

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Listening Instruction in the Indonesian EFL Context

English is taught as a Foreign Language (EFL) in many countries where students have limited exposure to authentic English outside formal educational settings. Indonesia represents one of these EFL contexts, in which students generally have limited opportunities to use and experience authentic English practice in their daily lives. Consequently, in accordance with Su et al. (2021), classroom instruction becomes the primary source of English language exposure, particularly for developing receptive language skills, such as listening. In this context, listening instruction plays a crucial role because it provides students with authentic spoken language input that supports language acquisition and communicative competence. Therefore, effective listening instruction is considered an essential component of English language teaching in Indonesian EFL classrooms.

Listening serves as the primary source of comprehensible language input for EFL students and is placed in a central position in language learning. According to Purdy (1997) as cited in Shah (2024), listening is defined as an active and dynamic process that includes paying attention to, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the needs, concerns, and information communicated by others. Listening supports both intentional and incidental vocabulary acquisition while also

facilitating the learning of grammatical structures in the target language (Pavia et al., 2019). Through listening, students expand new vocabulary and grammatical structures, improve pronunciation, and develop the ability to use the target language effectively in everyday communication (Sharif et al., 2024). However, in the Indonesian EFL context, many students continue to experience difficulties in listening comprehension.

Besides its importance in language learning, listening comprehension poses numerous challenges for EFL students in Indonesia, especially those with lower language proficiency, who often struggle with limited vocabulary, unfamiliar words and expressions, fast speech, poor pronunciation, extended conversations, stress and intonation changes, and difficulty maintaining concentration (Hardiyanto, 2021; Khanh & Diep, 2025; Tram & Anh, 2025). However, a lack of vocabulary becomes the first and primary factor contributing to students' difficulties in listening comprehension (Jaelani, 2020; Hardiyanto, 2021; Permatasari et al., 2023). Among these factors, students who have insufficient vocabulary have consistently been identified as one of the major barriers to success in listening because students often fail to recognize and interpret spoken words, resulting in poor listening comprehension.

Given these challenges, effective listening instruction is needed to overcome the barriers that students face during listening activities. Effective listening instruction involves more than just simply asking students to listen to an audio recording and answer comprehension

questions. Instead, lecturers should provide appropriate instructional strategies, meaningful learning activities, and authentic learning materials that correspond to students' proficiency levels and learning needs. Through effective instruction, students are encouraged to activate their prior knowledge, identify key information, infer meaning from context, and gradually improve their listening comprehension.

The ability of English listening comprehension has direct access and provides a positive contribution to academic achievement for students, especially in mastering overall language skills. As a research statement by Hsu (2024), mastering English listening contributes significantly to improving both reading and writing skills by enhancing students' understanding of language rhythm, intonation, and contextual meaning, which facilitates the comprehension and production of written texts.

In conclusion, Su et al. (2021) argue that listening instruction occupies a central position in English language teaching, especially in the Indonesian EFL context where classroom learning serves as students' primary source of English exposure. According to Purdy (1997), as cited in Shah (2024), Pavia et al. (2019), and Sharif et al. (2024), since listening provides comprehensible language input, it facilitates the development of vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, pronunciation, and communicative competence, which are essential for successful language acquisition. Nevertheless, as stated by Jaelani & Zabidi (2020), Hardiyanto (2021), and Permatasari et al. (2023), Indonesian EFL students continue to encounter

various listening difficulties, with limited vocabulary consistently identified as one of the most significant factors preventing students from understanding spoken English effectively. Therefore, listening instruction should not merely focus on listening practice but should also incorporate appropriate instructional strategies, meaningful learning activities, and authentic listening materials that address students' learning needs and proficiency levels. As reported by Hsu (2024), lecturers can create more meaningful learning experiences that not only enhance students' listening ability but also contribute to the development of other language skills and their overall academic achievement.

B. Teaching Listening

Teaching listening is the instructional process through which lecturers help students develop the ability to understand spoken language by providing appropriate learning strategies. Although many features of traditional listening instruction have remained unchanged, the contemporary understanding of listening as a complex and interactive process requires a more comprehensive approach to teaching in order to prepare students for authentic real-life listening situations (Nemtchinova, 2020). Since self-regulated learning is essential, listening pedagogy must provide step-by-step guidance that allows students to explore and practice effective listening strategies. Listening instruction should be designed to enable students to derive meaning independently, rather than relying on

deductive explanations provided directly by the lecturers (Rost, 2011). It also promotes students' use of clarification checks, comprehension checks, and collaborative strategies as means of negotiating and constructing meaning. Without explicit instruction on how to process auditory information, classroom tasks merely assess baseline abilities rather than teach them, ultimately heightening student anxiety (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009). Thus, transitioning from testing to effective teaching requires lecturers to provide students with fundamental cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Listening strategies can be grouped into cognitive and metacognitive types, both of which are important for improving comprehension. Cognitive strategies help students process what they hear by making connections, retaining key information, and using techniques such as note-taking and summarizing (Al Ghazo, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2024; Khanh & Diep, 2025). Additionally, listening comprehension is also supported by bottom-up and top-down processing. Bottom-up processing involves constructing meaning from smaller language units, such as sounds, words, and grammatical forms, and moving from the parts to the whole (Latupono & Nikijuluw, 2022; Musayeva, 2025). By contrast, top-down processing uses prior knowledge, context, and prediction to interpret the message and confirm meaning from what is heard (Latupono & Nikijuluw, 2022; Musayeva, 2025). The integration of linguistic decoding and students' existing background knowledge through these two processes facilitates

more effective comprehension of spoken input. Conversely, metacognitive strategies involve students planning, monitoring, and reflecting on their listening process, which supports students' autonomy and self-regulation (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Khanh & Diep, 2025; Pradhani, 2025). These strategies enable students to control their comprehension more effectively by setting goals, checking understanding during listening, and evaluating performance afterward.

In this regard, teaching listening strategies requires lecturers to make the listening process explicit by modeling how effective listeners approach a task, explaining why particular strategies are useful, and providing repeated practice in different listening situations. As Nemtchinova (2020) highlighted, effective strategy use does not happen by itself; lecturers need to help students recognize listening problems, demonstrate strategies, and offer opportunities to practice them. In line with this, Goh & Vandergrift (2022) emphasize lecturer modeling and scaffolded listening practice to help students understand the mental processes involved in listening and to develop metacognitive control. In this sense, teaching listening strategies shifts instruction from simply testing comprehension to guiding students in how to manage comprehension more effectively.

While strategy in teaching listening helps students manage listening tasks, listening principles provide the foundation for how those strategies should be organized and applied in class. According to Brown (2007) cited by Latupono & Nikijuluw (2022), lecturers should understand several

principles in teaching listening skills. Listening should receive primary attention in the early stages of EFL instruction, and the materials used should be relevant to students' real-life experiences. In addition, listening input should contain authentic language and vary in terms of speaker, accents, topic, speed, and genre so that students remain engaged and better prepared for different listening situations. Lecturers should also ask students to demonstrate their comprehension through listening tasks, while ensuring that the audio is presented before any visual support. These principles show that effective listening instruction should be purposeful, realistic, and designed to reach the goals of listening comprehension. Moreover, effective listening lessons consist of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities that support learners in progressing from understanding spoken input to responding appropriately and applying their comprehension in meaningful contexts.

The teaching of listening is commonly organized into three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. In the pre-listening stage, teachers help students prepare for the listening task by activating prior knowledge, building background information, and giving a clear purpose for listening so students know what to focus on (Rost, 2011; Nemtchinova, 2020; Wahyuningsih, 2023). The while-listening stage is the main listening activity, during which students listen for meaning, complete tasks, and receive support or scaffolding from the lecturer to help them understand the text. The post-listening stage allows students to check and extend their

understanding through follow-up activities such as discussing the text, giving responses, writing reflections, or connecting the listening content with other language skills (Rost, 2011; Nemtchinova, 2020; Wahyuningsih, 2023). The implementation of these three stages contributes to effective listening instruction by systematically guiding students through the activities conducted before, during, and after listening.

Nemtchinova (2020), in her book titled ‘Teaching Listening’, explained that both authentic and scripted materials have a place in the listening classroom, and the choice depends on the lesson purpose: authentic texts are useful for helping students cope with real features of native speech, while scripted texts are better for focusing on specific language forms. Wang et al. 2020 also state that authentic spoken texts expose students to real-world variation in accent, rhythm, vocabulary, and sentence structure, but they should be scaffolded and made developmentally appropriate for students’ proficiency levels. Rost (2011) in ‘Teaching and Researching Listening’ also emphasized authenticity and genuineness as important principles in listening input.

In summary, the literature suggests that teaching listening extends beyond assessing students’ ability to understand spoken texts and instead emphasizes developing the processes and strategies that enable students to construct meaning independently. As highlighted by Rost (2011), Vandergrift and Goh (2022), and Nemtchinova (2020), effective listening instruction requires explicit strategy instruction, combining cognitive and

metacognitive approaches with both bottom-up and top-down processing to support students' comprehension of spoken language. Furthermore, Brown (2007), as cited in Latupono and Nikijuluw (2022), emphasizes that listening instruction should be guided by appropriate teaching principles and implemented through systematic pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages. In addition to this, Nemtchinova (2020), Wang et al. (2020), and Rost (2011) highlight the importance of using authentic listening materials to expose students to natural language while providing sufficient instructional support according to their proficiency levels. Therefore, effective teaching of listening requires lecturers to integrate appropriate strategies, structured instructional stages, and authentic materials in order to create meaningful listening experiences and improve students' listening comprehension. This theoretical perspective provides the foundation for the use of English songs as authentic listening materials, which is discussed in the following section.

C. English Songs as Authentic Materials

English songs can be considered authentic materials because they present language as it is naturally used in real-life communication. Unlike simplified textbook dialogues, songs often include colloquial expressions, slang, idioms, and phrasal verbs that students may hear in everyday speech (Ghanbari & Hashemian, 2014; Tafadze, 2025). This helps students become familiar with practical English and improves their understanding

of language in meaningful contexts. Songs also expose students to natural pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation, which can support their listening and oral language development (Lestary & Seriadi, 2019; Hsu, 2024; Tavadze, 2025). Another important benefit of using English songs as authentic materials is that they provide rich listening practice. According to Pavia et al. 2019, songs can provide language input and support listening comprehension and vocabulary learning in an enjoyable way. Similarly, Lestary & Seriadi (2024) explain that songs can help students improve their listening skills because they make students more active and engaged during listening tasks. This shows that songs are not only entertaining but also effective tools for developing listening comprehension.

English songs also help students expand their vocabulary and improve memory. Pavia et al. 2019 noted that the rhythmical characteristics of songs may assist students' memory when learning a new language. In addition, Tavadze (2025) emphasized that songs support vocabulary learning by presenting language in meaningful contexts. Because words are repeated in melodies and choruses, students may retain them more easily. Furthermore, songs create opportunities for cultural learning. Through English songs, students are exposed to different styles of expression and cultural perspectives from English-speaking communities, including accents, dialects, and styles of expression from various English-speaking communities (Tavadze, 2025). This exposure helps students develop a broader understanding of English as a global language. Songs may also

reflect cultural themes, values, and emotions, allowing students to connect language learning with real social and cultural experiences. In this way, authentic materials support both linguistic and intercultural competence.

Ultimately, English songs are useful because they make language learning more enjoyable and less stressful. Pavia et al. 2019 report that songs can reduce foreign language classroom anxiety and create a motivating learning environment. Tavadze (2025) also highlights that songs can provide a relaxing break for students and lecturers, turning routine classroom activities into fun experiences. For this reason, songs are effective authentic materials that can improve students' confidence, participation, and overall language achievement.

To conclude, the literature indicates that English songs are valuable authentic materials that expose students to natural language use while supporting various aspects of English language learning. As emphasized by Ghanbari and Hashemian (2014), Pavia et al. (2019), Lestary and Seriadi (2024), Hsu (2024), and Tavadze (2025), English songs provide authentic linguistic input through natural pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, vocabulary, and contextual language use, thereby enhancing students' listening comprehension and vocabulary development. Moreover, the repetitive and meaningful nature of songs facilitates vocabulary retention, increases learner motivation, reduces language anxiety, and promotes intercultural awareness by exposing students to diverse cultural expressions and real-world communication. Hence, incorporating English songs as

authentic materials enables lecturers to create engaging listening experiences while fostering both linguistic and communicative competence. Grounded in this theory, using song lyrics as a teaching tool for listening skills will be elaborated next.

D. Song Lyrics Media in Teaching Listening

Song lyrics can be defined as the words or textual content of a song that convey meaning, messages, emotions, and ideas through musical performance. In the context of language learning, song lyrics are not only viewed as part of entertainment, it is also as a learning resource that can be used to support listening instruction. As an authentic material, song lyrics present real language use, including pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, and natural expressions that are commonly found in spoken English (Supriyani et al., 2025). For this reason, song lyrics are considered suitable for teaching listening because they provide students with exposure to meaningful and contextualized language input.

In terms of characteristics, song lyrics are usually rhythmic, repetitive, and memorable, which makes them easier for students to follow and retain (Lestary & Seriadi, 2019). Songs often contain clear oral cues such as stress, pauses, and intonation patterns that are important in listening development (Rost, 2011). Furthermore, when selected appropriately, song lyrics can be adjusted to students' proficiency level and classroom needs, making them flexible materials for listening activities (Hsu, 2024). These

characteristics make lyrics suitable for students who need engaging and accessible listening input.

The educational value of song lyrics in teaching listening lies in their ability to increase students' motivation, concentration, and comprehension. Songs can make listening activities more enjoyable and less stressful, so students are more willing to participate actively in class (Supriyani et al., 2025). Additionally, songs help students improve their listening comprehension while also supporting vocabulary development, pronunciation awareness, and memory retention (Nemtchinova, 2020; Lestary & Seriadi, 2024). Because lyrics are repeatedly heard through melody and chorus, students may more easily remember unfamiliar words and expressions (Lestary & Seriadi, 2024). Thus, song lyrics can contribute not only to listening achievement but also to broader language development.

In teaching listening, song lyrics can be used through several instructional stages, such as before, during, and after listening activities.

1. Pre-listening activities

Pre-listening is the stage used to prepare students before they listen to the song. In this stage, the teacher can build students' background knowledge, introduce the topic, and activate prior knowledge so they are ready to understand the song better. The teacher may also teach key vocabulary, discuss the title, ask students to predict the theme or meaning of the lyrics, and create interest in

the listening task. This stage is important because it helps students focus their attention and supports comprehension during listening (Richards, 2008; Wahyuningsih, 2023; Lestary & Seriadi, 2024).

2. While-listening activities

While-listening is the main listening stage, when students actively listen to the song and complete tasks related to the lyrics or meaning. In this phase, the teacher can ask students to fill in missing words, identify specific information, arrange lines of the lyrics in the correct order, or answer comprehension questions. The teacher may also guide students to listen for pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation. This stage helps students process the song directly and understand the content more effectively (Latupono & Nikijuluw, 2022).

3. Post-listening activities

Post-listening is the follow-up stage after students have listened to the song. At this point, students can discuss the meaning of the lyrics, share their opinions, relate the song to their personal experiences, or summarize the message of the song. Teachers may also use post-listening tasks such as writing responses, speaking activities, or further analysis of difficult parts of the lyrics. This stage is important because it helps students deepen their understanding and connect listening with other language skills.

In the end, before listening, teachers introduce the topic, activate students' background knowledge, and predict words or expressions that may appear in the song. During listening, students can complete tasks such as filling in missing lyrics, identifying specific information, or focusing on pronunciation and intonation (Nemtchinova, 2020; Hsu, 2024). After listening, students may discuss the meaning of the lyrics, summarize the message, or relate the song to their personal experience. Through these activities, song lyrics become a great medium for improving listening skills.

E. Previous Studies

Previous studies have shown that the use of English songs can be effective in improving students' listening ability. Lestari and Seriadi (2019) reported that songs not only support the teaching and learning process but also help students improve their listening skills in a more engaging way. Similarly, other studies cited by Lestari and Seriadi (2019) found that English songs can be used to enhance students' listening performance, while different song types may produce different learning outcomes. In line with this, Supriyani et al. (2025) also stated that English songs can improve listening skills in a fun and enjoyable learning environment. These findings indicate that songs are a beneficial medium for listening instruction because they make the learning process more interesting and easier for students to follow.

In addition, research by Nguyen (2020) emphasizes that listening comprehension is influenced by several cognitive and linguistic factors, which means that effective listening instruction should provide meaningful input and reduce learners' difficulty in processing spoken language. Although the specific study discussed in Nguyen (2020) is not directly about songs, its explanation of listening challenges supports the use of songs as authentic material that can increase students' exposure to natural language. Furthermore, Graham (2016) highlights the importance of listening strategies in supporting comprehension, while Pavia et al. (2019) show that repeated exposure to input can support vocabulary acquisition. These studies collectively suggest that English songs may serve as a useful instructional medium because they combine repetition, pronunciation, vocabulary, and motivation in one activity.

F. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the assumption that the use of English song lyrics as authentic listening materials supports the teaching of listening by providing meaningful and engaging language input. Rather than functioning merely as entertainment, songs expose students to authentic pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, vocabulary, and contextualized language, enabling them to experience spoken English in a more natural way. These characteristics make English songs an appropriate instructional medium for listening class.

In this study, by applying theory by Rost (2011) about teaching listening as the primary theory, the implementation of Celine Dion's 'The Power of the Dream' song lyrics is integrated into listening instruction through three instructional stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. During the pre-listening stage, students activate their background knowledge and prepare for the listening task. During the while-listening stage, students focus on understanding the spoken text through repeated listening and guided activities. During the post-listening stage, students reflect on, discuss, and respond to the content of the song. These instructional stages provide opportunities for students to process spoken language systematically while engaging with authentic listening materials.

The interrelationship between the instructional medium and listening comprehension is reflected in the way English song lyrics facilitate students' listening process. The authentic pronunciation, rhythm, repetition, and meaningful lyrics encourage students to recognize vocabulary, connect spoken and written forms, interpret meaning from context, and maintain their attention throughout the listening activities. As students repeatedly engage with these listening processes, they gradually develop better listening comprehension. Therefore, this conceptual framework proposes that the use of Celine Dion's *The Power of the Dream* song lyrics contributes to students' listening comprehension by supporting meaningful listening instruction through authentic language input and structured listening activities.