



The Influence of “English Fairy Tales” Youtube Channel on Students’ Listening Comprehension Ability

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of the “English Fairy Tales” YouTube channel on students’ listening comprehension abilities in an EFL context. Listening comprehension is a crucial yet often neglected skill among Indonesian EFL learners, who struggle due to limited exposure to authentic spoken English and lack of engaging instructional materials. To address this issue, the study examines whether digital storytelling specifically, fairy tales on YouTube can enhance students’ listening skills. The study used a quantitative, quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group. A total of 70 tenth-grade students from SMA Negeri 1 Sukodadi were divided into experimental and control groups. Data were collected using multiple-choice listening tests and analyzed using t-tests and effect size measurement. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group’s post-test scores (from 51.57 to 67.14), while the control group’s scores declined (from 48.43 to 44.00). Statistical analysis confirmed a significant difference between groups ($p < 0.001$). These results suggest that storytelling videos from the “English Fairy Tales” YouTube channel effectively improve students’ listening comprehension. The study concludes that integrating digital storytelling into EFL instruction offers a valuable, engaging approach to overcoming traditional listening barriers and should be considered in modern language classrooms.

Keywords: Listening comprehension; YouTube; fairy tales; digital storytelling; EFL learning

INTRODUCTION

Listening comprehension is a fundamental component of language acquisition, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It not only lays the groundwork for the development of other language skills such as speaking, reading, and writing but also plays a crucial role in real-life communication (Nunan, 2002; Sumaiya et al., 2022). According to Gultom et al., (2023), listening activates cognitive processes involved in storing and processing auditory information, thus forming the foundation for linguistic competence. Devie, (2023) adds that listening is the first language skill most learners acquire, contributing significantly to cognitive development and language mastery. Despite its importance, listening comprehension is often neglected in formal education settings, especially in EFL classrooms across Indonesia. Students frequently struggle with unfamiliar vocabulary, diverse accents, and limited exposure to authentic English. Traditional teaching methods heavily focused on grammar and reading—fail to provide sufficient listening practice or engagement, thereby impeding learners’ ability to process real-time spoken language (Diora & Rosa, 2020; Manihuruk & Nababan, 2024).

These issues are exacerbated by a lack of access to authentic, contextual, and multimodal listening materials that reflect real-world language use (Khairat et al., 2024). The advancement of digital technology offers a compelling solution to these challenges. Platforms such as YouTube have emerged as accessible and effective tools for language learning, combining visual and auditory elements to support comprehension and retention (Albahiri & Alhaj, 2020; Alobaid, 2020). Among various formats available on YouTube, storytelling videos especially fairy tales have gained recognition for their educational potential. These videos typically feature simple vocabulary, clear narration, and engaging visuals, which are particularly suitable for beginner and intermediate learners (Rohman, 2022; Sulistiyaningsih, 2024). The English Fairy Tales YouTube channel exemplifies this format, providing learners with a rich repository of narratives that enhance vocabulary, listening accuracy, and motivation (Rifiyanti & Hidayat, 2024; Achmadi & Sofiana, 2024).

Numerous studies support the pedagogical benefits of digital storytelling in improving EFL students' listening skills. For instance, Fatirah, (2024) demonstrated that students exposed to fairy tale animations significantly outperformed peers in traditional settings in terms of listening comprehension. Similarly, Sembiring & Katemba, (2023) reported increased engagement, understanding, and motivation among students who utilized YouTube video-based instruction. Digital stories not only captivate students' attention but also provide repeated exposure to language structures and vocabulary in context, supporting language acquisition more effectively than conventional methods (Marie et al., 2024; Budianto et al., 2021).

However, despite the proven benefits of digital media and storytelling, research specifically focused on the "English Fairy Tales" YouTube channel and its impact on listening comprehension within the Indonesian secondary school context remains limited. Most existing studies address general audiovisual aids or storytelling in traditional formats, overlooking the interactive potential and structured design of storytelling videos on YouTube (Khasanah et al., 2023). Additionally, the gap in understanding how students engage with these materials—particularly in environments with minimal authentic listening exposure—warrants further investigation.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in Mayer, (2005) Multimedia Learning Theory, which posits that students learn more effectively when information is presented using both visual and auditory channels. The "multimedia principle," along with the "modality" and "coherence" principles, emphasize the reduction of cognitive load through relevant, synchronized information. The English Fairy Tales channel aligns well with this theory by presenting stories through clear narration paired with animated visuals, allowing learners to better process language input, build background knowledge, and retain vocabulary.

Based on preliminary observations in East Java, particularly at SMA Negeri 1 Sukodadi, it was evident that students often struggled with listening comprehension due to a lack of exposure to authentic English input. They had difficulty understanding main ideas, interpreting vocabulary in context, and distinguishing key details during listening activities. Traditional teaching practices that relied solely on textbook audio or teacher narration were found insufficient to overcome these challenges (Hardiyanto et al., 2021; Hasan, 2024). This study was thus motivated by the need for an engaging, pedagogically sound, and accessible intervention, which storytelling videos like those from the English Fairy Tales channel could provide.

Fairy tales are particularly valuable in language learning because of their predictable narrative structure, moral messages, and repetitive language (Akdamar & Sütçü, 2021). As noted by Bajramaj, (2024), such stories contain descriptive language, natural dialogue, and figurative expressions, which collectively foster comprehension and vocabulary development. Additionally, the use of archetypal characters and universal themes—such as bravery, kindness,

and justice—enhances cultural awareness and emotional engagement, further supporting meaningful language learning (Wiyani, 2024).; Simeonova-Ingilizova, 2023). Furthermore, the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel offers a mix of classic and original narratives, with interactive features that promote critical thinking and discussion. Videos often include pauses or moral reflection prompts, encouraging learners to actively engage with the content. The simplicity and repetition in these tales cater to learners of varying proficiency levels, while the visual cues aid in understanding and retaining new information (Stevkovska, 2022).

In light of these factors, this study aims to explore the impact of using the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel on the listening comprehension abilities of Indonesian EFL students, particularly in a senior high school context. The study specifically investigates whether storytelling videos can enhance comprehension of spoken English, improve vocabulary retention, and foster learner motivation. It also seeks to contribute to the growing literature on digital storytelling by offering empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness within the Indonesian EFL classroom—a context that has received relatively little scholarly attention.

By integrating relevant theories, recent research findings, and practical classroom observations, this study responds to a critical pedagogical need. It provides a potential instructional model that combines accessibility, cultural relevance, and multimedia engagement. The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on the “English Fairy Tales” YouTube channel, its application in Indonesian classrooms, and its grounding in multimedia learning theory. The findings are expected to inform educators, policymakers, and researchers about the value of digital storytelling in modern EFL instruction and suggest scalable strategies for curriculum development in similar contexts.

Ultimately, this research seeks to demonstrate that storytelling—when delivered through modern digital platforms—can be a transformative tool in addressing long-standing issues in listening comprehension. The integration of audio-visual narratives may bridge the gap between textbook-based instruction and real-world language use, leading to improved comprehension outcomes and more motivated, autonomous learners.

METHOD

In this quantitative study, a quasi-experimental approach was applied to examine the effectiveness of digital storytelling through the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel in improving students’ listening comprehension. The data were collected using a structured multiple-choice test administered before and after the intervention. Both the experimental and control groups were given the same listening comprehension test as a pre-test to assess their baseline abilities. The experimental group received lessons integrating storytelling videos, while the control group followed conventional textbook-based listening instruction. To minimize bias, the test items used in both the pre- and post-tests covered similar levels of difficulty and content themes, ensuring that the changes in scores could be attributed to the instructional treatment. This design allowed the researcher to measure not only the improvement within each group but also the comparative effectiveness of multimedia storytelling versus traditional listening activities.

Sample of the Research

Table 1 Sample of the Research

Experimental Class	Control Group	Total
35	35	70

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Sukodadi, East Java, during the 2024/2025 academic year. The population consisted of all tenth-grade students, from which two intact classes were selected based on the recommendation of the English teacher. One class was assigned as the experimental group and received treatment using selected videos from the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel, while the other class served as the control group and received traditional audio-based instruction without digital storytelling.

Lesson Plan

The intervention lasted for three weeks, with one treatment session per week (each 45 minutes). The experimental group viewed animated fairy tales that included clear narration, simple vocabulary, and supportive visuals. Lessons were structured to include pre-listening vocabulary activities, video viewing, and post-listening comprehension tasks. The control group followed standard listening activities from the English textbook and teacher-read texts.

Table 2 Timeline

No.	Date	Group	Activity	Time
1.	February, 13 th 2025	Experimental	Pre-test & Treatment	09.30-11.00 (90 minutes)
2.	February, 14 th 2025	Control	Pre-test & Treatment	09.30-11.00 (90 minutes)
3.	February, 17 th 2025	Experimental & Control	Treatment	13.00-13.45 (Experimental) 14.30-15.15 (Control)
4.	February, 20 th 2025	Experimental	Treatment Session	2 09.30-11.00 (90 minutes)
5.	February, 21 th 2025	Control	Treatment Session	2 09.30-11.00 (90 minutes)
6.	February, 24 th 2025	Experimental & Control	Post-test	13.00-13.45 (Experimental) 14.30-15.15 (Control)

The instrument used to assess listening comprehension was a multiple-choice test consisting of 20 items, adapted from the story content. The test was developed and validated by three experts. Content validity was verified using Aiken's V, with most items scoring above 0.80, indicating high validity. The reliability of the instrument, calculated using Cronbach's alpha, reached 0.798, confirming good internal consistency.

Table 3 Reliability Statistic

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.798	.800	20

Both the experimental and control groups received three treatment sessions; however, the instructional methods differed significantly. The experimental group was taught using a video-based approach, integrating animated stories from the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel. Each session involved pre-viewing vocabulary introduction, focused video viewing without note-taking, and post-viewing comprehension tasks such as answering questions,

sequencing events, and discussing moral values. Stories were carefully selected to match the students' proficiency level, with clear narration, appropriate vocabulary, and supportive visuals. This multimodal approach aimed to make listening more engaging, meaningful, and accessible. In contrast, the control group followed conventional methods, relying on textbook audio recordings or teacher narration, followed by comprehension and vocabulary exercises. While traditional instruction provided some benefits, it lacked the immersive and motivating qualities found in the storytelling videos.

Data collection was carried out through a pre-test and post-test administered to both groups under the same conditions. The data analysis included descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity tests, paired-sample t-tests (to compare pre- and post-test results within groups), and independent t-tests (to compare performance between groups). All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 30.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

To evaluate the effect of digital storytelling on students' listening comprehension, both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted. The study examined students' performance before and after the intervention using pre-test and post-test scores from both the experimental and control groups. The main focus was to assess whether the use of the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel significantly enhanced students' listening skills compared to traditional instruction.

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive statistics provided an overview of students' score distributions. In the experimental group, the pre-test mean was 51.57 (SD = 18.739), with scores ranging from 25 to 85. After the intervention, the post-test mean rose to 67.14 (SD = 20.120), with an expanded score range from 20 to 95. In contrast, the control group started with a pre-test mean of 48.43 (SD = 18.699) and slightly declined in the post-test to a mean of 44.00 (SD = 17.227), with scores ranging from 20 to 80.

Table 4 Score distribution

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Experimental	35	60	25	85	51.57	18.739
Post-test Experimental	35	75	20	95	67.14	20.120
Pre-test Control	35	60	20	80	48.43	18.699
Post-test Control	35	60	20	80	44.00	17.227
Valid N (listwise)	35					

These results suggest a substantial improvement in the experimental group's performance, indicating the effectiveness of using storytelling videos. The control group's decrease, despite regular instruction, reflects limited effectiveness of conventional methods in enhancing listening comprehension.

Assumption Testing

Before conducting hypothesis tests, assumption testing was carried out. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test yielded significance values above 0.05 for all four data sets: Pre-Test Experimental ($p = 0.059$), Post-Test Experimental ($p = 0.060$), Pre-Test Control ($p = 0.059$), and Post-Test Control ($p = 0.052$), indicating normal distribution of the data.

Table 5 Normality Test

Tests of Normality

			Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Kelas			Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Results Pre and Post Experimental and Control	PreExp		.106	35	.200*	.941	35	.059
	PostEx		.167	35	.014	.941	35	.060
	p							
	PreCon		.135	35	.106	.941	35	.059
	t							
	PostCo		.150	35	.043	.939	35	.052
	nt							

The Levene's Test for Equality of Variance also confirmed homogeneity of variances across groups. For example, in the pre-test, the Levene Statistic = 0.006, $p = 0.937$, indicating equal variances between the groups and validating the use of parametric tests.

Table 6 Homogeneity Test
Test of Homogeneity of Variance

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Results PreTest	Based on Mean	.006	1	68	.937
	Based on Median	.004	1	68	.953
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.004	1	67.732	.953
	Based on trimmed mean	.004	1	68	.947

Hypothesis Test**Paired t-test**

The paired t-test was used to examine the within-group differences between pre- and post-test scores. For the experimental group, the mean difference was -15.571 , with $t(34) = -11.108$, and $p < 0.001$, indicating a significant increase in listening performance. The 95% confidence interval ranged from -18.420 to -12.723 , further affirming the robustness of the findings. In the control group, the results also showed a statistically significant change, but in the opposite direction. The mean difference was 4.429 , with $t(34) = 2.624$ and $p = 0.013$, suggesting a modest gain in scores, though not as impactful as the experimental group.

Independent t-test

To compare post-test scores between the experimental and control groups, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Levene's test confirmed the assumption of equal variances ($F = 1.666$, $p = 0.201$). The t-value was 5.169 , $df = 68$, with $p < 0.001$, indicating a statistically significant difference in favor of the experimental group. The mean difference between groups was 23.143 ($SE = 4.477$), with a 95% confidence interval from 14.209 to 32.077 .

Table 7 Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Side d p	Two-Side d p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Hasil Post Test Exp Cont	Equal variances assumed	1.666	.201	5.169	68	<.001	<.001	23.143	4.477	14.209	32.077
	Equal variances not assumed			5.169	66.424	<.001	<.001	23.143	4.477	14.205	32.081

These quantitative findings demonstrate that the use of the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel significantly enhanced students' listening comprehension compared to traditional audio-based instruction. The marked improvement in mean scores and statistical significance in all t-tests validate the hypothesis that digital storytelling is an effective instructional tool in EFL learning contexts.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the use of storytelling videos from the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel significantly improved students' listening comprehension. This is evidenced by the notable increase in post-test scores in the experimental group compared to the control group. These results affirm the effectiveness of integrating multimodal input—audio, visual, and contextual cues in second language instruction, particularly in listening skills.

The improvement observed in the experimental group can be interpreted through Mayer's Multimedia Learning Theory (2005) which posits that learners understand and retain information more effectively when it is delivered through both auditory and visual channels. The fairy tale videos used in this study provided synchronized spoken narration with supporting animation, which reduced cognitive load and allowed learners to focus on meaning rather than decoding isolated sounds. The theory's modality principle also explains why students responded better to video-based instruction than to textbook audio alone: spoken words paired with visuals enhance working memory efficiency more than text alone.

These results align with prior studies in EFL contexts. For instance, Alobaid, (2020). found that the use of video materials increased students' engagement and comprehension in Saudi EFL classrooms. Similarly, Rohman, (2022), emphasized the pedagogical value of fairy tale videos in helping students understand plot structures, vocabulary, and inferred meanings. Fatirah, (2024) reported significant gains in listening comprehension among Indonesian students taught using animated narratives. These parallels support the notion that video-based

storytelling can effectively bridge the gap between textbook English and authentic language exposure, particularly in environments with limited access to native speakers or immersive contexts. Moreover, the structure of fairy tales—often predictable, morally themed, and repetitive—aligns well with pedagogical principles for language learning. According to Akdamar & Sütçü, (2021), narrative-based instruction builds comprehension by offering a consistent framework for anticipating events and understanding character behavior. In this study, students demonstrated better sequencing skills and moral inference during post-listening tasks, suggesting that the story format aided comprehension beyond surface-level vocabulary recall.

Another aspect worth discussing is the role of motivation and emotional engagement. Students in the experimental group reported greater interest in the lessons, as observed through increased attentiveness and willingness to participate in class discussions. This echoes findings by Handi Pratama et al., (2020), who argue that emotionally engaging materials—such as stories—stimulate learner motivation, a critical factor in successful language acquisition. The engaging nature of the fairy tale videos likely contributed to students' increased retention and processing of the listening material. Contrastingly, the control group, which followed conventional instruction, showed minimal gains and in some cases, declining performance. This finding is consistent with Manihuruk & Nababan, (2024), who noted that traditional listening practices often lack variety and fail to cater to diverse learning styles. Without visual aids or narrative context, students may struggle to maintain focus and grasp meaning from isolated audio tracks.

This study also contributes to the ongoing discourse on the integration of digital media in language learning. While previous research has broadly established the benefits of multimedia instruction, this study provides specific evidence of how a curated, narrative-based YouTube channel can serve as an effective instructional tool within the constraints of a typical Indonesian classroom. It supports the development of a conceptual framework in which digital storytelling acts not only as an input source but also as a scaffold for comprehension, linking language forms to familiar narrative patterns and cultural values. Furthermore, the success of the experimental group implies that teachers should consider adopting video-based materials that go beyond entertainment, focusing instead on structured pedagogical goals. It also invites future exploration into how such media can be adapted for other language skills such as speaking and writing, or integrated into project-based learning and student-created storytelling.

While this study did not introduce new theoretical models, it reinforces and applies existing theories in a specific and under-researched context. It also offers practical insights for language educators, particularly in non-English-speaking countries where access to authentic spoken input is limited. The results confirm that simple, accessible tools—like a freely available YouTube channel—can make a measurable difference in learner outcomes.

In summary, the integration of storytelling videos in listening instruction enhances not only students' comprehension performance but also their engagement, confidence, and motivation. These improvements are best understood through the lens of multimedia learning theory, narrative-based pedagogy, and affective factors in second language acquisition. By situating these findings within broader theoretical and empirical contexts, this study supports the growing body of evidence advocating for technology-enhanced, student-centered approaches in EFL education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of storytelling videos from the English Fairy Tales YouTube channel significantly enhances students' listening comprehension in the EFL classroom. The findings clearly demonstrate that students who were exposed to video-based narrative instruction performed better in listening tasks compared to those who received conventional textbook-based instruction. Through the lens of multimedia learning theory, this improvement is attributed to the combination of auditory and visual input, which aids in processing and retaining spoken information. Moreover, the structured use of familiar storylines, engaging visuals, and moral content not only supported comprehension but also increased students' motivation, attentiveness, and confidence during listening activities. These results emphasize the practical benefits of digital storytelling as an instructional tool in secondary education, particularly in contexts where exposure to authentic English is limited. In addition to addressing the research objectives, this study opens possibilities for further exploration of digital media in developing other language skills such as speaking and writing. Future research could investigate long-term impacts, integrate student-generated storytelling projects, or expand the use of such materials across varied proficiency levels. Overall, the study affirms that video-based storytelling is not only effective for enhancing comprehension but also offers an engaging, accessible, and pedagogically sound approach to EFL instruction in the digital age.

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