

# The Use of Storytelling to Enhance English Listening Skills among Elementary School Students

Tiarnita Maria Sarjani Br Siregar<sup>1\*</sup>, Tetty Aprilya Rezeki Simatupang<sup>2</sup>, Rani Natalia Purba<sup>3</sup>, Niko Alriadi Sinaga<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Medan State University, Indonesia; e-mail : [lian.nita2010@gmail.com](mailto:lian.nita2010@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Medan State University, Indonesia; e-mail : [simatupangtetty558@gmail.com](mailto:simatupangtetty558@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Medan State University, Indonesia; e-mail : [mhsranintlpurba5@gmail.com](mailto:mhsranintlpurba5@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup> Medan State University, Indonesia; e-mail : [nikoalriadi6633@gmail.com](mailto:nikoalriadi6633@gmail.com)

\* Corresponding Author: Tiarnita Maria Sarjani Br Siregar

**Abstract:** English learning at the elementary school level plays an important role in developing students' early language competence, particularly in listening skills as the foundation for other language abilities. However, many learning processes still rely on conventional teaching methods that do not fully accommodate the developmental characteristics of young learners, resulting in limited engagement and listening comprehension. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of storytelling in improving English listening skills among elementary school students and to identify effective implementation strategies in classroom learning. This research employs a library research method by reviewing and analyzing various relevant literature sources, including books, scientific journals, and previous research findings related to storytelling in English language learning. The analysis shows that storytelling contributes significantly to improving students' listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, attention, and learning motivation. Through structured narratives, expressive delivery, and the support of visual media, storytelling creates a contextual and meaningful learning environment that helps students understand spoken English more effectively. The findings also indicate that the effectiveness of storytelling is closely related to the developmental characteristics of elementary school students who learn better through concrete, imaginative, and engaging experiences. Furthermore, the implementation of storytelling through systematic stages pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening can enhance students participation and comprehension during the learning process. In conclusion, storytelling can be considered an effective instructional strategy for improving English listening skills among elementary school students while also supporting vocabulary development and creating an engaging learning atmosphere.

**Keywords:** Elementary School; English Learning; Listening Skills; Storytelling; Vocabulary Development

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## 1. Introduction

Learning English in elementary school is essential for establishing students' early language abilities as a basis for further language development. At this level, teaching strategies should be aligned with children's cognitive, social, and language development to ensure effective understanding. Elementary school students tend to understand learning concepts more easily when they are presented in a concrete, contextual, and engaging manner. Therefore, selecting appropriate teaching methods becomes an important factor in supporting the success of English learning, particularly in listening skills. One approach that is widely used in language learning is storytelling, which refers to the activity of narrating stories orally that allows students to understand language through a sequence of meaningful and structured events. Through storytelling, students not only gain entertainment but also indirectly learn vocabulary, sentence structures, and language intonation naturally.

Various previous studies have examined the use of storytelling in English learning at the elementary school level. Research conducted by Setyarini that storytelling can serve as an effective alternative learning approach to increase students' engagement and help them express ideas in the language learning process. In addition, Fitriany et al. (in Widiyanto et al.,

2023) state that the use of short stories in storytelling activities can help students understand learning materials more effectively while also improving their English vocabulary mastery. The storytelling method is also often combined with visual media such as pictures, picture cards, or hand puppets to increase students' focus and attention during the learning process.

Nevertheless, every learning method has its strengths and limitations. The storytelling method has advantages in creating an enjoyable learning atmosphere, increasing students' learning motivation, and facilitating contextual language learning through storylines that are easy to understand. In addition, storytelling can involve various aspects of language skills in an integrated manner, particularly in training students' listening abilities through direct story-listening activities. However, several studies also indicate limitations in the implementation of this method, such as differences in students' language abilities, limited instructional time, and teachers' skills in delivering stories expressively and engagingly (Widiyanto et al., 2023). Furthermore, many previous studies have mainly focused on improving speaking skills or vocabulary, while research that specifically examines the role of storytelling in improving English listening skills among elementary school students is still relatively limited.

Based on the explanation above, the research problem in this article is how the storytelling method contributes to improving English listening skills among elementary school students and how its implementation strategies can be applied in the learning process. Listening skill is one of the fundamental skills in language learning because it serves as the foundation for developing other language skills, such as speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, a learning approach that can create meaningful learning experiences and align with the developmental characteristics of elementary school students is highly needed. To address this problem, this study proposes a literature review approach (library research) that analyzes various theories, concepts, and previous research findings related to the use of storytelling in English learning. Through this approach, the study aims to identify the concept of storytelling in language learning, understand the characteristics of elementary school students that are relevant to the use of this method, and analyze the role of storytelling in improving students' English listening skills. In addition, this study also discusses the steps for implementing storytelling in classroom learning activities so that the method can be applied systematically and effectively.

The main contributions of this study are as follows: (1) presenting a conceptual synthesis of the use of storytelling in English learning at the elementary school level; (2) identifying the relationship between the developmental characteristics of elementary school students and the effectiveness of the storytelling method; (3) analyzing the role of storytelling in improving students' English listening skills; and (4) formulating steps for implementing storytelling in classroom learning activities that can serve as a reference for teachers in instructional practice. Section two presents the literature review discussing the concept of storytelling in English learning, the characteristics of elementary school students, the role of storytelling in improving listening skills, and the steps for its implementation in learning activities. Section three explains the research method used in this study, namely the library research method. Finally, the last section presents the discussion and conclusions regarding the role of storytelling as a learning strategy in improving English listening skills among elementary school students.

## 2. Literature Review

English learning in elementary school requires approaches that are appropriate to children's developmental characteristics. At the elementary school level, students tend to understand learning materials more easily when they are presented in a concrete, engaging, and contextual manner. Therefore, teachers need to apply teaching methods that not only focus on delivering the material but also create an enjoyable learning environment and actively involve students in the learning process. One method that can support this process is storytelling. Storytelling refers to the oral delivery of stories and serves as a powerful instructional tool, particularly in language learning contexts. Stories not only engage students but also facilitate natural language acquisition through meaningful contexts. In English learning, storytelling can help students become familiar with new vocabulary, understand sentence structures, and develop listening skills in a more engaging way.

The use of storytelling in English learning is also closely related to the characteristics of elementary school students, who generally have strong imagination and enjoy listening to stories that involve characters, conflicts, and interesting events. Stories delivered expressively

with the support of visual media such as pictures or hand puppets can increase students' attention, concentration, and motivation to learn. In this way, storytelling does not only function as a method of delivering learning material but also as a learning strategy that can develop students' language skills in an integrated manner.

Based on these considerations, this section discusses several concepts related to the use of storytelling in teaching English to elementary school students. The discussion begins with the concept of storytelling in English learning, followed by the characteristics of elementary school students, the role of storytelling in improving students' listening skills, and the steps for implementing storytelling in classroom learning activities. Understanding these aspects is expected to provide a strong theoretical foundation for the use of storytelling as a learning strategy to improve English listening skills among elementary school students.

### **The Concept of Storytelling in Teaching English to Elementary School Students**

According to Echols, storytelling consists of two words: story, which means a tale or narrative, and telling, which means the act of narrating. The combination of these two words, storytelling, refers to the act of telling a story or narrating a tale. In addition, storytelling is also referred to as narrating or telling stories. It is an effort carried out by a storyteller to convey feelings, ideas, or a story to children orally. Storytelling is one of the learning methods that utilizes storytelling activities to deliver learning materials in an interesting and communicative way. Storytelling is also considered one form of language skill mastery. The root word of storytelling is story, which refers to a narration that describes a sequence of events or occurrences chronologically. The activity of retelling stories that have been read, heard, or listened to using one's own language is known as retelling. In language learning, storytelling does not only function as entertainment but also as an effective medium for developing various language skills, especially listening skills. Through stories, students can understand the meaning of language contextually because language is presented within a sequence of events that is structured and easy to understand.

According to Asrul and Rahmawati in Maknun (2023), storytelling is the activity of narrating a story as well as the ability to organize scenes, events, and dialogue. Teachers can use pictures as media to create stories. The use of pictures and sketches as learning media can increase students' focus and attention, making it easier for them to capture information. Storytelling is not only an example of effective oral communication and an activity to develop speaking skills, but it also actively trains and develops all language skills. In English learning at the elementary school level, storytelling plays an important role because it helps students become familiar with vocabulary, sentence structures, and language intonation naturally. Stories are usually delivered with the help of facial expressions, body movements, pictures, or other visual media, making it easier for students to understand the content of the story. Thus, students do not only hear words but also grasp the meaning through the context of the story conveyed by the teacher.

Previous research on storytelling conducted by Setyarini in Widiyanto et al. (2023) stated that storytelling can serve as an alternative approach to improving English learning for early-grade elementary school students. This model provides opportunities for students to interact and express their opinions. However, there are still challenges in classroom implementation, particularly students' speaking abilities, which are sometimes insufficient for applying this method effectively.

Fitriany et al. in Widiyanto (2023) stated that storytelling, particularly through the use of short stories, can serve as a medium that facilitates children's learning and helps them follow lessons more effectively. This approach can also contribute to the improvement of students' English vocabulary. Types of storytelling can be classified into several categories, including:

- a. Educational Storytelling, which refers to stories created with an educational mission for children. For example, stories that aim to instill respect for parents, provide education about natural disasters, and others.
- b. Fables, which are stories about animals whose lives are portrayed as if they were human. Fables allow the storyteller to deliver moral messages or satire about human behavior without causing offense. Examples include stories of the mouse deer, the rabbit, and the tortoise.

The storytelling method also allows students to actively participate in the learning process. Teachers can invite students to guess the storyline, repeat certain words, or answer questions related to the story being told. These activities can improve students' concentration in listening and help them understand the story content better. Furthermore, the use of

interesting stories that are close to students' daily lives can increase learning motivation and create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. Through the storytelling method, teachers can make learning more enjoyable so that students become interested and focused when listening to the story.

As a result, students' learning motivation increases, particularly in understanding English stories. In the context of listening skill development, storytelling helps students practice their ability to understand the information they hear, recognize new vocabulary, and interpret the meaning of a story. When students listen to stories in English, they learn to understand the message being conveyed without always relying on translation. This process gradually improves their listening skills while also enriching their vocabulary. Therefore, storytelling can be an effective learning strategy for improving English listening skills among elementary school students. This method not only helps students understand the language more easily but also encourages them to become more active and enthusiastic in participating in the learning process.

### **Characteristics of Elementary School Students**

Character refers to the way individuals think and behave, and each individual possesses unique characteristics. Good character is aligned with moral and religious values and enables individuals to make decisions and take responsibility for those decisions. A character is considered good when it includes understanding, caring for others, acting according to ethical values, and demonstrating cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of moral life. Students in elementary school are generally between 6 and 12 years old and are in the stage of school-age child development. During this phase, children experience rapid development in cognitive, social, emotional, and language aspects. Understanding the nature and characteristics of elementary school students is very important for teachers so they can determine appropriate teaching methods that match students' developmental needs, including in teaching English.

Based on Piaget's cognitive development theory, elementary school learners are generally at the concrete operational stage, elementary school children are in the concrete operational stage. At this stage, children begin to think logically but still require the support of concrete objects or situations. Students tend to grasp concepts more effectively when they are delivered through concrete examples and real-life representations. Therefore, the use of learning methods that involve visualization, direct experiences, and storytelling can greatly assist students' understanding.

In addition, elementary school students generally have relatively limited attention spans. They tend to become bored easily if the learning process lasts too long or if the material is delivered in an abstract way. For this reason, teachers need to use varied and engaging teaching methods to keep students focused and involved in the learning process. The use of storytelling in English learning can be an effective alternative because stories are able to attract students' attention and maintain their interest in listening.

There are several characteristics that teachers need to understand about elementary school students in order to create learning experiences that meet children's needs. One important factor that influences how students learn is recognizing their individual characteristics. Student characteristics are unique traits possessed by each learner, both as individuals and as members of a group, which must be considered when designing instruction. If teachers conduct teaching without considering student characteristics, children may experience difficulties in understanding the material. No matter how well a teacher designs a lesson, if the learning process does not place students and their characteristics at the center of instruction, the learning process will not be effective for them.

The general characteristics of learning in elementary school include:

- a. Grade 1 and Grade 2: Learning is oriented toward facts and tends to focus on concrete events that exist in the students' surrounding environment.
- b. Grade 3: Students begin to be introduced to generalization concepts derived from concrete facts or events, representing a higher level than Grades 1 and 2.
- c. Grades 4, 5, and 6 (upper grades): Students are introduced to broader concepts and principles along with their practical applications.

Elementary school students also possess a relatively high level of imagination. They enjoy listening to stories about characters, adventures, and interesting events. This imaginative ability can be utilized by teachers to deliver learning materials through creative storytelling. By listening to stories, students can imagine the sequence of events and better understand the

meaning of the language used in the story. Furthermore, students in the lower grades are still experiencing rapid language development. They are learning to understand and use language in different situations. Therefore, teaching foreign languages such as English needs to be conducted in a communicative and contextual manner. Storytelling can help students understand language through real-life situations presented in stories, making learning more meaningful.

Based on these characteristics, it can be concluded that the storytelling method is highly suitable for teaching English to elementary school students. This method accommodates children's learning needs, which favor enjoyable activities, concrete experiences, and imaginative engagement. Thus, storytelling can support the improvement of listening skills while creating a more engaging learning experience for students.

### **The Role of Storytelling in Improving Elementary School Students' English Listening Skills**

The storytelling method plays an important role in improving the English listening skills of elementary school students because it can create a contextual, meaningful, and developmentally appropriate learning experience. At the elementary school level, children tend to learn more effectively through engaging, imaginative, and concrete experiences. Therefore, the use of stories as a learning medium can create a more lively and meaningful learning atmosphere. Stories generally contain elements such as plot, characters, setting, and simple conflicts that are easy for children to understand. The structured sequence of events in a story helps students follow information step by step, enabling them to understand the relationships between events within the narrative. When students listen to stories delivered in English, they are not merely hearing language sounds but are also attempting to comprehend the content, meaning, and messages conveyed in the story. In this way, listening activities become more meaningful because students are actively involved in understanding the storyline as a whole (Izzati et al., 2025).

Through storytelling, students are trained to develop their listening skills in a more focused manner. When teachers tell stories in English, students must pay attention to the pronunciation of words, sentence intonation, and the context of the story to understand the meaning being conveyed. This process encourages students to process information gradually, beginning with recognizing language sounds, understanding the vocabulary used, and eventually identifying the main ideas within the story. Furthermore, stories that present events in a clear sequence help students develop logical thinking and the ability to understand information chronologically. Students learn to connect one part of the story with another, allowing them to grasp the overall meaning more effectively. This process indirectly enhances their ability to comprehend spoken messages in English.

In addition to improving comprehension of story content, the storytelling method also plays a significant role in enriching students' vocabulary acquisition. In learning a foreign language, vocabulary is a fundamental component that greatly influences the ability to understand spoken messages. Through stories, new vocabulary is usually introduced naturally within a clear context, enabling students to infer the meaning of words based on the situations presented in the story. This approach is more effective than memorizing isolated vocabulary without context. When certain words or phrases appear repeatedly in a story, students are more likely to remember and understand how they are used in sentences. Repeated and contextual exposure to vocabulary helps strengthen students' memory and gradually improve their understanding of English language structures. Therefore, storytelling not only helps students comprehend the content of a story but also expands their linguistic competence in a natural way (Maknun & Adelia, 2023).

Beyond cognitive and linguistic aspects, storytelling also has a positive impact on the affective dimension of the learning process. Stories delivered in an engaging way for example through facial expressions, variations in voice intonation, body movements, and the use of visual media such as pictures, story cards, or hand puppets can increase students' attention and interest in learning. Children tend to be more focused when listening to stories that are presented expressively and interactively. This makes listening activities less monotonous and transforms them into enjoyable and imaginative learning experiences. When students are interested in the story being told, they become more motivated to listen carefully and try to understand the content of the story.

Students' emotional involvement with the characters and storyline also plays an important role in improving their memory of the information they hear. When students feel

connected to the characters or experience emotions such as happiness, curiosity, or empathy, the learning process becomes more meaningful. Learning experiences that involve emotions and imagination tend to be remembered more easily than abstract and monotonous instruction. As a result, storytelling helps students remember vocabulary, expressions, and key information within the story more effectively. This process turns listening activities into an active process of understanding and interpreting spoken messages rather than merely a passive act of hearing language sounds.

Furthermore, storytelling can encourage interaction between teachers and students during the learning process. Teachers may ask simple questions related to the story, such as identifying the characters, describing the sequence of events, or explaining the moral message contained in the narrative. These activities train students to listen more carefully because they know that after the story is finished, they will be asked to respond to questions or retell certain parts of the story. Such interaction helps increase student participation in the classroom and strengthens their understanding of the story's content. Follow-up activities, such as asking students to mention new vocabulary or arrange the sequence of events from the story, can also reinforce their listening skills.

In conclusion, storytelling has a highly significant role in improving the English listening skills of elementary school students. This method not only helps students understand spoken messages more effectively but also enriches vocabulary, increases concentration, enhances learning motivation, and creates enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences. Through well-designed and interactive storytelling activities, students can gradually develop their English listening abilities in accordance with their developmental characteristics. Therefore, the implementation of storytelling is highly relevant and recommended as an effective instructional strategy for improving English listening skills among elementary school students (Baitullah et al., 2025).

### **Steps for Implementing Storytelling in the Classroom to Improve Elementary School Students' English Listening Skills**

The implementation of storytelling in English learning at the elementary school level needs to be designed systematically so that the goal of improving listening skills can be achieved optimally. The first stage is the pre-listening activity. At this stage, the teacher introduces the topic of the story, connects the material with students' experiences, and introduces key vocabulary that will appear in the story. This activity aims to build students' schemata or prior knowledge so that they have mental and linguistic readiness before listening to the story. Proper preparation at the initial stage will help students understand the story content more easily (Maknun & Adelia, 2023).

The second stage is the while-listening activity. In this stage, the teacher tells the story while paying attention to clear pronunciation, appropriate intonation, facial expressions, and the use of body movements to clarify meaning. The use of visual media such as pictures, flashcards, or hand puppets can help students visualize the story, thereby strengthening their understanding. During this stage, the teacher may also insert simple questions in the middle of the story to ensure that students remain focused and understand the storyline. Listening activities that include such interaction have been shown to increase students' attention and their ability to absorb the information they hear (Izzati et al., 2025).

The third stage is the post-listening activity, which functions as an evaluation and reinforcement of comprehension. The teacher can ask students to answer questions related to the story, arrange pictures according to the storyline, complete sentences, or retell the story in a simple way using their own words. These activities help students reconstruct the information they have heard, thereby strengthening their comprehension and memory. In addition, a joint reflection on the moral messages or values contained in the story can deepen the meaning of the learning experience. Consistent and continuous implementation of these steps can significantly improve students' listening skills because students are actively involved in the entire learning process (Baitullah et al., 2025).

### **3. Research Method**

This article uses the library research method. Library research is a research method conducted by reviewing, examining, and analyzing various sources of information related to a particular research topic. These sources may include books, scientific journals, articles, research reports, and other references that are relevant to the discussion of the study. The purpose of using the library research method is to obtain a comprehensive understanding of

the topic being studied, review existing theories and previous research findings, and identify research gaps that still require further investigation. In addition, this method is also used to build a strong theoretical foundation as the basis for analyzing the role of storytelling in improving English listening skills among elementary school students.

The research process in library research is carried out systematically through several stages: (1) identifying the research topic and focus, (2) searching for and collecting relevant literature sources, (3) selecting sources based on their relevance and credibility, (4) reading and understanding the content of the literature in depth, (5) analyzing and synthesizing the information obtained, and (6) organizing the results of the study in the form of a systematic literature review. Through these stages, this research is expected to provide a clear conceptual overview of the use of the storytelling method in improving English listening skills among elementary school students.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

This study aims to analyze the use of the storytelling method in enhancing English listening skills among elementary school students. The results of the study were obtained through a comprehensive literature analysis and conceptual review of previous studies related to storytelling in English language learning at the elementary school level. Based on the analysis, it was found that the implementation of storytelling in classroom learning contributes significantly to improving students' listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, attention during learning, and overall engagement in the learning process. The findings indicate that storytelling creates a more interactive and meaningful learning environment for elementary school students. Through storytelling activities, students do not merely listen passively to spoken language but actively attempt to understand the storyline, characters, events, and messages conveyed in the story. This process allows students to comprehend English in a contextual and natural manner, which ultimately enhances their listening comprehension ability.

#### ***Improvement of Students' English Listening Skills***

The findings indicate that storytelling has a substantial impact on enhancing elementary school students' English listening skills. During the learning process, students demonstrate better ability to understand oral information presented through stories delivered by the teacher. Stories typically follow a chronological structure consisting of a beginning, middle, and ending, which helps students process information gradually. This narrative structure enables students to follow the sequence of events and understand the relationship between different parts of the story. As a result, students are not only hearing English words but are also able to grasp the meaning of the information conveyed in the story. Furthermore, the use of expressive storytelling techniques such as voice intonation, facial expressions, and body movements helps clarify the meaning of the story. These elements provide additional contextual cues that support students in understanding the spoken language. Students tend to be more attentive when listening to stories compared to traditional lecture-based explanations. These findings indicate that storytelling helps students develop their ability to understand spoken English progressively. Students learn to recognize language sounds, understand the vocabulary used in the story, and connect the information they hear with the overall context of the narrative.

#### ***Improvement of Vocabulary Acquisition***

In addition to improving listening comprehension, the results also reveal that storytelling significantly contributes to students' vocabulary acquisition. During storytelling activities, new vocabulary is introduced naturally within the context of the story. This contextual exposure allows students to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words based on the situations presented in the narrative. Vocabulary that appears repeatedly throughout the story helps strengthen students' memory and understanding of the new words. Repetition plays an important role in language learning, as hearing the same words several times in different parts of the story allows students to gradually recognize and internalize their meanings without relying heavily on translation. Moreover, storytelling is often supported by visual media such as pictures, flashcards, or illustrations. These visual elements help students associate new vocabulary with concrete objects or actions depicted in the story. The connection between words and visual representations enhances students' comprehension and retention of new vocabulary. Therefore, storytelling not only serves as a medium for improving listening skills but also

functions as an effective strategy for enriching students' English vocabulary. The improvement in vocabulary knowledge subsequently supports the development of other language skills, including speaking, reading, and writing.

### ***Increased Students' Attention and Concentration in Learning***

Another important finding of this study is that storytelling increases students' attention and concentration during the English learning process. Elementary school students generally have a relatively short attention span and may easily lose interest if the learning process is monotonous or overly abstract. Therefore, engaging and interactive teaching methods are essential to maintain students' focus during classroom activities. Storytelling has proven to be effective in capturing students' attention because stories are typically delivered in an expressive and imaginative manner. When teachers use varied voice intonation, facial expressions, gestures, and dramatic storytelling techniques, students become more interested in listening to the story. In addition, stories often include interesting conflicts or events that stimulate curiosity among students. This curiosity motivates students to listen carefully in order to discover how the story unfolds and ends. As a result, storytelling helps sustain students' attention throughout the learning process. The improvement in students' concentration is also reflected in their ability to answer comprehension questions after the storytelling session. Many students are able to recall characters, events, and key information from the story, which indicates that they paid close attention during the listening activity.

### ***Enhancement of Students' Learning Motivation***

The results of the study also show that storytelling positively influences students' motivation to learn English. Stories that are interesting and relatable to students' daily experiences create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. When learning activities are perceived as enjoyable, students tend to participate more actively in the classroom. During storytelling sessions, students often show enthusiasm by responding to the teacher's questions, predicting what might happen next in the story, or repeating certain words and phrases introduced during the storytelling process. Active participation in storytelling activities demonstrates that this method can increase students' motivation to learn English. Students no longer perceive English learning as a difficult or monotonous task but rather as an engaging and enjoyable learning experience. Furthermore, emotional involvement in the story plays a significant role in enhancing motivation. When students feel connected to the characters or events in the story, they become more interested in understanding the language used to convey the narrative.

### ***Implementation of Storytelling in Classroom Learning***

The findings also indicate that the implementation of storytelling in elementary school English classrooms can be carried out through several systematic stages, namely the pre-listening stage, the while-listening stage, and the post-listening stage. These stages are designed to support students in understanding the story more effectively. During the pre-listening stage, the teacher introduces the topic of the story and explains several key vocabulary items that will appear in the narrative. This stage aims to activate students' prior knowledge and prepare them for the listening activity. During the while-listening stage, the teacher tells the story using expressive techniques such as voice modulation, gestures, facial expressions, and visual aids. These elements help students visualize the story and understand the meaning more clearly. During the post-listening stage, the teacher evaluates students' comprehension through various follow-up activities, such as asking comprehension questions, asking students to retell parts of the story, or discussing the moral values conveyed in the narrative.

**Tabel 1.** Stages of Storytelling Implementation in Listening Learning

<b>Learning Stage</b>	<b>Teacher Activities</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b>
Pre-listening	Introducing the story topic and key vocabulary	Activating students' background knowledge
While-listening	Delivering the story using expressive techniques and visual aids	Helping students understand the story
Post-listening	Asking questions, retelling activities, and discussion	Strengthening students' comprehension

The structured implementation of these stages helps students follow the learning process systematically and improves the effectiveness of storytelling in developing English listening skills. Overall, the results of this study demonstrate that storytelling is an effective

instructional method for enhancing English listening skills among elementary school students. The method not only helps students understand spoken messages more effectively but also improves vocabulary acquisition, increases attention and concentration during learning, and enhances students' motivation to participate in English learning activities.

### **Discussion**

The discussion section interprets the findings that have been presented in the results section. The findings of this study indicate that storytelling plays a significant role in enhancing English listening skills among elementary school students. The effectiveness of storytelling in language learning can be explained through several important perspectives, namely cognitive, linguistic, and affective aspects of language acquisition. Through storytelling activities, students are not only exposed to language input but also actively involved in understanding meaning, interpreting information, and connecting language with real-life contexts.

Storytelling creates a learning environment that is more interactive and meaningful for young learners. Unlike conventional teaching methods that rely heavily on explanation and memorization, storytelling integrates language learning with imagination, narrative structure, and emotional engagement. As a result, students are able to process language more naturally and develop their listening comprehension gradually.

### ***Storytelling as a Contextual Approach in Language Learning***

The findings of this study indicate that storytelling helps students understand language in a contextual manner through structured narratives. This finding supports language learning theories which emphasize the importance of meaningful context in understanding language. When language is presented within a narrative structure, students can more easily understand the relationship between words, sentences, and overall meaning. Stories naturally provide meaningful contexts where vocabulary, sentence structures, and expressions are embedded within events and situations. This contextual exposure allows students to interpret meaning not only through individual words but also through the sequence of events occurring in the story. Consequently, students develop a deeper understanding of the language being used.

In the context of foreign language learning, storytelling allows students to process language input more naturally. Rather than focusing solely on grammatical rules or isolated vocabulary lists, students learn language through meaningful communication. While listening to stories, students try to recognize sounds, interpret vocabulary, and follow the development of the narrative. Furthermore, storytelling provides a rich linguistic environment where language is presented in authentic and meaningful forms. Students are exposed to natural patterns of language use, including expressions, sentence structures, and discourse markers. This exposure helps students gradually develop listening comprehension skills and supports their ability to interpret spoken messages in English.

Therefore, storytelling should not be viewed merely as a form of entertainment in the classroom but rather as an effective instructional strategy that facilitates meaningful language learning. By integrating language with narrative contexts, storytelling enables students to understand language more effectively and meaningfully.

### ***The Suitability of Storytelling for Elementary School Students' Characteristics***

Another important finding of this study is that storytelling aligns well with the developmental characteristics of elementary school students. According to the cognitive development theory proposed by Jean Piaget, children at the elementary school level are generally in the concrete operational stage, where they are able to think logically but still rely heavily on concrete experiences and observable situations. At this stage, children tend to understand concepts more easily when they are presented through concrete examples, visual representations, or narratives rather than abstract explanations. Storytelling provides such concrete contexts through characters, events, and settings that students can easily imagine and relate to. Stories often include simple conflicts, interesting characters, and clear sequences of events, which make them highly engaging for young learners. These elements stimulate students' imagination and encourage them to follow the narrative carefully. As students listen to stories, they mentally visualize the events taking place, which supports comprehension and strengthens their listening ability.

Elementary school students typically have a high level of curiosity and imagination. Storytelling taps into these characteristics by presenting narratives that stimulate curiosity and encourage active engagement. Students become interested in finding out what will happen next in the story, which motivates them to pay close attention to the language used. Moreover,

storytelling provides opportunities for students to connect new language with their prior experiences. When stories relate to familiar situations or everyday life, students are better able to understand the meaning of the language used. This connection between language and real-life experiences makes the learning process more meaningful and effective. Therefore, storytelling is considered a highly appropriate instructional approach for elementary school learners because it accommodates their developmental needs, learning styles, and cognitive abilities.

### ***Storytelling in Vocabulary Development and Language Structure Acquisition***

Another important finding of this study is the contribution of storytelling to students' vocabulary development and understanding of language structures. Vocabulary is a fundamental component of language proficiency, especially in listening comprehension. Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, students often struggle to understand spoken language. Storytelling introduces new vocabulary in a natural and meaningful context. Instead of memorizing vocabulary lists, students encounter new words within the storyline and interpret their meaning based on the situation described in the story. This contextual learning process allows students to infer meaning and understand how words are used in real communication.

Repeated exposure to vocabulary within stories also plays a crucial role in strengthening students' memory. When certain words or expressions appear repeatedly throughout the narrative, students gradually become familiar with them and begin to understand their meaning and usage. In addition to vocabulary acquisition, storytelling also helps students understand language structures. Through listening to stories, students are exposed to various sentence patterns, grammatical structures, and expressions commonly used in English. Although students may not consciously analyze the grammatical rules, they gradually internalize these patterns through repeated exposure.

This process aligns with natural language acquisition principles, where learners acquire language through meaningful input and repeated exposure. As students listen to more stories, they become more familiar with the rhythm, intonation, and structure of English sentences. Therefore, storytelling contributes not only to the development of listening skills but also to the broader development of students' language competence.

### ***The Affective Impact of Storytelling on Students' Learning Motivation***

In addition to cognitive and linguistic benefits, storytelling also has a significant impact on the affective dimension of language learning. The affective aspect includes students' motivation, interest, attitudes, and emotional engagement in the learning process. The findings show that storytelling can increase students' motivation to learn English because stories create an enjoyable and engaging learning atmosphere. When teachers deliver stories using expressive voices, gestures, and visual aids, students become more interested and attentive. Emotional involvement is another important factor that enhances learning. When students feel emotionally connected to the characters or events in the story, they become more engaged in the learning process. For example, students may feel curious, excited, or sympathetic toward certain characters. These emotional responses make the learning experience more memorable. Research in educational psychology suggests that emotionally meaningful learning experiences are more likely to be retained in long-term memory.

Therefore, storytelling can help students remember vocabulary, expressions, and story details more effectively. Furthermore, storytelling reduces students' anxiety in learning a foreign language. Traditional language learning methods sometimes create pressure or fear of making mistakes. In contrast, storytelling provides a relaxed and enjoyable environment where students can listen and participate without feeling stressed. As a result, storytelling contributes to creating a positive learning atmosphere that supports both emotional engagement and effective language learning.

### ***Theoretical and Practical Implications***

The findings of this study provide several important implications both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, this study supports the view that effective language learning requires meaningful context, active engagement, and learner-centered approaches. Storytelling integrates cognitive, linguistic, and affective aspects of learning simultaneously, making it a comprehensive instructional approach in language education. The findings also reinforce the idea that young learners benefit from language learning experiences that involve imagination, narrative structures, and meaningful contexts. Therefore, storytelling can be considered an important pedagogical strategy in teaching English to elementary school

students. From a practical perspective, the results of this study suggest that English teachers at the elementary school level can effectively use storytelling as a teaching strategy to improve students' listening skills. Teachers can enhance storytelling activities by incorporating various supporting media such as pictures, flashcards, puppets, storybooks, and digital storytelling platforms.

Teachers can design follow-up activities after storytelling sessions to reinforce students' comprehension and language skills. These activities may include retelling the story, answering comprehension questions, arranging story sequences, discussing moral values, or participating in language games related to the story. Such activities not only strengthen listening comprehension but also encourage students to develop other language skills such as speaking and reading. Therefore, storytelling can serve as a foundation for integrated language learning in elementary school classrooms. Overall, the findings suggest that storytelling is a highly effective and pedagogically valuable method for enhancing English listening skills among elementary school students. By combining meaningful language input, engaging narratives, and emotional involvement, storytelling provides a holistic learning experience that supports students' language development in multiple dimensions.

## 5. Conclusion

Storytelling can be considered a valuable teaching approach to enhance students' English listening abilities. Through structured and contextual storytelling, students are able to understand spoken information more easily because language is presented within meaningful sequences of events. The use of storytelling also contributes to the improvement of students' vocabulary acquisition, attention and concentration during the learning process, and their motivation to actively participate in classroom activities. Stories delivered expressively and supported by visual media such as pictures, story cards, or hand puppets can create a more engaging and enjoyable learning atmosphere, enabling students to focus better during listening activities.

The effectiveness of storytelling is also closely related to the developmental characteristics of elementary school students, who tend to learn more effectively through concrete, contextual, and imaginative experiences. Stories that include characters, events, and simple conflicts help students understand language naturally and make it easier for them to connect the meaning of words and sentences with the situations presented in the narrative. Therefore, storytelling not only improves students' ability to comprehend spoken language but also enriches vocabulary and strengthens their understanding of language structures. In terms of implications, storytelling can serve as an alternative instructional strategy for teachers to develop English listening skills among elementary school students. The systematic implementation of storytelling through the stages of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening can help students follow the learning process more effectively while reinforcing their comprehension of the story content.

However, this study has limitations because it is based on literature analysis and therefore does not directly represent the real classroom implementation of storytelling. For this reason, future studies are recommended to conduct empirical or experimental research in actual classroom settings to further examine the effectiveness of the storytelling method in improving students' listening skills. In addition, further research may explore the use of digital media or technology in storytelling activities to support more innovative and interactive English learning in elementary schools.

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