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STORYTELLING TO ENHANCE LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

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DEDICATION

To my cherished family, I want to take a moment to recognize Alejandro, my husband, for your unwavering support and encouragement—I could not have done it without you! How could I forget Alice, my dear daughter, whose laughter and love each day remind me of why I want to do better? To my parents, for all your sacrifices, for your wisdom, and for your respect and belief in my dreams. To my brother, for your unwavering, steady presence in the background with quiet strength and loving concern. This accomplishment does not belong to me alone; it belongs to you as well; it is a result of the love, patience, and belief you have shown me. Thank you for being by my side step by step.

Gabriela Espinel



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Gabriela Espinel Ramos



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RESUMEN

Esta investigación examinó el impacto del uso del *storytelling* como estrategia pedagógica para mejorar la comprensión auditiva en estudiantes de sexto grado de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en la Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina durante el año lectivo 2024–2025. Los beneficiarios directos fueron los 29 estudiantes del sexto grado, quienes participaron activamente a lo largo de toda la intervención. Para obtener una visión integral del progreso de los aprendices, la investigadora empleó un enfoque metodológico mixto que combinó instrumentos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Por un lado, se utilizaron evaluaciones de comprensión auditiva basadas en los estándares de Cambridge Young Learners para medir el desempeño objetivo de los estudiantes antes y después de la aplicación de la estrategia. Por otro lado, un diario de aula permitió documentar observaciones detalladas sobre la participación, motivación, actitudes y dificultades que surgieron durante el proceso. La intervención se desarrolló en tres etapas progresivas, cada una diseñada cuidadosamente para disminuir gradualmente el apoyo visual ofrecido a los estudiantes y fomentar una mayor dependencia del input auditivo. A medida que avanzaban por las fases, los estudiantes escuchaban relatos más extensos y complejos, desarrollando habilidades como la inferencia, la identificación de ideas principales y la comprensión global. Los resultados sugieren que el *storytelling* puede ser una herramienta efectiva para fortalecer la comprensión auditiva y promover una experiencia de aprendizaje más motivadora y significativa.

Palabras clave: *storytelling*, comprensión auditiva, EFL.





ABSTRACT

This research investigated the impact of storytelling as a pedagogical strategy to strengthen listening comprehension among sixth-grade EFL learners at Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina during the 2024–2025 academic year. The study focused on 29 sixth-grade students who directly benefited from the implementation of this strategy. A mixed-methods approach was employed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of learners' progress. Quantitative data were collected from Cambridge Young Learners listening assessments, which provided measurable evidence of students' improvement in identifying key information, recognizing vocabulary in context, and understanding short narratives. Complementing this, qualitative data were derived from a classroom journal maintained throughout the intervention, offering insights into students' engagement, challenges, and evolving attitudes toward listening activities. The intervention itself was organized into three progressive stages, each intentionally designed to reduce the amount of visual scaffolding and encourage students to depend increasingly on auditory cues. In the initial stage, storytelling was supported with visual aids, gestures, and illustrations to build confidence and comprehension. In the second stage, visual support was limited, prompting students to develop more attentive listening habits. Finally, the third stage relied solely on oral storytelling, fostering autonomous listening, sustained attention, and deeper comprehension of spoken English.

Keywords: storytelling, listening comprehension, EFL learners





ÍNDICE GENERAL

INTRODUCTION.....	16
CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	21
1.1 Independent Variable	23
1.2 Dependent Variable	27
1.3 Historical and Evolutionary Background	29
1.3.1 Listening Comprehension in EFL.....	29
1.3.2 Storytelling in Language Learning	29
1.4 Sociocultural Theory	30
1.5 Input Hypothesis	30
1.6 Information Processing Theory	31
CHAPTER II - METHODOLOGY.....	36
2.1 Delimitation of the Population, sample and sampling.	38
2.2 Research Context	39
2.3 Research stages	39
2.4 Operationalization Matrix	40
2.5 Instruments:	42
2.5.1 Pre-test (diagnostic) and Posttest (after the process)	42
2.5.2 Research Journal.....	43
2.5.3 Questionnaire	44
2.6 Ethical Considerations	45
CHAPTER III – PROPOSAL PRESENTATION.....	47
3.1 Proposal Modeling	47
3.1.1 General Objective	47
3.1.2 Specific Objectives	47
3.1.3 Characteristics of the Proposal.....	48
3.1.4 Key Ideas	48
3.1.5 Requirements	49
3.1.6 Demand	49
3.1.7 Conditions	49
3.1.8 Research Journal.....	60





UNIVERSIDAD
BOLIVARIANA
DEL ECUADOR

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

3.1.9 Questionnaire	62
CONCLUSIONS	63
REFERENCES.....	66
ANEXOS	73



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UNIVERSIDAD
BOLIVARIANA
DEL ECUADOR

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

ÍNDICE DE TABLAS

Table 1 Sample population	38
Table 2 Research stages	39
Table 3 Operationalization Matrix	40



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ÍNDICE DE FIGURAS

Figure 1 Pre test results	50
Figure 2 Post test results	51
Figure 3: Students' interest in storytelling activities.....	53
Figure 4 Activities format.....	54
Figure 5 Storytelling improvement	54
Figure 6 frequency of understanding the main idea	55
Figure 7 Vocabulary understanding	56
Figure 8 Level of confidence	57
Figure 9 Comfort in class discussion.....	58
Figure 10 Interest in using storytelling again.....	58
Figure 11 Use of storytelling in other skills.....	59
Figure 12 Listening comprehension improvement	60





UNIVERSIDAD
BOLIVARIANA
DEL ECUADOR

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

ÍNDICE DE ANEXOS

Annex 1 Instrument validation letter	73
Annex 2 Certificate of instruments validation 1	74
Annex 3 Certificate of instruments validation 2	74
Annex 4 Pre test activities	74
Annex 5 Questionnaire for listening comprehension	74
Annex 6 Journal entry	74



La Universidad para todos





INTRODUCTION

Storytelling is often used as a tool to illustrate concepts, provoke emotions, and enhance understanding in a more memorable and meaningful way. Through storytelling, students are exposed to natural rhythms, intonations, and the flow of spoken language, helping them develop an ear for authentic English, introducing them to idioms that are used in real-life situations, things that would not be possible with just the formal grammar of the course books.

Storytelling is a highly effective method for enhancing listening comprehension, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Both traditional and digital storytelling significantly improve students' ability to understand spoken English, increase motivation, and make learning more enjoyable.

When teaching listening, storytelling is one of the methods teachers can use as it is assumed to promote skills such as listening and speaking (Bala, 2015). It is not surprising that stories are the primary way that people pass on or seek information—according to some literacy experts, up to seventy percent of the world's population depend upon oral communication as their primary source (Franklin, 2010).

Listening is a crucial part of a language, not just for communication but for learning a new language. Listening plays a very important role in all effective communication; without this ability, messages can be inaccurately received and interpreted leading to misunderstandings. Students acquire new information and are able to consolidate what they already know through listening to stories told by their teachers, if suitable to their language level (Santos, 2018).

Teaching vocabulary to primary school learners is not the same as teaching vocabulary to adults (Yılmaz & Yavuz, 2015). According to Rost (2011), listening plays a fundamental role in first





language acquisition and functions similarly in the process of learning a foreign language. It is the foundation for other language skills—learners must first develop the ability to listen and understand sounds, vocabulary, and sentence structures before they can effectively speak, read, or write. In a later work, Rost (2013) emphasizes that listening is a universally relevant skill and a vital part of spoken language processing. He explains that spoken communication cannot exist without listening, as it is deeply connected to various fields of study and personal development.

Listening comprehension is the dominant influence on reading comprehension, and deficient listening comprehension skills contribute to a growing number of children failing to develop adequate reading comprehension skills. Language serves as a system of communication that enables individuals to share ideas, beliefs, and viewpoints. People communicate their thoughts in various ways, and language consists of four key skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Of these, listening is particularly significant, as it allows individuals to comprehend spoken information. It plays a vital role in everyday interactions and communication (Adnan, 2023).

According to Patterson (2023) a story is far more than a sequence of facts; it is structured with a beginning, middle, and end, enriched by sensory details and emotional depth. Through authentic storytelling, the speaker becomes more transparent, allowing for deeper connection and transformation in the audience. Unlike mere lists of accomplishments, stories help us make sense of facts and experiences, providing context and coherence to what we learn.

After a diagnostic test based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) was applied to 6th-grade students, the researcher concluded that they require greater exposure to the language in a natural context. Learning through storytelling can support this, as it encourages the acquisition of listening skills in a meaningful way. As Rost (2011) explains, materials for teaching





listening should include sources of audio and video input, spoken interaction opportunities, and structured tasks to develop comprehension and learning strategies. These resources are readily available from educational publishers and online platforms.

Based on the diagnostic results, the students are currently at an A1 proficiency level according to the CEFR. This proposal aims to enhance their listening and comprehension abilities through authentic situations and real-life contexts. According to Dujmović (2006), storytelling remains a foundational teaching method; while technology has introduced new forms of storytelling, the power of live oral storytelling endures as a central component of effective teaching.

Listening comprehension is a fundamental skill that must be developed efficiently. However, as Ecuador is a non-English-speaking country, students lack daily exposure to the language. Therefore, this research explores whether the implementation of storytelling in the classroom can benefit 6th-grade students at Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina in understanding spoken English.

This study aligns with the second research line of the Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador: innovation and applied technologies. It also supports the research themes of the master's program *Maestría en Pedagogía del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera*, particularly the use of ICT and educational management to enhance learning processes.

Listening is an active process in which the listener decodes incoming information into meaningful chunks. To do this effectively, specific skills must be developed:

1. Predicting content: Students recall previous knowledge to hypothesize about the type, purpose, or scope of a story. Jiang (2009) emphasizes that prediction depends heavily on





prior knowledge and awareness of the speaker's intent.

2. Listening for gist: This involves understanding the general idea without needing to understand every word. Campos (2024) notes that learners rely on intonation, keywords, and clues to infer meaning.
3. Listening for detail: According to Campos (2024), this type of listening requires focused attention to extract specific information, as the relevant details may not be immediately apparent.

The present study seeks to assess the benefits of using storytelling with 6th-grade students. The specific objectives are: (1) to define students' current proficiency level via a pretest, (2) to identify effective strategies for implementing storytelling, and (3) to evaluate students' progress through listening comprehension tasks.

As Serrat (2008) argues, storytelling conveys values, experiences, and knowledge in ways that provoke emotional engagement and deep understanding. Moreover, Nadig (2013) states that listening comprehension encompasses the recognition of speech sounds, syntax, prosody, and contextual inferences—skills enhanced through meaningful, story-based input.

A mixed-method research approach was selected, combining qualitative and quantitative strategies. This method is effective for complex research questions (Dovetail Editorial Team, 2023). As Bhandari (2024a, 2024b) explains, qualitative research gathers in-depth non-numerical data, while quantitative research analyzes numerical data to identify trends and test hypotheses.

A diagnostic listening test was administered at the start of the academic year using a printed test and audio played via a computer and speaker. It revealed that students struggle with listening





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due to phonological interference from Spanish. Storytelling provides an opportunity for students to naturally improve their pronunciation, sound recognition, and spoken language comprehension.

In Chapter I, the researcher explores previous studies of language learning and teaching methods focusing on listening development through storytelling, in Chapter II the diagnostic process is included along with the scope of the study, description, and justification of the instruments. Finally, in chapter III all collected data and the respective analysis are presented through charts, graphics and tables showing the progress made by the students.



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CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The process of listening comprehension in second language acquisition has evolved significantly over the past decades. Traditionally, listening was considered a passive skill, with limited emphasis in language classrooms. Earlier teaching methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method primarily focused on reading and writing, leaving listening underdeveloped (Brown, 2007).

It was not until the rise of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in the 1970s that listening gained proper recognition as an active and essential skill (Richards, 2008). CLT emphasized authentic communication, which necessitated real-world listening practice, moving away from purely artificial language exercises.

Despite these advances, listening remains one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners, especially in contexts like Ecuador where English is taught as a foreign language and students have limited exposure to real-life spoken English outside the classroom (Mantilla-Cabrera, Narváez-Vilema, & Carrillo-Rodríguez, 2020). The limited exposure to authentic input hinders the natural acquisition of phonetic patterns, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Taking into account how important English learning worldwide is, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (2014) established new regulations for teaching English as a compulsory subject in the curriculum of public and private schools starting in 2016. In addition, technology plays an important role in the educational field; hence, it is indispensable to conduct research into the quality of English language teaching at this level, especially into the use of technological tools to be applied in the classroom (Solano, Cabrera, Ulehlova, & Espinoza, 2017).

In response to these challenges, educators have sought meaningful and context-rich teaching





strategies that can enhance listening comprehension. One such approach is the integration of storytelling in language teaching, which has been part of oral traditions for thousands of years (Widrich, 2012). Storytelling has been used for centuries as a way to transmit cultural knowledge, values, and language across generations.

Modern research emphasizes storytelling's potential to improve listening skills, increase vocabulary retention, and reduce learner anxiety (Lucarevski, 2016; Isbell et al., 2004). In EFL contexts, storytelling is particularly valuable because it provides authentic, meaningful, and comprehensible input, even when learners have limited access to native speakers (Ghosn, 2002).

Moreover, the integration of multimedia storytelling has gained attention in the 21st century as an innovative way to further support learners. Digital storytelling, which combines oral narration with visuals and audio, helps students process information through multiple sensory channels, enhancing memory and comprehension (Mayer, 2009).

In Ecuadorian schools, however, the use of storytelling—whether traditional or digital—has not yet been widely implemented as a strategy for developing listening comprehension. Given the limited opportunities for real-life English interaction, storytelling emerges as an accessible, motivating, and culturally adaptable method to support students in developing this critical skill.

The present research addresses this gap by exploring the benefits of storytelling in enhancing listening comprehension among sixth-grade EFL students in Ecuador. By focusing on storytelling, this study aligns with international trends in communicative and learner-centered methodologies while addressing local educational needs.





1.1 Independent Variable

Storytelling is a universal cultural practice and is often regarded as the oldest method of teaching. It enables the transmission of cultural knowledge across generations. Widrich (2012) suggests that storytelling dates back approximately 27,000 years, citing cave paintings as early evidence. Schank and Abelson (1995) argue that much of human understanding is derived from past experiences and that stories help people make sense of new information through personal relevance. Cameron (2001) claims that storytelling is not just a verbal activity, however, the audience should be engaged as well.

Narration serves not only as a means of conveying information but also as a mechanism for shaping one's understanding of the world. According to Wiklund-Gustin (2010), narrating experiences fosters self-reflection and contributes to the creation of personal meaning by interpreting and transforming lived events.

The structure of a narrative—including elements such as plot, chronology, and pacing—plays a vital role in maintaining audience engagement. Narratives may follow various formats, such as linear, non-linear, or circular (Blue Rose One, 2022). Understanding these structures helps storytellers develop coherent and compelling content.

Narrative structure refers to how a story is organized and presented to an audience. It encompasses components like plot, characters, setting, and theme, and includes literary devices used by the author. The structure typically follows a sequence of beginning, middle, and end and may vary depending on the story's genre (StudySmarter, 2025).

Student engagement encompasses general behaviors such as school attendance and participation





in school activities. Within lessons, engagement is typically analyzed in terms of emotional, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020).

Phonemic awareness is essential for reading in alphabetic languages, as it connects sounds (phonemes) to letters. Without this awareness, phonics instruction is ineffective (Yilmaz, 2014). English is a stress-timed language, meaning that stress plays a critical role in pronunciation. Stressing the appropriate syllables—by using louder volume, longer duration, and higher pitch—improves intelligibility and naturalness (Geeslin, 2013; Kreidler, 2004).

Vocabulary is fundamental to second language acquisition. As cited in Zarfsah and Yeganehpour, Tyler highlights vocabulary as central to both comprehension and production. Roediger and McDermott (2018) emphasize that while children are natural learners, academic concepts can be challenging due to their complexity and counterintuitive nature.

Many ESL/EFL learners are unaware of the strategies available for vocabulary acquisition. Teachers play a critical role in guiding students toward effective methods (Saeidi & Amin, 2006).

Listening is a foundational skill in language learning. Though all four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—are essential, listening is the first to develop and supports overall language proficiency. It enables learners to acquire rhythm, intonation, stress patterns, and pronunciation more effectively (Renukadevi, 2014).

Storytelling has long been recognized as a potent pedagogical tool in language education. Its efficacy lies in its ability to contextualize vocabulary, foster engagement, and enhance retention. For instance, Gao, Wang, and Lee (2023) conducted a study comparing three storytelling approaches—storytelling alone, storytelling with word focus, and storytelling with activities—on vocabulary acquisition among young EFL learners. They found that storytelling alone yielded the most





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significant vocabulary gains, suggesting that the narrative context itself is a powerful vehicle for language learning.

Further supporting this, Lucarevski (2016) reviewed literature indicating that storytelling not only improves language skills across listening, speaking, reading, and writing but also surpasses traditional teaching methods in effectiveness. The immersive and engaging nature of stories captivates learners, making the language input more memorable and meaningful.

Digital storytelling, an evolution of traditional methods, incorporates multimedia elements to further enhance language learning. Hava (2019) explored its impact on student motivation and satisfaction in EFL contexts, revealing that digital storytelling significantly boosts learners' self-confidence and engagement. Similarly, Abdolmanafi-Rokni and Qarajeh (2014) demonstrated that digital storytelling positively affects oral performance, providing learners with opportunities to practice speaking in a structured yet creative format.

In Ecuador, English is taught as a foreign language, and despite national efforts to improve English proficiency among students, listening comprehension remains one of the most challenging skills to develop at the elementary level (Mantilla-Cabrera, Narváez-Vilema, & Carrillo-Rodríguez, 2020). According to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (2016), the English curriculum emphasizes the development of communicative skills; however, there is a clear gap between curriculum expectations and actual classroom practice, particularly in listening comprehension.

Many Ecuadorian students, especially those attending private schools like Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina, receive limited exposure to authentic English listening input. Teachers often rely on traditional methods such as textbook-based instruction, isolated vocabulary lists, and grammar drills, which do not offer students sufficient opportunities to develop effective listening



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strategies (Vera & Arévalo, 2020). Additionally, the dominance of the Spanish language both inside and outside the classroom restricts students' opportunities to encounter real-life spoken English.

Diagnostic evaluations applied in the 6th grade at Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina during the 2024–2025 academic year confirmed that most students possess basic listening abilities corresponding to an A1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). While they are able to recognize familiar words and phrases, they struggle with listening for detail, following instructions, and distinguishing English pronunciation from Spanish phonetic patterns. This challenge aligns with findings from previous studies in Ecuador, where learners demonstrated limited comprehension of spoken English due to a lack of exposure and insufficient listening practice in meaningful contexts (González et al., 2017).

Furthermore, teachers in Ecuadorian primary schools often prioritize reading and writing skills over listening and speaking, which limits students' holistic language development (González & Vargas, 2021). The lack of varied and interactive listening materials also contributes to this issue, as traditional classroom resources frequently fail to engage students or simulate real-life communication scenarios.

Given this situation, it is essential to incorporate innovative and culturally adaptable strategies such as storytelling, which can provide contextualized, engaging, and multimodal listening experiences. Storytelling allows students to hear language in meaningful contexts, promoting vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation accuracy, and listening for comprehension. Despite its recognized benefits worldwide, storytelling remains underutilized in Ecuadorian classrooms, particularly in the primary education sector (Vera & Arévalo, 2020).

This research seeks to address this local educational gap by implementing storytelling as a



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pedagogical strategy to improve listening comprehension in sixth-grade students at Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina, offering an alternative to traditional methods and responding to the specific needs identified through diagnostic assessments.

1.2 Dependent Variable

Listening comprehension is often considered the most challenging language skill to master and thus requires purposeful instruction. Agwuocha (2024) notes that listening is central not only to English language acquisition but also to broader academic and professional success. Walker (2014) agrees that with the acoustics of the spoken language often varying dramatically to the form of the written language, the identification of the words that constitute the oral discourse could prove to be problematic for the student.

Language learners use various strategies to process auditory input. According to Minh Trang (2020), listeners rely on background knowledge and relevance to interpret messages. Familiar or personally meaningful content improves comprehension, highlighting listening as a purposeful, cognitive process. When EFL students have good listening comprehension skills, it assists them in the teaching-learning process to acquire language (Jemadi, Halum, & Sujosephine, 2022)

Nushi and Orouji (2020) investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of listening difficulties and emphasized that when compared with other language skills, listening has its own distinctive features. For instance, although both reading and listening are receptive skills as opposed to productive skills of writing and speaking, there are important differences between the two. When reading, learners can go over the written text as many times as they wish but they cannot do the same with the oral text as listening happens in real time (Nunan, 2015).



Strong listening skills are also key to accurate oral production. Mantilla-Cabrera, Narváez-Vilema, and Carrillo-Rodríguez (2020) emphasize that effective listening supports pronunciation and intelligibility, making it crucial for language proficiency.

Various instructional methods can support listening development. According to Suhud and Apsari (2018), interpersonal activities such as storytelling and mock interviews, along with group activities, offer effective and low-anxiety ways for learners to build listening skills.

Pronunciation is a core component of spoken language. Many EFL learners underestimate its importance compared to grammar or vocabulary. However, effective pronunciation is essential for comprehensible speech (Srakaew, n.d.). As Rost (2011) explains, listening requires more than decoding; it involves activating cognitive resources and interpreting meaning beyond the linguistic level.

Listening comprehension is a foundational skill in language acquisition, yet it often presents challenges for learners. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) identified that many students struggle with listening due to factors such as unfamiliar accents, rapid speech, and limited vocabulary. They emphasized the need for explicit instruction in listening strategies to mitigate these difficulties.

Fung and Macaro (2021) investigated the relationship between linguistic knowledge and strategy use in listening comprehension. Their findings suggest that learners who actively employ listening strategies—such as predicting content, inferring meaning, and monitoring comprehension—achieve better understanding of spoken language. This underscores the importance of teaching metacognitive strategies alongside language content.

Moreover, Hadijah and Shalawati (2018) conducted a classroom action research study focusing on enhancing listening comprehension through strategy instruction. They reported that students



showed marked improvement in listening tasks after being taught specific strategies, highlighting the effectiveness of this approach in real classroom settings.

1.3 Historical and Evolutionary Background

1.3.1 Listening Comprehension in EFL

Historically, listening comprehension was often marginalized in second language (L2) instruction, regarded as a passive skill that learners would acquire naturally over time. However, this perspective began to shift in the 1970s with the rise of communicative language teaching, which emphasized the importance of authentic listening experiences in language acquisition (Babae Bormanaki, 2017).

Over the decades, methodological approaches to listening evolved from language-centered to learner-centered and eventually to learning-centered methodologies. These changes reflect a growing recognition of listening as a dynamic, active process essential to communication (Babae Bormanaki, 2017).

Recent studies further support the idea that listening involves more than decoding sounds—it is a complex cognitive task requiring learners to make meaning using contextual and linguistic cues. As Nazarieh and Razmi (2022) explain, listening comprehension engages memory, inference, and prediction, and is highly dependent on a learner's background knowledge and exposure to the language.

1.3.2 Storytelling in Language Learning

Storytelling has long been a fundamental part of human communication and education. In language education, it offers more than just entertainment—it creates a meaningful and context-rich input that supports vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, grammar awareness, and, most importantly,





listening comprehension (Lucarevschi, 2016).

Lucarevschi's (2016) literature review highlights how storytelling promotes motivation, helps reduce anxiety, and fosters social interaction in EFL contexts. These affective and interactive aspects enhance students' overall ability to comprehend spoken language. In fact, storytelling's role in social development and cultural transmission further underscores its value as a tool for holistic language learning.

This study is grounded in three main theoretical perspectives:

1.4 Sociocultural Theory

According to Vygotsky (1978), learning develops through interaction and collaboration within a learner's Zone of Proximal Development. In storytelling contexts, teachers and peers scaffold understanding by modeling pronunciation, clarifying unfamiliar vocabulary, and engaging in shared meaning-making. Bruner (1986) expanded this idea with the Language Acquisition Support System (LASS), which highlights how interactive storytelling between instructors and learners fosters linguistic and cognitive development.

Furthermore, narrative theorists argue that stories inherently promote scaffolded learning. Zarei and Salimi (2012) found that EFL students who participated in storytelling sessions—incorporating peer or teacher explanations—significantly improved their listening comprehension compared to those receiving decontextualized audio input.

1.5 Input Hypothesis

Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of $i+1$ —comprehensible input that's slightly above a learner's current level. Storytelling naturally delivers this level of input by





embedding new vocabulary within familiar narrative structures. Teachers can enhance this effect by adjusting language complexity and using contextual aids like gestures or images. Jalongo (2004) reported that such multimodal storytelling enriched vocabulary development and listening comprehension among young language learners.

1.6 Information Processing Theory

Listening, from this perspective, is an active mental process involving decoding, comprehension, and memory. Storytelling naturally activates all these mental functions—requiring learners to pay attention, process, visualize, and recall narrative elements, which ultimately improves listening skills (Nazarieh & Razmi, 2022).

While many researchers support storytelling as a pedagogical strategy, others stress the importance of combining it with explicit instruction. Ellis and Brewster (2014) note that storytelling should be accompanied by structured follow-up tasks to reinforce language learning outcomes.

In contrast, Lucarevschi (2016) presents storytelling as effective on its own, especially in enhancing listening comprehension, due to its emotional engagement and relevance to learners' experiences. However, she also calls for further empirical research to understand the long-term impact of storytelling on various language skills and to identify potential drawbacks.

Based on the reviewed literature, this research supports the use of storytelling as a powerful and engaging strategy to enhance listening comprehension in EFL contexts. Storytelling addresses both the cognitive and affective dimensions of language learning. It provides authentic language input while creating a safe and motivating environment that supports active engagement with spoken language. This study proposes that integrating storytelling into EFL lessons not only improves listening comprehension but also encourages language learners to develop critical thinking, cultural awareness,





and communicative competence.

Paivio's (1991) Dual Coding Theory explains how verbal and visual information processed together enhances memory and comprehension. When storytelling is presented with illustrations or multimedia slides, learners engage both visual and auditory channels, improving their listening comprehension.

Sweller's (2011) Cognitive Load Theory also underlines the importance of reducing extraneous cognitive demands during instruction. Storytelling presents information in a structured and engaging format, supporting working memory efficiency and increasing attention span.

Narrative pedagogy refers to the intentional use of storytelling as a method of teaching that promotes critical thinking, empathy, and engagement. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), narratives shape both the content and process of learning, especially when students identify with the story's characters and plot. "Narrative-based learning enhances learner engagement and helps to contextualize abstract language concepts within familiar, emotionally resonant frameworks" (Chou, 2018, p. 65). This approach supports the view that storytelling not only facilitates linguistic input but also encourages personal meaning-making.

Listening is a complex cognitive process that involves decoding, interpreting, and constructing meaning from spoken input (Field, 2008). In second language learning, listening comprehension is essential for developing phonological awareness, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative competence.

"Listening, especially in young learners, is the first skill to emerge and is foundational to the development of speaking and reading abilities" (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012, p. 5). When embedded in storytelling, listening becomes more than a passive skill—it becomes a dynamic interaction between





the learner and the text, supported by context, imagery, and motivation.

This study assumes that storytelling is not merely a didactic tool but a transformative learning experience. It connects language learning to emotional, cultural, and social dimensions. While some studies prioritize grammar-based instruction, this research supports a communicative and constructivist approach where comprehension precedes production, especially in early EFL education.

Furthermore, while traditional listening activities often focus on drills and isolated comprehension questions, this study proposes that narrative input provides context-rich, meaningful exposure to language, enhancing both the motivation and linguistic capacity of learners.

This research is grounded in the socio-constructivist theory of learning, which posits that knowledge is actively constructed by learners through interaction with their environment and others. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, learning occurs first on the social level and then is internalized individually. Vygotsky emphasized the importance of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding, where learners are supported by more knowledgeable peers or instructors to achieve tasks they cannot accomplish alone (Vygotsky, 1978).

In the context of language acquisition, the socio-constructivist perspective highlights the role of meaningful input and interaction in developing listening comprehension. Bruner (1986) extended Vygotsky's ideas by introducing the concept of the Language Acquisition Support System (LASS), emphasizing the interactive process between adult and child as a foundation for language development.

Storytelling aligns well with this framework as it offers a rich context for authentic language use, emotional engagement, and social interaction. Stories provide learners with comprehensible input that is contextualized and culturally embedded, making it easier to acquire vocabulary, grammar, and





pronunciation patterns in a meaningful way (Isbell et al., 2004; Jalongo, 2004).

Moreover, Krashen's Input Hypothesis reinforces this approach by stating that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to input slightly above their current proficiency level, known as $i+1$. Storytelling facilitates this exposure by presenting language in a natural, engaging format that promotes understanding through context and visuals (Krashen, 1982).

In terms of listening comprehension, Anderson's (1995) model of listening processing—comprising perceptual, parsing, and utilization phases—explains how learners process and make sense of oral input. Storytelling supports all three phases by capturing attention, organizing input through narrative structure, and connecting information to prior knowledge, thereby fostering deeper comprehension (Field, 2008).

From a constructivist viewpoint, learners are not passive recipients of information; instead, they construct understanding by integrating new information with prior knowledge. This is particularly effective in storytelling, where students relate narratives to their own experiences, which enhances engagement, critical thinking, and memory retention (Zarei & Salimi, 2012).

In summary, this theoretical-conceptual framework justifies the use of storytelling as a pedagogical tool to enhance listening comprehension, grounded in Vygotsky's socio-constructivist theory, Krashen's input hypothesis, and Anderson's listening model. It supports the idea that interactive, contextualized, and emotionally engaging methods—such as storytelling—create favorable conditions for second language acquisition, especially in young learners.

As Chang, Millett, and Renandya (2019) emphasize although second language listening has become a rather active area of research in the past ten years, some topics such as listening fluency development and extensive listening (EL) have not received much attention. In EFL learning studies,





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listening comprehension, and fluency learning are interconnected. If you have a strong listening comprehension skill, you will have reading and speaking fluency skills and vice versa. A combination of extensive listening practice and technology will likely enhance both parts of fluency, leading to improved overall fluency.



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CHAPTER II - METHODOLOGY

For this investigation, a mixed methods research approach was selected. This approach has become increasingly popular, as it allows for a deeper exploration of research questions by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. Mixed methods research enables researchers to address complex inquiries that may not be adequately answered by either qualitative or quantitative methods alone (Dovetail Editorial Team, 2023).

Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It is often used in the humanities and social sciences—such as anthropology, sociology, education, and history—to gather in-depth insights or to generate new ideas (Bhandari, 2024).

Quantitative research, on the other hand, involves the collection and analysis of numerical data. This method is used to identify patterns, test relationships, and make predictions that can be generalized to larger populations. It is commonly employed in both the natural and social sciences, including biology, psychology, economics, and marketing (Bhandari, 2024).

According to Tuovila (2004), sampling is a process in statistical analysis in which researchers select a predetermined number of observations from a larger population. This approach enables researchers to study a broad group by analyzing a smaller, representative subset. The choice of sampling method depends on the type of research being conducted and may include techniques such as simple random sampling or systematic sampling.

For this research project, which explores the use of storytelling to enhance listening comprehension skills, a sample of 29 students was selected from a total population of 350 students in the institution. The participants were chosen based on the following criteria:





1. Age group: The selected students are between 10 and 11 years old, aligning with the developmental stage relevant to the study.
2. Same institution: All participants attend the same school, ensuring consistency in their educational environment.
3. Availability: The students have sufficient time to participate in the study without significant disruptions to their regular academic activities.
4. Identical schedule: Since all students follow the same timetable, external variables such as different learning conditions or teacher influences are minimized.
5. Proficiency level: All participants have an A1 level of English proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), making them an appropriate sample for evaluating storytelling as a strategy to improve listening comprehension.

As Kamper (2020) states the basic concept of generalizability is simple: the results of a study are generalizable when they can be applied (are useful for informing a clinical decision) to patients who present for care. Generalizability is the coalface of evidence-based practice, where research evidence influences patient management.

On the other hand, Linton (2020) claims that in the social sciences invoking generalizability is more problematic as it is often based on assessment of a mainstream population, but may not apply to groups outside of the mainstream. This is a significant challenge to developing appropriate policy and interventions suitable for other groups.

When considering the generalizability of the study, certain limitations arise due to the social sciences nature of the research. Unlike natural sciences, where variables can be strictly controlled,





studies in language learning and education are often influenced by contextual factors such as teaching methods, institutional policies, and learner motivation. Therefore, while the results may provide valuable insights into how storytelling enhances listening comprehension for A1-level students in this specific setting, they may not be fully applicable to different age groups, proficiency levels, or educational contexts without further investigation.

2.1 Delimitation of the Population, sample and sampling.

The population at Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina, located in Ibarra, consisted on 340 students. For this study the researcher selected a sample of 29 students. Sampling is a process in statistical analysis in which researchers take a predetermined number of observations from a larger population. It allows researchers to conduct studies about a large group by using a small portion of the population. The sampling method depends on the type of analysis being performed, but it may include simple random sampling or systematic sampling. (Tuovila, 2024). This sample was selected because 1) Their ages fluctuate between 10 to 11 years old. 2) All the learners go to the same school 3) Students have time to participate in this study 4) All of them share the same schedule. 5) They are an A1 level of proficiency according to the CEFR.

Table #1

Sample Population

Table 1 Sample population

Participants	Sample Population	Percentage
Female	14	49%
Male	15	51%
Total	29	100%





Source: the author

2.2 Research Context

This proposal focuses on enhancing the listening comprehension skills of 6th-grade students at Unidad Educativa Particular “La Colina”, a private institution in Ibarra-Imbabura, Ecuador. The 29 participants, aged 10 to 11, possess an A1 proficiency level according to the CEFR. Despite their strong vocabulary, diagnostic tests revealed that these learners struggle with listening for detail and recognizing word sounds due to interference from their mother tongue, Spanish. Through the integration of storytelling and the use of technological resources such as computers, speakers, and projectors, this project aims to create an engaging and meaningful learning experience. By improving listening comprehension, students will gain skills essential for real-life communication, fostering their confidence and proficiency in English.

2.3 Research stages

Table 2 Research stages

Research Stage			
Delimitation of the problem.	Define the object of the study and the methodology	Review of previous information and researchers.	Researcher and Tutor
Literature Review	Define the Theoretical Framework	Explore bibliographic information.	Researcher
Selection of instruments	Search and design appropriate instruments	Select a pre test, post test, create a research journal, elaborate a questionnaire.	Researcher Expert to validate the instruments.





Application of instruments	Apply the instruments to gather information	Apply all the instruments at an adequate time.	Researcher
Data Analysis	Create a report about the student's situation	Statistical Analysis of the obtained data to infer conclusions.	Researcher
Final Report	Gather the results of the investigation	Create a final Report with the data to finally write conclusions and recommendations.	Researcher

Source: the author

2.4 Operationalization Matrix

Table 3 Operationalization Matrix

Independent variable.	Conceptual Definition	Dimensions	Indicators	Scales
Storytelling	Storytelling is the vivid description of ideas, beliefs, personal experiences, and life-lessons through stories or narratives that evoke powerful emotions and insights. (Serrat, Knowledge Solutions,	Narrative Structure Engagement	Identification of beginning, middle, and end Student participation and motivation	Low (Unable to identify structure) – High (Fully identifies structure)





2017)

Comprehension

Ability to recall

and summarize

Pronunciation

Accuracy in

awareness

word stress and

intonation

Vocabulary

Use of new

development

words in

context

Listening skills

Understanding

key ideas from

stories.

Dependent variable.	Conceptual Definition	Dimensions	Indicators	Scales
Listening Comprehension	Listening is a very complicated process as it requires students to engage in the process of multi-tasking. When performing academic listening, university students have to	Understanding Pronunciation	Identification of main ideas and details. Recognition of correct Word	Low (Unable to identify structure) – High (Fully identifies structure)





discriminate sound to		sounds and
make meaning from		patterns
spoken messages. In	Fluency	Response time
order to build speech		and coherence
recognition of similar		in spoken
sounds (Nguyen, 2020)		responses
	Interpretation	Ability to
		infer meaning
		from context.
	Retention	Recall of
		information
		after listening.

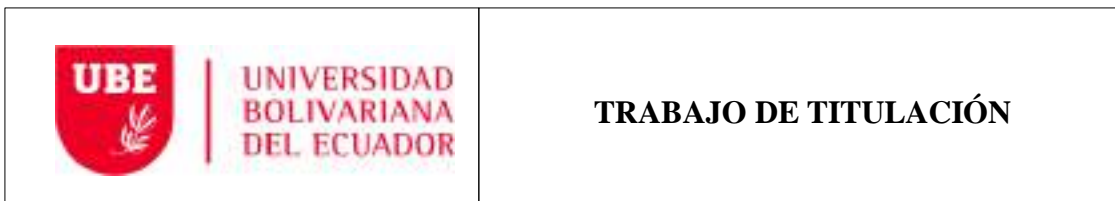
Source: the author

2.5 Instruments:

2.5.1 Pre-test (diagnostic) and Posttest (after the process)

The tests were sourced from Cambridge English, specifically the A1 Movers Listening Test. This test consists of four parts. The first part requires filling in a chart based on the audio, with an example provided for guidance. The second part involves listening to a description of a weekly routine and drawing a line to the corresponding picture. In the third part, students listen to a story and tick the correct option. The final part involves following instructions to color or write accurately





in a picture.

A1 Movers is the second of three Cambridge English Qualifications designed for young learners. These tests introduce children to everyday written and spoken English and are an excellent way for them to gain confidence and improve their English. The tests are written around familiar topics and focus on the skills needed to communicate effectively in English through listening, speaking, reading and writing. (Cambridge, 2024).

The A1 Movers Listening Test, developed by Cambridge English, was chosen as an assessment tool because it aligns well with the research objectives and the proficiency level of the target students. As the second tier of the Cambridge English Qualifications for young learners, this test is specifically crafted to assess listening comprehension skills in children, making it a suitable and dependable instrument for measuring progress in an A1-level classroom.

The test consists of four structured tasks that evaluate different aspects of listening comprehension, such as recognizing key details, following spoken instructions, and identifying main ideas in short narratives. These skills are directly related to the study's focus on using storytelling to improve listening comprehension. Additionally, the inclusion of familiar topics and engaging visuals ensures that the test is both accessible and motivating for young learners.

2.5.2 Research Journal

As the investigation Aims to register the progress students make during the study, a research journal became a necessary tool to work with as it is a register that can be made in each lesson. Research diaries, diaries solicited specifically for research, comprise a varied set of data collection instruments and techniques that range from descriptive event logs to narrative personal accounts. The research diary can conceptually and physically resemble other data collection methods such as





the questionnaire, the interview, or observation. (Laura & Wildemuth, 2009).

Maintaining a research journal fosters academic rigor by promoting transparency, consistency, and critical thinking. It enables researchers to document methodological adjustments, theoretical insights, and practical considerations that arise during the study. Additionally, it serves as a valuable resource for future research by providing a chronological account of the investigative process, facilitating replication, and ensuring the credibility of the study.

2.5.3 Questionnaire

The Student Questionnaire on Storytelling for Listening Comprehension is a structured tool aimed at understanding students' views on the storytelling approach used to improve their listening skills. This questionnaire features ten closed-ended questions, each rated on a five-point Likert scale. This setup allows us to gather quantitative data for easy analysis and interpretation. The consistent response options across most questions help streamline the process, making it efficient to tabulate and compare results.

The questionnaire provides valuable insight into students' experiences with storytelling-based listening activities. It helps determine their level of engagement, interest, and motivation—crucial factors in the success of any instructional approach. By assessing students' self-reported progress in listening comprehension, the questionnaire allows the researcher to analyze the effectiveness of storytelling as a teaching tool. This is especially important in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, where listening is often one of the most challenging skills to develop.

The collected data can help pinpoint which aspects of the storytelling methodology were most beneficial and which require modification. For example, responses related to comprehension difficulties, vocabulary acquisition, or engagement with different story formats (audio-only,





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subtitled, etc.) can guide future pedagogical adjustments. By incorporating student feedback, the questionnaire fosters a learner-centered approach, ensuring that instructional methods align with students' needs and preferences. This contributes to a more inclusive and effective learning environment. Additionally, the questionnaire enhances the validity of the research by providing quantifiable data that can be systematically analyzed. The standardized format allows for easier comparison of trends, patterns, and correlations with other research findings, reinforcing the study's conclusions.

After applying the diagnostic process it was concluded that most of the kids are in the A1 level of proficiency, they can understand basic things but lack of the ability of listening for detail, they have a wide range of vocabulary but lack of knowledge of how the words sound because they are used to pronounce them in Spanish so the mother tongue is a major influence in the results of the diagnostic test. The aim of this project is to enhance their listening comprehension skills through storytelling in order to make this ability useful in real life. Learners need to practice the pronunciation of some words to get familiarized with the different sounds of the letters.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the study, permission was obtained from the school principal to work with 29 sixth-grade students. Informed consent was also obtained from parents or guardians, who received a detailed letter outlining the purpose of the study, the methods to be used, potential risks, and how the data would be handled. The consent form explicitly included permission for the researcher to take and use photos or videos of classroom activities for academic purposes, including possible publication.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and both students and their parents were



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informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any point without any negative consequences. To protect the privacy of participants, all personal information was kept strictly confidential, and data collected was used solely for this research.

It is also important to mention that the process was carried out following the university's ethical guidelines, considering all the necessary aspects to fulfill the assignment properly, and based on the instructions given. In this way, all data collected was securely stored by the researcher throughout the process to ensure proper use, prevent manipulation, and obtain accurate results, as well as prevent leaks.

The use of storytelling activities did not pose any psychological, emotional, or academic risks to the children; on the contrary, they were enriching and interesting activities that engaged their attention and encouraged active participation in the project. Furthermore, the activities were aligned with normal learning processes and did not interfere with regular instruction; in fact, they served as a tool for developing meaningful and long-term learning, as they were also linked to the topics taught in class.



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CHAPTER III – PROPOSAL PRESENTATION

3.1 Proposal Modeling

3.1.1 General Objective

To design and implement a pedagogical proposal based on storytelling as a methodological strategy to strengthen the listening comprehension skills of sixth-grade EFL learners at Unidad Educativa Particular La Colina, aligning with CEFR standards for young learners.

3.1.2 Specific Objectives

To integrate storytelling activities progressively, starting with multimodal support (visuals, videos, subtitles) and moving toward independent listening experiences.

To enhance students' ability to understand the main ideas, details, and connectors (because, then, so) in short stories and conversations.

To foster student motivation and engagement in the listening process through meaningful, age-appropriate narratives that connect to their interests and cultural background.

To provide opportunities for learners to develop strategies such as prediction, inference, and recall while listening to authentic input.

To assess students' progress through pre- and post-tests aligned to CEFR listening descriptors, ensuring measurable outcomes in comprehension.



3.1.3 Characteristics of the Proposal

Progressive structure: The proposal develops in three stages: (1) stories with visual aids and subtitles, (2) longer stories with only subtitles, and (3) simple stories without visual or textual support.

Scaffolded learning: Learners are guided gradually from high-support tasks to independent listening, ensuring confidence and autonomy.

Authenticity: Materials include adapted stories, short videos, and oral narratives that reflect real communicative contexts.

Interactivity: Storytelling is not limited to passive listening; students engage through predictions, answering comprehension questions, and retelling.

Cultural relevance: Stories incorporate both universal themes (friendship, challenges, adventures) and local references, fostering identity and engagement.

Integration with CEFR: Listening descriptors for A1–A2 levels are the reference point to track and evaluate learner progress.

3.1.4 Key Ideas

Storytelling is the oldest and most natural form of teaching, making it an ideal tool for young learners (Widrich, 2012). Listening comprehension is not a passive process; it requires decoding, evaluating, and making meaning from input (Minh Trang, 2020). Students' progressive exposure to stories helps them develop phonological awareness, rhythm recognition, and improved pronunciation (Geeslin, 2013).

The proposal emphasizes student engagement and motivation, as learners are more attentive when input is relevant and interesting (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020).





3.1.5 Requirements

Human resources: English teacher trained in storytelling techniques, with awareness of scaffolding strategies.

Material resources: Projector, speakers, computer, access to internet, story videos with subtitles, printed transcripts, and later, teacher-read stories.

Evaluation tools: Cambridge Young Learners Listening Test (pre- and post-test), observation checklists, and rubrics for comprehension activities.

3.1.6 Demand

Students show low performance in listening skills at the Pre-A1 and A1 levels, as evidenced by pre-test results. The CEFR framework emphasizes listening comprehension as a foundational skill for language learning progression. Teachers demand effective methodologies that not only improve comprehension but also motivate learners to engage with authentic English input.

3.1.7 Conditions

The proposal is applied during the 2024–2025 school year with sixth-grade students at Unidad Educativa Particular “La Colina”. Learners are between 10–11 years old, with heterogeneous proficiency levels (Pre-A1, A1, and A2). The institution provides access to technological tools (projector, computer, and internet), enabling multimedia-based storytelling. Time allocation: 3 sessions per week, 80 minutes each, across three intervention stages (October–May).

The intervention is aligned with the institution’s curriculum and CEFR standards for young learners. The current research was conducted in the 2024–2025 school year, in Unidad Educativa Particular “La Colina”. The study was conducted from October 2024 to May 2025 and included a sample of 29 sixth-grade students. The task was deliberately set up to expose learners to authentic





input in the form of stories whilst systematically decreasing support visually. This incremental progression of awareness activities helped the pupils to develop as listeners, practicing with highly scaffolded to more autonomous listening activities.

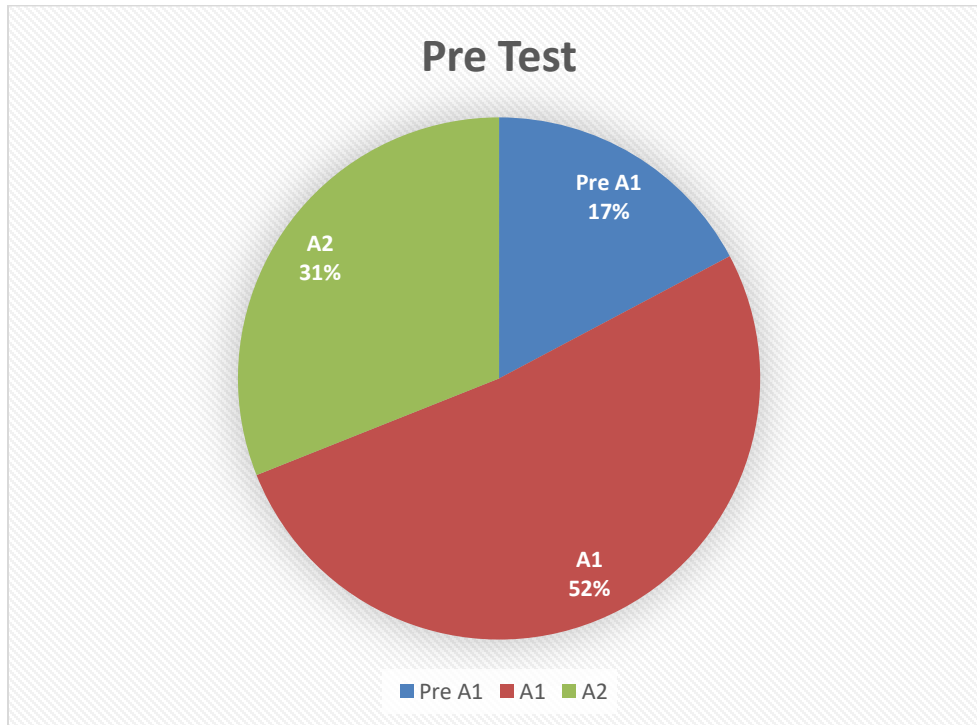


Figure 1 Pre test results

This graphic shows that 5 students were at the Pre -A1 level, 15 at the A1 level and 9 at the A2 level. The pre-test supported by the fact that A2 indicates an appropriate level in listening comprehension for sixth graders on the CEFR scale.

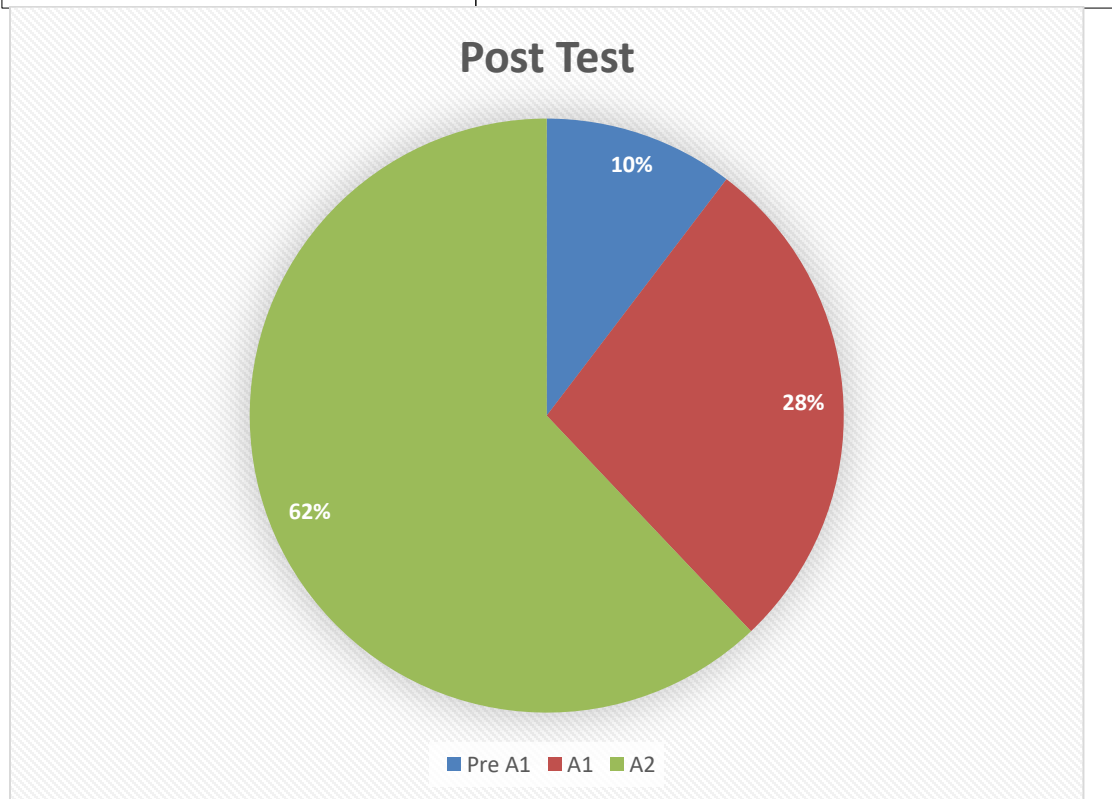


Figure 2 Post test results

The graphic above shows that at the end of the intervention post-test results clearly demonstrated progress: 3 students were still at the Pre-A1 stage, 8 at their first A1 level, and 18 at the A2 stage.

By now, the majority of students could comprehend short stories, pick out details in short stories, and recognize certain basic connectors like ‘because’ and ‘then’.

The intervention comprised three main parts. In the initial phase (October–December 2024), the learners interacted with simple narratives transmitted by way of videos with English subtitles. Listening, reading, and viewing made available several streams of input, and comprehension and vocabulary acquisition were facilitated. As articulated by Mayer (2009), the theory of multimedia



learning posits that instruction is more effective when presented using multiple input channels, which helps to facilitate understanding and decrease cognitive load. This phase was important for boosting learners' confidence to listen and being accustomed to the rhymes, intonation, prosody as well as structure of English story telling.

The second phase (January–March 2025) had more difficult challenges. The stories grew longer and more elaborate, and now, the images disappeared, with only the English subtitles for support. This phase involved incorporating a heightened emphasis on the auditory, contact and relying less upon data and more upon sensory input, yet still with the support of a written stimulus. It was hoped that, as external aids were strategically removed, learners would be forced to concentrate on the decoding of sounds of speech, on the recognition of key-words, and on the extraction of meaning from context – processes that Vandergrift and Goh (2012) consider to be critical for the acquisition of strategies for listening comprehension.

Shift 3 (April to May 2025) focused on autonomous listening. The stories were still fairly straightforward, though this time without subtitles or visual aids. The learners had to rely strictly on their ears to decode the content, which is very similar to natural communication. This step was important in order to find out if learners could use the strategies learned in the previous step in more realistic listening situations.

The process of instructions mirrored an action research cycle, such as planning-collecting data- analyzing data-evaluation (Burns, 2010). The stages were conceived in a way where the difficulty level would be gradually increased but also controlled, so that decreasing the level of support would not impair the understanding by promote autonomy. This is consistent with the advice





of Creswell and Creswell (2018) who advocate that educational interventions should be both scaffolded and reviewed regularly for effectiveness.

1. How interesting did you find the storytelling activities?

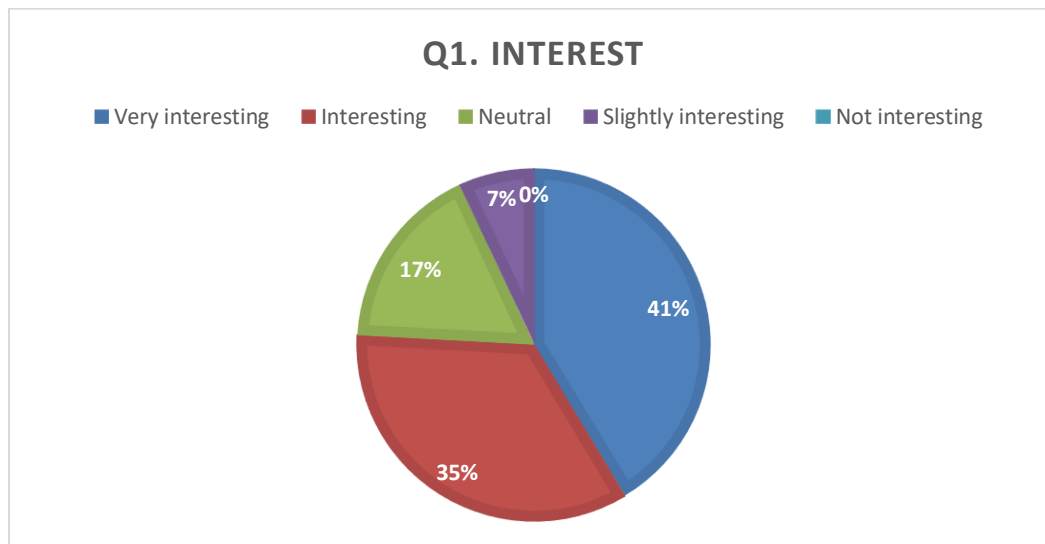


Figure 3: Students' interest in storytelling activities

Nearly 70% of students said they found the storytelling activities interesting or very interesting. That's a strong sign that the method captured their attention and kept them engaged. Only a few reported low interest, which tells us that storytelling was generally a hit in the classroom.



2. Which storytelling format helped you understand best?

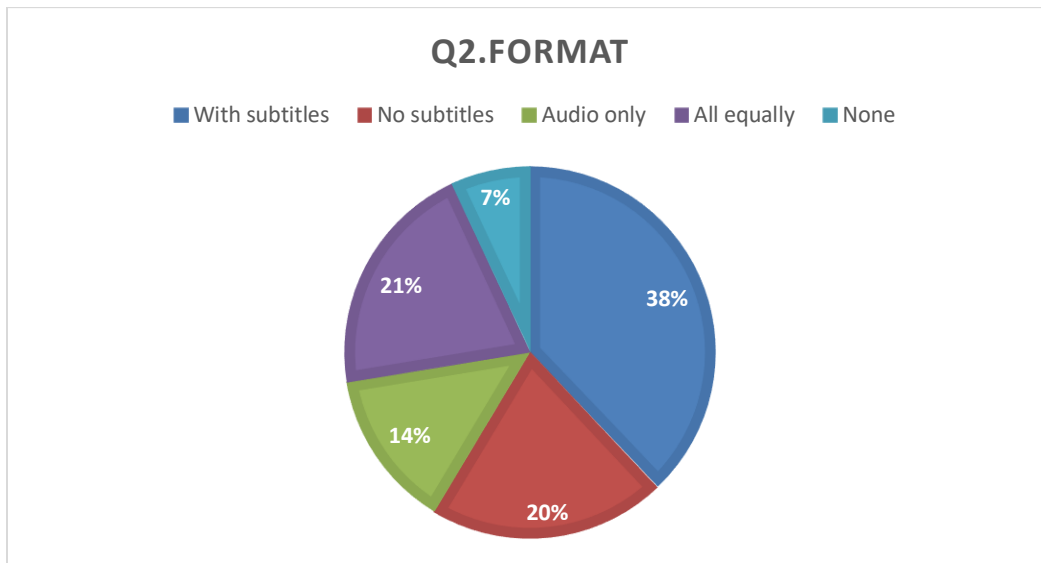


Figure 4 Activities format

Almost half of the students (45%) felt that stories with both images and audio helped them understand best. It seems that having visual support made a real difference. While fewer students preferred audio-only stories, it's clear that combining different formats still benefits comprehension.

3. How much did storytelling improve your listening comprehension?

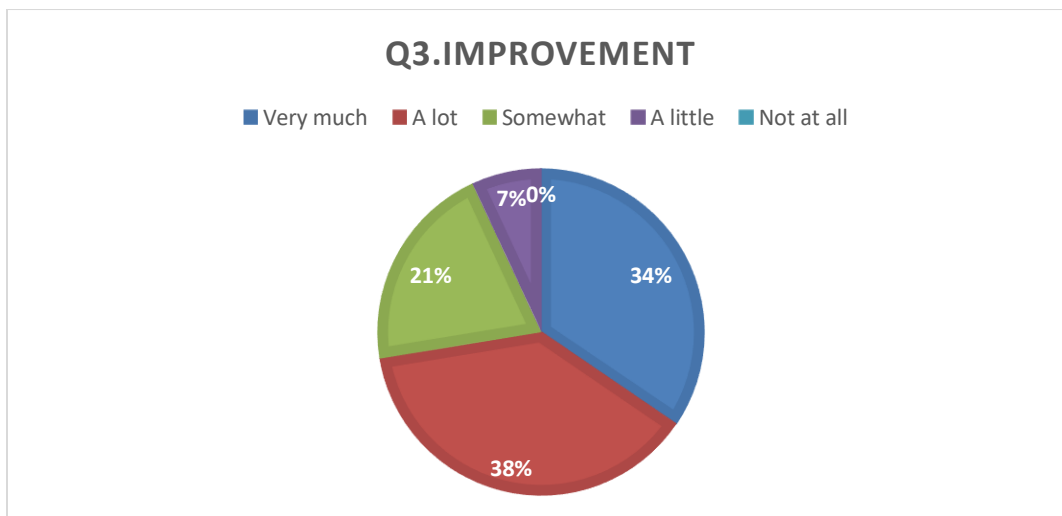


Figure 5 Storytelling improvement





A solid 72% of students felt that storytelling improved their listening skills “very much” or “a lot.” That’s not just a good feeling—it matches the progress seen in their post-test results, showing that storytelling really worked as a learning tool.

4. How often did you understand the main idea of the stories?

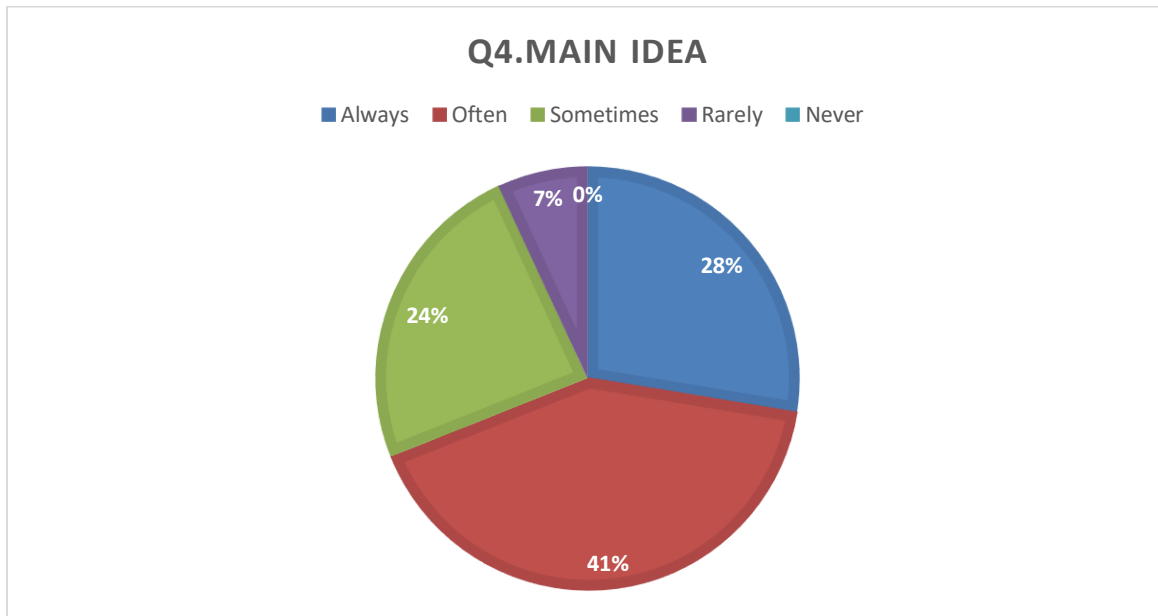


Figure 6 frequency of understanding the main idea

Two-thirds of the students said they could often or always grasp the main idea. That’s a strong indicator that storytelling helped them develop their global listening skills—understanding the big picture, not just isolated details.



5. How well did you understand the vocabulary?

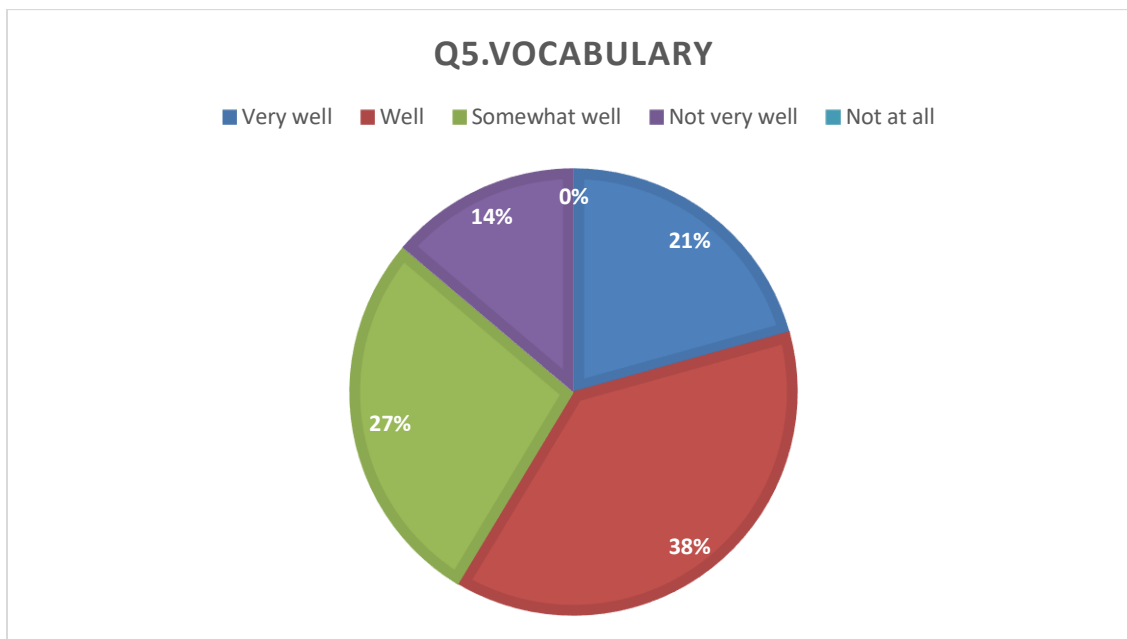


Figure 7 Vocabulary understanding

About 62% of learners said they understood the vocabulary “well” or “very well.” This suggests that hearing words in context, with repetition and meaning woven into the story, helped them absorb new vocabulary more naturally.



6. How confident did you feel explaining the moral?

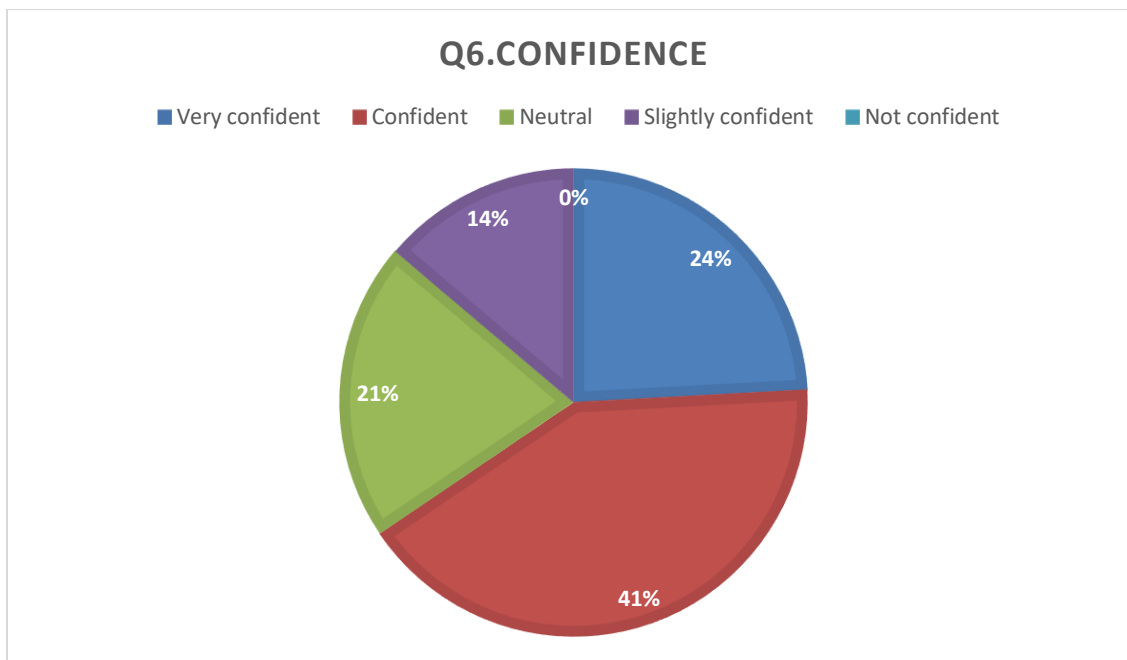


Figure 8 Level of confidence

More than half of the students (55%) felt confident or very confident when explaining the moral of the stories.

That's a great sign that storytelling encouraged deeper thinking and gave them a chance to express their interpretations clearly.



7. How comfortable were you participating in class discussions?

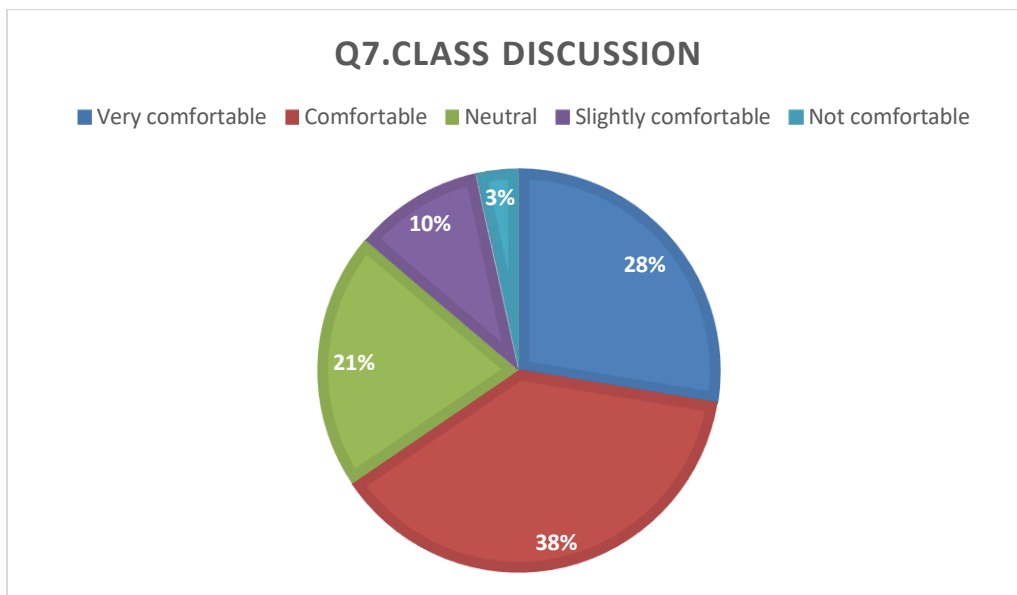


Figure 9 Comfort in class discussion

Most students (58%) felt comfortable joining class discussions about the stories. It seems that storytelling created a safe and inviting space for sharing ideas and practicing spoken English.

8. Would you like to continue using storytelling?

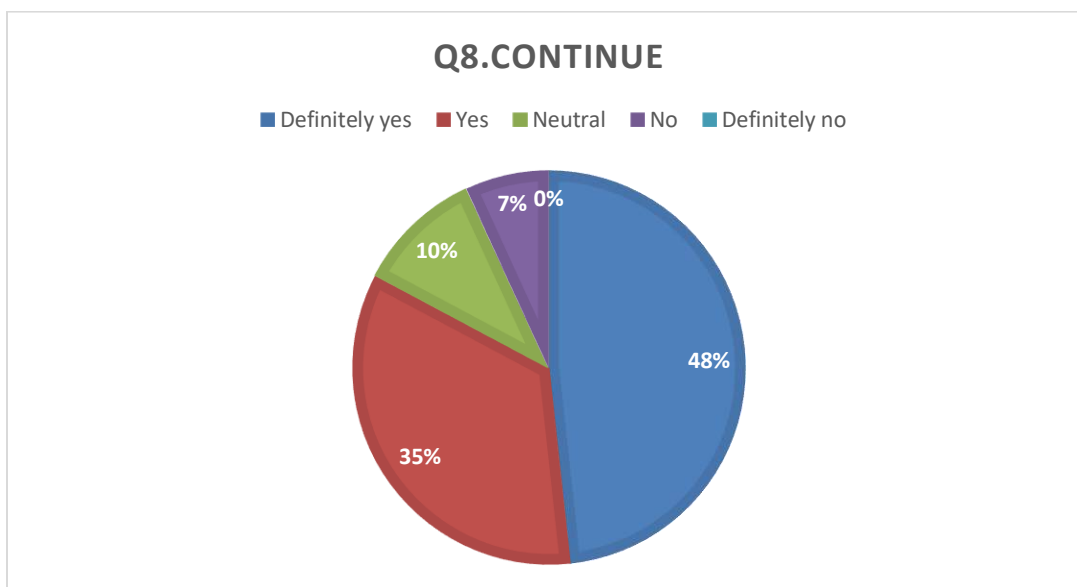


Figure 10 Interest in using storytelling again





A strong majority—72%—said they'd like storytelling to continue in future English lessons. That kind of enthusiasm shows that students not only enjoyed the method but also saw its value in their learning journey.

9. Should storytelling be used to teach other English skills?

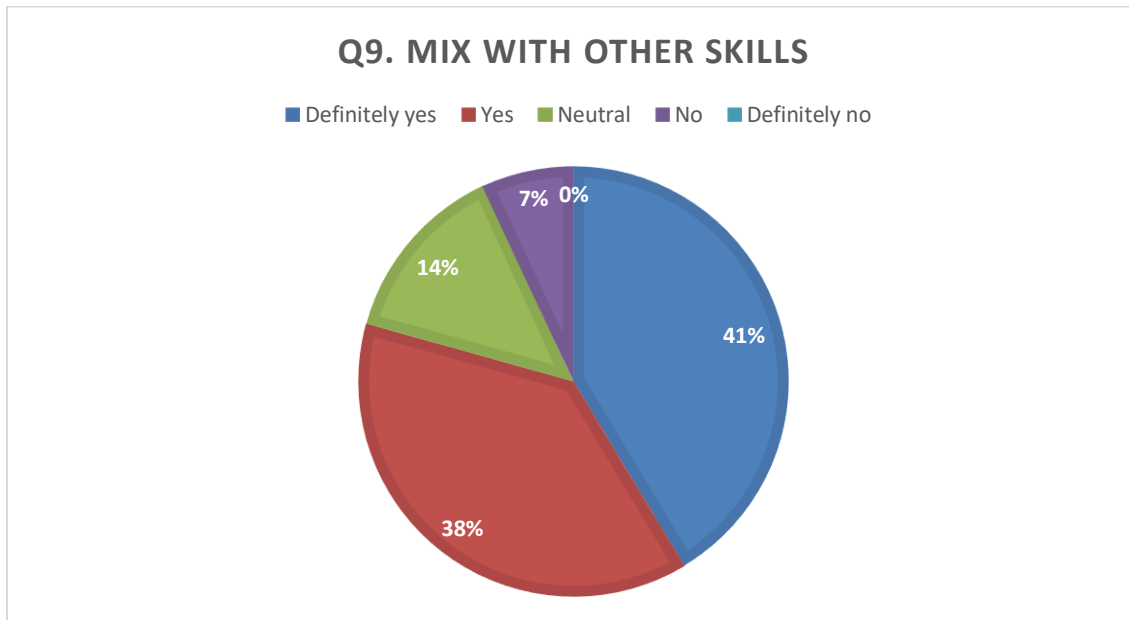


Figure 11 Use of storytelling in other skills

Again, 72% of students agreed that storytelling could be useful for teaching other English skills too. They're clearly seeing its potential beyond just listening comprehension.

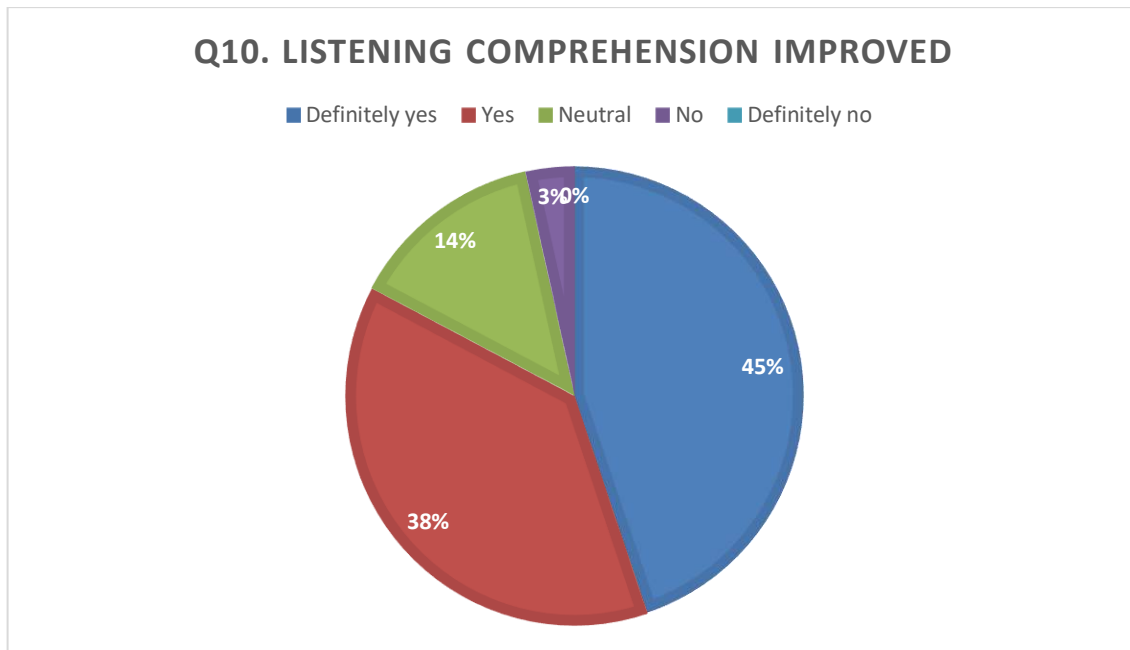
10. Do you feel your listening comprehension improved?

Figure 12 Listening comprehension improvement

An impressive 76% of students felt their listening comprehension improved thanks to storytelling. Their perception matches the actual gains seen in assessments, reinforcing how effective this approach can be.

To summarize, the application of this technique facilitated the learning process for students as they moved from supported to unsupported listening through storytelling. Through staging the treatment, the learners had more opportunities to gradually develop listening strategies themselves, to become more competent learners of listening and to increase their confidence in listening to English being used genuinely in communication.

3.1.8 Research Journal

In addition to standardized tests, a research journal was employed as a qualitative instrument to document the progression of the storytelling intervention and to capture reflective insights from the teaching–learning process. According to Altrichter and Posch (2009), research journals in



educational contexts function as systematic records that allow researchers to observe, reflect, and analyze events as they occur in the classroom.

The journal was maintained by the researcher throughout the intervention, covering the entire academic year from October 2024 to May 2025. It was organized into weekly entries that included descriptive, reflective, and analytical notes. Each entry addressed the following aspects:

Lesson description: A summary of the storytelling activity carried out in the session (type of story, support materials, and length of input).

Student engagement: Notes on students' participation, attention, and motivation during storytelling activities.

Comprehension evidence: Observations of how students responded to comprehension tasks such as answering questions, retelling, or identifying story details.

Challenges observed: Difficulties learners faced (e.g., vocabulary gaps, problems with connectors, lack of attention without visual support).

Researcher reflection: Critical insights about the effectiveness of the activity, adjustments needed, and emerging patterns.

The use of the journal provided a longitudinal perspective of the intervention, allowing the researcher to monitor changes in students' listening skills and attitudes across the three stages of the proposal. It also served as a source of triangulation, complementing the quantitative findings of the pre- and post-tests with qualitative evidence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Furthermore, the journal fostered the researcher's professional development, as reflective practice has been shown to enhance teachers' ability to evaluate and improve their methodologies (Farrell, 2015). The insights gathered contributed not only to data analysis but also to the refinement of the



storytelling proposal in real time.

3.1.9 Questionnaire

Hahn (2024) defines a questionnaire as a set of questions used to gather data from individuals, either in paper or online formats. This questionnaire was designed as a structured research instrument to gather quantitative information regarding students' perceptions, engagement, and perceived progress throughout the storytelling intervention. It consisted of 10 close-ended items, organized into four thematic sections: Engagement and Interest, Comprehension and Learning, Confidence and Participation, and Preferences and Future Use. The questionnaire used a five-option response scale for each item, allowing students to choose the option that best represented their experience.





CONCLUSIONS

1. Students began the intervention with a limited level of listening comprehension, as revealed by the diagnostic pretest. They struggled particularly with identifying main ideas, recognizing details, and following the sequence of events in spoken texts. This first report confirmed the need for a structured and engaging pedagogical approach that could improve their comprehension skills and help them overcome the difficulties detected.
2. The theoretical analysis demonstrated that storytelling is strongly supported in the literature as a useful strategy for developing listening comprehension skills in young learners. Previous research highlights storytelling's ability to capture attention, stimulate visualization, and promote understanding through contextualized language. These theoretical foundations aligned with the needs identified in the diagnostic stage and provided a solid basis for implementing storytelling as a meaningful instructional tool in the English classroom.
3. Techniques such as the use of visual aids, gestures, repetition, prediction activities, and interactive retelling increased engagement and facilitated understanding of the stories. These strategies allowed students to connect more naturally with the narrative content and supported their ability to process spoken information more accurately and confidently.
4. The comparison between pretest and posttest results confirmed substantial progress in students' listening comprehension after the application of storytelling. Students showed improvement in identifying general meaning, extracting key information, and following narrative sequences. Overall, the study concludes that storytelling is a beneficial and





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DEL ECUADOR

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

developmentally appropriate approach for sixth-grade learners, offering both linguistic and motivational advantages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implement structured storytelling sessions regularly. Teachers should incorporate storytelling as a consistent part of the listening curriculum, gradually increasing the complexity of stories to help students strengthen their ability to identify main ideas, details, and sequences in spoken texts.

Integrate multimodal support during initial stages. Visual aids, gestures, and repetition should continue to be used strategically, especially at the beginning of instruction. These scaffolds help students build confidence and facilitate comprehension before transitioning toward more independent listening tasks.

Encourage students' active participation in storytelling activities. Techniques such as prediction, interactive retelling, dramatization, and questioning can promote deeper engagement and enhance students' ability to process and interpret spoken language more effectively.

Provide explicit training in listening strategies. Teachers should guide students in using cognitive strategies such as anticipating content, identifying keywords, and visualizing events, which can support comprehension beyond storytelling contexts.

Use ongoing assessment to monitor progress. Implementing periodic listening checks, reflective journals, and performance-based tasks can help teachers identify areas of difficulty early and adjust instruction accordingly.



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DEL ECUADOR

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

Expand storytelling to other linguistic skills. Since storytelling enhances motivation and meaningful use of language, educators are encouraged to extend its use to speaking, reading, and writing activities, fostering a more integrated and enjoyable language-learning experience.

Offer professional development for teachers. Training programs on storytelling techniques, narrative pedagogy, and communicative strategies can equip teachers with innovative tools to maximize learning outcomes.



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Part 3

- 5 questions -

What did Sally do last week?

Listen and draw a line from the day to the correct picture.

There is one example.



Monday

Tuesday



Wednesday

Thursday

Friday



Saturday

Sunday



Part 4

- 5 questions -

Listen and tick (✓) the box. There is one example.

Where did Jim see the film?



A



B



C

1. Where did the rabbits go to the film go?



A



B



C

2. Where did the children have their lunch?



A



B



C



Always listening

Part 3

- 8 questions -

What did Sally do last week?

Listen and draw a line from the day to the correct picture.

Here is one example.



Holiday



Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday

Friday



Saturday

Sunday



Part 4

- 9 questions -

Listen and tick (✓) the box. There is one example.

Where did Jim see the fox?



A



B



C

1 Where did the rabbits go to the zoo?



A



B



C

2 Where did the children have their lunch?



A



B



C

Always listening





Answer's key

3. What did the children eat?



A

B

C

4. What did the children do after lunch?



A

B

C

5. What did Jim's friends give him?



A

B

C

Part 5

- 5 questions -

Listen and colour and write. There is one example.



Answer's key