by 89.5% to 97.4% of respondents.

Items 6, 9, 21, and 24 describe operating conditions of the application and not benefits, so agreement with the requirement is read as recognition of a limitation. All 38 respondents (100%) agreed that audio must be downloaded before it can be played (item 6), and 36 respondents (94.7%) agreed that an internet connection is required (item 9). Seven respondents (18.4%) and 4 respondents (10.5%) agreed with the opposite statements, that downloading (item 21) and an internet connection (item 24) are not required. In the researchers' observation, excessive advertisements were also a drawback of the application, although the questionnaire did not include an item on advertising.

Excluding the technical items, the negatively worded statements were rejected by most respondents. The percentage of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed ranged from 71.1% (item 16) to 100% (item 28), and item 16 was the only statement with a rejection rate below 86%. “Disagree” was the most frequent response for each of these statements. Strong agreement with a negatively worded statement appeared only for item 16 (3 respondents, 7.9%) and item 17 (1 respondent, 2.6%). The figure for item 25 is calculated from the recorded frequencies (see the note to Table 2).

Agreement was mostly moderate. “Agree” was the most frequent response for every positively worded item, and “strongly agree” exceeded 20% only for items 1 (21.1%), 2 (23.7%), 5 (28.9%), and 10 (23.7%). Because the scale had no neutral option, these percentages should be read with care. Pairing each positive statement with its negation also revealed some inconsistency. All 38 respondents agreed with item 1, yet 11 respondents (28.9%) agreed with its negation (item 16), so at least 11 respondents endorsed both statements. Similar contradictions appeared for items 6 and 21 (at least 7 respondents) and items 2 and 17 (at least 5 respondents). Across the 13 comparable pairs, at least 39 of 494 comparisons (7.9%) were contradictory.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses to the positively worded statements. “Agree” was the tallest bar for every item, “strongly agree” was prominent mainly for items 1, 2, 5, and 10, and “disagree” appeared for only eight items (items 4 and 9 to 15). The tallest single bar was item 6 (36 respondents), which describes a technical requirement. Among the benefit-related statements, the tallest bar was item 13 (35 respondents).

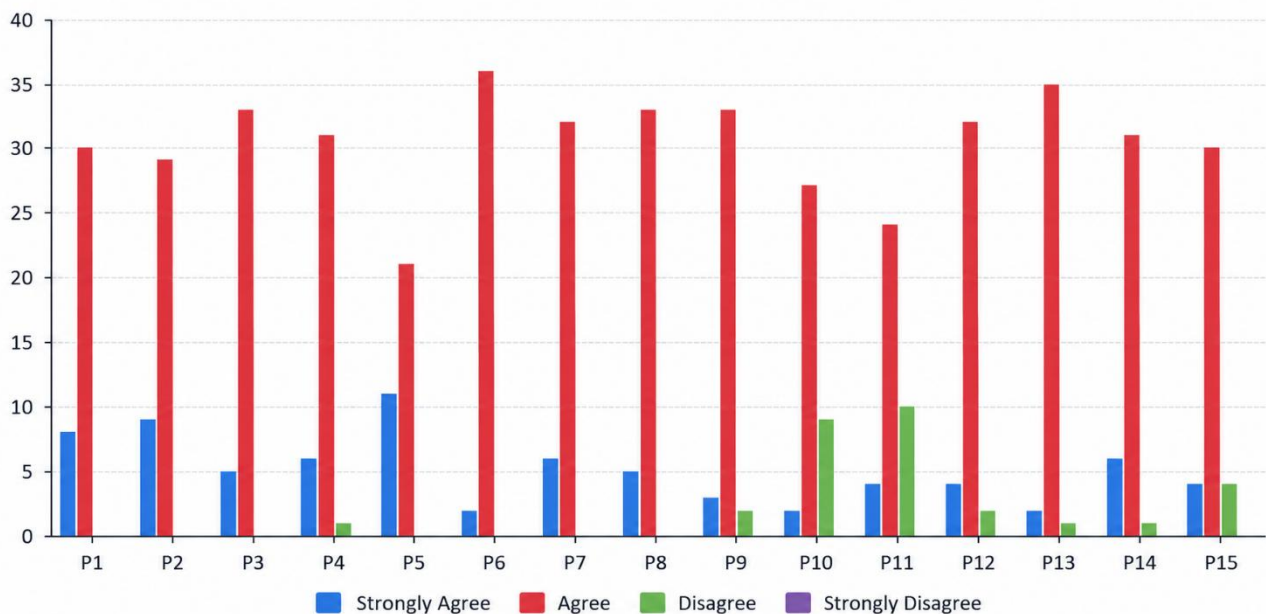


Figure 2. Distribution of responses to the positively worded statements (N = 38)

Figure 3 shows the interface of the application. According to the researchers' observation, the application can be downloaded from the Play Store or App Store and used without a paid subscription. It provides audio episodes grouped into series, text that accompanies the audio, and the option to download episodes for later listening. These characteristics correspond to the features addressed in the questionnaire.

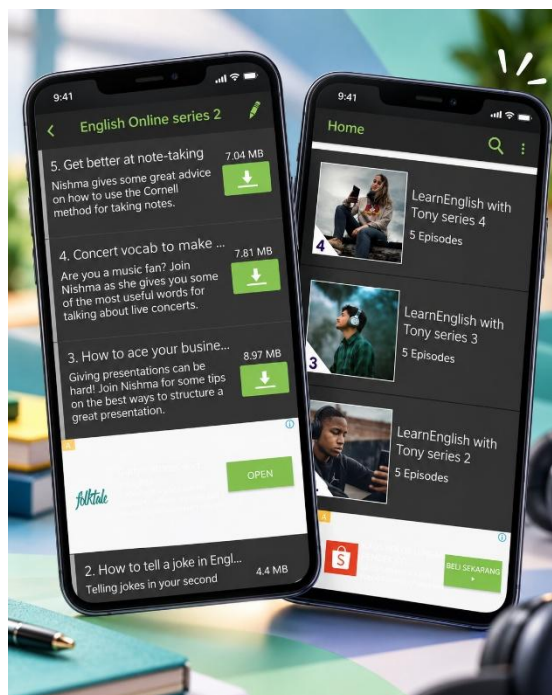


Figure 3. The BBC Learning English Podcast application

The main finding is that the students perceived the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a useful medium for listening practice. All respondents agreed that they used the application to improve their listening and that it helped them, and 97.4% agreed that it improved their English listening ability. In the technology acceptance model, perceived usefulness is treated as a central determinant of whether users accept and keep using a technology (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Students who find the application useful are therefore likely to keep using it, and sustained use is a precondition for any learning benefit. The result is also in line with a review of mobile-assisted language learning projects, which reported mostly positive learning outcomes over two decades (Burston, 2015). The application therefore appears suitable as a supplement to classroom instruction and not as a replacement for it.

The pattern can be explained by the characteristics of the medium. Mobile access allows learners to practise outside the classroom and to decide when and where they listen (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Podcasts offer authentic spoken input that learners can replay, and earlier work on podcasts, including a review and a study in an ESL listening strategies course, has treated them as a promising supplementary resource (Hasan & Hoon, 2013; O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007). The features that students rated most positively, namely the choice of audio, the series, and the episodes, support this kind of self-directed practice. Item 5 recorded the highest proportion of strong agreement (28.9%), which suggests that the ease of choosing audio was an important part of the experience.

The motivation and preference items need careful interpretation. Items 10 and 25 compare the application with "other learning methods," but the questionnaire did not specify which methods, so students may have compared it with classroom listening, video, or other applications. The preference rate of 94.7% therefore shows a positive attitude toward the application and not a verified advantage over alternatives. Because the application is free and available on mobile devices, convenience may have contributed to this preference (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Motivation is also relevant to the usefulness result. Thirty-seven respondents (97.4%) agreed that the application motivated them to keep learning, which is consistent with the view that a tool perceived as useful is more likely to be used again (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). However, motivation was self-reported, and the study did not record how often students actually listened.

The text feature was also evaluated positively. All respondents agreed that it helped them listen (item 7), and 89.5% used it to match the audio with the written version (item 15). A text that accompanies audio allows learners to check what they heard and to notice words that were difficult

to recognise in connected speech. Studies of captioned video for second language listening treat comprehension scores and learners' perceived usefulness of the text as separate outcomes (Montero Perez et al., 2014), and the same distinction applies here. The students judged the text to be helpful, but the survey did not test whether it improved their comprehension.

Perceived improvement should not be equated with measured improvement. The statements used wording such as "improve my listening ability," which invites students to report a sense of progress, and the study did not include a listening test. Self-reports are also open to response tendencies such as acquiescence and social desirability (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results therefore describe students' perceptions and not their learning gains.

The boredom items were the weakest point in an otherwise favourable pattern. Item 11 produced 26.3% disagreement, whereas the negated version (item 26) was rejected by 92.1% of respondents. This difference shows how item wording can change the results (Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012). A possible explanation is that audio-only practice becomes monotonous for some learners, even though the series and episode structure seems to reduce the problem for most. Future studies could ask students about session length and the types of episodes they find tedious.

The students also recognised practical drawbacks. All respondents agreed that audio must be downloaded, and 94.7% agreed that an internet connection is required. In technology acceptance research, perceived ease of use is distinguished from perceived usefulness and may influence whether a useful tool is adopted (Davis, 1989). The download requirement may be inconvenient when a device has limited storage or a slow connection, although a downloaded episode can be replayed without a connection. Advertisements were mentioned only in the researchers' observation, and a future instrument should measure them directly.

The paired statements show that the high level of agreement should be read with caution. For some pairs, respondents answered a statement and its negation in the same direction, most clearly for items 1 and 16. Methodological reviews show that negated items often produce misresponse, because respondents read them carelessly or answer in the direction of agreement, which lowers reliability (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012). The questionnaire presented all positive items before all negative items, and the four-point scale gave students no way to express uncertainty, so both features may have contributed. The 7.9% of contradictory comparisons is only a lower bound calculated from the frequencies, because respondent-level data were not examined. These inconsistencies do not overturn the main finding, because most negated statements were rejected, but they reduce confidence in the exact percentages. The validity and reliability of the instrument still need to be tested, ideally after reverse coding the negated items.

For teaching, the findings suggest that the application can be recommended as a free supplementary resource for independent listening practice, provided that students are told about the download and connection requirements in advance. Lecturers could also ask students to keep a short listening log so that their use can be monitored. The study is limited to one study program at one university, relied on a perception-based questionnaire, and had no listening test or comparison group. Only 38 of the 50 invited students (76%) responded, so the views of non-respondents are unknown. Future studies should combine a validated questionnaire with measured listening performance and with data on how often and how long students use the application.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the perceptions of English education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang toward the BBC Learning English Podcast application as a medium for improving listening skills, using a quantitative descriptive survey completed by 38 of the 50 invited students (76%). The students perceived the application as useful. All respondents agreed that they used it to improve their listening and that it helped them, and 97.4% agreed that it improved their English listening ability. The features valued most were the choice of audio, the series and episode structure, and the text that accompanies the audio. Students also recognised practical limitations, namely the need to download audio and to have an internet connection, and the researchers

observed that advertisements were a drawback. Responses about boredom were the least consistent. These findings describe students' perceptions and not measured listening gains, and some respondents answered statements and their negations inconsistently, so the percentages should be read with caution. The results suggest that the application can serve as a free supplementary resource for independent listening practice. Future research should combine a validated questionnaire with a listening test and a comparison group.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this work the author(s) used Gemini AI in order to process data and improve grammar. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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