



EFFORTS TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LISTENING ABILITIES THROUGH THE STORYTELLING METHOD USING HAND PUPPETS

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Abstract

This study aims to improve the listening skills of group B children at TK IT BUNAYYA 7 through the application of storytelling methods with hand puppets. The background of this study is based on the low listening skills of children who tend to be passive, easily distracted, and have difficulty responding to story questions. The research method used is the Classroom Action Research (CAR) model of Kemmis and McTaggart which was carried out in two cycles. The research subjects consisted of 15 children in group B. Data collection techniques included observation, field notes, and documentation. The results of the study showed a significant increase in children's listening skills. In the pre-cycle stage, the average percentage of children's listening ability indicator completion was only 34.75%. After being given action in Cycle I, the average percentage value increased to 60.0%. Optimal improvement was achieved in Cycle II with an average percentage value reaching 83.35%, which means it has successfully exceeded the success indicator set at 80%. Children became more focused, able to understand the storyline, name characters, and respond to questions actively. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the application of the storytelling method using hand puppets has proven effective in improving the listening skills of early childhood children.

Keywords: Listening Skills, Storytelling Method, Hand Puppet Media, Early Childhood.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a crucial early stage in the development of a child's basic skills, including language, cognitive, social, and emotional abilities. During early childhood, children experience a golden age, a period of rapid brain development, and a heightened sensitivity to various learning stimuli. According to Suyanto (2022), early childhood education aims to provide appropriate stimulation to ensure optimal development of all aspects of a child's development, preparing them for the next level of education.

One crucial aspect of language development in early childhood is listening skills. Listening skills are the foundation for other language skills, such as speaking, reading, and writing. According to Tarigan (2023), listening is the process of actively listening to understand, interpret, and give meaning to verbal messages. Children with good listening skills will more easily understand instructions, absorb information, and respond appropriately to communication in learning activities and social interactions.

The importance of listening skills in early childhood has been demonstrated by various studies. Research conducted by Fitriani and Nurhayati (2021) found that good listening skills significantly influence children's success in various aspects of development, including language skills, intelligence, and readiness for primary education. Children with strong listening skills demonstrate faster progress in vocabulary mastery, conceptual understanding, and overall communication skills.

In line with this, Susanti and Rohaeti (2020) in their research emphasized that listening skills in early childhood are not merely passively receiving sounds, but rather an active process involving information processing, constructing meaning, and developing critical thinking from an early age. This ability is the primary foundation for the development of children's linguistic intelligence and requires serious attention from educators and parents. Without a strong listening foundation, children will struggle to understand instructions, follow lessons, and communicate effectively.

Meanwhile, according to Wahyuni and Kristanto (2022), appropriate stimulation of listening skills from an early age has been shown to have a significant positive impact on children's overall language development. Children who receive adequate listening stimulation demonstrate broader vocabulary development, better language comprehension, and more fluent speaking skills compared to children who receive less stimulation. These findings reinforce the urgency of prioritizing listening skills development in early childhood education.

However, in practice, early childhood listening skills often do not develop optimally. Many children have difficulty focusing, are easily distracted, and struggle to understand the content of stories or messages conveyed by teachers. According to Susanto (2022), children's poor listening skills can be caused by a lack of varied learning methods, monotonous material delivery, and minimal use of engaging learning media.

Storytelling is an effective learning method for developing children's language skills, including listening skills. Storytelling is a way of conveying messages or learning materials through stories that are structured in a coherent and engaging manner. According to Musfiroh (2022), storytelling can train children to listen attentively, understand the story's content, and develop their imagination and thinking skills.

The effectiveness of storytelling in early childhood learning has been extensively studied by various researchers. Putri and Setyaningsih (2021) found that consistent and planned implementation of storytelling can improve children's language skills, particularly in listening and speaking. Storytelling allows children to learn through meaningful narratives, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective. Children show high enthusiasm when learning is conducted using engaging storytelling.

Another study supporting this finding was conducted by Anggraini and Wijayanti (2020), who found that children who learned through storytelling demonstrated significant improvements in their listening skills compared to those who learned using conventional methods. Engaging stories motivate children to listen attentively, understand the storyline, and actively respond to the story. Storytelling has also been shown to be effective in building children's memory of the information presented.

Hapsari and Kurniawati (2022) explain that storytelling not only serves as a means of developing language skills but also as a medium for instilling character and moral values in early childhood. Through stories containing positive values, children learn to understand the concepts of right and wrong, develop empathy, and build good character. This demonstrates that storytelling has extensive benefits for children's holistic development. For storytelling to work optimally, learning media are needed that can capture children's attention and focus their concentration. One effective medium for storytelling is hand puppets. Hand puppets are a visual and concrete medium that can bring stories to life and make the storytelling process more engaging and interactive. According to Arsyad (2023), visual and manipulative learning media can increase children's attention span and help them better understand the learning message.

The benefits of using hand puppets as a learning medium have been demonstrated through various studies. Rahayu and Sujana (2021) concluded that using hand puppets as a storytelling medium significantly improves children's listening skills. Hand puppets capture children's attention due to their visual and movable nature, resulting in more focused, enthusiastic, and actively engaged listening. Research by Pratiwi and Nugroho (2020) shows that hand puppets are effective in improving children's concentration and focus during the learning process. Through the movements, expressions, and dialogue portrayed by hand puppets, children become more emotionally engaged in the story, thus optimally developing their listening skills. Hand puppets have also been shown to reduce children's boredom during storytelling.

Furthermore, Marlina and Sari (2022) stated that hand puppets are a highly suitable learning medium for early childhood education due to their concrete, engaging nature and ability to actively engage children. The use of hand puppets in learning can simultaneously stimulate children's expressive and receptive language development, thereby developing their communication skills holistically. Based on initial observations, it was found that children's listening skills were still relatively low, indicated by a lack of attention when the teacher was telling a story, frequent self-talk, and a lack of ability to answer simple questions related to the story. The storytelling activities carried out by teachers tended to not utilize engaging learning media, resulting in children easily becoming bored and losing focus. This

situation indicates the need for more creative and innovative efforts in learning to improve children's listening skills.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that the storytelling method using hand puppets has great potential to improve children's listening skills. Therefore, the study, entitled "Efforts to Improve Children's Listening Skills Through the Storytelling Method Using Hand Puppets," is important to conduct in-depth to examine the process of implementing this method and its impact on improving children's listening skills.

RESEARCH METHODS

Study This use Classroom Action Research (CAR) with the Kemmis and McTaggart model which includes four stage , namely planning , implementation action , observation , and reflection . PTK aims For improve and enhance quality learning through actions taken in a way systematic and reflective (Arikunto , 2021). Research implemented in two cycles , with possibility addition cycle if indicator success Not yet achieved . Subject study is child Group B (ages 5–6 years) at IT Bunayya 7 Kindergarten, Deli Serdang Regency , North Sumatra, which consists of around 15–20 children . Selection subject based on the results observation the beginning that shows that ability listening child Still need improved . Research implemented in the even semester Year Academic Year 2025/2026 at IT Bunayya 7 Kindergarten, located at Jalan Perhubungan , Tembung , District Percut Sei Tuan, Deli Serdang Regency , North Sumatra. Research location chosen Because in accordance with focus research and support implementation action designed learning .

Before the action was carried out, the researcher conducted initial observations in the pre-research stage. At this stage, the researcher observed the listening skills of children in Group B during the learning process, especially during storytelling activities. Observations were made by recording the children's level of attention to the story told by the teacher, the children's ability to answer simple questions related to the story's content, and the children's level of concentration and engagement during the activity. In addition, the researcher also observed the methods and media used by the teacher in storytelling activities to assess their suitability with the developmental characteristics of children aged 5–6 years. The results of the observations showed that children's listening skills were still relatively low, indicated by many children who paid little attention when the teacher told stories, often talked to themselves, and had difficulty answering simple questions about the story's content. The storytelling activities carried out were also not supported by interesting learning media, so children easily became bored and lost focus. Based on these findings, this study focused on efforts to improve children's listening skills through the application of storytelling methods using hand puppets as media that are more interesting, interactive, and appropriate to the developmental characteristics of early childhood.

In cycle I, stage planning done with Developing a Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH) that includes the application of storytelling methods using hand puppets to improve children's listening skills. Researchers also prepared hand puppets, compiled story scripts appropriate to the theme and characteristics of children aged 5–6 years, and prepared observation sheets as instruments to measure the development of children's listening skills during learning.

The implementation stage of the action is carried out through storytelling activities using hand puppets integrated into the RPPH (Lesson Plan and Lesson Plan). The activity begins with apperception and an introduction to the hand puppets to capture children's attention. Next, the teacher tells the story with engaging expressions, movements, and intonation, engaging the children through simple questions and answers related to the story's content. At the end of the activity, the teacher asks questions, provides appreciation, and summarizes the story with the children before closing the lesson.

During the observation phase, researchers conducted direct and systematic observations of the development of children's listening skills during the storytelling method using hand puppets. Observations were conducted throughout the learning process, recording various behaviors that demonstrated children's listening skills, such as attention to the story, ability to answer questions, understanding the story's content, and children's involvement in the learning activities.

The reflection stage was conducted by analyzing and interpreting all data obtained from observations and documentation during the implementation of the action. Researchers evaluated the success rate of the storytelling method using hand puppets based on the achievement of children's listening ability indicators, specifically in the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) and

Developing Very Well (BSB) categories. Furthermore, researchers identified various obstacles that emerged during the learning process, both related to media use and children's responses to the storytelling activity. The results of this reflection were used as a basis for designing improvements and refinements to the action in the next cycle so that the research objectives could be optimally achieved.

In Cycle II, the planning stage began with re-drafting the Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH) by improving learning strategies based on the results of Cycle I reflections. The researcher prepared more varied hand puppet media, more interesting stories, and supporting media in the form of picture cards and question cards to increase children's engagement in listening activities. In addition, the researcher also prepared a more detailed observation sheet to observe the development of children's listening skills during the learning process.

The implementation phase involves applying a refined storytelling method using hand puppets. The activity begins with a brief question and answer session regarding the previous story and an introduction to the new story theme to build children's interest. In the main activity, the teacher tells the story using more varied hand puppets, accompanied by expressive intonation and supporting media to help children understand the storyline. The teacher also pauses at certain points in the story to ask questions and actively engage children in the listening process. As a form of motivation, the teacher awards children who actively participate in the activity. At the end of the lesson, children are invited to retell the story and discuss its moral message before the activity concludes with a prayer and greeting.

During the observation phase, researchers systematically monitored the development of children's listening skills using a prepared observation sheet. Observations focused on children's attention during storytelling activities, their ability to understand and answer questions about the story, and their ability to retell the story. Furthermore, researchers recorded children's spontaneous responses during the lesson and collected documentation as supporting data to assess changes in children's listening skills compared to the results in Cycle I.

During the reflection stage, the researcher and collaborating teacher analyzed and compared the Cycle II observation results with pre-cycle and Cycle I data to determine improvements in children's listening skills. Next, an evaluation was conducted on the achievement of success indicators in the Developing as Expected (BSH) and Developing Very Well (BSB) categories. The reflection results were used to determine the success of the research and the need for follow-up in the next cycle.

The assessment instrument in this study used an observation sheet in the form of a checklist designed to measure children's listening development practically and objectively. Assessment was conducted by placing a checkmark (✓) in the category column that corresponded to the child's listening behavior during storytelling activities using hand puppets. Data from this checklist will be accumulated at each cycle to determine whether the child's success rate has reached the target.

Table 3.1 Research Instruments

No	Indicator	Information			
		BB	MB	BSH	BSB
1	Pay attention when listening to the story	Children are not yet able to pay attention to the story even though the teacher has conditioned them	Children can pay attention to the story with guidance or reminders from the teacher.	Children are able to pay attention to stories independently and consistently.	Children are very focused on paying attention to the story and inviting friends to listen too.
2	Understanding the content of the story	The child is not yet able to understand the content of the story being conveyed	Children can understand the content of the story after receiving a re-explanation from the teacher.	Children are able to understand the content of the story independently and answer questions correctly.	Children are able to understand the content of the story in depth and explain it to friends
3	Mentioning the characters in the story	The child is not yet able to name the characters in the story	Children can name story characters after receiving stimulus from the teacher.	Children are able to name story characters independently and correctly.	Children are able to name all the characters and their characteristics independently.
4	Responding to questions about the story	The child is not yet able to respond to questions about the content of the story.	Children can answer simple questions with the help of teachers.	Children are able to answer questions independently and correctly	Children are able to answer and ask their own questions about the story.

Information:

BB = Score 1 (Not Yet Developed)

MB = Score 2 (Starting to Develop)

BSH = Score 3 (Developing as Expected)

BSB = Score 4 (Very Well Developed)

Data collected through observation, notes fieldwork, and documentation. Observation used For observe ability listening child, note field For take notes incident important during learning and documentation in the form of photos, videos, and document supporters research (Sugiyono, 2022). Data analyzed use analysis descriptive quantitative and qualitative analysis quantitative used For count percentage ability listening children, whereas analysis qualitative used For describe change behavior child during learning. Research stated succeed if reach indicator success by 80%.

Table 3.2 Percentage Qualifications for Increasing Listening Skills in Early Childhood

Percentage	Criteria	Information
85% - 100%	Very high	BSB
75% - <85%	Tall	BSH
50% - <75%	Currently	MB
0% - <50%	Low	BB

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This research was conducted at TK IT BUNAYYA 7 located on Jl. Perhubungan, Tembung, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, in the even semester of the 2025/2026 Academic Year. Based on the results of observations and initial interviews conducted with class teachers at TK IT BUNAYYA 7, the researcher presents data regarding the condition of children's listening skills in group B. This research uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method of the Kemmis and McTaggart model which is implemented in two cycles, with each cycle including four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data collection techniques include observation using checklist sheets, field notes, and documentation, while data analysis is carried out descriptively quantitatively and qualitatively.

**Table 4.1. Initial Data from the Research on Children's Listening Ability
IT BUNAYYA 7 Kindergarten**

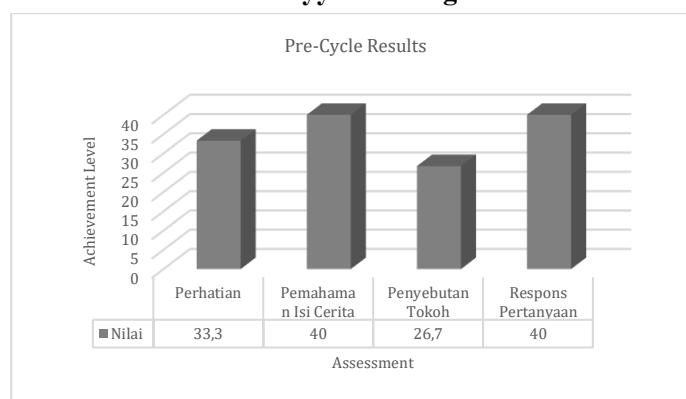
Aspect	Observation & Interview Findings	Kindergarten Teacher & Principal Expectations
Attention listening when	Most children pay less attention when the teacher is telling a story, are easily distracted, and often talk to themselves with friends during the storytelling activity.	Children are able to pay attention to the story with focus and consistency from the beginning to the end of the storytelling activity.
Understanding the content of the story	Children have difficulty answering simple questions about the content of the story, often do not understand the storyline conveyed by the teacher verbally without media.	Children are able to understand the content of the story independently and answer questions given by the teacher correctly.
Mentioning story characters	Children are not yet able to name the characters in the story independently, they are only able to name them if reminded or given instructions by the teacher.	Children are able to name the story characters and their respective roles independently and correctly.
Response questions to	The child is unable to respond to questions about the content of the story, remains silent or gives irrelevant answers when asked by the teacher.	Children actively respond to questions and even dare to ask their own questions about the stories they hear.

Aspect	Observation & Interview Findings	Kindergarten Teacher & Principal Expectations
Learning Activities	Storytelling activities are carried out without interesting media; teachers tell stories orally without visual aids so that children easily get bored and lose focus.	The storytelling method using hand puppets is implemented as a planned strategy to optimally improve children's listening skills.
Constraint	Limited learning media, difficult to condition classroom atmosphere, and children's short attention span are the main obstacles to learning to tell stories.	The availability of interesting hand puppet media and support from teachers and parents to support the learning process.

1. Pre-Cycle Results

In the pre-cycle stage, researchers conducted initial observations on Monday, January 6, 2026 to determine the condition of the listening skills of group B children at TK IT BUNAYYA 7 before being given treatment. Observations focused on four indicators of listening skills, namely: (1) attention when listening to the story, (2) understanding the content of the story, (3) mentioning story characters, and (4) responses to questions about the story. The results of the pre-cycle assessment are presented in the following table.

Figure 4.1 Graph of Pre-Cycle Results of Group B Children's Listening Ability IT Bunayya Kindergarten 7.



Based on the results of pre-cycle observations, it was found that the listening skills of group B children at TK IT BUNAYYA 7 were still very low overall. Of the 15 children, 9 children (60%) were in the BB (Not Yet Developing) category and 6 children (40%) were in the MB (Starting to Develop) category. No children reached the BSH or BSB categories. The average class score only reached 44.2%, which places the children's listening skills in the Low criteria based on the established percentage qualification table.

Table 4.2. Summary of Pre-Cycle Results of Children's Listening Skills IT BUNAYYA 7 Kindergarten

No.	Category	Number of children	Percentage	Information
1	BB (Undeveloped)	9	60%	Score 1
2	MB (Starting to Develop)	6	40%	Score 2
3	BSH (Developing According to Expectations)	0	0%	Score 3
4	BSB (Best Developing)	0	0%	Score 4
Total	Average Class Score	15	44.2%	Low

By indicator, the aspect of attention when listening only reached 33.3% (5 out of 15 children who began to be able to pay attention to the story), the aspect of understanding the content of the story

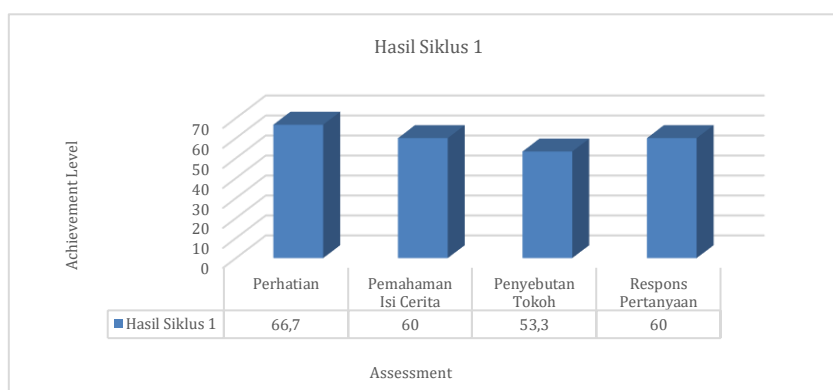
reached 40% (6 children), the aspect of mentioning story characters only 26.7% (4 children), and the aspect of responding to questions reached 40% (6 children). This condition shows that all indicators of children's listening abilities are still far from the target of 80% success. Children appear passive when the teacher tells a story, are easily distracted, and are unable to respond to simple questions about the content of the story. Based on the problems found, the researcher then designed corrective actions through the application of the storytelling method with hand puppets as the media which was implemented in two cycles of CAR.

2. Results of Cycle I

The implementation of Cycle I was carried out on Thursday, January 8, 2026 by applying the storytelling method using hand puppets with the theme "The Rabbit and the Turtle". In this cycle, the teacher introduced two hand puppet characters, namely a white rabbit puppet and a green turtle puppet, to tell a story about friendship and hard work. Children were conditioned to sit in a circle in front of the teacher so that all children could see the hand puppets clearly. The teacher told the story with a variety of interesting voices and expressions for each character. The results of observations of children's listening skills in Cycle I are presented in the following table.

In Cycle I, the implementation of the storytelling method using hand puppets showed a significant improvement compared to the pre-cycle conditions. Of the 15 children, 5 children (33.3%) had reached the BSH category, 8 children (53.4%) were in the MB category, and only 2 children (13.3%) were still in the BB category. The average class score increased to 62.5%, which is in the Moderate criteria. Children appeared more enthusiastic and interested in participating in storytelling activities when the teacher used hand puppets compared to previous storytelling activities carried out without media.

**Figure 4.2 Children's listening skills per indicator in cycle I group B
IT Bunayya Kindergarten 7.**



In Cycle I, the implementation of the storytelling method using hand puppets showed a significant improvement compared to the pre-cycle conditions. Of the 15 children, 5 children (33.3%) had reached the BSH category, 8 children (53.4%) were in the MB category, and only 2 children (13.3%) were still in the BB category. The average class score increased to 62.5%, which is in the Moderate criteria. Children appeared more enthusiastic and interested in participating in storytelling activities when the teacher used hand puppets compared to previous storytelling activities carried out without media.

**Table 4.3. Summary of Cycle I Results of Children's Listening Skills
IT BUNAYYA 7 Kindergarten**

No.	Category	Number of children	Percentage	Information
1	BB (Undeveloped)	2	13.3%	Score 1
2	MB (Starting to Develop)	8	53.4%	Score 2
3	BSH (Developing According to Expectations)	5	33.3%	Score 3
4	BSB (Best Developing)	0	0%	Score 4
Total	Average Class Score	15	62.5%	Currently

By indicator, the aspect of attention when listening reached 66.7% (10 children began to be able to pay attention to the story independently), the aspect of understanding the story content reached 60% (9

children), the aspect of naming story characters reached 53.3% (8 children), and the aspect of responding to questions reached 60% (9 children). Although there was a good increase in all indicators, the target of 80% success has not been achieved. There were still some children who experienced difficulties, especially in the aspect of naming story characters and understanding the deeper content of the story. In addition, some children still seemed shy in responding to teacher questions. Based on the results of the reflection on cycle I, the researcher and collaborating teachers developed improved strategies to be implemented in Cycle II.

The improvements planned for Cycle II include: (1) the use of more varied hand puppets with more interesting colors and expressions; (2) the addition of *the story pause technique* to encourage children to predict the storyline; (3) the use of picture question cards to help children respond to questions; and (4) giving rewards in the form of stars to children who actively listen and answer questions. These improvements are expected to encourage optimal improvement in children's listening skills in the next cycle.

3. Results of Cycle II

The implementation of Cycle II was carried out on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 by applying the storytelling method using hand puppets with the theme "The Diligent Ant and the Lazy Grasshopper". In this cycle, the teacher used three hand puppet characters that were more varied and brightly colored. *The story pause technique* was applied consistently by asking predictive questions in the middle of the story, and picture question cards were used in the final question and answer session. Children were also given the opportunity to hold the hand puppets and try to play their favorite characters in turns, so that children's active involvement increased significantly.

In Cycle II, there was a very significant increase in all aspects of children's listening skills. Of the 15 children, 3 children (20%) successfully reached the BSB category, 9 children (60%) were in the BSH category, 3 children (20%) were still in the MB category, and no more children were in the BB category. The total number of children who achieved BSH and BSB was 80%, so the research success indicator had been achieved. The average class score increased to 83.3%, which is in the Very High criteria. Because the success indicators had been met, the research was declared complete in Cycle II.

Figure 4.3 Children's listening skills per indicator in cycle II of group B, IT Bunayya 7 Kindergarten.



In Cycle II, there was a very significant increase in all aspects of children's listening skills. Of the 15 children, 3 children (20%) successfully reached the BSB category, 9 children (60%) were in the BSH category, 3 children (20%) were still in the MB category, and no more children were in the BB category. The total number of children who achieved BSH and BSB was 80%, so the research success indicator had been achieved. The average class score increased to 83.3%, which is in the Very High criteria. Because the success indicators had been met, the research was declared complete in Cycle II.

Table 4.4. Summary of Results of Cycle II of Children's Listening Skills

IT BUNAYYA 7 Kindergarten				
No.	Category	Number of children	Percentage	Information
1	BB (Undeveloped)	0	0%	Score 1

No.	Category	Number of children	Percentage	Information
2	MB (Starting to Develop)	3	20%	Score 2
3	BSH (Developing According to Expectations)	9	60%	Score 3
4	BSB (Best Developing)	3	20%	Score 4
Total	Average Class Score	15	83.3%	Very high

By indicator, the attention aspect when listening reached 86.7% (13 children), the understanding aspect of the story content reached 80% (12 children), the naming of story characters reached 80% (12 children), and the response aspect to questions reached 86.7% (13 children). All indicators have exceeded the target of 80%. Children who were previously passive and did not dare to respond, in this cycle appeared active in answering questions and there were even some children who independently asked questions about the story. All indicators of listening ability have reached or exceeded the established success threshold.

To see the overall development of children's listening skills from the pre-cycle stage to Cycle II, the data is summarized based on each listening skill indicator. A summary of the improvement in children's listening skills can be seen in the following table.

Table 4.5. Summary of Improvement in Children's Listening Skills from Pre-Cycle, Cycle I, to Cycle II

No	Indicator	Pre Cycle		Cycle I		Cycle II		TCP Count	Average Value (%)
		TCP Child	%	TCP Child	%	TCP Child	%		
1.	Pay attention when listening to the story	5	33.3	10	66.7	13	86.7	28	186.7
2.	Understanding the content of the story	6	40.0	9	60.0	12	80.0	27	180.0
3.	Mentioning story characters	4	26.7	8	53.3	12	80.0	24	160.0
4.	Response to questions	6	40.0	9	60.0	13	86.7	28	186.7
Amount		21	139.0	36	240.0	50	333.4	107	713.4
Average value		5.25	34.75	9.0	60.0	12.5	83.35	26.75	178.35

Information:

TCP = Level of Development Achievement (Number of Children Who Achieve BSH or BSB)

% = Percentage of Completion Per Indicator = $(\text{TCP} \div 15) \times 100\%$

BSH = Developing as Expected (Score 3)

BSB = Very Well Developed (Score 4)

Based on Table 4.5 above, it can be seen that there is an increase in children's listening skills in all indicators from the pre-cycle stage to Cycle II. In the indicator of attention when listening to the story, there was an increase from 33.3% in the pre-cycle to 66.7% in Cycle I and increased again to 86.7% in Cycle II. The indicator of understanding the content of the story increased from 40.0% to 60.0% and reached 80.0% in Cycle II. The indicator of mentioning story characters increased from 26.7% in the pre-cycle to 53.3% in Cycle I and 80.0% in Cycle II. Meanwhile, the indicator of response to questions increased from 40.0% to 60.0% and reached 86.7% in Cycle II. Overall, the average value of children's listening skills increased from 34.75% in the pre-cycle to 60.0% in Cycle I and reached 83.35% in Cycle II. These results show that the application of the storytelling method using hand puppets is effective in improving the listening skills of group B children at IT Bunayya 7 Kindergarten.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pre Cycle

Initial observations showed that the listening skills of group B children at TK IT BUNAYYA 7 were still very low. Of the 15 children, 9 (60%) were in the BB category and 6 (40%) were in the MB category, with an average grade point average of only 44.2%. This condition was characterized by passive behavior during storytelling activities, inability to maintain attention, inability to name story characters, and failure to respond to simple questions posed by the teacher.

This condition aligns with findings by Susanto (2022), who stated that children's poor listening skills can be caused by a lack of varied learning methods, monotonous material delivery, and minimal use of engaging learning media. The storytelling activities carried out by teachers prior to the intervention were conducted only verbally without any media, resulting in children easily getting bored and losing focus. These findings emphasize the need for more structured and enjoyable remedial measures through the implementation of storytelling methods using hand puppets.

Cycle I

The implementation of storytelling using hand puppets in Cycle I showed a significant improvement in children's listening skills. The average class score increased from 44.2% in the pre-cycle to 62.5% in Cycle I. A total of 5 children (33.3%) achieved the BSH category, although none had yet achieved BSB. The most prominent improvement occurred in the aspect of attention when listening, which increased from 33.3% to 66.7%.

This improvement can be explained by Sudjana and Rivai's (2023) statement that hand puppets can attract children's attention and interest due to their visual and movable nature, thus making them more actively involved in the learning process. When the teacher moves the puppets with different expressions and voices for each character, the children appear enthusiastic and riveted to the story. This is also in line with Mayer's (2023) theory on multimedia learning, which states that learning will be more effective when it involves visual and verbal elements simultaneously. The storytelling method presents verbal elements, while the hand puppet media provides visual elements that strengthen children's understanding of the story's content.

However, in Cycle I, there were still several obstacles that needed to be addressed. Some children still appeared hesitant and shy in responding to questions, especially in the aspect of naming story characters, which only reached 53.3%. Furthermore, the 80% success target had not been achieved, requiring strategic improvements in Cycle II. This was consistent with field notes that indicated that the interaction between children and puppets was still one-way, with the teacher actively playing with the puppets while the children tended to simply watch. Therefore, in Cycle II, a more participatory strategy was designed by directly involving children in interactions with the hand puppets.

Cycle II

Cycle II demonstrated the most significant improvement compared to previous stages. The average class score increased from 62.5% to 83.3%, exceeding the 80% success target. Of the 15 students, 12 (80%) achieved the BSH and BSB categories, with 3 (20%) achieving the highest BSB category. No students were in the BB category. All listening skill indicators achieved or exceeded the 80% target.

Significant improvement in Cycle II was largely due to improvements in the strategies implemented, particularly the *story pause technique* and children's direct involvement in playing with hand puppets. Gunarti et al. (2022) stated that hand puppets can be used to actively engage children in storytelling activities, and this active involvement is highly beneficial in increasing children's understanding, motivation, and engagement in the learning process. When children are given the opportunity to hold and play with puppets, they feel part of the story, thereby improving their listening skills naturally and meaningfully.

The effectiveness of the storytelling method using hand puppets at TK IT BUNAYYA 7 is also strongly supported by several important factors. First, the teacher's active and creative role in designing story scripts that are appropriate to the children's age and experience and selecting hand puppets with attractive colors. Second, the consistent use of voice variations, expressions, and puppet movements throughout the story, so that the characters in the story feel alive in front of the children. Third, the application of the *story pause technique* that encourages children to actively think and predict the storyline, training critical thinking skills that are an integral part of the active listening process. Fourth,

a conducive and pleasant classroom atmosphere makes children feel comfortable to respond and participate actively.

These findings are supported by Rahayu and Sujana (2021), who concluded that the use of hand puppets as a storytelling medium significantly improves children's listening skills due to their visual and movable nature, resulting in more focused, enthusiastic, and actively involved children in the storytelling process. Furthermore, research by Pratiwi and Nugroho (2020) also demonstrated that hand puppets are effective in improving children's concentration and focus during the learning process. This finding aligns with the researchers' findings in the field, where children who were previously passive and unable to answer questions appeared more confident, communicative, and able to retell the story concisely by the end of Cycle II.

However, this success was not without several obstacles encountered during the research. Differences in children's character and personality meant that some, especially shy children, still needed extra guidance from teachers in responding to questions. This condition aligns with the opinion of Zakiyah et al. (2024) who stated that each child has different characteristics and levels of development. Limited learning time also hampered the process of in-depth reflection, resulting in uneven improvement in certain aspects among all children. Three children who remained in the MB category at the end of Cycle II required more intensive guidance, both from teachers at school and from parents at home. Therefore, synergy between teachers, parents, and the child's learning environment is essential for optimal and sustainable listening development. Parents play a crucial role in developing children's language skills through language stimulation, storytelling activities, and positive interactions in daily life (Wulansari et al., 2023).

Overall, the results of this classroom action research prove that the storytelling method with hand puppet media consistently and planned is proven to be effective in improving the listening skills of early childhood group B at TK IT BUNAYYA 7. The average increase in children's listening skills from 44.2% in the pre-cycle, increased to 62.5% in Cycle I, and reached 83.3% in Cycle II, with a total increase of 39.1% from the initial condition. This emphasizes that the combination of structured storytelling methods and concrete and interesting hand puppet media is able to create a meaningful, fun, and effective learning experience in optimizing the listening skills of early childhood in accordance with Mayer's multimedia learning theory (2023) and Piaget's concrete learning principles in Suyanto (2022).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Based on results data analysis and discussion in Classroom Action Research that is carried out can be concluded that Implementation method tell a story with puppet media hand proven in a way significant can increase ability listening child Group B at IT BUNAYYA Kindergarten 7 Years Academic Year 2025/2026. Improvement ability listening child happen in a way gradually in each cycle. Initial data (pre-cycle) shows ability listening child still very low with average percentage of indicators only by 34.75 %. After done actions in Cycle I, abilities listening increase to 60.0% even though Not yet achieve the completion target. After done strategy improvements in Cycle II, ability listening child increase optimally reached 83.35 % and succeeded meet completion targets class. Use of puppet media combined hands with various techniques (such as *story pause* and cards question illustrated) success change behavior Study child become more active, enthusiastic, improving concentration, as well as courage child in respond and answer question related content story.

Suggestion

Based on the results and discussion of this study, it is recommended that PAUD/TK teachers consistently apply the storytelling method with hand puppet media, varying the characters, vocal expressions, and the story pause technique, while directly involving children in playing with the puppets to enhance focus and active participation in listening; schools are expected to provide concrete learning media such as hand puppets and picture question cards to support teachers' creativity; parents are encouraged to provide language stimulation at home, particularly for children who still require extra guidance; and future researchers are advised to develop similar studies with a broader scope, more

varied story themes, or combinations with other interactive media to support children's development more comprehensively.

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