

EFL STUDENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES IN LEARNING ACADEMIC LISTENING THROUGH TED TALKS: AN ETNOGRAPHY STUDY

SKRIPSI



**Presented to
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Sarjana in English Education**

**By:
Dafa Yanuar Andini
NIM 22120003**

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS EDUCATION
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO
2026**

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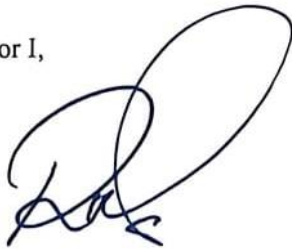
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MOTTO

“Prayer isn’t part-time, it isn’t sometimes, and it isn’t no time. But prayer must be full-time and performed on time, because death can come anytime”

“every soul will taste death”

(Setiap jiwa pasti akan mengalami kematian)

(QS. Ali Imran: 185)

AKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All praise and gratitude are due to Allah SWT for blessings, mercy, and guidance, which have enabled the researcher to complete this undergraduate thesis entitled **“EFL STUDENTS’ LIVED EXPERIENCES IN LEARNING ACADEMIC LISTENING THROUGH TED TALKS: AN ETHNOGRAPHY STUDY”** as one of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in English Education at the English Education Study Program, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude and appreciation to all those who have supported and contributed to the completion of this thesis:

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The researcher realizes that this thesis still has limitations. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly welcomed for future improvement. Finally, the researcher hopes that this thesis will be beneficial for readers and contribute to the development of English Language Education.

Bojonegoro, 6 July 2026

The Researcher

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned below:

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In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the skripsi entitled:

**EFL STUDENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES IN LEARNING ACADEMIC
LISTENING THROUGH TED TALK: AN ETNOGRAPHY STUDY**

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, I personally accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal situations.

Bojonegoro, 6 July 2026

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ABSTRACT

Andini, Dafa Yanuar. 2026. EFL Students' Lived Experiences in Learning Academic Listening Through TED Talks: An Ethnography Study. Skripsi, English Education Department Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Advisor (I) Dr. Refi Ranto Rozak, M.Pd., Advisor (II) Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd.

Keywords: Academic Listening, TED Talks, ethnography, EFL students' lived experiences, authentic materials.

Academic listening is one of the essential skills in English language learning at the tertiary level. The use of TED Talks as authentic learning materials provides students with opportunities to engage with English as it is used in real-life contexts. Therefore, it is important to understand students' experiences while participating in this learning process. This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of EFL students in learning academic listening through TED Talks and to examine how social practices and institutional conditions influenced their learning experiences. This study employed an ethnographic approach involving seven students from the English Education Study Program at a private higher education institution in Bojonegoro, Indonesia. The data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, students' reflective journals, and document analysis of students' mind mapping assignments. The data were analyzed inductively through open coding, categorization, and theme development, while methodological triangulation was employed to ensure the credibility of the findings. The findings revealed five major themes, students' engagement in TED Talks-based learning, linguistic and non-linguistic challenges, compensatory strategies and media usage patterns, students' affective responses and reflections, and the roles of social interaction, lecturer support, and the learning environment in shaping students' learning experiences. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that TED Talks, as authentic learning materials, provided meaningful learning experiences for EFL students. The use of TED Talks promoted active engagement, enabled students to develop various listening strategies, enhanced their learning motivation, and fostered collaborative learning in academic listening.

ABSTRAK

Andini, Dafa Yanuar. 2026. EFL Students' Lived Experiences in Learning Academic Listening Through TED Talks: An Etnography Study. Skripsi, English Education Department Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Advisor (I) Dr. Refi Ranto Rozak, M.Pd., Advisor (II) Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd.

Kata Kunci: Academic Listening, TED Talks, etnografi, pengalaman mahasiswa EFL, materi autentik.

Pembelajaran mendengarkan dalam konteks akademik (academic listening) merupakan salah satu keterampilan penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di perguruan tinggi. Penggunaan TED Talks sebagai materi autentik memberikan kesempatan kepada mahasiswa untuk berinteraksi dengan bahasa yang digunakan dalam konteks nyata. Oleh karena itu, penting untuk memahami pengalaman mahasiswa selama mengikuti pembelajaran tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman hidup (lived experiences) mahasiswa EFL dalam pembelajaran mendengarkan konteks akademik (academic listening) melalui TED Talks serta mengkaji bagaimana praktik sosial dan kondisi institusional memengaruhi pengalaman belajar mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan etnografi dengan melibatkan tujuh mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di salah satu perguruan tinggi swasta di Bojonegoro. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, jurnal refleksi mahasiswa, dan analisis dokumen berupa pemetaan pikiran (mind mapping). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan lima tema utama, yaitu keterlibatan mahasiswa dalam pembelajaran berbasis TED Talks, tantangan linguistik dan nonlinguistik, strategi kompensasi dan pola penggunaan media, respons afektif dan refleksi mahasiswa, serta peran interaksi sosial, dukungan dosen, dan lingkungan belajar dalam membentuk pengalaman belajar mahasiswa. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa TED Talks sebagai materi autentik memberikan pengalaman belajar yang bermakna bagi mahasiswa EFL. Penggunaan TED Talks mendorong keterlibatan aktif, membantu mahasiswa mengembangkan berbagai strategi menyimak, meningkatkan motivasi belajar, serta memperkuat pembelajaran kolaboratif dalam pembelajaran mendengarkan dalam konteks akademik (academic listening).

PREFACE

All praise and gratitude are due to Allah SWT, the Almighty, for His endless blessings, mercy, and guidance, which have enabled the writer to complete this undergraduate thesis entitled “EFL Students' Lived Experiences in Learning Academic Listening Through TED Talks: An Ethnography Study.” This research is submitted as one of the requirements for obtaining the Bachelor's Degree in English Education at the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. This study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of EFL students in learning Academic Listening through TED Talks and to examine how social practices and institutional conditions shaped their learning experiences. By employing an ethnographic approach, this research provides an in-depth understanding of students' learning experiences while highlighting the role of authentic learning materials in English language education. It is expected that the findings of this study will contribute to the development of Academic Listening instruction and serve as a useful reference for future studies in English language teaching. The process of completing this thesis was not without challenges. The writer encountered various difficulties during the stages of data collection, data analysis, and thesis writing. However, through continuous guidance from the supervisors, support from lecturers, encouragement from family and friends, and sincere prayers, these challenges were successfully overcome, enabling this thesis to be completed. The writer would like to express sincere appreciation to the supervisors for their invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, continuous encouragement, and patience throughout the completion of this thesis. The writer also extends heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has provided support and assistance, directly or indirectly, during this research process. The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are sincerely welcomed for the improvement of future research. It is hoped that this thesis will provide meaningful contributions to students, lecturers, future researchers, and other readers who are interested in Academic Listening, authentic learning materials, and ethnographic studies in EFL contexts.

Bojonegoro, 6 July 2026

The Researcher

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE	ii
APPROVAL SHEETS.....	iii
LEGITIMATION.....	iv
MOTTO	v
AKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY.....	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
ABSTRAK	x
PREFACE.....	xi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xii
LIST OF TABLE	xiv
LIST OF FIGURE	xv
LIST OF APPENDICES	xvi
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
A. Background of the Study	1
B. Formulation of the Problems	5
C. Objectives of the Study	5
D. Significances of the Study	6
E. Definition of Key Terminologies	8
CHAPTER II.....	11
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	11
A. Review of Previous Studies.....	11
B. Theoretical Review.....	14
C. Theoretical Framework	23
CHAPTER III	28
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
A. Research Design	28
B. Research Setting and Duration	30
C. Data and Data Sources	31
D. Data Collection Techniques	32

E. Data Analysis Techniques	34
F. Data Validation Techniques.....	35
CHAPTER IV.....	37
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	37
A. Research Findings	37
B. Discussion	53
CHAPTER V	61
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.....	61
A. Conclusions	61
B. Suggestions.....	63
REFERENCES.....	68
APPENDICES	71

LIST OF TABLE

Table 4.1 Example of the Open Coding Process	37
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LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 2 1 the Diagram of Theoretical Framework of the Study	26
Figure 3.1 the Diagram of Data Analysis Techniques	35

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Observation Guide.....	71
Appendix 2 Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview Guide	72
Appendix 3 Students' Reflective Journals.....	74
Appendix 4 Documents Analysis Students' Mind-Mapping Artifacts.....	75
Appendix 5 Documentation	76
Appendix 6 Research Data Request Letter	77
Appendix 7 Research Clearance Letter	78

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English proficiency has long been positioned as a basic and strategic competency in education, especially in today's era of globalization. English not only functions as an international language that opens access to literature and cross border academic communication, but has also become a determinant of academic and professional mobility for college graduates. Therefore, strengthening English skills, especially receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive (speaking and writing) that are relevant to academic needs, is a fundamental requirement for students. In English language learning, there are four main skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening skills play a crucial role in academic context where university students must be able to understand lectures, seminars, presentations, and academic audio-visual materials in order to follow lectures and conduct effective literature reviews.

Theoretically, the use of authentic materials and varied listening exercises is believed to improve oral comprehension skills, including materials that resemble academic discussions Gavenila et al. (2021) . TED Talks are often seen as an authentic source suitable for academic listening practice because of their format, which resembles short lectures, their variety of relevant topic, and the availability of transcript and subtitles that support learning (Al-jafra, 2021; Thuy & Tuyen, 2024). These pedagogical

expectations may encourage many teachers to integrate TED Talks their listening learning activities.

However, in practice there is a significant gap between theoretical expectations and reality in the field. Based on experience and field reports, it appears that although TED Talks provide authentic input, the benefits are not automatically realized for all EFL Students. Frequently reported obstacles include the speed of the speaker, the use of technical or advanced vocabulary, accent variations, and the complexity of ideas, which are factors that cause high cognitive load for students with below-average abilities Astika & Kurniawan, (2020).

In addition, the tendency to rely on subtitles or transcripts and reactive learning processes indicate that authentic input is sometimes presented without adequate pedagogical scaffolding. Meanwhile, the literature points to the importance of activities such as pre-listening, metacognitive strategies that encourage planning, monitoring, and evaluation of understanding, and post-listening activities that encourage reflection and discussion so that the input can be internalized effectively Gavenila et al., (2021).

The urgent need in the field reinforces the urgency of this research. In many study programs in Indonesia, the use of English language materials in increasingly intensive, but systematic, continuous, and contextual listening teaching practices are still limited, including a lack of studies on how students themselves experience the learning process in their daily academic lives (Andika & Yulia, 2025). The practice of using

TED Talks in class is often uncertain or in other words, videos are played and students are asked to make summaries or have brief discussions without exploring in depth the learning strategies, meaning of the content or social dynamics that occur in study groups. Observations and experiences of teacher also show a tendency for students to rely on subtitles or transcripts, miss the pragmatic aspects of the presentation, or feel overwhelmed when the topic is too abstract.

The gap between expectations and reality and the demands of the field require a research approach that captures students lived experiences, rather than simply measuring quantitative changes in ability. An approach that places students lived experiences as the center of analysis is necessary to understand how learning practices actually occur, how students select and process TED Talks material, what cognitive and social strategies they use, and what obstacles influence learning outcomes. The educational ethnography approach offers a suitable methodological foundation because it emphasizes in-depth study of the practices, meanings, social interactions, and cultural contexts of everyday learning (Sarah, 2021). Through an ethnography, research can explore how students select TED Talks, the strategies they use on to select material, the role of peers, and the technical and non-technical barriers that influence the process of academic listening learning.

Previous studies have shown two things that are relevant to this study. First, TED Talks have the potential to increase motivation, enrich academic vocabulary, and provide a practical context for extensive

listening practice when implemented with the right strategies (Al-jafra, 2021). Second, these benefits depend on the context of implementation. Without supporting activities such as pre-teaching vocabulary, scaffolding tasks, and opportunities for reflective discussion, students tend to have difficulty understanding complex content (Astika & Kurniawan, 2020). The lack of ethnographic studies that record the lived experiences of EFL students especially in the context of Indonesian universities is a compelling reason for conducting this research.

In addition to contributing based on experience, this study has policy implications. The findings, which describe the real challenges and effective practices of students, can help inform policy-making at the study program and university levels to formulate guidelines for authentic material based listening learning, allocate resources for teacher training, and design a curriculum that balances the amount of time students spend using English with adequate pedagogical support. In practical terms, the recommendations generated are expected to not only improve the effectiveness of listening learning, but also empower students to independently utilize English language resources as part of their ongoing academic learning.

Based on theoretical considerations and field requirements, this study aims to explore the lived experiences of EFL students in academic listening learning through TED Talks using an ethnographic approach. The focus of study includes the learning practices carried out by students, the cognitive and social strategies they use, the dynamics of interaction in the

classroom or study groups, and the institutional and technical factors that facilitate or hinder listening learning. The expected findings not only bridge the gap between theoretical expectations and reality, but also produce contextual pedagogical recommendations for more effective academic listening instructions.

B. Formulation of the Problems

1. What are the lived experiences of EFL students in the academic listening learning process through the use of TED Talks in a college environment?
2. How do social practices and institutional conditions influence the process and effectiveness of academic listening learning for EFL students who use TED Talks?

C. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to understand and describe in depth the lived experiences of EFL students in the process of learning academic listening courses through the use of the TED Talks platform in a university environment using an ethnographic approach. Specifically this study seeks to:

1. To explore the lived experiences of EFL students in learning academic listening using TED Talks in a university setting.
2. To examine how social practices and institutional conditions influence the process and effectiveness of academic listening learning for EFL students using TED Talks.

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

The results of this study are expected to enrich the literature on academic listening, multimodal listening materials, and the use of authentic digital resources, particularly TED Talks in EFL learning. Using an ethnographic approach, this study provides deeper insights into students' lived experiences, perceptions, challenges, and learning strategies, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding than quantitative approaches. The findings of this study can strengthen theoretical discussions on listening pedagogy, learner agency, language input authenticity, and learning in social and institutional contexts.

2. Practical Significance

a. For EFL Students

This study can help students gain a clearer understanding of effective academic listening learning strategies through the use of authentic materials such as TED Talks. Students are expected to be able to increase their learning independence, be motivated to be more active in exploring listening materials outside the classroom, and be more confident in dealing with academic oral texts. In addition, the results of this study can be used as a reference for students in choosing the right techniques, such as taking notes on keywords, utilizing subtitles gradually, and reflecting after watching the material.

b. For English Language Teachers and Lecturers

The findings of this study can be used as a reference in designing listening lessons that are more structured and responsive to student needs. Lecturers can obtain information about the obstacles that students often face when using TED Talks, so that they can prepare more appropriate pedagogical interventions such as pre-listening activities, vocabulary scaffolding, reflective discussions, and targeted evaluations after video playback. This research can also help educators assess the effectiveness of using authentic media in the classroom and adapt it to the learning context. Thus, listening teaching strategies can be more varied, interactive, and able to increase student engagement in learning activities.

c. For Curriculum Designers and Institutions

The results of this study can provide input for institutions in improving the quality of English language learning in higher education. Findings regarding listening-based learning conditions using TED Talks can be used as a basis for designing policies on the provision of learning facilities such as adequate internet access, multimedia rooms, or learning video banks. In addition, institutions can consider training programs for lecturers to optimize the use of authentic resources so that the learning process is more effective, focused, and in line with technological developments.

d. For Future Researchers

This research can be used as a reference for developing studies related to listening learning, the use of digital media, or ethnographic approaches. Future researchers can broaden the focus of their research, for example by comparing the use of TED Talks with other authentic media, examining the long-term impact on students' listening skills, or studying the learning process through mixed methods. Thus, this research opens up opportunities for more in-depth and comprehensive follow-up research.

E. Definition of Key Terminologies

1. Lived Experiences

Lived experiences refer to real events experienced by a person, understood through personal perspective and awareness. In qualitative research, this term is used to explore how individuals feel, evaluate, and give meaning to various events in their lives. (Rino et al., 2022), provide an example through research on the experiences of English teachers who are not proficient in the language, it not only reveals professional obstacles, but also internal processes such as, anxiety, adjustment, and efforts to build confidence when teaching.

Khairunnisa et al., (2025), also provides an in-depth understanding of “life experiences” through the stories to foreign students adapting to literacy practices, academic demands, and new cultural values in Indonesia. It can be concluded that lived experience is a series of

meaningful and highly personal events, enabling researchers to understand how individuals interpret, respond to, and interact with certain phenomena within their socio-cultural context.

2. EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) occurs when someone studies English in a country where English is not the primary language used in everyday life. Typically, those who learn EFL only interact with English at school or through sources such as the internet. According to research by (Pitaloka et al., 2021), EFL learners in Indonesia often use social media to improve their English skills because their English skills environment does not support direct English practice.

3. Academic Listening

Academic listening skills are the ability to listen in academic settings, including understanding formal spoken discourse such as lectures, seminars, scientific presentations, and academic audio-visual content. This skill is not only focused on listening, but also involves the ability to capture main ideas, extract important information, draw conclusions, and connect new information with existing knowledge.

Academic listening is a complex process that requires a combination of linguistic, cognitive, and strategic elements in understanding spoken information (He & Jiang, 2020). In addition, success in listening is greatly influenced by metacognitive abilities, which include monitoring comprehension and applying appropriate

listening strategies. Therefore, in this study, academic listening is understood as a high-level listening skill that plays an important role in understanding and interpreting formal spoken discourse in the context of higher education.

4. TED Talks

TED Talks, which stands for Technology, Entertainment, and Design, presents short video presentations from various fields of science delivered by experts. Its lecture-like format, varied topics, and availability of transcripts and text translations make it recognized as authentic learning material. Research by (Netta, 2025) highlights how Indonesian students view TED Talks, and the results confirm that this material is effective in improving listening comprehension skills. A quasi-experimental study conducted by (Maharani et al., 2021) also reveals that TED Talks can develop listening skills in middle school students. (Gavenila et al., 2021) also emphasized that TED Talks are a very useful source of listening practice. In this study, the term TED Talks refers to original presentation videos used as teaching materials to improve academic listening skills in EFL classes.