

Creative Storytelling: Its Effectiveness in Enhancing the Listening Skills Among Grade 1 Learners

Marienel D. Acal

Graduate School, Polytechnic College of La Union, Agoo La Union, Philippines

Publication history: Received: May 1, 2026; Revised: May 17, 2026; Accepted: May 25, 2026

Email of Corresponding Author: marienelacal8@gmail.com; ORCID: [0009-0006-3099-743X](https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3099-743X)

Abstract

This study assessed the effectiveness of creative storytelling in enhancing the listening skills of Grade 1 learners in the private elementary schools of Agoo, La Union during the school year 2025–2026, as basis for proposed intervention strategies. Anchored on learning theories related to multisensory learning, constructivism, dual coding, schema development, cognitive load, narrative engagement, metacognition, social learning, and affective language acquisition, the study employed a descriptive research design. Total enumeration was used, involving eleven Grade 1 teachers and four school administrators. Data were gathered through a validated questionnaire-checklist and analyzed using frequency counts, weighted means, rankings, and t-test at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings showed that the listening skills of Grade 1 learners during creative storytelling activities were rated satisfactory. Teachers perceived creative storytelling as highly effective, while school administrators rated it as moderately effective. Learner participation and the impact of creative storytelling on listening skills were both moderate. The major challenges encountered were poor discipline during storytelling sessions, short attention span, and limited parental support for storytelling activities at home. The study also found no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and school administrators regarding the effectiveness and impact of creative storytelling. The study concluded that creative storytelling is relevant, useful, applicable, and efficient in enhancing learners' listening skills, although implementation challenges must be addressed. It recommended the adoption of proposed intervention strategies, continued use of meaningful storytelling activities, close learner monitoring, and similar studies in other settings. The study supports SDG 4 – Quality Education and SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals by promoting learner-centered instruction and collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, and schools. Its sustainability impact lies in strengthening educational and institutional practices for early literacy development.

Keywords: Creative Storytelling; Effectiveness; Grade 1 Learners; Listening Skills; Private Elementary Schools; Proposed Intervention Strategies; School Administrators; Teacher Perceptions

1. Introduction

Creative storytelling is increasingly recognized as a meaningful pedagogical strategy for improving the listening skills of young learners. Listening is a foundational language skill that supports speaking, reading, writing, comprehension, communication, and classroom participation. However, listening remains one of the least explicitly developed skills among learners, creating gaps in receptive and productive language development (Mendelsohn, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2023). In response, creative storytelling offers an interactive, imaginative, and learner-centered approach that transforms listening from a passive activity into an active process involving attention, comprehension, prediction, emotional engagement, memory, and response (Roney, 2022). This study therefore focuses on the effectiveness of creative storytelling in enhancing the listening skills of Grade 1 learners in the private schools of Agoo, La Union.

Listening is central to early literacy development because it enables children to understand spoken language, follow oral instructions, process story details, and respond appropriately in academic and social situations. As 21st-century education emphasizes communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, the need to strengthen listening instruction becomes more urgent (Mendelsohn, 2021). Despite this importance, listening is often learned implicitly and receives less instructional attention than reading and writing (Ahmed et al., 2023). Creative storytelling addresses this concern by using narrative, imagination, voice modulation, gestures, pictures, props, digital tools, and interactive questioning to engage learners. Storytelling allows children to hear language in meaningful contexts, encounter varied tones and vocabulary, and participate cognitively and emotionally in the learning process (Roney, 2022). International studies show that storytelling improves listening comprehension, vocabulary recall, attention span, narrative understanding, and critical response among young learners, particularly when compared with traditional methods (Ahmed, Inam, and Saif, 2023; Johansson and Virtanen, 2020). These findings are consistent with global calls for creative, inclusive, culturally responsive, and communication-centered teaching practices (UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2022).

The literature emphasizes that listening is not passive hearing but an active mental process involving concentration, understanding, prediction, memory, and interpretation (Vandergrift, 2021). Rost (2020) explained that listening precedes and supports the development of speaking and reading skills, especially among early-grade learners. In the same way, Browning and Simons (2022) found that daily storytelling can improve learners' attention and inferential comprehension. Creative storytelling supports early language development because it combines language, imagination, emotion, and sensory engagement. As Wilson (2021) pointed out, storytelling connects language, imagination, and feeling, thereby supporting receptive language development. Fisher and Lane (2020) added that repeated exposure to story patterns helps learners become familiar with words, phrases, and text structures, while Chang (2019) emphasized that story listening strengthens learners' awareness of intonation, stress, rhythm, and pronunciation. Storytelling is also a pedagogical and classroom management strategy. Gonzalez and Chen (2019) emphasized that storytelling organizes classroom learning and sustains children's attention. Morrow's (2020) described effective storytelling as multimodal, using pictures, puppets, digital stories, drawings, and dramatization. Li and Park (2021) further noted that children who emotionally connect with story characters tend to listen more carefully and show empathy during discussion. Teachers' perceptions strongly influence the effectiveness of storytelling. Kelly and Stone (2023) noted that teachers who view storytelling as an interactive and creative tool use it more effectively in designing dynamic learning experiences. Sato (2020) emphasized that storytelling also serves as a formative assessment opportunity because teachers can observe learners' oral responses, movements, and facial expressions. Mendez and Harper (2019) likewise showed that storytelling can integrate language arts, moral education, and listening comprehension while improving participation and reducing behavioral problems. The cognitive and affective benefits of storytelling are also emphasized in the literature. Brandt (2021) associated storytelling with memory, sequencing, inferential reasoning, and problem-solving. Miller (2022) highlighted the role of emotionally engaging stories in sustaining attention and motivation, while Lin and Schwartz (2023) explained that storytelling activates auditory, visual, and sensory areas of the brain, thereby supporting multimodal encoding. Interactive storytelling, prediction tasks, repetition, props, music, movement, and digital media further strengthen listening engagement and comprehension (Hughes & Robertson, 2019; Rivera and Thompson, 2021; Okafor, 2020).

Globally, storytelling has been integrated into early literacy programs in countries such as Australia and Singapore to develop creativity, empathy, and language fluency (Tan & Lim, 2021). In these contexts, storytelling is viewed not merely as entertainment but as a cognitive language activity requiring perception, interpretation, and response. Storytelling also connects linguistic and emotional intelligence by allowing learners to experience language as a social and cultural activity (Smith & Jacobs, 2020). Nationally, the Philippine K–12 Basic Education Curriculum emphasizes communication skills through the Language Arts and Multiliteracies Framework (DepEd, 2022). However, classroom implementation still tends to prioritize reading comprehension over listening instruction (Villanueva, 2020). The DepEd (2023) Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy assessment also indicates that many first graders struggle to understand spoken words, respond to verbal instructions, and make sense of what they hear. These challenges were worsened by COVID-19 disruptions, which reduced opportunities for face-to-face speaking and listening activities (Reyes & Fernandez, 2022). In the Philippine context, creative storytelling is strongly connected to culturally responsive teaching. Reyes (2019) emphasized that storytelling allows Filipino learners to engage with folktales, local narratives, and oral traditions. Delos Santos (2020) related storytelling to the learner-centered and contextualized goals of the DepEd K–12 curriculum. Dela Cruz and Alvarez (2021) found that learners exposed to daily storytelling sessions showed better listening comprehension, responsiveness, enthusiasm, vocabulary retention, and reflective listening. Santos and Rivera (2020), Almario (2021), and Velasco and Ramos (2022) similarly emphasized that storytelling improves comprehension, recall, attention, discipline, and emotional engagement among Filipino learners. Locally, the concern is evident in private schools in Agoo, La Union, where Grade 1 learners reportedly experience difficulty following oral instructions, understanding stories, recalling details, and sustaining attention. The study responds to these local classroom realities by examining the effectiveness, learner participation, impact, and implementation problems of creative storytelling as a basis for proposed intervention strategies.

The study is anchored on several theories that explain how creative storytelling may enhance listening skills. The Multisensory Learning Theory propounded by Orton-Gillingham as cited by Gazioğlu and Karakuş (2023) supports the use of hearing, seeing, touch, movement, and visual materials in storytelling because multisensory activities improve listening comprehension, engagement, attention, and retention. The Constructivist Learning Theory initially theorized by Jean Piaget (1972) and later expanded by Vygotsky (1978) explains that learners construct knowledge through experience, reflection, and interaction. In storytelling, learners do not merely receive information; they imagine, interpret, connect the story to prior experience, and construct meaning. Chubko et al. (2020) similarly supported digital storytelling as a constructivist approach that allows students to actively construct understanding of language and content. The Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1971, 1986) supports the use of verbal and visual channels in storytelling. When learners hear a story while seeing pictures, gestures, illustrations, or digital images, they process information through both auditory and visual systems, which can improve comprehension and memory. Türel (2023) likewise emphasized that combining listening texts, visuals, and keywords improves learner engagement and understanding. Schema Theory by Anderson (1984) explains that learners understand new information by connecting it with existing mental frameworks. Malik (2023) emphasized that storytelling strengthens listening comprehension by helping learners connect linguistic input with familiar contexts and prior

knowledge. Cognitive Load Theory, innovated by John Sweller (1988) and further developed in 2020, also supports storytelling because clear, structured, and visually supported narratives reduce unnecessary mental load and help young learners focus on meaning (Sweller, 1988; Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 2020). The Narrative Transportation Theory (Green & Brock, 2000) provides a psychological basis for storytelling because learners who become absorbed in a story experience focused and emotionally charged attention. Kubrak & Starostina, (2023) supported this view by explaining that learners become part of the story experience as they imagine events, feel with characters, and predict outcomes. The Metacognitive Theory articulated by John H. Flavell (1979) further explains that learners improve listening when they monitor their understanding, use prediction, ask clarification questions, and reflect on story meaning. Pei, Suwanthep, and Hu (2023) emphasized that metacognitive awareness contributes to better listening skills. The study is also supported by Social Learning Theory, originally formulated by Albert Bandura in 1977 and later revised in 1986, because children learn by observing, imitating, and modeling the storyteller's intonation, gestures, expressions, and language use. Finally, Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis explains that learners acquire language more effectively when they are relaxed, confident, motivated, and emotionally engaged. Rahman and Wahyuni (2023) found that creative storytelling reduces listening anxiety and improves motivation, comprehension, and recall. Rahman (2023) also emphasized that emotionally engaging and low-stress learning environments support listening and language acquisition. Conceptually, creative storytelling is viewed as an instructional approach that combines imagination, narrative structure, emotional involvement, and multimodal strategies. It is expected to influence learners' listening skills, participation, comprehension, attention, recall, and engagement. The study's input-process-output orientation focuses on the level of listening skills, level of storytelling effectiveness, learner participation, impact on listening skills, problems encountered, and the development of proposed intervention strategies.

Although many studies support the benefits of storytelling, several gaps remain. First, much of the existing research focuses on preschool, kindergarten, or general early childhood education rather than specifically on Grade 1 learners in private schools. Second, there is limited research on the perceptions of teachers and school administrators regarding creative storytelling, including its effectiveness, impact, implementation challenges, and needed support. Third, few studies compare or document different storytelling methods, including oral, digital, multimedia, bilingual, and community-based approaches, especially in the Philippine setting. Fourth, most available studies are short-term and intervention-focused, leaving limited evidence on sustained listening development across a school year. These gaps justify the need for a study focused on Grade 1 learners in the private schools of Agoo, La Union. The study is also necessary because teachers report short attention spans, weak listening comprehension, limited learner participation, and continuing reliance on traditional strategies. These concerns are linked with broader issues such as limited training, lack of materials, insufficient administrative support, and weak monitoring of listening development (Villanueva, 2020; Santos & Guevara, 2023; Superioridad, 2024; DepEd, 2023). Therefore, this study assesses the effectiveness of creative storytelling in enhancing Grade 1 learners' listening skills and uses the findings as basis for proposed intervention strategies.

This study primarily aligns with SDG 4 – Quality Education because it focuses on improving early-grade listening skills, learner engagement, comprehension, and classroom participation through a creative and child-centered teaching strategy. By examining creative storytelling as an instructional intervention, the study supports the development of inclusive, effective, and learner-centered education consistent with the emphasis of UNESCO (2021), OECD (2022), and the DepEd K–12 curriculum framework (DepEd, 2022). The study also has supportive alignment with SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals because the proposed improvement of creative storytelling depends on the coordinated roles of the Department of Education, school administrators, teachers, parents, learners, and future researchers. The literature emphasizes that storytelling implementation requires administrative support, teacher training, materials, parental involvement, and community-centered programs (Villanueva, 2023; Reyes and Dela Cruz, 2024; Delos Reyes, 2024). No environmental SDG is directly supported by the content of the study.

The study contributes to educational sustainability by promoting an instructional approach that strengthens foundational listening skills among young learners. Listening supports comprehension, communication, participation, and later literacy development; therefore, improving this skill at the Grade 1 level can support long-term learning outcomes. Creative storytelling also advances learner-centered pedagogy by making instruction more interactive, meaningful, culturally responsive, and developmentally appropriate. The study contributes to institutional sustainability by providing evidence that can guide curriculum planning, teacher training, instructional supervision, and classroom innovation. School administrators may use the findings to support storytelling workshops, allocate materials, and encourage systematic integration of storytelling into early-grade language instruction. Teachers may use the findings to improve classroom delivery through voice modulation, gestures, visual aids, digital tools, guided questioning, and learner participation activities. The study also supports cultural and social sustainability because storytelling can include Filipino folktales, local narratives, bilingual storytelling, and community-based oral traditions. Such practices strengthen listening comprehension while preserving cultural identity and learner connection to familiar contexts (Reyes, 2019; Almario, 2021; Garcia (2023); Delos Reyes (2024). In addition, storytelling promotes socio-emotional development by encouraging empathy, confidence, motivation, patience, and sustained attention (Li and Park, 2021; Reyes and Bautista (2022); Yulianawati (2024). Lastly,

the study has relevance to technological and innovation sustainability because the literature supports the use of digital storytelling, multimedia storytelling, digital storybooks, electronic musical storytelling, and augmented-reality storybooks as tools for improving listening engagement and comprehension (Sari, Kumala, and Muntomimah (2023); Febrianti (2023); Hadi et al. (2023); Wati et al. (2024); Royani, Herlina, and Rustandi (2024); Loniza et al., 2024). These approaches show that creative storytelling can be adapted to traditional, digital, and blended classroom environments while remaining focused on the development of young learners' listening skills.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design to determine the extent to which creative storytelling contributes to the development of listening comprehension skills among Grade 1 learners in selected private schools. This design was appropriate because it provided a factual and systematic description of existing classroom practices, learners' listening skills, participation in storytelling activities, perceived effectiveness of creative storytelling, its impact on listening development, and the seriousness of problems encountered during implementation. Creswell (2018) clarified that descriptive research is mainly concerned with describing and interpreting the current state of the phenomenon as it happens naturally without changing variables. Similarly, Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2021) pointed out that descriptive research is better for educational contexts when the main objective is to describe existing practices, attitudes, or perceptions.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the private elementary schools of Agoo, La Union during the school year 2025–2026. Agoo is a first-class municipality located along the western coast of Luzon facing the Lingayen Gulf. It serves as one of the major entry points to La Union from the south and is known for its historical landmarks, cultural identity, coastal areas, commerce, tourism, farming, fishing, small-scale trading, and service-based livelihoods. The municipality has also developed as a commercial and educational center in southern La Union, with schools, marketplaces, and government centers contributing to its local economy.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were eleven (11) Grade 1 teachers and four (4) school administrators from private elementary schools in Agoo, La Union. The participating schools included Hands of Hope School, Kiddie School, Montessori School, and Polytechnic College of La Union.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study involved the total enumeration of the identified respondents, consisting of all eleven (11) Grade 1 teachers and four (4) school administrators from the participating private elementary schools. Since the population was limited and directly relevant to the study, all qualified respondents were included.

2.5 Research Instrument

The researcher used a questionnaire-checklist as the main data-gathering instrument. A common questionnaire was prepared for Grade 1 teachers and school administrators. The instrument gathered data on the level of listening skills of Grade 1 learners in creative storytelling activities, the level of effectiveness of creative storytelling in enhancing listening skills, the level of learner participation during creative storytelling activities, the extent of impact of creative storytelling on listening skills, the degree of seriousness of problems encountered, and the significant differences between the perceptions of the two respondent groups. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was subjected to validation and pre-tested among five (5) Grade 1 teachers and five (5) school administrators in the public elementary schools of Aringay District, Division of La Union. The pre-test assessed the content, format, and language of the instrument. The pre-test was administered through Google Forms sent via email and Messenger. Reliability was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, with a computed value of 0.87, indicating that the instrument was good. Suggestions and recommendations from the proposal defense were incorporated with the assistance of the thesis adviser before the final version of the questionnaire was prepared.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher formally requested permission from the school principals of the private schools in Agoo through a written letter of request, endorsed by the Dean of the Graduate School of Polytechnic College of La Union, Dr. Rogelio E. Tangalin. The questionnaires were administered to and retrieved from the Grade 1 teachers and school administrators through multimedia platforms such as Messenger, Facebook, and email. Some questionnaires were personally administered and retrieved by the researcher with the assistance of fellow teachers, the District Supervisor, and school heads covered in the study.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The data gathered were organized, tallied, and analyzed systematically. Frequency counts, weighted means, and rankings were used to present the descriptive results of the study. The variables were interpreted using rating scales for listening skills, effectiveness, participation, extent of impact, and degree of seriousness of problems encountered. The t-test was used to determine whether significant differences existed between the perceptions of Grade 1 teachers and school administrators on the variables under study at the 0.05 level of significance. All computations were done using the Microstat computer program.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher upheld strict compliance with the PCLU Guidelines on Research Ethics. Permission was obtained from the proper authorities before data collection. Respondents were not compelled or subjected to harm in participating in the study, and their consent was secured before they answered the questionnaire. The nature and objectives of the study were explained to them, and their right to withdraw at any stage was observed. The names of the respondents were not disclosed in any part of the study, and all gathered data were treated with utmost confidentiality and used solely for research purposes. The researcher also used Grammarly for grammar checking, followed proper citation and referencing practices, and subjected the paper to plagiarism scanning to certify its authenticity.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Main Findings on Creative Storytelling and Listening Skills

3.1.1 Level of Listening Skills among Grade 1 Learners

The level of listening skills of Grade 1 learners in creative storytelling activities was rated Satisfactory, with an average weighted mean of 3.22. The highest-rated indicators were listening attentively during creative storytelling sessions, observing discipline during storytelling activities, and identifying the main character and setting of the story. The lowest-rated indicators were demonstrating clear understanding of the theme and sequence of events, identifying the problem and solution in the story, and retelling simple parts of the story using their own words. These results indicate that Grade 1 learners are more capable of basic listening behaviors such as attention, discipline, and identification of simple story elements, but they still need support in higher-order listening tasks. Smith & Sandilands (2021) found that narrative activities with expressive language and interaction help learners sustain concentration. Lee & Kendeou (2020) also pointed out that engaging stories promote cognitive engagement through emotional and linguistic involvement. Gonzalez et al 2022 and Hofmann and Vogt 2023 support the idea that structured storytelling helps learners develop classroom routines and disciplined listening behavior, while Martinez and Wilkinson 2021 and Nguyen and McLean 2024 emphasized that learners understand narrative elements better through clear storytelling patterns. However, Johnson and Raikes 2020 explained that thematic understanding and sequencing require inferential processing, while (Adi, Nasrullah, & Rosalina, 2024) supports the finding that learners may struggle with problem-solution recognition. Demir and Guven (2022) and Alves and Pereira (2024) further suggest that retelling requires comprehension, memory, expressive language, visual scaffolds, and guided practice.

3.1.2 Effectiveness of Creative Storytelling as Perceived by Teachers

Teachers perceived creative storytelling as Highly Effective in enhancing the listening skills of Grade 1 learners, with an average weighted mean of 3.62. The highest-rated indicators were motivating learners to listen attentively and actively, building teamwork during listening activities, and improving learners' attention span. The lowest-rated indicators were motivating learners to retell the story in their own understanding, enhancing their ability to remember important story details, and helping them understand new words or vocabulary and ideas in the story. This finding shows that creative storytelling is effective in improving motivation, attention, and collaboration, but it needs to be supported by additional strategies for retelling, recall, and vocabulary development. Smith and Sandilands (2021) and Lee and Kendeou (2020) support the result that storytelling increases engagement and focused listening. Hofmann and Vogt (2023) and Gonzalez et al. (2022) explain that storytelling encourages cooperative behavior and shared understanding. Martinez and Wilkinson (2021) also emphasized that narrative flow, repetition, and expressive delivery help maintain listener attention. However, Demir and Guven (2022), Alves and Pereira (2024), Baker and Scher (2023), and Nguyen and McLean (2024) indicate that retelling, memory retention, and vocabulary acquisition require scaffolds, guided support, reinforcement strategies, repeated exposure, and explicit vocabulary instruction.

3.1.3 Effectiveness of Creative Storytelling as Perceived by School Administrators

School administrators perceived creative storytelling as Moderately Effective, with an average weighted mean of 3.21. The highest-rated indicators were motivating learners to listen attentively and actively, making listening activities more fun and meaningful, and strengthening learners' listening comprehension during storytelling activities. The lowest-rated indicators were aiding learners to comprehend cause and effect in the story, motivating learners to retell the story in their own understanding, and helping learners understand new words or vocabulary and ideas in the story. These results show that administrators recognized the value of creative storytelling in promoting learner engagement, enjoyment, and comprehension, but they also noted limitations in higher-order listening and language tasks. Smith and Sandilands (2021)

and Lee and Kendeou (2020) support the role of storytelling in improving attention and active listening. Martinez and Wilkinson (2021) highlighted that expressive and interactive narratives increase learner motivation, while Nguyen and McLean (2024) found that structured storytelling promotes narrative comprehension through context, sequence, and causal relationships. However, Baker and Scher (2023) emphasized that cause-and-effect understanding requires guided questioning and modeling. Demir and Guven (2022) and Nguyen and McLean (2024) also show that retelling and vocabulary development require scaffolding, repetition, and explicit instruction.

3.1.4 Level of Participation of Grade 1 Learners

The level of participation of Grade 1 learners during creative storytelling activities was rated Moderately Participated, with an average weighted mean of 2.73. Learners participated most in expressing ideas or opinions about the story, showing emotions or reactions to story events, and unlocking difficult words in the story. The lowest-rated indicators were formulating comprehension questions, summarizing story events, and participating in group storytelling discussions. The results suggest that learners are more comfortable with expressive and emotional participation than with cognitively demanding tasks. Alves and Pereira (2024) found that young learners engage more when teachers provide supportive prompts for expressing interpretations. Baker and Scher (2023) emphasized that emotional engagement strengthens narrative involvement. Nguyen and McLean (2024) also noted that learners participate better in vocabulary activities when these are embedded in meaningful story contexts. However, Demir and Guven (2022, Smith and Sandilands (2021), and Lee and Kendeou (2020) indicate that question formulation, summarization, and group discussion require explicit modeling, guided frameworks, smaller group arrangements, and teacher encouragement.

3.1.5 Impact of Creative Storytelling as Perceived by Teachers

Teachers rated the extent of impact of creative storytelling on listening skills as Moderate Impact, with an average weighted mean of 3.29. The highest-rated indicators were helping learners understand the message or lesson of the story after listening, enhancing listening comprehension, and improving attention span. The lowest-rated indicators were identifying the problem and solution in the story, predicting what will happen next, and responding correctly to questions about the story. These findings indicate that creative storytelling has stronger impact on basic comprehension, attention, and understanding of story messages than on inferential and analytical listening tasks. Demirbas and Sahin (2022) and Nguyen and McLean (2024) support the idea that structured and creatively narrated stories help learners understand key messages through repetition, context, and guided discussion. Akdamar and Suktu (2021) also explained that storytelling strengthens comprehension through active listening and interpretation of narrative flow. Smith and Sandilands (2021) further noted that expressive storytelling techniques sustain attention. However, Baker and Scher (2023), Lee and Kendeou (2020), and Demir and Guven (2022) show that identifying problem-solution structures, predicting outcomes, and answering story-related questions require scaffolding, teacher modeling, cues, and guided practice.

3.1.6 Impact of Creative Storytelling as Perceived by School Administrators

School administrators also rated the extent of impact of creative storytelling as Moderate Impact, with an average weighted mean of 3.27. The highest-rated indicators were enhancing learners' listening comprehension, improving learners' ability to remember important story details, and improving learners' ability to predict what will happen next in the story. The lowest-rated indicators were helping learners understand the message or lesson of the story, helping learners respond correctly to questions, and making it easier for learners to understand ideas in the story. The findings show that school administrators viewed creative storytelling as useful for comprehension, memory, and prediction, but less sufficient for abstract understanding and accurate question response. Akdamar and Suktu (2021) reported that creative storytelling promotes active listening and deeper understanding when combined with expressive narration and guided questioning. Nguyen and McLean (2024) emphasized that repeated exposure and guided recall improve retention of story details. Lee and Kendeou (2020) explained that prediction skills develop when teachers model thinking aloud and provide cues. Smith and Sandilands (2021) further emphasized that structured questioning, visual scaffolds, and teacher modeling help learners interpret complex story ideas.

3.2 Challenges Encountered in Creative Storytelling

The problems encountered by Grade 1 teachers in using creative storytelling were rated Moderately Serious, with an average weighted mean of 2.78. The most serious problems were poor discipline during storytelling sessions, very short attention spans among learners, and lack of parental support for storytelling activities at home. The least serious concerns were poor teacher strategies in conducting creative storytelling, individual differences among learners, and limited training or professional development in creative storytelling techniques. These findings indicate that the major barriers to creative storytelling are mostly related to learner behavior, attention, and home reinforcement rather than teacher capability alone. Nguyen and McLean (2024) emphasized the need for structured routines and classroom management strategies during interactive learning. Smith and Sandilands (2021) also highlighted that attention span is critical in listening and comprehension and may be supported through expressive storytelling, focused activities, and breaks. Baker and Scher (2023) reported that parental support through home-based reading and listening activities strengthens comprehension and

attention. Meanwhile, Demir and Guven (2022) and Nguyen and McLean (2024) suggest that professional development, peer collaboration, time allocation, and careful scheduling can further improve storytelling implementation.

3.3 Comparative Perceptions of Teachers and School Administrators

The summary of perceptions showed that teachers rated creative storytelling as Highly Effective, with an average weighted mean of 3.62, while school administrators rated it as Moderately Effective, with an average weighted mean of 3.21. For extent of impact, teachers gave an average weighted mean of 3.29, while school administrators gave 3.27, both categorized as Moderate Impact. The overall ratings indicate that both groups viewed creative storytelling positively, although teachers gave slightly higher ratings for effectiveness. This finding suggests that both respondent groups recognized the instructional value of creative storytelling, but they also viewed it as needing complementary strategies to fully develop listening skills. According to UNESCO (2021), storytelling enhances early childhood listening by allowing learners to process spoken language in meaningful and engaging contexts. However, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2022) emphasized that storytelling alone may not fully develop listening competence unless supported by guided questioning, visual aids, and collaborative learning tasks. Nugraha and Suherdi (2020) similarly found that storytelling improves listening comprehension, engagement, and focus, but optimal listening development occurs when storytelling is combined with other language learning strategies.

3.4 Significant Difference in Perceptions

The t-test results showed no significant difference between the perceptions of Grade 1 teachers and school administrators regarding the level of effectiveness of creative storytelling in enhancing listening skills, with a mean difference of 0.41, t-value of 0.90, and p-value of 0.368. The results also showed no significant difference in their perceptions regarding the extent of impact of creative storytelling, with a mean difference of 0.07, t-value of 0.26, and p-value of 0.795. Since both p-values were greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted. These results mean that teachers and school administrators generally shared similar perceptions regarding the usefulness of creative storytelling in enhancing the listening skills of Grade 1 learners. Although their descriptive ratings differed slightly, the statistical results indicate that both groups agreed that creative storytelling is an effective instructional material for improving listening skills.

3.5 Proposed Intervention Strategies Based on the Findings

Based on the findings, the proposed intervention strategies focused on improving classroom management, attention span, comprehension of theme and sequence, problem-solution identification, retelling skills, memory retention, and vocabulary development. The strategies included classroom management training, use of interactive storytelling techniques such as voice, gestures, and props, provision of sequencing charts and story maps, use of graphic organizers, guided questioning, cause-and-effect matching activities, storytelling support tools such as puppets and visual aids, guided retelling using pictures, audio-visual story libraries, repetition and recall activities, follow-up comprehension questions, vocabulary-rich storybooks, digital resources, vocabulary games, and visual aids. These proposed strategies directly address the weakest areas identified in the results. Since learners showed difficulty in advanced listening tasks such as understanding theme and sequence, identifying problem and solution, retelling, remembering details, and developing vocabulary, the intervention activities emphasize scaffolding, instructional materials, visual supports, repetition, guided questioning, and teacher-facilitated practice. The intervention plan therefore strengthens the use of creative storytelling not only as an engagement tool but also as a structured approach for developing comprehension, recall, vocabulary, and higher-order listening skills.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

Creative storytelling was found to be relevant, useful, applicable, and efficient in enhancing the listening skills of Grade 1 learners in the private elementary schools of Agoo, La Union. The findings showed that learners demonstrated very satisfactory performance in listening attentively, observing discipline, and identifying the main character and setting of the story, while creative storytelling was perceived as highly effective by teachers and moderately effective by school administrators. Learner participation was moderate, the impact of creative storytelling on listening skills was moderate, and the problems encountered, including poor discipline, short attention span, and limited parental support, were considered moderately serious but manageable. There were no significant differences between the perceptions of Grade 1 teachers and school administrators regarding the effectiveness and impact of creative storytelling on learners' listening skills.

The proposed intervention strategies should be adopted and implemented to strengthen the use of creative storytelling in improving the listening skills of Grade 1 learners in the private schools of Agoo, La Union. Teachers should continue using creative storytelling, provide meaningful storytelling activities, closely monitor learners during sessions, and give priority attention to moderately serious challenges through practical solutions. School administrators and teachers should also work together in addressing implementation concerns, while similar studies may be conducted in other settings to validate the findings of the study.

The study was limited to the assessment of creative storytelling in enhancing the listening skills of Grade 1 learners in the private elementary schools of Agoo, La Union during the school year 2025–2026. It involved only eleven Grade 1 teachers and four school administrators, used a descriptive research method, and relied on questionnaire-checklist responses, frequency counts, weighted means, rankings, and t-test results; therefore, the findings are best interpreted within the specific locale, respondents, and research design of the study.

Compliance with ethical standards

This study complied with the PCLU Guidelines on Research Ethics and secured the necessary approval and permission from concerned authorities before data collection. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and respondents were informed of the nature and objectives of the study, including their right to withdraw at any stage. Confidentiality was strictly observed, and all gathered data were used solely for research purposes. The researcher also ensured proper citation and referencing, observed copyright and plagiarism standards, acknowledged the contributions of all individuals and institutions involved, and declared full responsibility for the integrity and originality of the research, with no conflict of interest reported.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, F., Inam, S., & Saif, K. (2023a). The effectiveness of creative storytelling on preschool learners' listening comprehension and vocabulary recall. *International Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 17(2), 112–125.
- Ahmed, F., Inam, S., & Saif, K. (2023b). The impact of creative storytelling on preschoolers' listening comprehension. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 51(2), 115–130.
- Almario, P. (2021). *Narrative-based learning and Filipino learners' listening comprehension*. Phoenix Publishing.
- Alsubaie, A. (2022). Collaborative storytelling and its role in enhancing language comprehension and social interaction. *International Journal of Language Education and Social Studies*, 5(2), 45–60.
- Anderson, J. R. (1984). *Schema theory and the acquisition of knowledge*. Academic Press.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Brandt, H. (2021). *The cognitive power of storytelling in early education*. Academic Press.
- Browning, E., & Simons, R. (2022). The role of storytelling in developing children's listening comprehension. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy Studies*, 12(3), 145–162.
- Castillo, M. E. (2021). Teachers' views on storytelling as a dual tool for language and character formation. *Philippine Journal of Education*, 95(2), 33–47.
- Castro, F. (2020). Challenges in implementing creative storytelling in early language classrooms. *Asian EFL Journal*, 25(4), 78–94.
- Chang, L. (2019). Intonation and rhythm awareness through story listening. *TESOL Quarterly*, 53(2), 412–428.
- Chubko, N., Liu, S., & Martinez, P. (2020). Digital storytelling and constructivist learning in EFL contexts. *Journal of Educational Technology and Literacy Studies*, 12(3), 133–148.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- David, R., & Ortega, C. (2020). Creative storytelling and listening engagement among Grade 1 learners. *Philippine Basic Education Research Journal*, 8(1), 21–37.
- Dela Cruz, M., & Alvarez, J. (2021). Storytelling as an effective pedagogical approach for listening comprehension. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 15(2), 74–92.
- Delos Reyes, C. (2020). Creative storytelling and K–12 curriculum integration. *DepEd Educational Review*, 9(1), 50–65.
- Delos Reyes, C. (2024). Community storytelling for cultural and listening development. *Philippine Education Forum*, 17(2), 133–149.
- Department of Education. (2022). *K to 12 curriculum guide: Language arts and multiliteracies framework*. Department of Education.
- Department of Education. (2023). *Early language, literacy, and numeracy (ELLN) assessment report*. Department of Education.
- Febrianti, D. (2023). Digital storytelling in an English class for very young learners. *Indonesian Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 9(1), 45–56.
- Fisher, A., & Lane, T. (2020). Imaginative learning through storytelling in early literacy. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(3), 265–283.
- Flores, D., & Ramos, M. (2024). Frequency of storytelling and retention through listening. *International Journal of Language Education*, 10(1), 88–103.
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2021). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

- Garcia, L. (2023). Bilingual storytelling as a tool for transitional language learning. *Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 201–215.
- Garcia, L., & Cruz, R. (2021). Interactive storytelling and learner participation in listening activities. *Philippine Journal of Language Education*, 5(4), 47–63.
- Gazioğlu, A., & Karakuş, H. (2023). The effects of multisensory tale-telling on listening skills in early childhood education. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 12(1), 99–118.
- Gonzalez, A., & Chen, W. (2019). Classroom management and storytelling: Pedagogical perspectives. *International Review of Education Management*, 33(2), 188–204.
- Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2000). The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(5), 701–721. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.79.5.701>
- Guevara, R. (2022). Story-driven teaching and its role in enhancing listening and participation among Filipino learners. *Philippine Journal of Language and Literacy Studies*, 6(2), 98–112.
- Hadi, N., Putra, R., & Siregar, A. (2023). Digital musical storytelling and listening comprehension of first graders. *International Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 13(2), 90–106.
- Johansson, P., & Virtanen, A. (2020). Storytelling as a pedagogical strategy for primary school learners: Enhancing attention and comprehension. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 64(3), 321–339.
- Kelly, J., & Stone, P. (2023). Teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of storytelling. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 117, 102–118.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Kubrak, T., & Starostina, Y. (2023). Creative storytelling as an effective tool for developing listening comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology and Practice*, 15(2), 58–74.
- Li, H., & Park, S. (2021). Emotional attachment and listening comprehension in story-based learning. *Early Education Studies*, 14(2), 89–106.
- Lin, D., & Schwartz, A. (2023). Brain activation in storytelling: A multisensory encoding study. *Cognitive Psychology Review*, 15(4), 203–220.
- Loniza, N., Saad, K., & Che Mustafa, N. (2024). The effect of digital storytelling on kindergarteners' listening comprehension. *Malaysian Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 8(1), 55–68.
- Malik, A. (2023). Schema activation through storytelling in enhancing listening comprehension. *Asian EFL Journal*, 25(1), 54–70.
- Mendoza, R. (2020). Teachers' perception of storytelling as a tool for developing listening skills among Grade 1 pupils. *Iloilo Educational Research Journal*, 6(1), 15–30.
- Miller, J. (2022). Emotion and attention in storytelling: A neuroscientific view. *Journal of Cognitive Education*, 19(1), 12–27.
- Morrow, E. (2020). *Effective storytelling techniques in early literacy instruction*. Routledge.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2022). *Future of education and skills 2030: Conceptual learning framework*. OECD.
- Orton, S. T., & Gillingham, A. (1935). *Remedial training for children with specific disability in reading, spelling, and penmanship*.
- Paivio, A. (1971). *Imagery and verbal processes*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Paivio, A. (1986). *Mental representations: A dual coding approach*. Oxford University Press.
- Piaget, J. (1972). *The principles of genetic epistemology*. Routledge.
- Rahman, N., & Wahyuni, F. (2023). Peer-led storytelling as a strategy to enhance listening and speaking skills. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 18(1), 33–49.
- Reyes, A. (2019). Storytelling as culturally responsive teaching for Filipino learners. *Philippine Education Quarterly*, 11(2), 98–113.
- Reyes, A., & Bautista, M. (2022). Emotional engagement and listening accuracy in storytelling. *Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 10(3), 178–194.
- Reyes, A., & Dela Cruz, M. (2024). Storytelling corners: A school-based listening enhancement program. *Philippine Journal of Educational Innovations*, 14(1), 22–40.
- Rivera, D., & Thompson, M. (2021). The impact of creative storytelling on listening comprehension. *International Journal of Linguistics and Education*, 26(2), 155–169.
- Rost, M. (2020). *Teaching and researching listening* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Royani, D., Herlina, T., & Rustandi, A. (2024). Digital storytelling and listening comprehension in senior high school students. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 11(4), 200–214.
- Santos, E., & Velasco, J. (2023). Digital storytelling interventions for listening skill enhancement. *Educational Innovations in the Philippines*, 7(2), 93–110.
- Sevtiana, D., Hatim, L., & Septeyawan, E. (2023). The effects of storytelling method on Grade 2 students' listening skills. *Journal of Primary Education Research*, 5(2), 67–83.
- Sonda, B., Fatkurochman, A., & Nurkamilah, R. (2024). Improving EFL learners' listening comprehension through storytelling. *Indonesian EFL Research Journal*, 10(1), 25–40.

- Soni, A. (2021). Storytelling as a tool for literacy and listening development. *Journal of Early Literacy Studies*, 7(1), 12–24.
- Susilowati, S. (2009). The effect of storytelling on the listening skills of fifth-grade pupils. *Indonesian Journal of Basic Education*, 4(2), 99–112.
- Türel, V. (2023). Learners' perceptions towards dual-coding in adaptive hypermedia environments: Listening texts, keywords and visuals. *Journal of Learning and Teaching in Digital Age*, 8(1), 32–46. <https://doi.org/10.53850/joltida.1083583>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2021). *Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education*. UNESCO Publishing.
- Vandergrift, L. (2021). Active listening as a core of early literacy. *Language Education Today*, 30(1), 8–23.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Wati, L., Nugraha, F., & Rizwan, A. (2024). Digital storytelling and listening skill improvement among learners. *Journal of Educational Media and Technology*, 12(1), 50–63.
- Wilson, S. (2021). Storytelling as a semiotic tool in early education. *International Journal of Early Literacy Development*, 9(2), 30–45.
- Yulianawati, R. (2024). Storytelling and reading engagement in elementary students. *Asian Journal of Child Learning and Development*, 14(2), 133–148.