



**Sudan University of Science and Technology**  
**College of Graduate studies**  
**College of Education**

**The Effect of Teaching Short Stories on Solving English Language  
Vocabulary Difficulties Encountered by Sudanese  
Undergraduates.**

A Case study of First Year Students –College of Education  
–Sudan University of Science &Technology

اثر تدريس القصص القصيرة في معالجة صعوبات تعلم مفردات اللغة الانجليزية التي  
تواجه الطلاب الجامعيين.

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of PhD in Education (ELT).

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*Dedication*

*To my family*

*To my teachers*

*To my friends*

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## **Abstract**

Many studies in Sudan have investigated vocabulary learning strategies from different perspectives, but few have surveyed the effects of teaching short stories strategy on vocabulary learning. The main concern of the present study is to probe the effects of teaching short stories on solving Sudanese university student vocabulary learning difficulties. The researcher used the descriptive, experimental and analytic methods for data analysis by designing questionnaire which addressed ELT teachers in Khartoum locality to this end, 50 participants were selected from Sudan university of Science and Technology. The participants were randomly assigned to an experimental group that received instruction on using short stories strategy and a controlled group which received no treatment. In order to guarantee the participants' homogeneity, a pretest (PET test) was administered to them. After the treatment, a posttest was administered to the participants to find out the effectiveness of the instruction strategy. For analyzing the data, a T-test was employed. The result of this study has provided significant empirical evidence together with theoretical insights for of vocabulary research..

The study has come out with the following results;

- Vocabulary Learning creates difficulties for the sample of this study.
- The study participants hardly understand the meaning of word from the context.
- The study participants are unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixations and face difficulties in learning synonyms

Based on the above mentioned results the researcher recommends the following:

- Short stories should be taught for solving vocabulary learning difficulties, short stories should be taught widely in tertiary level to enhance students to learn English language vocabulary.
- Short stories those are taught to university student should be selected to help them understand the meaning of the new words within context.

- Short stories should be taught for teaching word affixation and it will be better to teach short stories if the aim is understand the meanings of the new word. **Abstract (Arabic Version)**

### المستخلص

حاول الكثير من الباحثين إيجاد طرق تدريس للمفردات وإيجاد حلول لمعالجه صعوبه تعلمها بمختلف الأوجه. ولكن القليل منهم اتخذ أسلوب تدريس القصص القصيرة في تعليم مفردات اللغة الانجليزية وإيجاد حلول لمعالجة صعوبات تعلمها.

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى إكتشاف أثر تدريس القصص القصيره فى معالجه صعوبات تعليم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزیه بالنسبه للطلاب الجامعي السودانى.

لإنجاز هذا الهدف تكونت عينة الدراسه من 50 طالباً وطالبة من جامعه السودان للعلوم والتكنولوجيا (المستوي الاول) و 30 محاضرا لمادة اللغة الإنجليزیه من جامعات ولاية الخرطوم. استخدم الباحث الاسلوب الوصفي التحليلي التجريبي. كان اختيار عينة الدراسه عشوائياً. استخدم الباحث الاستبانة لجمع البيانات ومعرفة آراء الأساتذہ حول تدريس القصص القصيره. وأيضاً استخدم الباحث أسلوب الأختبار القبلي والبعدى لجمع البيانات من الطلاب، قسم الطلاب إلى مجموعتين. المجموعه الأولى تسمى المجموعه التجريبيه وتدرس مفردات اللغة الإنجليزیه عن طريق القصص القصيره وأما المجموعه الأخرى و تدعى المجموعه القياسيه وتدرس من دون استخدام القصص القصيره. وبعد تحليل البيانات توصلت الدراسه الى النتائج الآتيه:-

- يواجه معظم افراد عينة الدراسه صعوبات فى تعلم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزیه.
- يصعب علي افراد عينة الدراسه فهم معنى مفردات اللغة الانجليزية من خلال السياق.
- لا يستطيع معظم افراد عينة الدراسه التمييز بين اصل الكلمه ومشتقاتهاو يواجه الطالب - المشارك في هذه الدراسه صعوبات فى فهم الكلمه و مترادفاتها.

#### بناءً علي النتائج أعلاه يوصي الباحث بالاتي:

- ينبغي تدريس القصص القصير للطلاب الجامعي السودانى لمعالجه صعوبات المفردات اللغويه.
- يستحسن تدريس القصص القصيره فى المرحلة الجامعيه بصوره واسعه لتعليم المترادفات اللغويه.
- ينبغي إختيار القصة القصيره المراد تدريسها للطلاب للمساعدہ على فهم معنى المفردہ من خلال السياق.
- لتدريس الإضافات ينبغي تدريس القصص القصيره للطلاب الجامعى -
- يستحسن تدريس القصص القصيره للطلاب الجامعى السودانى لمعالجه صعوبات تعلم المفردات - اللفظيه.

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# **Chapter One**

# **Introduction**

## **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.0 Background**

English is an international language used as second or, foreign language vastly throughout the world. In addition to its official function, it plays a significant role in the field of education, According to Truog, (2000:2) “For many universities teachers of English as foreign language (EFL), the study of short story is indispensable, because it exposes students to meaningful contexts that are replete with descriptive language,



and interesting characters. Structuring lessons around the teaching short story introduces a profound range of vocabulary”.

There is no doubt that short stories can provide a context of language enrichment, especially in the foreign language situation which exists in Sudan – where learners of English are not exposed to as much language practice as possible in order to improve their standards of English. Thus, much of the vocabulary is needed for smooth communication will be acquired from the literary works. Short story started to be viewed as an appropriate vehicle for language learning, and development since the focus is now on authentic language and authentic situation.

Teaching short stories contributes generously to develop vocabulary learning and solving the difficulties of learning vocabulary, it could be a promising field for researchers to carry out. Therefore, one of the research objectives is exploring the strategies for developing teaching short story in Sudanese EFL classrooms.

In addition to developing university student’s vocabulary, teaching short stories also appeals to their imagination, develops cultural awareness and encourages critical thinking about plot, theme, and characters.

The researcher sees that learners gain knowledge from surroundings and this process goes on in learning through teaching short stories. From short stories students can learn; facts, moralities, behaviors; even in religion they learn their beliefs through stories of ‘prophets’ messengers and holy books. Within this natural way of learning through stories, the researcher thinks of technique in teaching English to make use of the quality of story, in developing the skills of English language and sub skills especially vocabulary.

The researcher thinks of using short story for students of Sudanese universities because the process of acquiring knowledge including the

first language is through stories. Short Stories develop and become richer day by day as the learner develops and grows and if it is applied and used as the second language, develop with the learner simultaneously, which will probably give the results.

To understand short story, novel or any printed paper you need to know the meaning of the words and their functions. For that reason it comes the importance of vocabulary, it considers as the bone of the language. Moreover, vocabulary has been commonly recognized as one of the most important aspects of language learning by second or foreign language. Although vocabulary is widely known as crucial language element when learning a language and vocabulary difficulty is experienced by many language learners. The researcher suggests teaching short stories helps students to learn vocabulary and it is an easy way to help students to know word's meaning.

Above all, vocabulary plays an important role in reading. A good vocabulary helps the students to read meaningfully. It enables the students to express themselves better when they speak, write and think as well. In addition, some of students are unable to choose appropriate word and use it. So the researcher suggests teaching short stories as material and technique might help the learners to cope with vocabulary difficulties and choose the appropriate words.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

As the researcher a lecturer at Sudan University of Science and Technology, has got experience in teaching university students, thought, the researcher has been in a position to get to know much about the university students' vocabulary learning difficulties who study general purposes English (GPE), especially in word meaning. Through observation, the researcher has noticed it can be argued that students face

difficulties in learning vocabulary because the lack of authentic material. Moreover, the researcher observes that many students are unable to choose the suitable words when they are asked to speak or write. Students also suffer from comprehending what they have taught, which leads their low performance in other skills and failure in academic achievement.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The research aims at:

- 1- Identifying and analyzing English language vocabulary difficulties which face Sudanese university students
- 2- Examining the possibility of teaching short stories in solving the meanings of new words learning difficulties.
- 3- Exploring the strategies for developing teaching short stories in Sudanese EFL classrooms.

## **1.3 Questions of the Study.**

This research attempts to answer the following questions:

- Q1- How does vocabulary create difficulties to Sudanese university students?
- Q2- How does word meaning cause much difficulty to Sudanese University students in learning English language?
- Q2- To what extent does teaching short stories help in solving the difficulties of English language vocabulary learning?

## **1.4 Hypotheses of the Study**

The present study hypothesizes that:

- 1- Learning English language vocabulary is difficult for Sudanese university students.

- 2- Word meaning causes much difficulty to Sudanese university students learning English language.
- 3- Teaching short stories solves vocabulary learning difficulties.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

As the researcher is an English language teacher and learner at the same time thinks no one can learn language without vocabulary. So teachers who adopt short stories want to help their students to become willing and able to use their limited amount of foreign language to express their ideas and telling their stories. Thus fluency and accuracy are attained.

Realizing the importance of short stories and their role in enhancing vocabulary building for students to express themselves in spoken or written English and understand what they hear or read. This study attempts to emphasize the roles of short stories in solving vocabulary difficulties.

The research is important to instructors, teachers, experts in applied linguistics and curriculum planners.

Developing and practicing new vocabulary strategies in the classroom will lead to continue improvement in comprehending and speaking out- side the class.

## **1.6 limits of the Study**

Field of the study: First Academic year, College of Education Sudan University of Science and Technology.

The researcher chooses Sudan University of Science and Technology for two reasons: the firstly, the levels of students at the first academic year need this study. The second reason is that it would be easier for the researcher to get the result of experiment.

## **1.7 Methodology of the Study**

In this study, experimental methods will be adopted. The proposed experiment will be conducted at Sudan University of Science and Technology where there will be two groups of students. One group will be taught English language vocabulary through short stories. The experiment is expected to take three months. Measuring the role of short story in solving English vocabulary difficulties will be trying to control all variables and then measuring the improvement of respective students in using vocabulary. While the other group “Control group” will be taught English language vocabulary through usual selective reading.

A questionnaire will be administrated to English language teachers.

The researcher will be also confirm the validity and the reliability of the research tools before their application.

# **Chapter Two**

## **Literature Review**

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the theoretical framework of English language vocabulary as well as short stories as literary genre and as authentic resource for teaching EFL vocabulary. Short stories have the great advantage of contextualizing newly met vocabulary items; with their apparent interest that serves to make the target language more memorable. This chapter explores short story: first, it gives a background to the genre and its history in English literature; then it explores the literary characteristics of short story followed by its elements: the plot, the characters, the setting, the point of view and the theme, in addition to symbol, allegory, style and tone. It also explores the linguistic features of the genre, and finally the ‘language-based approach’ for teaching of literature.

The second section is about the teaching of EFL vocabulary. It starts by giving a background to English language vocabulary; then it is followed by the definition to notion “vocabulary” and its importance, it is followed by the vocabulary types. A fourth subsection focuses on vocabulary difficulties, shedding lights on: - spelling difficulties, pronunciation difficulties and meaning difficulties.

The third section of this chapter is review of the relevant previous studies.

## **Short story**

### **2.1.1 The role of short stories in developing vocabulary**

The role of literature, in general and short-stories in particular, in ELT classroom has always been advocated because of various advantages this use can offer for EFL teachers and learners. Literature, in the form of short-stories, makes learning English an enjoyable and attractive process for EFL learners. Stories also help to stimulate students' curiosity about the target culture and language. Integrating short-stories in EFL classrooms also paces the way to the EFL learners' involvement with rich, authentic uses of the foreign language. Various ways of using stories in foreign language classroom help to develop vocabulary also. The use of short-stories encourages language acquisition and students' language awareness. Stories stimulate language acquisition by providing contexts for processing and interpreting new language. They also supplement the restricted input of the EFL classroom. Stories also promote an elementary grasp of English to internalize vocabulary and grammar patterns. Stories foster reading proficiency which is very important for enriching EFL vocabulary.

Reading stories helps in cognitive development of EFL learners as extensive reading increases vocabulary levels, offers opportunities to acquire and practice reading skills, and models language patterns. Stories also increase all language skills by providing extended linguistic knowledge, by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax. As it defines, vocabulary learning strategy is a process by which information is obtained, stored, retrieved, and used. Therefore, individual vocabulary learning strategies need to be encouraged and short-stories as a means for developing EFL learners' vocabulary can be one such strategy. The benefit of using short-stories in EFL classrooms for developing vocabulary is that stories offer new words with the actual usage in many forms. This can help EFL learners to understand not only the meaning of the new word learned but also the usage in context.

One of the principles of vocabulary learning is that in order to be familiar with the new word, one need to see it several times. Stories make EFL learners repeat the words unconsciously in various forms. And the result is that they do not have difficulty in remembering the words that they have just met. It is argued that the nature of human memory dictates that vocabulary will probably be forgotten; especially the word just has been met. Vocabulary loss happens because word knowledge is so fragile. This means that words and phrases need to be recycled often to cement them



in memory. Introducing a word, and not recycling or revisiting it, means it is highly likely that it will be forgotten (Waring, 2001, P. 2). Reading short-stories not only offers the opportunities to revisit the words learned but also to understand and use them in real life communication which guarantees the required longer retention.

Another principle of vocabulary learning is that if the learning is enjoyable, then it can be memorable. And this principle of vocabulary learning is easily practicable with the use of short-stories. Short-stories are enjoyable with EFL learners

and therefore can definitely make the vocabulary learning and development memorable. Learning words with enjoyment through stories also guarantees a sense of achievement on the part of EFL learners and can help in developing motivation for further learning. Researchers have demonstrated that a strong link exists between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Therefore, if an EFL teacher wishes that his/her students learn vocabulary and be successful in reading, be creative in classes, then the best reading materials can be short-stories to make learning easy, independent, motivational, enjoyable and memorable. The use of short-stories not only offers essential vocabulary for EFL learners but also helps them in learning about the syntax and discourse functions of words learned and the possible usages of the word in different contexts of communication. The interesting contexts provided by short-stories serve to illustrate the notability of lexical and syntactical features. It is also argued that much vocabulary acquisition results from literacy and wide reading rather than from direct instruction. Many studies (for example, Justice, Walpole (2005)) have proved that the use of short-stories with EFL helps in developing and enriching their vocabulary.

Another advantage of using short-stories with EFL learners for developing vocabulary is that they present many opportunities for designing various language activities and help in teaching and learning new words very effectively in the real life context. Short- stories not only help EFL learners to develop vocabulary from linguistically rich material but also guide them to a personal discovery by opening a window on another culture and encouraging interaction. Short- stories are also practical for the English language teachers as their length is long enough to cover , entirely , in one or two class sessions ; they are not complicated for students to work with of their own ; they have a variety of choice for different interests and tastes , and they can be used in all levels (Beginner to Advanced) , all age groups (Young learners to Adults) , and all classes (Summer courses to Evening classes) (Goodman, Yetta M, 1991). This benefit can be exploited with EFL learners wisely and creatively for developing and enriching their vocabulary. As stories are easy to finish, definite to understand and attract the students' attention more than any

other normal passage, they should be exploited for developing vocabulary of EFL learners. Carter (1986) also presents similar argument for the use of short-stories in EFL classrooms for developing reading and vocabulary through it.

Many other scholars (Donelson , and Nilsen, 2009; Duff, and Maley, 2008; Povey, 1992) have also advocated the use of short-stories in EFL classroom for developing vocabulary.

The argument presented is that the short-stories can play a very important role in achieving the aim of vocabulary building and mastering foreign language thereby.

Short-stories can be very effective in developing vocabulary because of the psychological aspects embedded in them (Goodman, 1973). Stories make the readers guess what would happen next and thereby involve them in that process actively and help them understand the meaning of new words they encounter through context. They also help in retaining newly learned words because of the practical use of those words in dialogues and in context in the story. As we know, explaining the meaning of new word and the meaning in context and the usage is very difficult. However, short-stories provide both context and the usage of a new word in the form of conversation or dialogue among the characters in the story. EFL learners can see how a word is used by the writer and characters and what does it mean in that context. From such contexts, EFL learners can understand the meaning of those words very easily and it also helps them in using them in their own life in similar situations for communication.

As EFL learners go on reading short-stories, they go on guessing the meaning of new words from the context which is very crucial in foreign language learning (Goodman, Yetta M, 1978). Therefore, the use of short-stories need to be given preference while selecting vocabulary teaching and learning strategy. The use of short-stories for developing EFL learners' vocabulary is also advocated because the activities based on stories for developing vocabulary offer opportunities for EFL teachers to integrate them with the productive skills like: speaking and writing. Story-telling also provides a platform for EFL learners to tell their own moral stories, and thus to express and enhance their own responsibility through the process of authoring. The use of short-story is also regarded as an interesting method which can attract EFL learners to learn more, not only remembering each words but also the culture, moral values, and elements which are contained in a storytelling and the most main is their reading comprehension. Therefore, the use of short-stories should be given the preference while teaching, developing and enriching the vocabulary of EFL learners.

The 'short story' as a genre in English literature emerged much latter than the 'novel' – during the eighteenth century. It has developed out from oral literature labeled 'fables' and 'tables'.

Pickering (1993:1) states that short story as we know it today –that is, the short story as a consciously organized, highly unified piece of literary craftsmanship-of comparatively recent origin. There have always been "stories". Of course; examples of short fiction- simple straight forward narratives in prose or verse – are to be found in the folktales, ballads, fables, myths and legends of all nations and all cultures.

'Fables' and 'tales' had moral functions, but were not very common in English literature. Kennedy (1979:11) states that it would be false to claim that in passing from the fable and the tale to the short story, fiction has made a triumphant progress; or to claim that because short stories are modern they are superior to fables and tales. Fables, tales and short stories are distinct forms; each is able to achieve its own effects.

In the nineteenth century, writers of fiction were encouraged by a large literate audience of middle-class readers who wanted to see their lives reflected in faithful mirrors. Skillfully representing ordinary life, many writers perfectly produce the art of short story writing: in Russia, in France, in America as well as in Britain. According to Pickering (1993:1) It was not, however, until less than two hundred years ago during the first decades of nineteenth century, that writers began to regard the short story as literary genre all its own, whose artistic purposes, patterns, and techniques could be distinguished from all other forms of short fiction.

In following sub –sections tackle the features and characteristics of short story, its elements, as well as the approaches for teaching it.

### **2.2.2 The literary Characteristics of Short Story**

Authors usually write to entertain readers as well as to express their personal views about life in verse or prose. Short story as a work of prose fiction involves imagination. It is a brief work of prose fiction that concentrates on one event or sequence of events usually occurs in a specific time and place. Abcarian , et al ( 1998:4) states that," like other literary genres, fiction creates imaginary worlds. Unlike other sorts of literature, however, novel and short stories do so primarily by telling stories in prose, with realistic characters in actual physical environments, and with sustained attention to descriptive detail". More precisely Scribner and McMillan (1985:4) define short story as follow: A short story is a fictional account of events written in prose paragraphs".

A typical story involves 'chronology', or a sequence of events, and causation- the fact that events are somehow connected with each other.

However, Kennedy (1979:10) states that a short story is more than just a

sequence of happenings. Its setting or environment may be no less important than the events themselves. Scribner & McMillan (1985:31) state the following: A short story is a brief work of prose fiction. Usually we can read a short story in one sitting. Small as it is, a short story can contain almost anything. For example, a short story can show us events that remind us of our own lives and introduce us to people and places that we recognize, on the other hand, a story can take us to fantastic lands where people and events are like nothing we have ever known before. In either case, a story always communicates ideas about life and human nature.

A short story is usually about one or two characters undergoing some sort of difficulty or certain problem often introduced at the beginning of a story and became more complicated as the story develops. The characters, inhabiting, a story interact with each other and with the circumstances surrounding them. Therefore, it takes its readers briefly but so often deeply into the characters and situations, which have substance of real life itself.

A short story is also characterized by its concentration and briefness; since it lacks descriptions, except the most important. Therefore, it is comparatively very economy. DeMarinis (2000:76) states, “short stories usually don’t have room or time head to toe descriptions”. He adds that there is no reason to think that a descriptions needs to be given all at once. It can be given piece meal, and that the picture of character gradually filling out in the first few pages of the story.

This characteristic, in addition to that, makes the limitation of the amount of the plot a pre-request. As Pickering (1993:4) before has stated “the other, in constructing his or her plot, will of necessity be forced to select those incidents that are most relevant to the story to be told”. Illustratively, he declares that short story writer emphasizes and expands

merely the most significant incidents. The expansion is achieved via the use of devices such as description, dialogue and actions to dramatize these senses fully. Never the less, other accidents will be given relatively less emphasis through deliberate subordination. He concluded that both of them, major or minor incidents, need not to advance the plot in precisely the same way or at the same place; although the reader of the story does have the right to expect that each will contribute in some way to the total story. Pickering (1993:4/5) refers to these by term 'selectivity'. To conclude, a short story in its modern form is a single aspect focal; by dramatizing it, the short story achieves the sense of suspense.

A major literary feature of modern short story is its 'form'. 'Form' refers to events ordering or sequencing of events. No need to be flown in a chronological order. A story usually moves not only forward but also backward. Short story is characterized by a non-linear form affected by the natural way of thinking of human minds through the representation of flash backs and digressions.

A story should appear to be seamless even though it is crosshatched with stitchery. A seamless story progress smoothly. There is a kinetic energy in than it needs to be maintained even though the story itself moves not only forward but backward and sometimes crash- like to one side or the other. In spite of these non-linear backward and sideways movements (flashbacks and digressions), the reader must keep the sensation that the entire structure is moving forward. This sense of progression is directly dependent on the story's form.

By the word "form" means the superficial visible characteristics of a story, as well as the affective structural components. The later are such as the narrative voice, the point of view and the point of view shifts, the tense shifts, how time functions in the story, and the way the texture of the story's local in rendered. All these contribute to a story's structure or

‘form’. Add to them rhythms of strings of words and the sounds these individual words make.

Nevertheless, short story has no tradition of established form though it has its roots in the oldest forms of tables, the parables, tales are sketches. As for contemporary short story, its shape does change from story to story. Certain genre stories- such as commercial ones-have more or less the same shape. While stories of literary qualities find their own form.

Pickering (1993:4) argues; “Both stories offer little in the way of traditional plot: there is very little description and almost no. Rather in both instances the reader overhears a continuous dialogue between two characters – a man and a woman. Conflict and complication in each case are neither shown nor appeared for, but only revealed; the situation and the ‘story’ are to be understood and completed through the active participation of the reader. Such stories are sometimes referred to as ‘plot less’” in order to suggest that the author’s emphasis and interest have been shifted elsewhere, more frequently to character or idea. Rather than the ‘selectivity’ of the plot, contemporary short story is characterized by ‘objectivity’ –the objectivity of the transitive voice. According to DeMarinis (2000:181)

In its purest form, the short story is totally objective. There is no intervene consciousness, no intervene consciousness, no point of view restrictions, just scenes composed of dialogue and natural description. In this case, the only consciousness that filters the events at the story is their reader’s. The reader’s point of view then the only point of view. This form is regarded as the purest form since there are no mediating consciousness between the events of the story and the readers.

In such stories, actions are unfolded dramatically: concrete and factual details are introduced without comments. Moreover, actions and characters are allowed to present themselves directly to the readers not

only by narrator. With the disappearance of the narrator, telling is replaced by showing. The reader is a direct and immediate witness to an unfolding drama.

The action is dramatically unfolded: facts and details are not preceded or being followed by a comment. Action and characters present themselves without a narrator's intervention. They are just shown.

Therefore, short story as a concentrated fictional prose work has unique features. Which differentiate them from other literary works? The core fictional element is the character(s) performing actions: but in a non-chronological order of events. The open-ended plot of modern short story; its economy and briefness, along with the objectivity of the point of view are characteristics that featured the modern short story.

Not a part from the literary features, the following sub-section will discuss the elements of the short story.

In this regard, the researcher thinks teaching short story has various advantages this use can offer for EFL teachers and learners. Literature, in the form of short stories, makes learning English language an enjoyable and attractive process for EFL learners. Stories also help to stimulates students' curiosity about the target culture and language. Integrating short stories in EFL classrooms also paces the way to the EFL learners' environment with rich, authentic uses of the foreign language.

### **2.1.3 Elements of the short Story**

Relevant to the literary characteristics of short story is its elements: The plot, characters, setting, point of view and the theme: in addition to the symbol: allegory, style and tone. So like any form of art, the short story is comprised of certain identifiable devices, each of which contributes to the marking of an integrated and unified whole. A working knowledge of those devices is essential to organize responses to a literary work. Broadly, it enables learners to discuss literature. According to Pickering

(1993:1)” they are the working tools of authors, critics, and intelligent readers. Their great virtue is the common ground they provide for discussing, describing, studying, and ultimately appreciating a literary work”.

Plot, characters, setting, point of view, and themes stand respectively for events, people, places, and time(s), and narrative voice that tell the story. Their combination forms the story’s total effect; in other words, the overall impression that a story creates in the readers’ minds being introduced to various human experiences.

Each of those elements has its role in the story. However, tackling term separately in this study does not imply that they work separately. Together they produce an integrated and unified whole. In an untraditional way, the study will start by the characters, since contemporary short stories are exclusively character driven. Then successively the other elements follow. Pickering (1993:19) states, “Without the character, there would be no plot and thus no story”.

### **2.1.3.1 The Character(s)**

Characters refer to person inhabiting a story. A short story reader, while going through the events of the story, will develop an awareness of the personality of each important (i.e. main) character. Pickering (1993:19) defines the term character “The term character applies to my individual in a literary work”. The personality of character is made up of different qualities, or ‘character traits’ such as generosity, honesty, affection, and helpfulness. Some characters show only one major trait; others are more like real people that show a number only of different traits.

The major or central character of the plot is the ‘protagonist, his or her ‘opponent’, the character against whom the protagonist struggles or contends, is the, antagonist. The protagonist is usually easy enough to identify. He or she is the essential character without whom there would be



no plot in the first place. The conflict or problem being wrestled with is the protagonist's fate on which the attention of the reader is focused. Both terms, unlike 'hero', 'heroine', or 'villain'. Incidentally do not imply a judgment about moral worth. Many protagonists embody a complex mixture of both positive and negative qualities, very much in the way their real- life counterparts do.

The antagonists are more difficult to identify, especially if it is not a human being. Nevertheless, protagonists can easily be identified. Pickering (1993:20) states, "Very often title of the work identifies the protagonist". He also states, "The antagonist may not be a living creature at all, but rather the hostile social or natural environment with which the protagonist is forced to contend."

Characters in a story are presented and made real by the following methods used in combination: physical description, description of the surroundings, interpretative comments, presentation of the character's speech and actions in addition to their feelings and thoughts. The storywriter has to relate the physical descriptions to the mental traits of the particular character- to move from what a character looks like to what he or she is. The interpretative comments refer to the comments refer to the comments such as those made by the author or another character in the story. The writers usually disclose his characters by what he or she says about him or her. Character's speech reflects their intelligence and socioeconomic geographical and educational background.

Characters are of two types: Three-dimensional characters and one dimensional- characters. The first type is delineated more fully as a round, dynamic character revealed chiefly in the dramatic mode or style. The other type, on the other hand, is sketched simply as stock or stereotyped static character.

Round characters, however, present us with more facets –that is, their authors portray them in greater depth and in more generous detail. Such a round character may appear to us only as he appears to the other characters in the story. If their views of him differ, we will see him from more than one side.

Flat characters usually play a minor role in the stories, but not always so. They have much in-common with the kind of stock characters who appear again and again in certain types of literary works- for example, the rich uncle of domestic comedy, the hard-boiled private eye of the detective story, or the female confidante of romance.

‘Round’ characters are just the opposite. They embody a number of qualities and traits and are complex, multi- dimensional of considerable intellectual and emotional depth that has the capacity to grow and change. Major characters in fiction are usually round characters. It is the very complexity of such characters that story readers become engrossed and fascinated with, Stephen (1990:25) states, “A round character is more complex, can surprise the reader with his or her actions, and very often changes or grows in the course of the book”.

Characters in fiction can also be distinguished based on whether they demonstrate the capacity to develop or change as the result of their experiences. Flat characters tend to stay the same throughout a story, but round characters often change-learn or become enlightened, grow or deteriorate. Some critics call a fixed character ‘static’, a changing one ‘dynamic’. Therefore, ‘dynamic’ characters exhibit a capacity to change, while ‘static’ characters do not. The degree and rate of characters change varies widely, even among dynamic characters.

One of the obvious differences between short stories and novel is that characters in short story are developed rapidly by authors; and developed characters are limited in numbers.

Short stories writers, in presenting and establishing characters (i.e. characterizing), use two methods; 'telling' and 'showing'. The former relies on exposition and direct commentary by the author with telling, the guiding hand of the author is very much in the evidence, since we learn primarily from what author explicitly calls the readers' attention. The latter, which is characterized by dramatization of actions, is indirect method at characterization, using this method, author steps aside allowing the characters to reveal themselves directly through their dialogues and their actions. Therefore, inferences are made about what the character is like. As a result determining the character of the character through getting beyond the actions themselves and by indicating what they show about character; it is on the side that a character reside.

Traits, emotions and behavioral patterns that characterize a person as an individual are known as a "character's psychology". Impressions and influences from the past (i.e. heredity) as well as environment, give birth to ambition in some people, should have clear motivations for their actions. Therefore, inferences should be made for character's psychology as well as his/her physical appearance. Learner has to find out about the character's past, since it has its effects on the character's present traits and featured the psychology of his character,. Impressions about the past and influences from the past a long with the recent environment of the character inhabiting the story do affects and driven certain actions and emotions in the character.

Kennedy (1979:43) declares, "Should a character behave in sudden and unexpected way, seeming to deny what we have been told about his nature or personality, we trust that he had a reason, and that sooner or later we will discover it".

Not only should the character be motivated, but also be consistent. According to Pickering (1993:26) "what we as readers do have the right

to expect is that when a character undergoes change. Such change should be well motivated by event and be consistent in some basic and identifiable way with the nature of the character.” He adds that in seeking to test for consistency, we thus must ask ourselves whether the character doing a particular action or series of actions is adequate, justified and probable given what we know about that character.

Therefore, for the artistic character to seem realistic or true- to life, it must be motivated and consistent to be convincing and believable. To conclude, successful character’s creation allows direct and immediate access, however, brief and fleeting, to people’s inner-life; to the intellectual, emotional, and moral complexities of human personality that lie hidden beneath the surface. Learners are required to make judgments about the internal makeup of those men and women to whom they are introduced. The ability to interpret correctly from provided evidences, help developing learner’s understanding to be prepared for life.

The researcher believes that characters of short stories should be few in number. Characters have to be introduced sparingly into short stories because each new character usually requires background information and at least a brief explanation of his or her presence.

The sections to follow are going to shed lights on the rest of the elements: plot, point of view, theme, symbol and allegory, style and tone respectively.

### **2.1.3.2 The Plot**

The sequence of the events take a place in the story is known as its ‘plot’. Each event in a “plot” causes or leads to the next. As its readers go through the lines and pages of the story, they become involve in the chain of events and wonder how it will end”.

Most stories are told in chronological order (i.e. the time order in which events naturally happens). Pickering (1993:5) states that, customarily,

events in a plot are arranged (presented) chronologically; that is, in the order of their occurrence in the time. However, he restates that “chronological plotting can, of course, be handled in a variety of ways”. He illustrates that it can be rightly controlled so that each episode logically and inevitably unfolds from the one that precedes it. It can also be loose, relaxed, and episodic taking the form of series of separate and largely self-contained episodes, resembling so many beads on a string. However, he states that in practice, the former is more likely to be found in novel rather than a short story, simply because of the space required. The author to show the reader an event from the past, he sometimes interrupted the chronology of the plot. This technique is called “flash back.

Chronology of plot may shift forward in time as it shifts backward. “Flash-forward” technique, however, is rarely used with short stories. Nevertheless, it can be effective when the story calls for it.

Events, however, could be arranged by causes and effect as well as chronology. In cause and an effect relationship, each event makes another happens. In sense, the plot should be logical: why and in what order events happen.

Short stories, unlike novel, contain one difficulty or problem; labeled in fiction a “conflict”. It refers to the “struggle between two opposing forces”. In reading a story, interest grows since readers want to know how this struggle will be settled. “Conflict then, is the basic opposition, or tension, that sets the plot of the short story in motion; it engages the reader suspense or the mystery of the work, and arouses expectation for the events are following”.

The terms “conflict”, “struggle”, “suspense”, “mystery”, “exposition”, “imitation”, “resolution....etc mentioned so far, are representatives of the stages through which the story moved or developed.

“Exposition” refers to the initiative or beginning section in which the author provides the necessary background information, sets the scenes, establishes the situation, and dates the action. It usually introduces the characters and the conflict, or at least clues of it. The second stage, ‘complication’, referred to sometimes as “the rising action” that develops and intensifies the conflict. The ‘crisis’ or the ‘climax’ is the moment at which the plot reaches its point of greatest emotional intensity; it is the perceiving the resolution, actions descended. “Falling action” refers to the turning point of the plot, directly precipitating its resolution. Before perceiving the resolution, actions descended. “Falling action” refers to the moment “Once the crisis, or turning point has been reached, the tension subsides and the plot moves toward its conclusion”.

In fact, we can often use the author’s clues to predict the outcome of the story. Predicating of the outcome of a story can add to our reading pleasure”. However, not all plots follow the order of these stages respectively, or include them all.

Crisis may begin at the very beginning of the plot, where exposition and complication are omitted. The plot, then, consists of a “slice of life” into which readers enter on the eve of crisis. The reader is left to infer beginning and antecedents, including the precise nature of the conflict; from what is subsequently been able to learn.

The researcher sees that short stories plot considers practical for the English language teachers as their length is long enough to cover, entirely in one or two class sessions; they are not complicated for students to work of their own; they have variety of choice for different interests and tastes, and they can be used in all levels, all age group, and all classes. The short story will often leave much to the readers’ imagination.

To conclude, the plot of short story is open to infinite variety, but with the reservation of its interest.

### 2.1.3.3 The setting

The time and place in which the short story happens are essential elements in plotting a story. According to Pickering fiction is sometimes defined as “a character in action at certain time and place”.

Roberts (1977:76.77) states that since short story is short; all the scenes- indicating place- may be in one city or countryside. He adds that “setting “are either natural, or manufactured. Roberts also declares that a rich artificial setting emphasizes the richness taste of characters living in it; as well as their financial and political resources. In the most short stories, setting is established at or near the beginning of the work as a means of orienting the reader and framing the action that is to follow. However, there is variation in fictions settings’. There are many different kinds of setting in fiction. Some settings are relatively important; serve as little more no necessity incidental and decorative backdrops, with little or no necessity relationship to either element. Other settings are intimately and necessity connected with the meaning and unity of the total work.

In many modern stories, setting is also slight that it can be dispended with in a conflict. Pickering (1993:40) states, “Often, the forces of nature function as a casual agent or antagonist, helping to establish conflict and to determine the outcome of events. The African wildness with which Conrad’s Marlow must contend to reach his final destination in “Heart of Darkness” is an example of a setting that functions as a kind of antagonist”.

An author can also clarify and reveal character by deliberately making setting a metaphoric or symbolic extension of character, or in some other stories re- enforcing ‘theme’.

The time of the day, time of the year, or period in history at which a given event or series of events occurs, contributes to the setting as importantly

as its physical aspects. Therefore, regardless of its function, ‘setting’ is essential to any functional work in order to achieve authentic.

#### **2.1.3.4 The Point of View**

As the story must have a plot, characters and setting, it must also have a “story teller’. Pickering (1993:46) refers to it as “... a narrative voice real or implied, that presents the story to the reader”. Talking about the narrative voice means talking about the “point of view”, in other words, the method of narration that determines the position, or angle of vision, from which the story is told. Point of view refers to the relationship of the storyteller, or narrator, to the story.

The nature of the relationship between the narrator and the story, i.e. the teller and the tale, is always crucial to the art of fiction in particular. It governs the reader’s access to the story and determines just how much he/she can know at any given moment about what is taking place (i.e. the event). It determinates how the story will be told; but moreover, how the story ultimate affect will be perceived by the reader. As Richardson (1998:7) declares that, the storywriter’s decisions about point of view create powerful narrative effects.

#### **Omniscient Point of view**

It is the method with which an ‘all knowing narrator’ firmly imposes his or her presence between the reader and the story and retains full and complete control over the narrative. The omniscient narrator is not a character in the story and is not involved in the plot. From a vantage point outside the story, the narrator is free to tell his audiences much or little. He is free to tell or to dramatize, to summarize or interpret, speculate, philosophize, moralize, or to judge.

On telling the events of the story, the narrator can move the readers from one event to the next explicitly or evasively. He/she can skip backward



and forward in time. It can narrate as he/she wishes; sometimes summarizing, other times dramatizing – as wishing.

Therefore, stories told from the omniscient point of view may differ widely for the amount of omniscience the narrator is allowed;

. Another type of omniscient point of view is the third- person point of view, which is called the limited omniscient.

### 1- **Limited Omniscient point of view**

Using this method, the author tells the story in the third person, but from the viewpoint of one character in the story, therefore, the narrator limits his or her ability to penetrate the minds of characters by selecting a single character to act as the center of revelation. What the reader knows and sees is always restricted to what this focal character can know or see. According to Perrine & Thomas (1991:144) “Such point of view characters are filters through his eyes and minds both inside and outside these characters writers look at the events. Authors employing this perspective may move both inside and outside these characters but never leave their sides. They tell us what these characters see and hear and what they think and feel; they possibly interpret the character’s thoughts and behavior. They know everything about their point of view characters- often more than the characters know about themselves but they limit themselves to these characters’ perception, and show no direct knowledge of what other characters are thinking or feeling or doing, except for what the point of view character knows or can infer about them.

Utilizing this point of view, the reader may be given direct access to this focal character’s own “voice” and thoughts. In so far as, these are reproduced through dialogues or presented dramatically through monologue or stream of consciousness. Therefore, advantages of this narrative method are “tightness of focus and control” that it makes possible. That is why it suits short story with its restrict scope. Therefore,

limited omniscient method is much more realistic, and suitable to story genre. Another advantages added by DeMarinis (2000:175/6) is the consistence of the “rendition” for the story not to lose its credibility, in addition to vocabulary peculiarities of expressions.

## **2- First – person point of view**

A story told from a first – person point of view is told by a participant in the events of the story, dramatized character who says “I” and speaks directly to the audience readers. It is either a “protagonist” or an observer: a minor character standing a little to one side, watching the story unfold which mainly concerns someone else, most of Sherlock Holmes’s stories are narrated by this method. As a result, we learn about events from someone who lived them in the story. This character, again may be a major or minor character, protagonist or observer, and it will make considerable difference whether the protagonist tells the story or same one else tells it”.

On narrating a story, a “protagonist”, which is a central character, is involved with the events of the story in such a way that the outcome will affect his or her life directly. On the other hand, other narrators will report events dramatically: however, the outcome of the story may or may not cause a change in this person’s life.

First – person narrators are usually identified and differentiated based on their degree of involvement with the events of the plot.

The chief advantage of first –person point of view is its voice’s confiding nature; since it breathes words right off the page and tells the audience about an event of pivotal importance in an atmosphere intimate.

## **3- The dramatic point of view**

It is called the ‘dramatic’ or objective’ point of view. In this type the story is told by no one; that is, the narrator disappears completely. The

story is allowed, here, to present itself dramatically through action and dialogue.

This point of view is regarded as a neutral as a neutral one; it is the purest form of short story telling, since it lacks intervened consciousness and has no restrictions: merely scenes composed of dialogues and neutral descriptions. The dramatic effect of the story must come wholly from the actions of the characters. In consequence, there is no way of entering the minds of the characters. The reader is permitted to view the work only in its externals, from the outside. The author leaves readers to infer characters, thoughts and feelings.

The author initiates the plots by a brief description for the setting, but then dramatically unfolds the action(s). The concrete factual details about setting and people are introduced without comments and the actions and the characters are allowed to present themselves directly to the readers without benefit of an intervened narrator. The effect is one of the pure showing, however, he used 'telling technique' few times near the end of the story.

To conclude, the objective or dramatic point of view has the most speed and the most actions. In addition, it requires readers to draw their own inference. Moreover, it relies heavily on external action and dialogue, and it offers no opportunities for direct interpretation by the author.

Relevance to the "objective" point of view category, are the "stream of consciousness technique" and the 'interior'. Both methods are employed by modern fiction writers to capture reality and objectivity. The former refers to the procession of thoughts passing through the mind. In fiction, it is a kind of selective omniscience in which the presentation of thoughts and sense impressions in a life like fashion; not in a sequence arranged by logic. They mingled randomly. "Stream of consciousness" writing usually occurs in relatively short passages.

Using the “interior monologue” method , the character’s thoughts are presented extensively not in the seemingly helter order of stream of consciousness, but in an arrangement as if the character were speaking aloud to himself, for us to overhear

Nevertheless, every point of view has its advantages, its limitations, and its peculiar uses. The choice of the point of view will depend up on the materials and the purpose of a story. Authors choose the point of view that enables them to present their particular materials most effectively in terms of three purposes.

### **2. 1. 3. 5. Theme**

Short story writes usually communicate a ‘message’ or theme, which is identified as a comment or statement about an issue, a problem, or subject. It is a central idea or a statement, about life that unifies and controls the overall fictional work. Number of critics defines it.

Authors can express ideas both directly and indirectly, explicitly or another way. The theme of a story, long or short, is usually expressed in a complete sentence. Whatever central generalization about life arises from the specifics of the story constitutes theme. In stating the theme in a sentence, we must pick the central insight, the one that explains the greatest number of elements in the story relates them to each other.

Themes explicitly stated in the story by the author or by a character, labeled “stated themes”, usually they are stated at the end of the story, on the other hand, implied themes are not directly stated but rather being gradually revealed by the other elements of the story. An implied theme can be discovered by examining the following elements in a story: the title, a character, a personality trait, details of setting, the choice of point of view. The title may tell us the author’s opinion of what happens in a story. It directs the reader’s attention to what is important in a story, or helps them to discover a story’s theme or main idea. A character may

learn a lesson about or a personality trait of one if the characters that direct reader's attention to the storywriter's idea about people in general. The setting also may reveal the author's idea about the world in general. In addition, his choice of the point of view may indicate how he wants to react to the story.

In this point; the researcher considers the theme is the meaning or purpose of the story it should be specific to story, universal, provide unity to story, an integral part of the story, and present a new awareness of life.

In identifying the theme, it is crucially important to consider the title of the story: what does it indicate in the light of what one has read? Sometimes we can best get at it by asking in what way the main character has changed in the course of the story; or to find out if it arrives at any eventual realization or understanding. A third point to be considered is the "general observation about life or human nature stated by the author or by one of the characters.

#### **2.1.3.6 Symbol, Allegory, Style and Tone.**

Rather than the five basic elements of fiction: plot, characters, setting, point of view, and theme, allegory, style and tone are regarded by critics as components of a fictional work. According to Perrine and Thomas (1991:194), most successful stories are characterized by compression. That is, each word and detail is chosen for maximum effectiveness. He adds that good writers choose the detail and incidents that contribute most to the meaning they are after; they omit those whose usefulness is minimal. "As far as possible, they choose details that are multi-valued-that serve a variety of purpose at once. A detail that expresses character at the same time that it advances plot is more useful than a detail that does only one or the other".

He states that resources of the writer for gaining compression are "symbol" and "irony"; since both of them may increase the explosive

force of a story, but both demands awareness and maturity on the part of the reader.

Therefore, recognize and identifying symbols in stories requires perception and tact. In literature, generally, symbol in the form of words, images, objects, setting, events and characters. They are used deliberately to suggest and reinforce meaning.

In addition to that, the meaning of a literary symbol must be established and supported by the entire context of the story. The symbol has its meaning in the story, not outside it. In “Hills Like White Elephants” the shadow of a cloud moving over the field of grain is supported by and dependent on its relation to other elements in the story; the river, the field of grain, the stifling heat of the station, the brown dry country on the near side of the valley, etc. in this context, the moving cloud shadow extends the meaning of the fertility symbol of which it is a part.

Therefore, for a symbolic item to be called so, it must suggest a meaning different in kind from its literal meaning. In Hemingway’s story, the railroad junction is neither an example nor an evidence of a point in the character lives when a crucial decision must be made; nor are they opposed side of the valley examples or evidence of the two kinds of predicated future that might result from the choice.

The meanings these things suggest are different from what they are. Another evidence from the same story is the label-covered suitcases of traveling couple that acts as an evidence or sign of their past and should not properly be called a symbol of their past.

As for the “plot”, Pickering (1993: 73) states that single events, large and small, or plots in their entirety often function symbolically- or carry a symbol meaning. Nevertheless, it is often difficult to tell whether symbolism is involved, upon the first reading. “The symbolic nature of plot or plot elements may not, in fact, become clear until after we have

finished the work and look back to see how the individual parts of the relate to the whole”.

As far as characters are concerned, symbolism is frequently employed as a way of deepening our understanding of characters. Some characters are given symbolic names to suggest underlying moral, intellectual, emotional qualities. Character's names may suggest innocence, youth, evilness, etc. moreover, the objects assigned to the characters may function in the way as a symbol to suggest a concept such as aggressiveness.

Allegory as a component of short story is out of favor among modern and contemporary authors and critics for a number of reasons. It revealed by Pickering (1993:729) as “A type of narrative that attempts to reinforce its thesis by making its characters (and sometimes its events and setting as well) represent specific abstract ideas or qualities”. Therefore, it is a technique for expanding the meaning of a literary work by having the characters, and sometimes the setting and the events, represent certain abstract ideas, qualities, or concepts- usually moral, religious, or political in nature unlike symbolism, the abstractions of allegory are fixed and definite and tend to take the form of simple and specific ideas that, once identified, can be readily understood. Since ideas they remain constant, they are easily remembered.

Style as another distinctive quality of literature, in general are the writer's means for recovering and objectifying experience. It is the storywriter's means for presenting, shaping, and controlling subject matters. As Pickering (1993:81) states that the story writer's words (i.e. his style) provide important clues to his emotional and psychological life, beliefs, and attitudes and to the way I which he perceives and experiences himself and the world around him.

Crystal and Davy (1993:9) describe it as some or all of the language habits of one person or habits shared by a group of people at one time. Hence, its components are “diction”, “syntax”, as well as devices such as “rhythm and sound”, allusion, ambiguity, irony, paradox, and figurative language.

Discussion the components of style “diction” refer to the individual words an author chooses. They are usually meaningful only in the context of other words. Nevertheless, the type and quality of the individual words that comprise an author’s basic vocabulary characterize partially his style of writing. “Lack writer’s style is unique. It constitutes his “signature” in a way that sets his work a part”.

In examining and by analyzing fictional work’s style, critics attempt to arrive at a judgment based on considering how effectively the author of the story has managed to integrate the form and content of his work. This is achieved through the analysis of the story’s form. First, seeking and identifying the distinctive traits that comprise the author’s unique way of telling his story (i.e. his style). The understanding the effect produced by the selected stylistics devices and techniques, and then how they influence their response to the work’s other elements- and to the work as a whole. An analyzing diction as a stylistic device, critics consider the following:

- 1- Denotative meaning of the words

It refers to the dictionary meaning of works; and it is opposed to the “connotative” meaning (i.e. the ideas or suggested by the words).

- 2- Degree of concreteness or abstractness.
- 3- Degree of allusiveness
- 4- The parts of speech they represent
- 5- The length and construction



- 6- The level of usage they reflect (i.e. standard or nonstandard; formal, informal, or colloquial).
- 7- The imagery (i.e. Details of sensory experience) they contain
- 8- The figurative devices they embody (i.e. simile, metaphor, personification)
- 9- Rhythm and sound patterns of words (alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia)

#### 10- Repletion

It also needs consideration if used; and it refers to the way key words recur in a given passage or series of passages in such away as to call special attention to them.

The examination of words diction as a stylistic device is generally speaking concerned with the choice of specific lexical items but in relation to the story's subject matter, as well as their distribution in relation to one another semantically syntactically. Crystal and Davy (1993:18, 19) state:

Vocabulary in our sense is thus partly a formal and partly a motional concept. There seems to be little gained by separating the formal and semantic aspects of the study of individual lexical items, as long as we are allowed when necessary to talk about the formal aspects of word distinction without any reference to the meaning and vice versa.

Linguists no longer feel it necessary, describe, nor even possible, to exclude considerations of meaning from grammatical analysis.

Therefore, syntax, in stylistic analysis is not a part from diction. So in examining style at the level of syntax is an attempt to analyze the ways an author arranges words into phrases, clauses, and finally whole sentences to a chive particular effects. Syntax is partly determined by the lexical content of words (i.e. their meanings); as well as by basic grammatical structures.

Most importantly, the deliberate arrangement of words with individual sentences or groups of sentences can result in pattern of rhythm that establish or reinforce feeling and emotion. Although an author will usually vary the kinds of sentences used, creation of syntactic patterns will dominate and become characteristics of author's style.

Thus, style serves characterization, creation of setting and atmosphere, and the reinforcement of theme. Moreover, it illustrates the dynamic, changing nature of the language in fictional works.

"Tone" is a means of creating a relationship or conveying an attitude. They are much connected with spoken language. In speech, it is commonly used to characterize the special qualities of accent, inflection, and duration in speaker's voice. Pickering (1993:86) states that "the particular qualities of a speaking voice are unavailable to a writer in creating tone, but to a certain extent rhythm and punctuation can substitute for a speaker's accent and inflection, while word order and word choice can influence tone as easily in prose as in speech".

Specifying fiction, tone is frequently a guide to an author's attitude toward the subject or audience and to his or her intention and meaning. Richardson, in *Abcarianet.el*, (1998:5), alike "tone" to an 'aura' or 'atmosphere'. He defines it as an author's implicit attitude toward the characters, places and events in the story. He adds that it depends for its substance on delicate emotional response to language and situations

An author's tone is inferred through close and careful study of the various elements within the work, including plot, character, setting, point of view, and style. Some authors try to mask their attitudes and feelings, and to hide their presence within the work- perhaps by taking refuge somewhere, behind the narrative voice that tells the story. However, the author's tone can be inferred by the choices they make in the process of ordering and presenting their material. And by what is included and

emphasized to look at such choices carefully; and as well at the characters, incidents, setting and details depicted; at the issues and problems that are raised and explored at the style the author has employed; and at every decision that the author has made. The objective of these tasks is to infer from them the underlying attitudes, tone that color, and control the work as a whole. In order to reflect the puzzling, problematic nature of experience, authors may choose to approach their subjects indirectly using irony. Perrine and Thomas define it as “A term with a range of meanings, all of them involving some sort of discrepancy or incongruity. It is a contrast in which one term of the contrast in some mocks the other term. It is not to be confused with sarcasm, however, which is a simply language designed to cause pain. They also state that storywriter uses irony to suggest the complexity of experience, to furnish indirectly an evaluation of the material, and at the same time to achieve compression.

Third type, which is the “dramatic, irony”, its contrast is between a character says and what the readers know to be true. Pickering (1993:87) declares it as “in which the state of affairs known to the reader or the audience is the reverse of what its participants suppose it to be”. The value of this kind of this irony lies in the comment it implies on the speaker’s expectations.

“Dramatic irony “is as irony of situation, depends on the use of the plot, character, and point of view. An omniscient narrator, for example, will sometimes reveal information to the reader that the characters do not know which allows the narrator and the reader as well to judge the subsequent actions of those characters and to anticipate the likely outcome of events. Another means for approaching dramatic irony is through the characters whose innocence and “naiveté” cause them to misinterpret events whose significance is perfectly clear to the reader.

The plots of such works frequently turn on the matter of knowing or not knowing and result in outcomes that are either comic or tragic in their final implication.

Irony, according to Pickering (1993: 87) are either “actual” or “potential”; and that in any work of fiction, it is crucially important that we are able to determine “if” and “how” that potential has been exploited. He adds that to overlook or misinterpret the presence of irony can only lead to a misinterpretation of the author’s attitudes and tone and the way he or she would have readers and critics approach and understand the work.

Most importantly, irony must have purpose(s) served them, to achieve the appropriateness of the style and tone to the work’s subject and theme.

Therefore, any fictional work ought to be built up from “character(s) and “plot”. Characters refer to people inhabiting a story. While plot refers to the sequence of events proceeding through all or some of the five stages: exposition, complication, crisis, falling action and resolution. It must also compose setting that imply the time(s) and place(s) in which the story happens; in addition to the narrative voice that tells the story- known as the “point of view”. A fifth element is the “theme” which refers to the message the storywriter wants to communicate. “Symbol”, “allegory”, “style” and “tone” are regarded by critics as other components of fictional works which could merely be achieved essential via the selection of words and expressions. So short story embodies linguistic features created by the author of the story embodies linguistic features created by the author of the story to achieve the intended literary effects; which can be utilized to develop foreign language learners’ awareness of language in general and lexis in particular. Amira (2001:3) states that “stories which rely so much on words offer a major and constant source of language experience for children, stories are motivating, they enrich language experience and they are inexpensive”.

#### **2.1.4. Linguistic Features of Short Story**

It is apparent that the linguistic features of “short story” are not apart from its literary characteristics; rather the literary characteristics are achieved via language used by the storywriter. According to Crystal (2003:418) “Although literature cannot be identified “by “language, it is wholly identified “with” it, for it has no other medium of expression. Any of the tools which the study of the language has made available can therefore be of value in increasing our awareness of the meaning and effect of the elements which make up a text”.

All the elements and the literary components of the short story are drawn through the individual words, their collocations and expressions including simile, metaphor, allegory, etc. They are the vehicles through which characters, ideas, attitudes and values are expressed. They also convey details about appearance and inner states of the minds of the characters. In dialogues, words reflect the speaker’s intelligence and sophistication, the general level of his conscious awareness, the socioeconomic status, and his/her geographical and educational background. In describing incidents, words and their collocations help to convey the narrator’s (or the author’s) attitude toward those events and the characters involved in them; beside the description of the events themselves. Whereas, in describing setting, words help to create and sustain an appropriate atmosphere.

Audiences themselves respond to literature in general through the author’s words. Therefore, a successful short story writer is the one that managed to integrate the “form” and the “content” of its work. DeMarinis (2000:66) states, “Like poet, the short story writer must always be conscious of word selection, as well as rhythms produced by aggregations of words. The short story writer must have – or at least try to develop- an ear for the language”. He also advocates that in selecting his words, the

storywriter must put in consideration the “denotative” and “connotative” meanings of words; in addition to the other semantic and syntactic features such as degree of concreteness or abstractness of words, degree of allusiveness, part of speech, its length and construction the level of usage it reflects etc.

“Style” as a fictional component is to a further degree relevant to the linguistic feature of short story. Pickering (1991: 82) defines it as “an author’s words and the characteristic way he uses the resources of language to achieve certain effects”. Again, Crystal and Davy (1993:9) describe it as “some or all the language habits”. Moreover, the components of style itself are “diction” and “syntax” as well as devices such as rhythm and sound allusion, ambiguity, irony, paradox, and figurative language – each of which is part of the language and a feature achieved through language. DeMarinis (2000:66) called them the “aesthetic- roots” of the language. Authors arrange words into phrases, clauses and whole sentences in a certain way to achieve particular effects. Modern short stories are characterized by its economy: details are reduced through the language; particularly setting details. According to Pickering (1993:39) “The details of the setting will be reduced through language that is concrete and denotative”. Pickering (1993:4) also states that the amount of plot is limited. Nevertheless, Crystal (2003: 412) states that recently this is no such thing as a “variety” of “literature”. He adds that it is simply not possible to take any set of linguistic features and say that they are predictably “literature”. He attributes this to the following:

Authors are free to circle above the language, to swoop down and from it whatever they wish. The language of literature has no situational restrictions; all structures and all varieties are available to it as a resource. And because there is no theoretical limit to the subject- matter of

literature, so there is no theoretical limit to the language variation which authors may choose to employ.

Crystal (2002:412/3) adds that there is no clear –cut boundary between literary and non-literary domains. Moreover, the central role that literature plays in developing our experience of the language can never be diminished. In the contrary, it can reinforce it as long as we go on to show how literary experience everywhere makes contact with everyday language use. Therefore, anything that occurs in language can now be put to work in the service of literature. This view contradicts the view of ‘literariness’. It is argued by many critics and linguists that the notion of literary language as a clearly defined category should be replaced by one which sees literary language as a continuum, a cline of literature in language use with some uses of language begin marked as more literary than others. Carter and Nash (1990:18) declare that literariness is not an absolute but a conditional phenomenon.

These features make short story texts as a discourse much more useful to be utilized by foreign language teachers for teaching lexis. Providing EFL lexis in context is a trial tendency to conceive language in terms of communication rather than as a set of structures, and teaching of words in isolation.

This approach in literature is known as language – based approach for the teaching of literary texts.

### **2.2.1 Background to vocabulary**

Recently, vocabulary had been widely overlooked in the ESL and EFL classroom. Carter and Nunan (2001:91) stated that teaching or studying grammar is based on asset of rules, with a coherent structure which students to follow to remember, but the same is not true for vocabulary.

Within the last few years, vocabulary has become viewed as important aspect in second language learning, in fact many believe it just as

important as the main skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, Robinson. C (1994:7:6 explained “vocabulary knowledge enables language use language use and so on”.

Vocabulary acquisition is not something student can spend time learning, memorizing, like grammar and be successful. Acquisition requires the learning to be disciplined, spending time each day working on words, he/she does not know in order for learners to remember high frequency words and put them into their long term memory, Robinson. C stated that learners need to encounter the word multiple times in authentic speaking, reading and writing contexts at the students, appropriate level (Robinson. C (1994:8).

Although the learning of vocabulary may well be the main focus of the learner, the product of the efforts is often characterized by knowledge of the words limited to certain context, registers of language.

Even such words vocabulary knowledge may be quick to slip away, because the learning of vocabulary is so encompassing, it constitutes an important area in which to study the processes of language learning and forgetting.

Yet, its encompassing nature renders such study difficult, in recent years, there has been increasing interest in looking not only at the product side of vocabulary learning and forgetting, but at the process side as well in an effort to reveal the mysteries of differential vocabulary learning and substantial vocabulary loss.

In what concerns forgetting psycholinguists generally view it as a product of interference, where in other learning some now prevent appropriate remembering (Robinson. C (1994:17)

They add that several processes and mechanisms are seen as possibly accounting for the attrition of vocabulary learned in contexts.



The first process has been referred to as “response completion” where by all memory association is intact but one dominates and suppresses the other.

In this case the desired association is block and this is accessible, although it is still available, i.e. not erased from memory, the second process, is that of associative unlearning, where practice on interfering items extinguishes prior associations to the same stimulus, in the first process, the vocabulary is forgotten but not lost for good. In determining which process is responsible for the forgetting of given word may not be an easy matter, it is appealing to assume that most if not all lost vocabulary actually continues to reside in the brain and that is needed is proper stimulation to regain it.

### **2.2.2. Definition of vocabulary:**

Vocabulary has many definitions: thorough searching to define vocabulary the researcher found many terms define vocabulary as follows: [www.dg-pipex.edu](http://www.dg-pipex.edu) the word of which a language consist. Applied to an individual child the term stands for total number of words which enable to use or can recognize when reading or listening (Richard .J (2000: 53) defined vocabulary as knowledge of words and word meaning .however, vocabulary is come in two forms – oral and written.

Oral vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in reading and writing, second, word knowledge also comes in two forms, receptive and productive, receptive vocabulary includes words that we use when speak we write. Receptive vocabulary and may include many words to which we assign some meaning, even if we don't know their full meaning, definition, and connotations, or even used them ourselves as we speak and write.

Adding further complexity, in education, the word vocabulary is used with varying meaning, for example, for beginning reading teachers the

word might be synonymous with common words in English that young students need to be able to recognize quickly as they see them in print, however, for teachers of upper usually means the “difficult” words that students encounter in content area text book and literature selections.

### **2.2.3 The important of vocabulary:**

Vocabulary is the base of any language: without vocabulary we cannot speak, contact or understand each other, teacher cannot even make any development and progressive situation concerning the everyday life.

Robinson. C (1994:1) states that, ” it seems almost impossible to over and states the power of words”

They literally have changed and will continue to change the course of world history, perhaps the greatest tools we can give students for succeeding, not only in their education but more generally in life, is a large and rich vocabulary and skills for using those words.

Our ability to function in to today’s complex social and economic world is mightily affected by our language skills and word knowledge an individual has, and which are very important for communication: language knowledge –Meta –language knowledge, encyclopedia knowledge, lingua and socio cultural knowledge.

This is aspect of a word, its ability to awaken different types of knowledge while reading, listening and writing makes it extremely important for communication.

Robinson. C (1994:37) conclusion is consistent with in that “Grammar provides the overall pattern, vocabulary the material to put in the patterns”.

The much mushrooming amount of experimental studies and pedagogical and reference material (for example, according to ELIS 1995: 553:554) a study by Richard .J (2000:81) suggests provides three VLSs – keyword –

semantic, and keyword – semantic indicates that language, students are increasingly aware of importance and rapid development of VLSs.

Much of the research indicates that enlarging language vocabulary has been one of the objectives of many EFL students and there are different ways to achieve this objective.

For most students in learning as second language, the first headache or difficulty they meet is usually remembering words, vocabulary is an important part a language as well as the basic of linguistic, the size of vocabulary is an important standard to evaluate vocabulary knowledge, a second language learners conversational fluency and reading comprehension will meet difficulties; vocabulary is the foundation of language.

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M (1996:153) states “if language structures make up the Skelton of language; then its vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh. An ability to manipulate structure doesn’t have any potential for expressing meaning unless words are used”.

The researcher believes in vocabulary instruction forms a very important aspect of any foreign language teaching and learning, this is because the knowledge of vocabulary determines and decides the level of foreign language learner as he agrees with Robinson and Richard in the knowledge of vocabulary also pays a very crucial role in the major language skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading and mastering of required of vocabulary can make a foreign language learner an effective speaker, good listener, reader, and writer.

#### **2.2.4 Vocabulary types:**

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M (1996:1) it seems important to point that in almost all cases there are some difference in the number of words that an individual understands and use. Even the term “use” and “understand” need clarification. For example, the major way in which we “use’

vocabulary is when we speak and write, the expressive vocabulary is used to refer to both since these are vocabulary we use to express ourselves, we ‘understand’ vocabulary when we listen to speech and when we read; the term receptive vocabulary, finally, to round out the terminology, meaning or oral vocabulary refers to the combination of listening and speaking vocabularies, and literate vocabulary refers to the combination to our reading and writing vocabularies, are our listening , speaking, reading and writing vocabularies all the same.

Are they equally large? Is our meaning vocabulary large or smaller than our literate vocabulary? For the first five years or so of their lives, children are involved in the process of acquiring a meaning, oral vocabulary, words that they can use in their speech.

During this period, children have essentially no literate vocabularies. Most children acquire reading and writing skills upon entering school, they need to acquire a basic knowledge of how printed letters relate to the sounds of spoken words and being able to translate or trans code print into speech allows children to use what they know about meaning oral vocabulary for their literate vocabulary, so for very young children, their meaning vocabularies into their literate vocabularies.

This is so much the case that for older students and adults the literate vocabularies teachers tend to have a larger group of words that we use in reading and writing than we use in our own speech. This is because written language is more found, more complex, and more sophisticated than spoken language. There is also third category of words that students will meet once they move on to un simplified material; these I label thrown away vocabulary not all the words we meet are worth learning, even to the receptive level.

Students with a vocabulary of ‘say’ three thousand words cannot afford to cluster up their minds trying to learn words like boost.....instead,

they must learn to ignore what is not important for their immediate purpose.

That is to say she classified or categorized words types;

- Active vocabulary.
- Receptive vocabulary.
- Thrown away vocabulary

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M(1996:19) “ the terms productive and receptive vocabulary perhaps need explanation the distinction between them is certainly essential for teaching purpose- Native speaker and foreign learner alike recognize and understand more words than they actually use”.

The words they recognized but do not use the items by which their receptive vocabularies exceed their productive ones, the native speaker normally hears or sees a word many times in many slightly differing contexts and times in many slightly differing contexts and collocations before he begins to use it.

Robinson. C (1994: 279) distinguished between passive and active vocabulary in the following manners “Active vocabulary is vocabulary which is easily accessed from anywhere in the vocabulary network, and its turn allows easy access to other parts of the system too”

Passive vocabulary, on the other hand, comprise vocabulary that is a part of the network stimulation is available, you can recognize passive vocabulary when you see it, or when you hear it, but you are unable to bring it to mind without external support.

Indication to the argument of Robinson and Aebersol on types of vocabulary; the researcher sees, the term of vocabulary refers to students’ understanding of oral and print words. This understanding implies conceptual knowledge of words that goes well beyond a simple dictionary definition.

### **2.2.5 Vocabulary difficulties:**

To learn anything inevitably, you one almost encounter difficulty, because it is the first time to learn that things.

Robinson. C (1994:168.169) stated that difficulty may also be explained in terms of time or number of trails needed to learn something by one person or a group of people. He still showing that, from a psych linguistic point of view the “difficulty” of foreign language vocabulary consists of five factors;

- The “intrinsic “of word to be learned.
- The interaction between previously learned words and new words to be learned.
- The interaction within a group of words to be learned as the same time.
- The interaction between groups of words to be learned in sequence.
- The effects of repeated presentation of words to be learned.

Richard .J (2000; 136) says very language has its trouble spots so does English learning the words of spots. So does English learning the words of a foreign language is not an easy task, since every word has its form, meaning and usage and each of these aspects of the word may have its difficulties indeed, some English words are difficult in form as daughter busy, bury, woman, women) and easy in usage such as ( enter, get, happen).

Richard .J (2000:65) states that difficulty is high when there is limited time for learning and the students have no control over the time they can spend one each item. Difficulty is high when the words themselves are difficult because, for example they are difficult to pronounce and their English translation are adjective, adverb, and verb, rather than nouns. Robinson. C (1994:373) pointed a “distinctiveness” which relates ease of learning to distinctiveness (non –similarly) of information to be learned

as the distinctiveness of the information increase, does the ease with that information is learned, thus they argued presentation of vocabulary in clusters of semantically and syntactically similar non- distinct words impedes rockets than facilitate learning.

(<http://www.readingrocket.edu>). Words with multiple meaning are particularly challenging for students. Students may have a hard time understanding that words with the same spelling and pronunciation can have different meanings depending on their context looking up words with multiple meanings in the dictionary can cause confusion for students, they see a number of different definitions listed and they often have a difficult time deciding which definition fits the context, you will have to help students determine which definition they should choose, idiomatic expression also can be difficult for students, specially for students who are study English as a foreign language; because idiomatic expression do not mean that the individual words usually mean, you often will ( need to explain to students expression such as ) “drawing a blank”, “a chip off the old black” “ drawing a black” or “ get the picture”.

Structural words are the most difficult foreign- speaking pupils. Similarly and difference between the native language and foreign language is from meaning and distribution will result in ease difficult in acquiring vocabulary of a foreign language, in comparing foreign language vocabulary with that of the native language.

Richard .J (2000:22) listed (7) patterns of differences and similarities between language as follows:

- Similarity in form and meaning; the more cognates, easier to learn.
- Similarity in form but difference meaning .i.e. false cognates result in confusion and difficulty.
- Similarity in mean but difference in form indicates as normal difficulty level.

- Difference in form and meaning indicates difficulty.
- Difference in type of construction leads to difficulty (e.g. call up= telephone).
- Similarity in primary meaning but difference in connotation e.g. words those are harmless in connotation in the native language but offensive in foreign language.
- Similarity in meaning but with restriction in geographical distinction leads to difficulty.

the researcher thinks the difficulties of vocabulary leads learners to failure in establishing and achieving successful communication, having a low vocabulary can trap EFL learners in a vicious circle, since EFL learners who cannot read more advanced texts miss out on appropriate to extend their vocabulary and less successful in using strategies for word learning.

He adds lexical problems frequently interfering with communication; communication breaks down when people do not use the right words.

#### **2.2.5.1 Spelling:**

Spelling is the forming of words from letters according to accepted usage; or a sequence of letters composing a word; statement of rule or conventions on how words are to be written. (<http://www.sil.edu>).

The graphic form a word (spelling) is one more thing to consider, spelling (graphic) form of English words cannot always be inferred from their pronunciation or rules form because English spelling is in part conventional which means that spelling of some English words do not corresponding to their pronunciation certain letters being silent as (g,h) in night or (w) in wrong, while others stand for sounds different from their primary phonetic values, as (o) in do (a) in many.

At the same time English spelling is not chaotic; since most words are spelt regularly there are some contrasted homonyms such as pain – pane;



plain tact; bread; ied – I ead; red , read. Misspelling.  
(<http://enwikipeadia-edu>).

While some words admit multiple spelling some spelling are clearly in correct and this labeled as misspelling.

A misspelled word can be a series of letters that represent word no correctly spelled words of the same language at all such as “like” for “like” or a correct spelling of another words (such as writing) “hear” where one means “here” or “now” when means “know” misspelling or the letter type can easily make their way into printed materials because they are not caught by simple computerized spell checker. Misspelling may be due to either typing error (e.g. tying) “the” for “the” or lack of knowledge of correct spelling, whether or not a word is misspelled may depend on context such as Americans British English can also be a matter of opinion when variant spellings are accepted by some and not by other. For example “minuscule” for “minuscule” is a misspelling to many, and yet it is listed as a legitimate variant in a number of dictionaries.

Robinson. C (1994:94:4) stated that English foreign students commit many mistakes when writing, as in the following case, that they face difficulties when intend to write such words.

Omission of letters:

E.g.:

.discipline teacher ( disciphine).

Demerit makes (marks).

Quickly went home (quickly).

Because speech precedes writing, learner or foreign students tend to spell the way they pronounce their word.

B. Doubling of consonants e.g.

Apologized for being late (apologized)

A bowl of node les (node less).

This is a case of over – generalization on the student’s part perhaps, after learning words such as “appear” “appreciate”, apply” “appoint” all with double letter, p, learner is influenced to spell(apologize) with double P.

Word ending with “ily.E.g.

I wore my school uniform untidily.....(untidely)

.....luckily he didn’t decide to punish me (luckily)

The explanation for the occurrence of the errors above could be due to incomplete application of rules.

Although the students who wrote the first sentences, he has to omit the (y) in untidy” to form the adverb “untidily”, his knowledge of the rule application for suffix “ily” is incomplete.

As such, instead of applying (ily) to form (untidily”, he mistakenly applied (ely) in this writing.

Robinson. C (1994:7) states: spelling knowledge applies not only to the ability to encode words during writing; importantly, it also underlies individual’s ability to decode words during the process of reading.

Words like bomb, bombard, muscle, muscular; complete, competition are difficult for the student to learn or write because of their similarities, but they are difficult for the student to build up vocabulary, because the words in each pair are related in meaning, the spelling of the knowledge is, therefore, a powerful foundation for their reading and their vocabulary development.

#### **2.2.5.2 Pronunciation:**

(<http://www.contiman.edu>) the pronunciation of the words is that you hear when someone says the word. Most words have only one pronunciation, but sometimes a word has two more pronunciation. English pronunciation is difficult to be learned because it’s not related to the spelling of words. A person pronunciation is the ways they sound when they speak a language.

Robinson. C (1994:50) state that, it's true that unfamiliarity with correct pronunciation can result in the learner failing to understand words in connected speech that he understands clearly in written English careful attention to pronunciation is there for an essential part of vocabulary if few lexis is to be used effectively, or understood without difficulty, in spoken English <http://www.bbc.edu>. It's important to note that spelling of a word is not always an accurate guide to how it's pronounced similarly the pronunciation of a word is not always helpful when working out how that word should be spelt, there are 26 letters in English alphabet but there is many more sound in the English.

This means that number of sounds in a word is not always the same as the number of letters. For example the (CAT) has three letter and three sounds but the word(CATCH) has five letters but still only 3sounds, if we write those words using sounds symbols, we can see exactly how many sounds they have(CAT) is written/koat/ (CATCH) is written /htf/ in CATCH the 3 letters (TCH) are one sound represented by one symbol/tf/.

Chen, I., & Hsiao, H. (2010:50) state that homophones in English as key /quay/; draft /drought in addition to the number of similar forms which differ widely in their pronunciation as in e.g. foot, flood, food cause difficulty to the foreign students (<http://www.englishclub.edu>) English is not phonetic always remember that English remember that English is not (phonetic) that means that we don't always say a word the same way that we spell it.

Some words can have the same spelling but different pronunciation; for example

I like to read (rɪ:d).

I have read (red) that book.

Some words have different spelling but the same pronunciation for example:

I have read (red) that book.

My favorite colour is red (red)

Chen, I., & Hsiao, H. (2010:50) state that students should be total about the incidence of silent letters in pronunciation e.g (r) and (k), (b) as follows: or when it occurs at the end of a word e.g. mother, weather. But there is an exception of this rule is when the next word begins with a vowel, in this case it is usually pronounced to link the words together e.g mother and son.

As in (k) it's not the pronounced when it occurs at words being with (kn) such as (knee) or (knie). Also (b) is sometimes silent when it occurs at the end of words preceded by an (m) such as (dumb) and (bumb) (<http://www.englishclub.edu>) word stress is your magic key to understanding spoken English. Native speakers of English use word stress naturally; word stress is so natural for them that they don't even know they use it.

Non-native speakers who speak English to native speakers without using word stress encounter two problems:

They find it difficult to understand native speakers, especially those speaking fast.

The native speakers may find it difficult to understand them.

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M(1996:50) state that one of the major difficulties with English the pronunciation is that the position of the primary stress has such an influence on the individual verbs with in words the shift in stress from “economic”/Iknnomist/ to “economics” /i: konomiks/ ekrnoniks/ produces.

A different vowel quality in the first second and third syllables Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M(1996:570 state that, wrong words stress is said to be more likely to impeded comprehension, comfortable might be easily

understood the pronunciation in isolation, but perhaps not in the stream of speech, especially if accompanied by other similar mispronunciations.

So word stress is certainly worthy of attention, there will be some complication in saying international a teacher might correct it to international, but does not take account by likely stress in a phrase such as international relation, this suggests a need to work at the level of phrase rather than word.

### **2.2.5.3 Meaning:**

Meaning means: something that is conveyed or signified; sense or significance, something that one wishes to convey, especially by language (<http://www.thefreedictionary.edu>).

In linguistic meaning is the content carried by the words or signs exchanged by people when communicating through languages, McCarhy O'Dell (2002:2) state that, when you see or look up a word, the main thing that you want to know is its basic meaning.

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M(1996:135) say as a matter of fact the meanings into which we classify our experiences are culturally determined or modified and they vary considerably from culture to culture; some meanings found in one culture many not exist in another. Meaning can be classified according to the forms they attach to; meaning that attach to words as words are lexical meaning, for example. "a building for human habitation" that attaches to the form "house" is a lexical meaning in English.

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M(1996:66) states that, " every language is cut to a unique pattern", and the unit of a given language " can be identified only in terms of their relationship with other units in the same language " is that it has the same language, that has to be seen in the light of relations

between expressions in the same language Saussure in Singleton (2000:60) also state, the value of a linguistic unit derives both from the concepts for which it may be “exchanged” and from its set of relationships with other words in the language, the meaning of the word cannot be characterized in term of its component features, but in term of its relationship to other words, or the analysis of lexical relation such as: synonym, Antonyms, hyponymy and collocation.

#### **2.2.5.3.1 Synonym:**

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M (1996:118) states that, they are two or more forms with very closely related meaning which are often, but always intersubstitutable in sentence. Example of synonyms are (broad-wide) ; (hide-conceal) ;( almost-nearly).

Aebersol. J.A and Field L.M(1996:15) state that, synonyms occur when group of words that share a general sense and so may be interchangeable in a limited number of contexts, but which on closer inspection reveal conceptual difference, examples as ( extend – increase- expand).

Synonyms are different words with identical or at least similar meanings words that are synonyms are said to be synonymous and the state of being synonym be called synonym. An example of synonyms are word car and automobile – similarity, if you talk long time or extended, long and extended become synonyms. In the figurative sense, two words are often said to be synonymous if they have the same connotation: a wide immortality.

There is much difficulty in learning synonyms so the researcher thinks it well be better if the t teachers involve some exercises of synonyms so as to help students to get benefits of synonyms as it enriches students’ vocabulary

Synonyms can be any part of speech (e.g. noun, verb, adjective, adverb or preposition, more examples of English synonyms are:

- Baby and infant (noun).
- Student and pupil (noun).
- Buy any purchases (verb).
- Pretty and attractive (adjective).
- Quickly and speedily (adverb).
- On and upon (preposition).

Some lexicographers claim that no synonyms have exactly the same meaning ( in all contexts or social levels of language ) because etymology, orthography, phonic qualities, ambiguous meaning usage, make them unique, however, many people feel that the synonyms they use are identical in meaning for all practical purpose and are interchangeable different words that are similar in meaning usually differ for a reason: Feline is more formal than cat; long and extended are only synonyms in one usage and not in others, such long and extended arm.

#### **2.2.5.3.2 Antonyms:**

Carter and Nunan(2001:118) state that, two forms with opposite, such as (quick-slow) (long-short) (alive-dead).Its divided into two types: gradable antonyms, such as the pair (big – small); non-gradable antonyms or (complementary- pairs) such as (male-female); (obese and skinny) and (up-down) words may have different antonyms, depending on the meaning. Both long and tall are antonyms of short.

Antonyms are four types:

Gradable antonym: are two ends of spectrum (slow and fast) but can have variations.

Complementary antonyms: are pairs that express absolute opposite like mortal and immortal.

Relational antonyms: are pairs in which one describes a relationship between two objects and other describes the same relationship when two

objects are reversed such as parent and child; teacher and student, buy and sell.

Auto – antonyms: are the same words that can mean the opposite of themselves under different contexts or having separate definitions.

Enjoin (prohibit) issue injection; to order, command.

Moving quickly; fixed in place.

(to; to).

Punishment, prohibition; permission.

Stay (in special place, postpone; direction, movement).

#### **2.2.5.3.3 Hyponymy:**

Chen, I., & Hsiao, H. (2010:119) state that, when the meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, the relationship is described as hyponymy.

(Wilkins: 1972:124) states that, by hyponym is meant a relationship of inclusion, vehicle depends upon what its hyponyms are, so the meaning of car depends on its being a hyponym of words.

#### **2.2.5.3.4 Collocation:**

As for Lewis, (2002:25) collocation is the combinations of words which occur naturally with greater than random frequency. Collocation co-occurs, but not all words which co-occur are collocations.

Collocation is about words which co-occur, not ideas or concepts. For example, drive cars, drink coffee.

The researcher indicates that learning vocabulary is as important as learning grammar, whether the learner has the achieved near native speaking level or not can be judged based upon whether he /she can use and say collocations well

Chen, I., & Hsiao, H. (2010:37) when two items co-occur, or are used together frequently, they are said to collocate items may co-occur simply because the combination reflects a common real word state of affairs. For



instance “pass” collocate (pass the salt); or the earth revolves around the sun; bites her mail; heavy traffic; fully insured.

Chen, I., & Hsiao, H. (2010:11) stated: collocation is concerned with the words occur together, often any typical collocations that go with them, they identified examples as follows:

Adjective + noun collocation: (real thing), genuine article, (great detail).

Verb+ noun collocation: (drives quickly, fast), (move fast)(move swiftly) .

Adverb + adjective: (totally black); (completely depressed).

Verb +object collocations: (raise your hand); (visit a website).

Chen, I., & Hsiao, H. (2010:122, 12) state: knowledge of words it should be in term of collocation, or frequently occurring together, part of knowing a language knows not only what words mean, but what their typical collocations are thus, part air of your knowledge of fresh is as it occur in the phrase fresh air, or a knife and frog; enough already.

The summary; for many EFL learners, vocabulary learning means learning a list of new words with meanings intheir native language without any real context practice. In most of the EFL learning context, thus, often have to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary during language learning. During such encounter with new word, EFL learners look up the meaning of the word in a bilingual dictionary. Most of time they write down lines of new words without any idea of the real use of them in context, in this way EFL learner fails to understand and communicate message in appropriate way.

## **2.3 Previous Studies**

### **2.3.0 Overview**

This section is devoted to review briefly relevant previous studies; most importantly the problems they had investigated and their findings.

Notably the area investigated has recently attracted the attention of linguists and researchers.

### **2.3.1 Implementing Story telling in Developing Writing Techniques**

Khartoum University (Elfil, Amira: 2001)

Amira Elfils' thesis "Implementing story telling in developing writing techniques" was submitted in partial fulfillment to the degree of Med, in curriculum and methods of teaching at the faculty of education. The study investigated the deterioration of the standard of English language; and tried to find out a way of this by introducing a new technique. The researcher's population were randomly selected samples of basic school pupils (6<sup>th</sup> year), and first year university students. The methods used for the collection of the data were experimental method accompanied with observation, in addition to interviews with the teachers of English. Her findings could be summarized as follow:

- 1- The syllabus taught at basic level Sudanese schools does not fulfill the pupils' requirements; other materials should be supplemented to satisfy their needs.
- 2- The story telling technique proves to be:
  - a- Successful in teaching vocabulary at basic level and in teaching other skills.
  - b- Successful to improve advanced learners' writing skill.
  - c- Encouraging pupils to think and express themselves.
- 3- Number of hours given to English language teaching is not enough.
- 4- Unawareness of students; there is no specific goal for learning English.
- 5- Some schools states are miserable due to lack of books and literary books, large classes; moreover, that Spine series need more techniques for improving writing skill.

To find a way out for the deterioration of English Language in Sudan, the researcher introduced a new technique to develop the writing skill that was the 'story telling technique'. In her study, she confused the findings

were irrelevant to the assumptions. The tools she used for analyzing the data collected were not obvious in the study.

### **2.3.2 The effect of summarizing short stories on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning.**

Dr. Parviz Ajiddeh.

University of Taberiz, Iran.

The participants of this study were 40 female Iranian learners of English. They were learning English as a foreign language at a private English institute. They already had passed some English courses successfully. None of them had any background of residence in an English speaking country.

Vocabulary items which were the main focus of this study consisted of all the new vocabulary items presented in lessons 1 to 4 published by Pearson Education (2004). In this regard summarizing short stories strategy was taught to the experimental group while the control group was taught the reading part just by usual reading.

The objectives of this study:

- 1- Examine the effect of summarizing short stories on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning.
- 2- Investigating whether summarizing can enhance EFL learners' acquisition of new words.

The findings of this study as follows:

1. Summarizing is one of the Meta -cognitive strategies, leads to effective use of mental skills, and increases, remembering and understanding.
2. Summarizing short story helps students to comprehend knowledge, transferring it to long-term memory significantly because it leads students to
  - reading to understand.

- distinguish important ideas.
- express the information by using their own their own words.

### 2.3.3 **Strategies for Dealing with vocabulary Learning Problems.**

By Thai University students.

Faculty of Liberal Arts – NongKhai Thailand.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate KKU student's deals with vocabulary problems. The researcher use interview to collect data.

The findings of this study as follow:

1. The students are well aware of different vocabulary learning strategies.
2. The vocabulary learning strategy classifications was similar to that from Schmitt's Taxonomy (2002).
3. Employing strategies for dealing with vocabulary learning problems to discover the main of unknown words.

### 2.3.4 **Teaching Reading Comprehension through short Stories in advance Classes.**

By OmidPourkalhor- Islamic Asad University, Chalous

Department of English.

This study examined the effect of short stories instruction on 20 advanced level grade tenth students to show if the method had an impact on students reading comprehension. To serve this purpose an instrument was used in this study is reading comprehension test.

The findings of this study as follow:

- 1- Reading comprehension through short stories improves students' reading comprehension skill.

2- There are some problems in using literature in side class room

- Firstly; there is a lack of preparation in the area of literature teaching in TESL/TEFL programs.
- Secondly: there is the absence of clear, cut objectives defining the role of literature in ESL/EFL.
- Thirdly: there are very few pedagogically designed appropriate materials that can be used by language classroom.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Methodology**

## **Chapter three**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The pervious chapter reviewed the literature relevant to this study. It aimed at recognizing the effect of teaching short stories on solving the vocabulary difficulties which encountered by Sudanese university student.

To ensure satisfactory results and effective evaluation, the researcher used the Experimental, Descriptive and Analytical method of research. He constructed questionnaire and test for data collection. Questionnaire was addressed to the teachers of English language at university level. The test addressed to the students at the same level. The questionnaire and the test were tested for validity and reliability to ensure their ability to achieve the objectives of the research.

This chapter presents the methodology used in this study so as to achieve the objectives. A detailed description of subjects and setting will be provided and data collection instruments are explained. Also, the chapter describes the validity and reliability of the instruments used to obtain the required information.

#### **3.2 The subjects**

##### **3.2.1 The Students**

The students started to learn English Language at basic school in sixth year with Spine course Series (6 books), three in the basic level and three in the secondary level.

When the students “the samples” inter the university, they study English as requirement course.

These are the groups the research started the experimental on.

The two groups should be identically chosen. As for this study the two chosen groups are actually identical because there one big group and were divided into two sub – groups, so they are identical as needed.

### **3.2.2 The Teachers**

Thirty EFL teachers were selected randomly from all over universities in Khartoum locality to respond to thirty restricted questionnaires. They had different experiences and qualifications. Most of them hold postgraduate degree in English Language.

## **3.3 Instruments of Data Collection**

### **3.3.1 The questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a list of questions about a particular topic answered by many people. Nunan (1992:27) states that “a questionnaire is an instrument for the collection of data, usually in written form, consisting of pen and or closed questions and probes requiring a response from subjects.

A 15 items questionnaire was designed and distributed to EFL teachers from different universities in Khartoum State. The questionnaire focused mainly on the items concerned with research questions and hypotheses

### **3.3.2 Student’s Test**

A test consisted of 5 questions was designed and distributed to EFL students so as to know the difficulties which face them in vocabulary and evaluate its.

## **3.4 Procedures of Data Collection**

### **3.4.1 Students’ Test**

The researcher follows the experimental method in this study. The experimental method is an ideal method to prove by figures if this technique would confirm the assumption and help practically the English language vocabulary.

The steps that the researcher did are as follows:

The researcher chooses two groups (A) the controlled is 25 students and (B) the experimental group is 25 students.

A diagnostic test is prepared to be given to the two groups (A) and (B) before application of teaching and is called the pre-test. The test checks the difficulties of English language vocabulary which encounter university students, to evaluate both groups levels, the results are kept.

Then the researcher applied the technique of teaching short stories on the experimental group, for an hour per week.

The researcher suggests 15 hours, that makes 15 weeks i.e. one semester. The researcher thinks that this would be the minimum time to give reliable results and whenever there is a possibility to be extended, it would be better for satisfying results for discussion.

The same test is to be given to the two groups, the controlled group and the experimental group known as the post-test

### **3.4.2 Teachers' Questionnaires**

The researcher distributed copies of questionnaire to (30) EFL teachers in Khartoum state's universities. Few days later, all the questionnaire copies were collected.

### **3.5 Reliability of the Questionnaire and the Test**

Reliability means that the questionnaire and test should give the same result if it is applied in similar circumstances. It is one of the criteria through which a test can be evaluated. Brown (1988) identifies reliability as "the extent to which results can be considered consistent and stable". To calculate the reliability of the questionnaire and the test, the researcher randomly selected a group of the (10) English teachers for the questionnaire and (10) students for the test. They were given copies of the test and the questionnaire as a pilot test. Days later, they were given the test and the questionnaire for the second time. Accordingly, the reliability of the two instruments was achieved when the researcher compared the



pre-test to the second test of the both instruments to make sure that the items of the questionnaire and the test are relevant to the particular area of the study.

### **3.6 Validity of the Questionnaire and the Test**

To achieve the validity of the questionnaire and the test the researcher adopted the following steps:

The test and the questionnaire were seen by judges who are university lectures with long experience in field of ELT.

- 1- The revised and evaluated final versions of the test and the questionnaire were distributed to the both students and teachers.
- 2- The test and the questionnaire were distributed personally and directly to the subjects of the study.
- 3- The total number of the test and the questionnaire that the researcher has received from the respondents were (50) from students (control and experimental groups) and (30) from the teachers.

### **3.7 Reliability and Validity of the Students' test**

Test is judged valid, because it is clear and the students find it easy to understand the questions and respond accurately. The test was shown to four experts English language teachers at university, who assure its contents, structure, and face validity.

### **3.8 Reliability and Validity of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

Validity = Reliability

The researcher calculated the reliability coefficient of the scale used in the questionnaire by alpha equation and the results were as follows:

Table (2): Reliability and Validity:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.736	18

The results table above shows that all reliability and validity coefficients for questionnaire are greater than (50%) and close to the one. This indicates that the questionnaire is characterized by high reliability and validity, and makes statistical acceptable.

### **3.9 Data analysis Techniques**

#### **3.9.1 Phrases of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire contains (15) statements. The researcher requests from the study individuals to determine their answers about what it describes all statement according to the Likert scale which consists of five levels (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). These phrases have been distributed on three hypotheses as follows:

- 1- The first hypothesis includes statements (1-5)
- 2- The second hypothesis includes statements (6-10)
- 3- The third hypothesis includes statements (11-15).

#### **3.10 Statistical methods**

To achieve the objectives of the study and to verify hypotheses, statistical methods were used the following:

- 1- Charts.
- 2- Frequency distribution of the answers.
- 3- Percentages.

- 4- Alpha equation, to calculate the reliability coefficient.
- 5- Median.
- 6- Chi-square test for the significance of differences between the answers.

To get results as accurate as possible the researcher used SPSS statistical software.

### **3.11 Pilot Study**

Piloting phase is very essential for the success of any research. Bell (1993) states that all data gathering instruments should have to be piloted to test how long it takes recipients to complete them, to check that all questions and instructions are clear and enables them to remove any item which does not produce usable data.

Before conducting this study all the questions in the instruments were piloted with a small sample of the subject (10 teachers and 10 students). This pilot phase was done so as to make sure that the selected questions yield the required information and to revise and drop any question which may be confusing and ambiguous. The teachers' questionnaire, items 1, 6, 10 and 12 were ambiguous and, hence, they have been simplified.

# **Chapter Four**

# **Results Analysis &**

# **Discussion**

**Chapter Four**

**Data Analysis, Results and Discussion**

**4.0 Overview**

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data obtained from experimental of the vocabulary test for students and the ELT teachers' questionnaire. The data were processed by the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS) program. Some descriptive statistics such as the standard deviation and means and T- test were used to identify any significant differences of independent variables in the study.

The chapter consists of two sections. The first section shows and analyzes the data obtained from English language vocabulary test which addressed for students whereas the second one provides analysis of the data of the ELT teachers' questionnaire.

#### 4.1 Students' Test

Before the treatment, a pretest (*PET test*) was given to the participants in order to guarantee their homogeneity and determine their understanding ability and vocabulary knowledge. The test which consisted of five questions separated in five different parts was administrated to both groups. The students' individual scores on the proficiency test (50 scores for the experimental group and 50 scores for the control group) are listed in table.

**Table 4.1. The Raw Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups on the Pretest and Posttest.**

Post test		Pre test		
Controlled group	Experimental group	Controlled group	Experimental group	
33	26	37	33	

28	39		26	28
38	34		40	38
37	32		29	37
30	28		26	30
28	24		26	28
25	30		32	25
26	35		33	26
38	28		16	38
29	33		25	29
25	46		30	25
17	41		52	17
20	47		17	20
20	30		12	20
17	23		12	17
14	24		10	14
19	33		12	19
17	28		16	17
10	37		25	10
17	19		18	17
17	26		15	17
20	30		7	20
20	41		5	20
30	29		34	30
28	29		16	28

Resource: the researcher

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics for pre and post for both experimental and control tests

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
post control	24.12	7.699	25
Pre control	21.76	9.697	25
Post exp	31.64	7.088	25
Pre exp	26.20	6.910	25

Resource: the researcher

Figure 4.1. *Comparison of the Mean Values of both Groups in Pretest and Posttest*

According to Figure 1, the performance of the experimental group was better than the control group. There is a significant difference between their mean values after the treatment. The following figures illustrate comparison of the mean value, SD and spread of scores of control group in both pretest and posttest.

Histograms for pre test control group

-

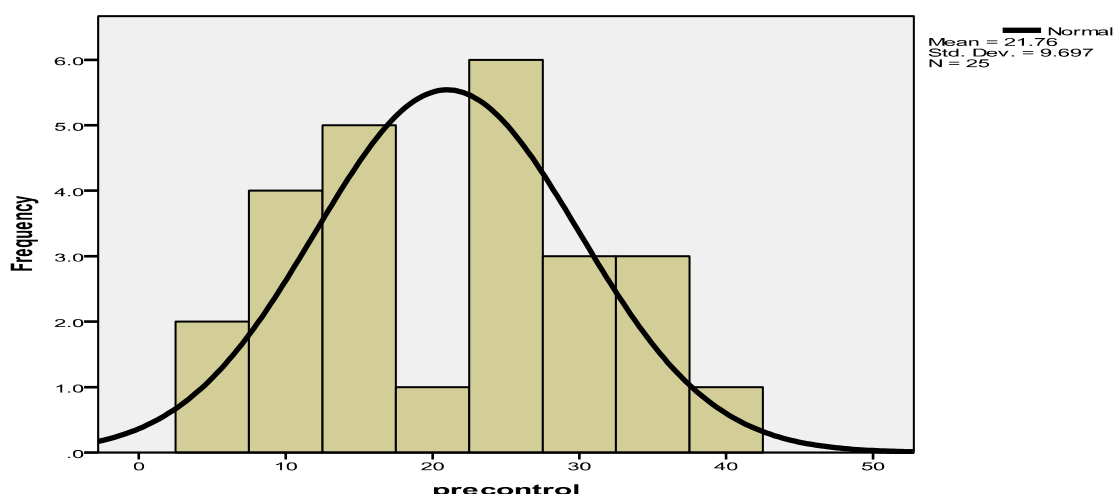


Figure 2. *The Mean Value, SD and Spread of Scores of Control Group in Pretest*

According to figure 2, we have mean value of 21.78 and SD 9.697 for the control group in pre test

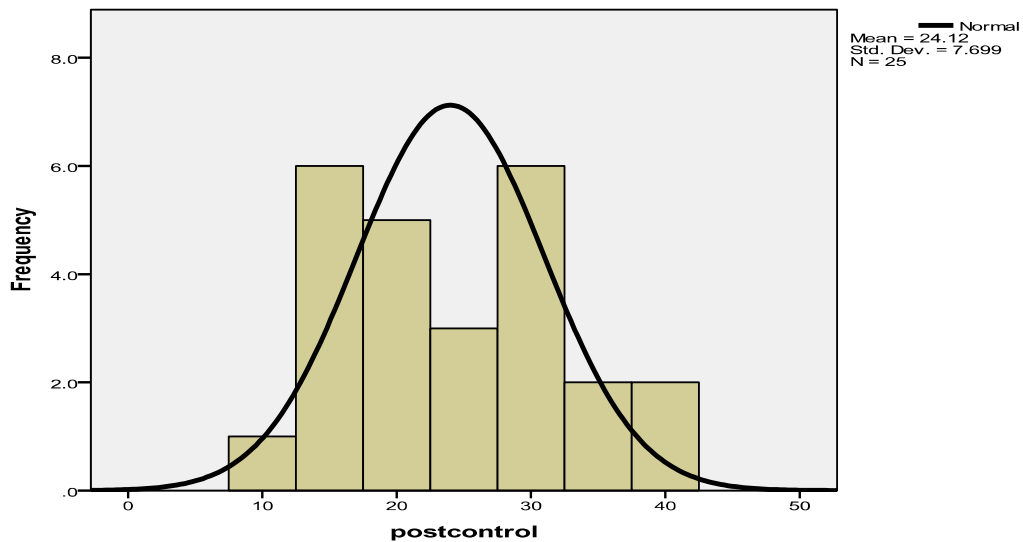


Figure 3. *The Mean Value, SD and Spread of Scores of Control Group in post test* According to figure 3, we have the mean value of (24.12) and a standard deviation of (7.699) for control group in pretest. As it is clear from the result, there is a slight difference in increasing of mean value and decreasing of SD. The following figures illustrate comparison of the mean value, SD and spread of scores of experimental group in both pretest and posttest.

Figure 4. *The Mean Value, SD and Spread of Scores of Experimental Group in Pretest*

According to figure 4, we have the mean value of ( 26.2 ) and a standard deviation of ( 6.91) for experimental group in pre-test.



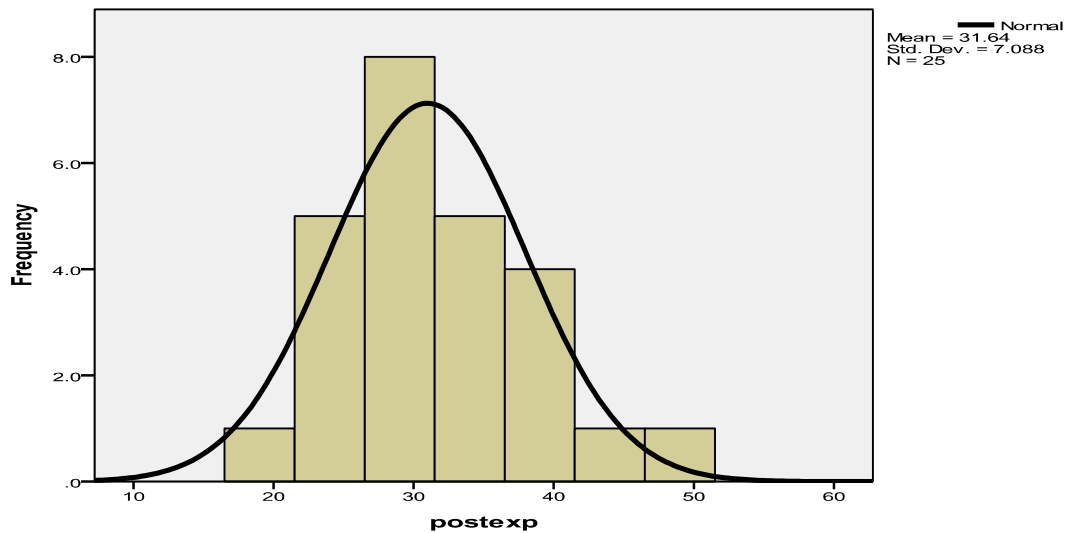


Figure 5. the Mean Value, SD and Spread of a score of experimental group post test. According to figure 5, we have the mean value of (31.64) and a standard deviation of (7.088) for experimental group in post test. The result indicates that SD shows a smaller spread of scores. also the mean value has increased significantly. By comparing the mean value and SD of the experimental group in both pretest and posttest, we can conclude that our strategy has been helpful and that our students “knowledge in learning vocabulary has been improved

95% confidence. Interval		p-value	T-value	DF	SD		Groups
U	L						
9.228	-.348	0.426	1.864	48	6.910	26.20	experimental
9.241	-.361		1.864	47	9.697	21.76	control

Resource: the researcher

Table 2. T-test analysis of the means of two groups in the pre test

For the scores gained from the pretest (*PET test*), the mean value was calculated. Mean for the control group was (21.76) and for the

experimental group it was (26.20). Moreover a T-test was employed on these scores for hypothesis testing purposes. As the result of T-test suggests (P-value 0.426) being greater than 0.05), our null hypothesis is accepted since we have not applied the intended strategy. There is not significance different between two groups. The following figure illustrates the comparison of the mean values of both groups on pretest and posttest.

Table 3. *T-Test Analysis of the Means of Two Groups in the Posttest.*

95% confidence. Interval		p-value	T-value	DF	SD		Groups
U	L						
11.72	3.31	0.008	3.595	48	7.088	31.64	Experimental
11.70	3.30			47	7.966	24.12	Control

Resource: the researcher

For the scores gained from the posttest, the mean value was calculated. Mean for the control group was (24.12) and for the experimental group it was (31.64). Moreover a T-test was employed on these scores for hypothesis testing purposes. As the result of T-test suggests (P-value 0.008 being less than 0.05), there is a meaningful difference between two groups. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis stating that “teaching short-stories has a significant impact on vocabulary learning” is accepted. Studies have also proved that reading stories has the potential to greatly increase an EFL learners’ vocabulary repertoire. The use of short-stories in EFL classrooms for developing vocabulary of EFL learners is a naturalistic, enjoyable, low-cost and highly effective method. And it should be recommended for all EFL teachers and learners. However, this does not mean that story telling should replace all other methods of vocabulary teaching; rather it should

be used in addition to those methods in order to boost development further. EFL teachers need to acknowledge the incremental nature of vocabulary learning, and to understand that an effective vocabulary learning program needs to be principled. And as it is accepted that short-stories are a powerful pedagogic tool in order to promote EFL learners' vocabulary development by making the process more enjoyable and meaningful, this linguistically rich material needs to be given adequate attention in any program of vocabulary instruction.

## **4.2 DISCUSSION**

This study sought to examine the effect of teaching short stories on solving the Vocabulary learning difficulties of EFL learners. The researchers aimed to investigate whether teaching short stories can solve Sudanese university students learning of new words difficulties. The overall gain in vocabulary learning will be explained. Furthermore, the researcher will compare participants' vocabulary learning over a one and a half month period. As mentioned previously, the aim of this study was to determine the effect of teaching short stories in solving Sudanese university student's vocabulary learning difficulties. As we know, students need to recognize a large number of words automatically if they are to be fluent learners.

As a result, the hypothesis was not rejected and the alternative hypotheses are accepted stating that "learning vocabulary causes difficulties to Sudanese university students learning English language" was accepted. What was revealed in this study about the positive effects teaching short stories in solving English language vocabulary learning difficulties was in line with the findings of McGinley and Denner (1994) who argued that the story impressions strategy arouses students' curiosity and enables them to use clue words associated with the setting, characters, and events

in the story to help them write their own versions of the story prior to learning.

These results also concur with the study conducted by Senemo lu, (2001), who concluded that teaching short stories, which is one of the meta-cognitive strategies, leads to effective use of mental skills, and increases remembering and understanding. It helps students to comprehend knowledge, transferring it to long-term memory significantly because it leads students to a/ reading to understand, b/ to distinguish important ideas, and c/ to express the information by using their own words. To sum up, the results presented above offer convincing evidence that teaching stories has a positive effect on Sudanese university students' vocabulary learning. The present findings expand the existing research in the area of vocabulary learning. However, to establish the results of this study into literature more follow up studies are needed.

### 4.3. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Now, let us turn to analyze the teachers' questionnaire. Tables 4.2.1 to 4.2.15 show the scores assigned to each of the 15 statements by the 30 respondents. The responses to the questionnaire of the 30 teachers were tabulated and computed. The following is an analytical interpretation and discussion of the findings regarding different points related to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. Each item in the questionnaire is analyzed statistically and discussed. The following tables will support the discussion. The following tables will support the discussion

Statement (1) *Table (1)* some of the university students ignore learning vocabulary.

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	13	43.3
Agree	12	40.0

not sure	1	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3
Disagree	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

Table (1) above shows that a majority of the respondents (83.3%) Strongly agree and agree that some of the university students ignore learning vocabulary only (13.3%) are not agree with Statement (1) figure (1) shows that (13) teachers (43.3%) strongly agree some of the university students ignore learning vocabulary, there are also (12) teachers (40%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that teachers agree with these statements. This result indicates that most of English language teachers believe that Sudanese universities as EFL learners find it difficult to learn English language vocabulary, and they start to ignore learning it, because vocabulary taught through uninterested topics which de-motivated students. To motivate students learning vocabulary it should be taught through short stories. Without some knowledge of vocabulary, neither language production nor language comprehension would be possible. Thus the growth of vocabulary knowledge is one of the essential pre-learning for language learning and this growth of vocabulary knowledge can only be possible when teachers employ effective vocabulary teaching and learning strategies through teaching short stories which are the objectives of this research thesis.

Statement (2) *Table (2)* vocabulary learning itself is a difficult task for Sudanese university students.

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	4	13.3
Agree	6	20.0

not sure	5	16.7
strongly disagree	3	10.0
dis agree	12	40.0
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

Form the Table (2) above shows that a majority of the respondents (33.3%) Strongly agree that vocabulary learning itself is a difficult task for university student and (50%) are agree and only (16.3%) are not sure an Statement (2) figure (1) shows that (13 ) teachers ( 43.3% ) strongly agree Some of the university students ignore learning vocabulary, there are also (12) teachers (40% ) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly disagree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the English languages teachers believe that vocabulary learning process is create difficulties for university students cause learning vocabulary needs enough time and help from teachers so as to achieve the goal of learning. Referring to learning task is the end product in the learner’s mind. It can be as broad as mastering a second language or as specific as remembering one meaning of a word. Broadly speaking, this conception of the learning task includes the materials being learned (such as the genre of a piece of reading) as well as the goal the learner is trying to achieve by using these materials (such as remembering, comprehending, or using language). It should be noted that this conception of “task” is in line with the traditional, broader understanding of task. Different types of task materials, task purposes, and tasks at various difficulty levels demand different learner strategies. For example, learning words in a word list is different from learning the same words in a passage.

Remembering a word meaning is different from learning to use the same word in real life situations. Likewise, guessing from context would mean

different things for texts of different levels of new word density. Knowing a word implies knowing many things about the word: its literal meaning, its various connotations, its spelling, derivations, collocations, frequency, pronunciation, the sort of syntactic constructions into which it enters, the morphological options it offers and a rich variety of semantic associates such as synonyms, antonyms, homonym all these make learning vocabulary a very difficult task for university students.

Statement (3) *Table (3)* Lack of knowledge in using dictionary effects on Sudanese university Students learning vocabulary

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	11	36.7
Agree	14	46.7
not sure	2	6.7
strongly disagree	1	3.3
dis agree	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

Table (3) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (83.4%) strongly agree and agree that the lack of knowledge in using dictionary effects on learning vocabulary. Only 10% do not agree to that. Statement

(3) figure (3) shows that (14) teachers (46.7%) agree Lack of knowledge of using dictionary effects on vocabulary learning ignore learning, there are also (11) teachers (36.7%) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result shows that most the teachers see that the difficulties of learning English language vocabulary is due to unknowing of how to get the proper meaning from the dictionary so teachers should help their students to get the meaning of the new vocabulary from the dictionary. Moreover, teachers should devote their time so as to teach their students how to use the dictionary and of course, learning strategies of using dictionary help students positively learning the new word easily and fast. University students certainly need to know how when to use a dictionary to look up the meanings of unfamiliar words. Surprisingly, many students lack event the most rudimentary dictionary skills and benefit from some explicit instruction. Without training and guidance, less proficient readers and English language learners are apt to encounter numerous difficulties as they struggle first to locate and then to effectively navigate a lengthy dictionary entry. Many publishers, including Longman and Heinle, have developed a line of manageable “learners’ dictionaries” for university students who need a more user-user friendly dictionary to assist them in content area coursework. A learners’ dictionary characteristically includes fewer yet more high-frequency definitions, written in accessible language and complemented by an age-appropriate sample sentence. English language learners and less proficient learners’ benefits from the clear, simple definitions and common synonyms as much as from the natural examples illustrating words and phrases in typical contexts.

Statement (4) *Table (4)* university student are not motivated to learn correct vocabulary



Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	5	16.7
Agree	16	53.3
not sure	2	6.7
strongly disagree	2	6.7
Disagree	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

From the above table(4) university student are not motivated to learn correct vocabulary we see that(70%) are strongly agree and agree and only (23.4%) are disagree Statement (4) figure (4) shows that (16) teachers (53.3%) agree students are not motivated to learn correct vocabulary, there are also (5) teachers (16.7%) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements.

This result clarifies that most of the teachers believe that university students are not motivated to learn the correct vocabulary. Student pronounces & understands English language word wrongly so it will be better if the teachers help their students to learn word correctly and motivate them; by this helping they learn the new words correctly then the students will feel satisfied and motivated. Also make sure you are teaching to all the learning styles in your classrooms is another way to motivate your students. It is unrealistic to expect an auditory learner to be successful and motivated if his/her sole instruction comes from reading a [textbook](#). Likewise, a kinesthetic learner will be frustrated listening to his teacher lecture class after class. Make sure, as you [plan your lessons](#) that you are teaching to all the learning styles in your classroom. If you do, you will engage students who might otherwise struggle to [pay attention](#) in class. Sometimes motivating your students is as easy as changing the

material you are using. For most teachers, the university chooses a curriculum that they expect each teacher to follow in his or her classes. Even when this is the case, it does not mean that you cannot bring additional resources to class. Sometimes students are turned off by the style or approach of certain curriculum authors. Bringing a different perspective into the class will reengage your students who are turned off by your current materials. In addition, it will challenge those who are already seeing success from the assigned curriculum.

Statement (5) *table (5)* Students are not given extra time for solving vocabulary meaning difficulties

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	4	13.3
Agree	16	53.3
not sure	3	10.0
strongly disagree	1	3.3
disagree	6	20.0
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

Table(5) Students are not given extra time for solving vocabulary meaning difficulties we found that(66.3%) strongly agree and agree and (23.3%)disagree Statement (5) figure (5) shows that (16) teachers (53.3%) agree) students are not given extra time for solving the vocabulary meaning difficulties, there are also (6) teachers (20.0) disagree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements This result shows clearly that most of the teachers see that the time for solving the difficulties of English language vocabulary’s meaning inside the class room is not enough for students to get the meaning of the new words. Teachers should give extra time inside the class room for students so as to get the meaning

of the new words. During this research I discovered new insights, challenges and possible solutions to the problems experienced by the ESL teacher in the English for academic purposes classroom.

The calculated value of the media from the respondents' answers about the all statements that related to the first hypothesis, this value in general, means that most of the respondents have agreed with all that mentioned about the first hypothesis. "Vocabulary learning creates difficulties to university student. It is commonly noted that in EFL classrooms the students with reading problems have poor vocabularies. The vocabulary knowledge, thus, influences EFL learners' other language skills, especially reading comprehension skill. The mastery of vocabulary can support EFL learners in speaking when they are communicating to people, in writing when they are writing and translating the meaning, incomprehension when they read and listen. On the other hand, the lack of vocabulary can trap them into vicious circle. Thus the lack of vocabulary knowledge results in lack of meaningful communication as the other language skills get affected with it benefits and they are also enjoyable among the EFL learners.

Statement (6) *Table (6) Homophones* confuse university student to learn vocabulary.

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	7	23.3
Agree	15	50.0
not sure	4	13.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3
dis agree	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

Table (6) home phones confuse university student to learn vocabulary we found that(73.3%)strongly agree and agree and only 13.3% are disagree Statement (6) figure (6) shows that (15) teachers (50.0%) agree on Homophone confuse university students in learning vocabulary, There are also (7) teachers (23.3) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements.

This result gives us clear evidence that most of teachers see that homophones confuse university students to get the correct meaning of the new words, so teaching the meaning of homophones with adequate practicing help students to avoid confusion. [Homophones](#), also known as [sound-alike words](#), are words that are pronounced identically although they have different meanings and often have different spellings as well. These words are a very common source of confusion when writing. Common examples of sets of homophones include: to, too, and two; they're and their; bee and be; sun and son; which and witch; and plain and plane. Vocabulary Spelling City is a particularly useful tool for learning to correctly use and spell the sound alike words.

Statement (7) Table (7) university students unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	7	23.3
Agree	13	43.3
not sure	6	20.0
strongly disagree	2	6.5
disagree	1	3.3
Total	30	100

Table (7) university students unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation (66.6%)strongly agree and agree 10%Statement

(7) figure (7) shows that (13) teachers (43.3%) agree on University students unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation, There are also (7) teachers (23.3) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. The result above indicates that most of teachers think that university students unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation which is affected learning the meaning of word because they do not know that the prefixes change the meaning of the word, hence, they look word up in the dictionary and they could not find it. There are far too many affixes to directly to teach them all; it is important to realize that relatively few affixes account for the majority of affixed in English. Thus, it is helpful to explicitly teach high- utility affixes (meaning and pronunciation) and assist students in making connections as they encounter new vocabulary containing these parts. Once these basic affixes have been mastered, it can be useful to explore more complex or less frequent word parts, such as multi (prefix) means many example multimedia. Additionally, focused word study that builds student knowledge of Greek and Latin roots, or bases, can be of significant assistance to university students. Diverse learners in particular, are unlikely to have read enough or engaged in enough academic conversations beyond school in which key roots were clarified. Linguists' estimate that well over 50 percent of polysyllabic words found in English texts are of Latin or Greek derivation, underlining the importance of ensuring that students learn "English from the roots up."

Statement (8) *Table (8)* university students hardly understand the meaning of the word from the context

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	4	13.3
Agree	13	43.3
not sure	3	10.0
strongly disagree	2	6.7
disagree	8	26.7
Total	30	100.0

Resource: the researcher

Table (8) above shows that a majority of the respondents (56.6%) Strongly agree and agree that university students hardly understand the meaning of the word from the context. Only 33.4% do not agree to that. Statement (8) figure8) shows that (13) teachers (43.3%) agree on): University students understand the meaning of the word from the context, there are also (8) teachers (26.7%) strongly disagree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the teachers believe that university student hardly understands meaning of word from context. Moreover, some EFL/ESL learners are often unable to guess the meaning of an unknown word from a text; learners in general due to their inadequate grasp of target language skills, are less effective guessers and less effective of English vocabulary. Learning context refers to the learning environment. It is the socio-culture-political environment where learning takes place. The learning context can include the teachers, the peers, the classroom climate or ethos, the family support, the social, cultural tradition of learning, the curriculum, and the availability of input and output opportunities. Learning context is different from language context which refers to the textual or discourse place in which a particular word or structure can be found. Learning contexts constrain the ways

learners approach learning tasks. A learning strategy that is valued in one learning context may well be deemed inappropriate in another context.

Statement (9) *Table (9)* Sudanese university students face difficulties in learning synonyms

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	6	20.0
Agree	15	50.0
not sure	3	10.0
strongly disagree	2	6.7
disagree	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

Table (9) above shows that a majority of the respondents (70%) Strongly agree and agree that university students face difficulties in learning synonyms. Only 20% do not agree to that. Statement (9) figure (9) shows that (15) teachers (50%) agree on): University students face difficulties in learning synonyms, there are also (6) teachers (20%) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result clarifies that most of the teachers see that university students face difficulties in learning synonyms, it will be better if the teachers involve some exercise of synonyms so as to help students to get benefits of synonyms as it enriches student's vocabulary.

Statement (10) *Table (10)* word's antonym affects university students on learning the meaning of the new vocabulary

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	4	13.3
agree	16	53.3
not sure	5	16.7

strongly disagree	3	10.0
disagree	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table (10) above shows that a majority of the respondents (66.6%) Strongly agree and agree that word's antonym effects university students on learning the meaning of the new vocabulary Only 16.7% do not agree to that. Statement (10) figure (10) shows that (16) teachers (53.3%) agree on word's antonym effects university students learning vocabulary, there are also (4) teachers (13.3%) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the teachers think that word's antonym effects university students learning vocabulary. Hence, teachers should teach word's antonym and its functions as they help in enrich vocabulary.

The calculated value of the media from the respondents' answers about the all statements that related to the second hypothesis, this value in general, means that most of the respondents have agreed with all that mentioned about the second hypothesis. "Word's meaning causes much difficulty to university student in learning vocabulary.

Statement (11) *Table (11)* short stores play effective role in learning vocabulary

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	18	60.0
Agree	8	26.7
not sure	2	6.7
strongly disagree	1	3.3
disagree	1	3.3
Total	30	100



Table (11) above shows that a majority of the respondents (86.7%) Strongly agree and agree that short stories play effective role in learning vocabulary. Only 6.7% do not agree to that. Statement (11) figure (11) shows that (17) teachers (56.7%) strongly agree on short stories play effective role in learning vocabulary, there are also (8) teachers (26.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the teachers come together with the researcher's point of view that teaching short stories help university students in solving difficulties of vocabulary learning. The learning vocabulary through story innovation strategy was introduced by Martin and Brogan. It is a procedure for innovating sentence patterns by using the structure of a sentence to create a semantically new one through word substitutions. Story innovation is a way for learners to enjoy writing and reading and learn vocabulary in a scaffold format. The finished product is a new text that is easy for learners to read because they are familiar with the patterns in the original story and with the new vocabulary used to create the innovation. Another advantage of using short-stories with EFL learners for developing vocabulary is that they present many opportunities for designing various language activities and help in teaching and learning new words very effectively in the real life context. Short- stories not only help EFL learners to develop vocabulary from linguistically rich material but also guide them to a personal discovery by opening a window on another culture and encouraging interaction. Short- stories are also practical for the English language teachers as their length is long enough to cover, entirely, in one or two class sessions; they are not complicated for students to work with of their own; they have a variety of choice for different interests and tastes, and they can be used in all levels (Beginner

to Advanced) , all age groups (Young learners to Adults) , and all classes. This benefit can be exploited with EFL learners wisely and creatively for developing and enriching their vocabulary.

Statement (12) *Table (12)* teaching short stories help in vocabulary enrichment

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	20	66.7
Agree	7	26.7
not sure	1	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3
disagree	1	3.3
Total	30	100

Table (12) above shows that the majority of the respondents (93.7%) strongly agree and agree that teaching short stories help in vocabulary enrichment 6.6% do not agree to that Statement (12) figure 12) shows that (20) teachers (66.7%) strongly agree on teaching short stories help in vocabulary enrichment, there are also (7) teachers (23.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the teachers come together with the researcher’s point of view that teaching short stories help in vocabulary enrichment. Enrich

vocabulary through short stories can be by involving antonyms and synonyms exercises to learn more words.

Teaching short stories helps in cognitive development of EFL learners as extensive reading increases vocabulary levels, offers opportunities to acquire and practice reading skills, and models language patterns. Stories also increase all language skills by providing extended linguistic knowledge, by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax. Vocabulary learning strategy is a process, by which information is obtained, stored, retrieved, and used. Therefore, individual vocabulary learning strategies need to be encouraged and short-stories as a means for developing EFL learners' vocabulary can be one such strategy. The benefit of using short-stories in EFL classrooms for developing vocabulary is that stories offer new words with the actual usage in many forms. This can help EFL learners to understand not only the meaning of the new word learned but also the usage in context. Therefore, if an EFL teacher wishes that his/her students learn vocabulary and be successful in learning , be creative in classes, then the best reading materials can be short-stories to make learning easy, independent, motivational, enjoyable and memorable. The interesting contexts provided by short-stories serve to illustrate the notice ability of lexical and syntactical features. It is also argued that much vocabulary learning results from literacy and wide reading rather than from direct instruction. Many studies have proved that the use of short-stories with EFL helps in developing and enriching their vocabulary.

Statement (13) *Table (13)* understanding short stories help student to guess the meaning of the word from context

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	14	46.7
Agree	12	36.7

not sure	2	6.7
strongly disagree	1	3.3
disagree	1	3.3
Total	30	100

Table (13) above shows that a majority of the respondents (83.4%) strongly agree and agree that understanding short stories help student to guess the meaning of the word from context 6.6% do not agree to that Statement (13) figure (13) shows that (14) teachers (46.7%) agree on understanding short stories help students to guess the meaning of the words from the context, there are also (13) teachers (43.3%) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the teachers come tighter with researcher's point of view that understanding short stories help students to guess the meaning of the words from the context. As the characteristics of short stories simple and easy to understand it should use to help students to guessing the meaning of the new words from the context rather that referring to dictionary. It found that word meanings are retained longer when they are included in numerous classroom assignments. In order to really know a word, students must be able to use it in more than one context; it must be used in writing, speaking, and listening and the use of short-stories in EFL classroom offers these opportunities for integrating vocabulary with other language skills. Many studies have also showed that context-clue vocabulary instruction using \short-stories can cause an increase in word usage compared with word-list instruction. Another benefit of using short-stories is the culture load in storytelling. Culture load refers to the way language and culture are related and the amount of cultural knowledge required to comprehend meaning to participate in activity

English students need to learn the words in English as well as the cultural background and need to learn words in context to understand the meaning. This can be made possible with the use of selected short-stories by the EFL teachers. The use of short-stories for developing vocabulary also makes EFL learners more autonomous. As students read and try to comprehend the meaning from the context, this strategy also develops the autonomous learning among EFL learners. Therefore, this use of short-stories needs to be explored as it has many pedagogical benefits.

A statement (14) Table (14) Teaching unfamiliar word through short stories saves time

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	10	33.3
Agree	8	26.7
not sure	3	10.0
strongly disagree	4	13.3
Disagree	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Table (14) above shows that a majority of the respondents (60%) strongly agree and agree that teaching unfamiliar through short stories save time 30% do not agree to that Statement (14) figure (14) shows that (10) teachers (33.3%) strongly agree on teaching unfamiliar words through short stories save time, there are also (8) teachers (26.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result gives us clear evidence that most of teachers see that teaching unfamiliar words through short stories save time. Instead of spending time explaining the meaning words by easier words it is better to explain it through short story. Learning meaning of words through short stories is improves not

only eliciting the meaning but also improves learning the skills of English language. One of the principles of vocabulary learning is that in order to be familiar with the new word, one need to see it several times. Stories make EFL learners repeat the words unconsciously in various forms. And the result is that they do not have difficulty in remembering the words that they have just met. It is argued that the nature of human memory dictates that vocabulary will probably be forgotten; especially the word just has been met. Vocabulary loss happens because word knowledge is so fragile. This means that words and phrases need to be recycled often to cement them in memory. Introducing a word, and not recycling or revisiting it, means it is highly likely that it will be forgotten. Reading short-stories not only offers the opportunities to revisit the words learned but also to understand and use them in real life communication which guarantees the required longer retention.

Statement (15) *Table (15) short stories reduce student's anxiety towards vocabulary learning*

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	8	26.7
Agree	15	50.0
not sure	1	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3
Disagree	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Table (15) above shows that a majority of the respondents (76.7%) strongly agree and agree that short stories reduce student's anxiety towards vocabulary learning 20% do not agree to that Statement (15) figure (15) shows that (14) teachers (46.7%) agree on): Short stories reduce students' anxiety toward vocabulary learning, there are also (8)

teachers (26.7%) strongly agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that teachers agree with this statements. This result indicates that most of the teachers come together with the researcher's Point of view that short stories reduce student's anxiety toward vocabulary learning; The role of literature, in general and short-stories in particular, in ELT classroom has always been advocated because of various advantages this use can offer for EFL teachers and learners. Stories stimulate language learning by providing contexts for processing and interpreting new language. They also supplement the restricted input of the EFL classroom. Stories also promote an elementary grasp of English to internalize vocabulary and grammar patterns.

The calculated value of the media from the respondents answers about the all statements that related to the third hypothesis. This value, in general, means that most of the respondents have strongly agreed with all that is mentioned about the third hypothesis. "Teaching short stories help in solving the difficulties of vocabulary learning. Study category teaching short stories help in solving the difficulties of vocabulary learning.

#### **4.4 Statistic Analysis**

The second part of study: represent the statistical analysis for the teachers responds

TABLE (4) shows the result for the first category (vocabulary learning creates the difficulties to university student

Results	S.D	mean	Disagree	strongly disagree	Not sure	agree	Strongly agree	Scale	
strongly agree	1.56	1.97	3	1	1	12	13	FREQUENCY	Q1
			10.0	3.3	3.3	40	43.3	PRESENT%	
Disagree	1.53	3.43	12	3	5	6	4	FREQUENCY	Q2
			40.0	10.0	16.7	20.0	13.3	PRESENT%	
agree	1.1	1.97	2	1	2	14	11	FREQUENCY	Q3
			6.7	3.3	6.7	46.7	36.7	PRESENT%	
agree	1.33	2.54	5	2	2	16	5	FREQUENCY	Q4
			16.7	6.7	6.7	53.7	16.7	PRESENT%	
Agree	1.35	2.63	6	1	3	16	4	FREQUENCY	Q5
			20.0	3.3	10.3	53.3	13.3	PRESENT%	
S.D	mean	Disagree	strongly disagree	Not sure	agree	strongly agree	Scale		
1.17	2.27	3	1	4	15	7	FREQUENCY	Q6	
		10.0	3.3	13.3	50.0	23.3	PRESENT%		
1.25	2.37	4	3	3	13	7	FREQUENCY	Q7	
		13.10	10	10	43.3	23.3	PRESENT%		



1.47	2.9	8	2	3	13	4	FRE QUA NCY	Q8
		26.7	6.7	10	43.3	13.3	PRE SENT %	
1.27	2.43	8	2	3	15	6	FRE QUA NCY	Q9
		26.7	6.7	10	50	20.0	PRE SENT %	
1.07	2.43	2	3	5	16	4	FRE QUA NCY	Q10
		6.7	10	16.7	53.3	13.3	PRE SENT %	

Resource: the researcher

From the result of above table it shows that all teachers are (agree) with the second research category word meaning cause much difficulty to university student in vocabulary learning Agreeing on word meaning causes much difficulty to Sudanese university in learning English language vocabulary by all respondents ( teachers) needs to find at any way solutions for this difficulty, as we can see in this study the researcher suggest to teach short stories to Sudanese university students for solving this difficulty , see table (6) to know whether teachers of this study will agree on teaching short stories in solving word meaning difficulty or not. *Table (6)* show the result of third category (teaching short story help in solving difficulties in vocabulary learning)

Results	S.D	mean	Disagree	strongly disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Scale	
strongly Agree	.86	1.68	1	2	2	8	17	FREQUANCY	Q11
			3.3	6.7	6.7	26.7	56.7	PRESENT%	
			1	1	1	7	20	FREQUANCY	

strongly Agree	1.02	1.44	3.3	3.3	3.3	23.7	66.7	PRESENT%	Q12
agree	1.02	1.72	1	1	1	14	13	FREQUANCY	Q13
			3.3	3.3	3.3	46.7	43.3	PRESENT%	
strongly Agree	1.53	2.55	5	4	3	8	10	FREQUANCY	Q14
			16.7	13.3	10	26.7	33.3	PRESENT%	
agree	1.4	2.34	5	1	2	14	8	FREQUANCY	Q15
			16.7	3.3	6.7	46.7	26.7	PRESENT%	

Resource :the researcher

And also its clearly from the answered of the questionnaire statements about teaching short stories for Sudanese university students to solving vocabulary learning difficulties, we can see that all English language teachers strongly agree with this dominant of this study, it says teaching short stories for Sudanese university students solving vocabulary learning difficulties.

**Reliability analysis:-**

Table (7) general reliability &Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.736	18

From the above table the value of reliability Cronbach's Alpha is (.736) that means the test is strong

#### **4.5. The Highest and Lowest Agreement through the Teachers' responses**

As seen from the tables (4.2.12), that statement 12 in the first section obtained the highest mean of agreement given by the teachers. In other words, this statement scored a percentage of 89.9 agreements among the teachers. This gives evidence that the teachers of English (respondents) were in total agreement with the concept that it teaching short stories help in vocabulary enrichment. This confirmed by the majority of the respondents, in other words that means the teachers do not reject utterly the teaching short stories in EFL classroom.

As seen from the tables (4.2.13), that statement 13 in the first section obtained the highest mean of agreement given by the teachers. In other words, this statement scored a percentage of 89.9 agreements among the teachers. This gives evidence that the teachers of English (respondents) were in total agreement with the concept that it understanding short stories help students to guess the meaning of words from context. This confirmed by the majority of the respondents, in other words that means the teachers do not reject utterly the teaching short stories in EFL classroom.

As seen from the tables (4.2.1), that statement 1 in the first section obtained the highest mean of agreement given by the teachers. In other words, this statement scored a percentage of 83.3 agreements among the teachers. This gives evidence that the teachers of English (respondents) were in total agreement with the concept that it some of university students ignore learning vocabulary. This confirmed by the majority of the respondents, in other words that means the teachers do not reject utterly careless of students toward vocabulary learning.

As seen from the tables (4.2.11), that statement 1 in the first section obtained the highest mean of agreement given by the teachers. In other

words, this statement scored a percentage of 83.3 agreements among the teachers. This gives evidence that the teachers of English (respondents) were in total agreement with the concept that it short stories play effective role in vocabulary learning. This confirmed by the majority of the respondents, in other words that means the teachers do not reject utterly the teaching short stories in learning vocabulary and solve students' difficulties in learning it.

As to the statement that has had the lowest agreement, in the teachers' responses, it is the statement No. 2 in the first section, which scored the lowest mean among the total agreement responses. This statement confirmed the opinion that "vocabulary learning itself is a difficult task for university student". This statement scored 33.3 % of agreement. This is indicates the evidence that the teachers have favour to say the difficulties are not concerned in the vocabulary itself but may concentrate in teachers or the syllabus which is used or the exercise which followed the lesson to evaluate the understanding the meaning of vocabulary.

#### **4. 6 The Highest and Lowest Disagreement through the Teachers' responses**

Statement 2 gave the highest disagreement – with a percentage of 50.0 %. It disagrees with the idea of vocabulary learning itself is a difficult task for university students. Whereas, the lowest percentage (3.3 %) was given by the statement No. 12, which claims "understanding short stories help students to guess the meaning of the word from the context." And also the lowest percentage (3.3 %) was given by the statement No. 13, which claims "teaching short stories help in vocabulary enrichment" These week percentages of disagreement for both of the two responses comparable with the considerable percentage given for the eight responses of agreement together confirm the need of effective teaching short stories in EFL classrooms.

#### 4.4 The Highest and Lowest

Disagreement through the Teachers' responses Statements gave the highest disagreement and lowest percentage – with a percentage of 10.6 %. It disagrees with the concept that student's vocabulary learning creates the difficulties to university student. 9.7 % disagrees with the with the concept of word meaning cause much difficulty to university student in vocabulary learning and only 8% are disagree that teaching short story help in solving difficulties in vocabulary learning) As seen from the above tables that statements in all sections obtained the highest mean of agreement given by the teachers. In other words, these statements scored a percentage of 82.3% agreement among the teachers. This gives evidence that the teachers of English (respondents) were in total agreement with the concept that students vocabulary learning creates the difficulties to university student - And also (87.4%) agree that word meaning cause much difficulty to university student in vocabulary learning And 88.6 % agree that teaching short story help in solving difficulties in vocabulary learning).

#### **4.7. Results in Terms of the Hypotheses**

The purpose of this section of the chapter is to discuss the statistical results as they pertain to the hypotheses. Each hypothesis is restated and discussed the results that relate to it, is following.

In chapter one three hypotheses were addressed and in chapter three they were stated with the expected outcome of each. In this chapter, the three hypotheses are listed below with a description of the outcomes of each in a form of summary.

**Hypothesis 1:** English language vocabulary creates difficulties for Sudanese universities students in learning English language. ;

Tables 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4, and 4.2.5. generally, for section 1 'vocabulary learning difficulties', The tables and figures, in general, for

section 1 of the questionnaire for teachers was highly accepted by the teachers; that Sudanese university students ignore learning vocabulary, vocabulary learning it is a difficult task for Sudanese University students and also the teachers agreed on lacking of knowledge of using dictionary effects on vocabulary learning . The average mean scored by teachers, for section 1, was 2.63 out of a maximum mean score 5. In summary, English language vocabulary learning creates Difficulties for Sudanese university students learning English language was high. Thus, hypothesis 1 is confirmed by the findings.

**Hypothesis 2:** word meaning causes much difficulty for Sudanese University students learning English language. The tables and figures, in general, for section 2 of the questionnaire for teacher was highly accepted by the learners in term of Homophones confuse Sudanese university students in learning the meaning of vocabulary, University students unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation, this may be their much difficulties face students to learn vocabulary, University students hardly understand the meaning of the word from the context, and learning word's antonyms and synonyms is needed. For section 2 the average mean scored by teachers, was 2.43 - comparatively out of a maximum mean score 5. In summary, the word meaning causes much difficulty for Sudanese University students learning English language for teachers was high Consequently, hypothesis 2 is attested by the findings.

**Hypothesis 3:** Teaching Short stories to Sudanese university students help in solving English language vocabulary learning difficulties... Table 4.11 evaluated the responses of the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> statements of section 3 (teaching of short stories in solving vocabulary learning difficulties). The responses agreed to five statements, they are number 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. Statement 11 has the highest percentage

among the others. It scores a percentage of 66.7 %. These responses reveal the teachers desire to teach short stories in EFL classroom for its characteristics. Nevertheless, this requires a careful thought by the teacher so that the vocabulary and structures used in the language of classroom management are also generally useful and teaching unfamiliar words. Furthermore, more this was supported by statement 14 Teaching unfamiliar words through short stories save time. Therefore, the teaching unfamiliar words through short stories can save time and make learning go very interesting. Referring to Table 4.16 the teachers agreed to five statements, they are number 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. On the other hand, the other responses have no statistical significances, which allow the door open for the probabilities of the other alternative responses. some teachers have favour to teach short stories to teach English language vocabulary to reach the maximum efficiency in language teaching, they are sure of English, the target language, as the primary means to instruct and communicate in the classroom and the teach of short stories should be controlled.

It is understood that not all teachers would agree with the teaching of unfamiliar words through short stories can save time and efforts. They would say that particularly foreign language learners need as much exposure as high tech devices during limited class time, the only time in their daily lives when they encounter the language.

In summary, Teaching short stories help in solving the difficulties of vocabulary learning. As well, exceeding teaching short stories in classroom may possibly be a way to successful English language vocabulary teaching/learning. Consequently, hypothesis 3 is maintained.

#### 4.8. Chapter Summary

To sum up, the findings of this chapter revealed that section one “Vocabulary learning creates difficulties for Sudanese university students we can say there was a consensus of opinions in ignoring learning of English language vocabulary by Sudanese university students creates difficulties for them. The neutral responses, however, show irregularity and unexpected and unexplainable instability of the respondents’ uncertainly in the five levels.

The responses section 2 to statements (6-10) ' the word’s meaning creates much difficulty for Sudanese university students learning English language vocabulary. All of the positive statements in this section were either strongly agreed to or only agreed to. The percentages of the less positive responses were less significant for word’s antonym affects university students learning vocabulary, but higher for the teachers in Homophones confuse university students in learning the meaning of vocabulary. All teachers agreed to the statements of the third section “teaching short stories for Sudanese university students can help in solving English language vocabulary difficulties”. The undecided responses, however, showed small differences. The majority of the respondents were in favor of the need for the use of short stories for teaching vocabulary. A very large majority of the respondents agreed on:

- Learning vocabulary creates difficulties for university student in learning language
- University student faces difficulties in learning English language word synonyms.
- University student hardly understands the meaning of the new words from context.



- University student unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation.
- Short stories play an effective role in solving the difficulties of vocabulary learning.
- Teaching short stories help in enrich university's student English language vocabulary.
- Understanding short stories help university student to guess the meaning of the word from the context.
- Teaching short stories reduce student's anxiety toward vocabulary learning.

# **Chapter Five**

## **Findings &**

### **Recommendations**

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusion**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The aim of this study is to find out the role of using short stories in solving the difficulties of learning vocabulary which face Sudanese university student. Teaching short stories help students to understand conventions of target community as well as developing language – learning process. This study investigates the area where short story can play a vital role as well as model of teaching language in general and learning vocabulary in particular, that short story has an educational value and the view of literature as schemata for understanding the whole world. The results and recommendations are extracted here in the light of the hypothesis of the research, questions of the research, review of literature and the study sample. What is worth mentioning is that all the findings are in favour of the research hypothesis.

This chapter deals with the conclusions of the study which the researcher has come to and the recommendations which reflect the researcher's opinion so as to find serious solutions for the problem, and the researcher's suggestions for further studies.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

The researcher believes that teaching vocabulary in Sudanese universities as university's requirement is becoming more infrequent. The importance

of teaching vocabulary should not be less the necessity of writing, grammar and reading.

As the aim of this study is Examine why it has been students neglect learning vocabulary and learn how to teach it effectively. Vocabulary learning is very important for students so as to be fluent in all skills of the English language.

This study concentrates mainly on the effect of teaching short stories in solving the difficulties English language vocabulary .moreover, in this study, short stories were incorporated into the EFL curriculum for adult Sudanese learners in order to reinforce students' knowledge of vocabulary, to promote English language skills, and to bring enjoyment into the classroom atmosphere.

King (2001) puts forth the idea that “pleasure and learning go hand in hand, but pleasure leads the way”. The present study has combined the entertainment and educational value; the two essential elements of the use short story in an EFL classroom. The present research confirms the findings of Tomlinson (1986: p. 33) who acknowledges that using various forms of literature has contributed far more to the acquisition of language and the development of language skills than “a total concentration on the presentation and the practice of language items (1986: p. 42), and that of Salih (1986) who notes the positive impact of literature upon improving language skills of Arab students majoring in English, and also supports the findings of Obeidat who remarks that literature helped his students become more “creative, critical, and analytical learners” (1997: p. 32), among many other related studies.

Though the particular setting for this experience is a Sudanese university, the procedure involved has universal application. Provided the objectives for the inclusion of and the selection criteria are well established, the use of stories can be included into the framework of an EFL curriculum in

institutions of higher education on a larger scale in Sudan and in similar other EFL/ESL contexts. Short stories are highly beneficial to use in EFL/ESL teaching programs; however, the selection of short stories should be done with reference to the course objective, the learners' profile, and the story content in order to make the best of it owing to the unique nature of every teaching situation.

### **5.3 Findings:**

As analysis and description of the experiment carried out the researcher and the teacher's questionnaire, the study has come out with the following results:

- Learning vocabulary creates difficulties for university student in learning language
- University student faces difficulties in learning English language word synonyms.
- University student hardly understands the meaning of the new words from context.
- University student unable to differentiate between the root of word and its affixation.
- Short stories play an effective role in solving the difficulties of vocabulary learning.
- Teaching short stories help in enrich university's student English language vocabulary.
- Understanding short stories help university student to guess the meaning of the word from the context.
- Teaching short stories reduce student's anxiety toward vocabulary learning.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

In the light of this study researcher may recommend the following;

- Short stories should be taught to solve vocabulary learning difficulties.
- Short stories should be taught widely in tertiary level to enhance students to learn English language vocabulary synonym.
- Short stories that are taught to university students should be selected to help them understanding the meaning of the new word within context.
- Short stories should be taught if the aim is to teach word affixation.
- Teachers at university should teach short stories as authentic materials to reduce student's anxiety toward learning English language vocabulary.
- Teachers at university should encourage their students to read short stories to develop and enrich their vocabulary.
- It will be better to teach short stories if the aim to understand the meanings of the new word.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further studies:**

- Using short stories to develop Speaking & Reading skill.
- Impact of using short stories on enhancing language learning.
- The role of short stories in enhancing university student critical thinking skill.
- Exploring ways to teach short stories to solve English language writing difficulties.

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# **Appendices**

## Appendices

### Appendix (1)

#### The teachers' Questionnaire

*Sudan university of science and Technology*

*Post graduate studies*

*Faculty of Education / English language Teaching*

Dear teacher, I will be very grateful if you read and respond to the following questionnaire.

This questionnaire has been planned and designed to collect data, about the teachers' opinion about the Effect of teaching short stories in solving the difficulties of English language vocabulary. The questionnaire covers three main categories:

- Vocabulary learning creates difficulties to university student.
- Word meaning causes much difficulty to university student in vocabulary learning.
- Teaching short stories help in solving difficulties of vocabulary learning.

For each statement, five optional responses are given. Please, read each statement carefully and then tick (√) in the space of the option, which is appropriate to you. The data of this questionnaire will be used only for the research purpose, and will be treated confidentially kept.

<i>No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>disagree</i>
<i>1-</i>	<i>Some of the university students ignore learning vocabulary</i>					

2-	<i>Vocabulary learning itself is a difficult task for university students.</i>					
3-	<i>Lack of knowledge in using dictionary affects learning vocabulary.</i>					
4-	<i>University students are not motivated to learn vocabulary.</i>					
5-	<i>Students are not given extra time for solving the vocabulary meaning difficulties.</i>					
6-	<i>Homophones confuse university students in learning vocabulary.</i>					
7-	<i>University students cannot to differentiate between the root of a word and its affixations.</i>					
8-	<i>University students hardly understand the meaning of word from the context.</i>					
9-	<i>University students face difficulties in learning synonyms.</i>					
10-	<i>Word's antonym affects university students learning the meaning of the vocabulary.</i>					
11-	<i>Short stories play effective role in learning vocabulary.</i>					
12-	<i>Teaching short stories helps in vocabulary enrichment.</i>					
13-	<i>Understanding short stories helps students to guess the meaning of words from context.</i>					
14-	<i>Teaching unfamiliar words through short stories save time.</i>					

15-	<i>Short stories reduce student's anxiety toward vocabulary learning.</i>					
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**Students' Test**

*Sudan University of Science and Technology  
Vocabulary test*

*Student's name:*

**Choose the correct meaning from the options below (10 marks)**

- 1- *Particular means*  
a- *Special*    b- *ordinary*    c- *new*    d- *important*
- 2- *Execution means*  
a- *Punishment by imprisonment*  
b- *The decision of the judge*  
c- *Punishment by the death*  
d- *Being let out of prison*
- 3- *Complicated means:*  
a- *not- simple*    b- *not easy to pass*  
b- *interested*    d- *strong*
- 4- *astonished means:*  
a- *frightened*    b- *pleased*  
b- *displeased*    d- *surprised*
- 5- *strict means :*  
a- *firm*    b- *easy*  
b- *unpleasant*    d- *weak*
- 6- *curiously means:*  
a- *usually*    b- *strangely*  
b- *funnily*    d- *stupidly*
- 7- *a good deal of means:*  
a- *quite a lot of*  
b- *too much*  
c- *enough*  
d- *plenty of*
- 8- *disobedience means :*  
a- *doing what you like*  
b- *making a lot of noise*  
c- *not doing what is necessary*  
d- *not doing what you are told*
- 9- *minimum means:*  
a- *least*  
b- *best*

- c- most
  - d- worst
- 10- idleness means:
- a- dullness
  - b- unhappiness
  - c- laziness
  - d- foolishness

**Question three:- 10 marks**

**put each of these verbs with its opposite:-**

- |                 |                        |              |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 1- to arrive    | .....                  | a- to depart |
| 2- to finish    | .....                  | b- to        |
| attack.....     |                        |              |
| 3- to win       | .....                  | c- to start  |
| 4- To shorten   | d- to lose .....       |              |
| 5- To defend    | e- to lengthen .....   |              |
| 6- To help      | f- to degrease.....    |              |
| 7- To increase  | g- to bore.....        |              |
| 8- To weaken    | h- to whisper.....     |              |
| 9- To shout     | I – to hinder.....     |              |
| 10- To interest | j- to strengthen ..... |              |

**Question four: - (10 marks)**

**Use the word given in brackets to word at the end of each sentence to form a word that fits in the space given. Use the following endings:-**

(-ous), (-ive), (-tion) (-ful) (-sion)

- 1- Planes are the most .....means of transport. (expense)
- 2-Trees protect the soil from.....(erode)
- 3-We must keep.....drugs out of the reach of children.(poison)
- 4-The police are responsible for the .....of crime. (prevent)
- 5- The results of space research may be.....to us in the future.( use)

**Question five: - (10 marks)**

**Use the following prefixes before suitable word:-**

(un-) (dis-) (en-) (fore-) (ir-)

- 1- Women need to be (courage).....to participate in development.
- 2- The company employed a new(man) .....
- 3- It is not true that women are (productive).....

4- *Are all women really (responsible).....?*

5- *I (agree)..... with women staying at home.*

## **Short stories**

### **Cinderella**

Cinderella lived with her stepmother and two stepsisters, who were jealous of her and treated her very badly.

She had to spend all day, every day doing work around the house. One day an invitation arrived from the prince, who was having a ball. Cinderella had to help her stepmother and stepsisters make beautiful dresses for the ball, and on the night they went off and left the poor girl alone.

She was very sad, but suddenly her Fairy Godmother appeared and turned Cinderella's old clothes into a beautiful gown. She turned a pumpkin into a golden coach and some mice into lovely black horses and a rat into a coachman. So Cinderella went to the ball, but her Fairy Godmother warned her that she had to leave the ball by midnight.

When the prince saw Cinderella he thought she was so beautiful that he danced with her all evening. Suddenly the clock began to strike twelve, and Cinderella remembered what her Fairy Godmother had told her. She ran out of the palace and was in such a hurry that one of her glass slippers came off as she was racing down the stairs.

The prince found the slipper and ordered his servants to go out into his kingdom and make every girl try the slipper on until they found its owner. Eventually they arrived at Cinderella's house and discovered that the slipper fitted her.

They took her back to the palace and she married the prince and they lived happily ever after.

### **THE GOLDEN BOYS**

Every August. Every August for twelve years. Every August for twelve years we went to the same small town on holiday. Every August for twelve years we went to the same beach. Every August for twelve years my parents rented the same small house in the same small town near the same beach, so every morning of every August for twelve years I woke up and walked down to the same beach and sat under the same umbrella or on the same towel in front of the same sea.

There was a small café on the beach where we sat every day, and every day Mr. Morelli in the café said "Good morning!" to my parents, and then always patted me on the head like a dog. Every day we walked down to our red and white umbrella, every day my father sat on his deckchair and read the newspaper then went to sleep, every day my mother went for a swim in the sea and then went to sleep. Every lunch time we ate the same cheese sandwiches which my mother made, and then every afternoon we went up to the café and ate an ice cream while my parents talked to Mr Morelli about the weather. Every summer for twelve years I sat there and read books and sometimes played volleyball with some of the other boys and girls who were there, but I never made any friends.

It was so boring. Every August for twelve years the same family sat next to us. They were called the Hamiltons. We had a red and white umbrella, they had a green one.

Every morning my parents said "Good morning!" to Mr and Mrs Hamilton, and Mr and Mrs Hamilton said "Good morning!" to my parents. Sometimes they talked about the weather.

Mr and Mrs Hamilton had two sons. Richard was the same age as me, and his brother Philip was two years older than me. Richard and Philip were both taller than me. Richard and Philip were very friendly, and both very handsome. They were much friendlier and more handsome than me. They made friends with everyone, and organised the games of volleyball on the beach or swimming races in the sea with the other children. They always won the games of volleyball and the swimming races. My parents liked Richard and Philip a lot. “Why can’t you be more like Richard and Philip?” they said to me. “Look at them! They make friends with everyone! They are polite, good boys! You just sit here reading books and doing nothing!”

I, of course, hated them.

Richard and Philip, Richard and Philip, Richard and Philip – it was all I ever heard from my parents every August for twelve years. Richard and Philip were perfect. Everything about them was better than anything about me. Even their green beach umbrella was better than our red and white one.

I was sixteen years old the last summer we went there. Perfect Richard and perfect Philip came to the beach one day and said that they were going to have a barbecue at lunch time. They were going to cook for everyone! “Forget your cheese sandwiches”, they laughed, “Come and have some hamburgers or barbecue chicken with us! We’re going to cook!”

My parents, of course, thought this was wonderful. “Look at how good Richard and Philip are! They’re going to do a barbecue and they’ve invited everybody! You couldn’t organise a barbecue!”

Every summer for twelve years, on the other side of my family, sat Mrs Moffat. Mrs Moffat was a very large woman who came to the same beach every summer for twelve years on her own. Nobody knew if she had a husband or a family, but my parents said that she was very rich. Mrs Moffat always came to the beach wearing a large hat, a pair of sunglasses and a gold necklace. She always carried a big bag with her. She never went swimming, but sat under her umbrella reading magazines until lunchtime when she went home.

Richard and Philip, of course, also invited Mrs Moffat to their barbecue.

Richard and Philip’s barbecue was, of course, a great success. About twenty people came and Richard and Philip cooked lots of hamburgers and chicken and made a big salad and brought big pieces of watermelon and everyone laughed and joked and told Mr and Mrs Hamilton how wonderful their sons were. I ate one hamburger and didn’t talk to anybody. After a while, I left, and made sure that nobody saw me leave.

Mrs Moffat ate three plates of chicken and two hamburgers. After that she said she was very tired and was going to go and have a sleep. She walked over to her umbrella and sat down on her deckchair and went to sleep. When she woke up later, everybody on the beach was surprised to hear her screaming and shouting. “My bag!!!! My bag!!!!” she shouted. “It’s gone!!! It’s GONE!!!” Everybody on the beach ran over to Mrs Moffat to see what the problem was. “Someone has taken my bag!!!” she screamed, “Someone has stolen my bag!!!”

“Impossible!” said everybody else. “This is a very safe, friendly beach! There are no thieves here!” But it was true. Mrs Moffat’s big bag wasn’t there anymore.

Nobody had seen any strangers on the beach during the barbecue, so they thought that Mrs Moffat had perhaps taken her bag somewhere and forgotten it. Mr Morelli from

the café organised a search of the beach. Everybody looked everywhere for Mrs Moffat's big bag. Eventually, they found it. My father saw it hidden in the sand under a deckchair. A green deckchair. Richard and Philip's deckchair. My father took it and gave it back to Mrs Moffat. Everybody looked at Richard and Philip. Richard and Philip, the golden boys, stood there looking surprised. Of course, they didn't know what to say.

Mrs Moffat looked in her bag. She started screaming again. Her purse with her money in it wasn't in the big bag. "My purse!" she shouted, "My purse has gone! Those boys have stolen it! They organised a barbecue so they could steal my purse!"

Everybody tried to explain to Mrs Moffat that this couldn't possibly be true, but Mrs Moffat called the police. The police arrived and asked golden Richard and golden Philip lots of questions. Richard and Philip couldn't answer the questions. Eventually, they all got into a police car and drove away to the police station.

I sat there, pretending to read my book and trying to hide a big, fat purse under the sand on the beach.

That was the last summer we went to the beach. My parents never talked about Richard and Philip again.

**THE END**

## **THE HUNTING BIRD**

In the small piece of dry land behind the house where Samir lived with his family, there was a bird. It was an old bird which sat on its perch all day, every day. Samir had never seen the bird fly. Samir's grandfather told him that once, a long time ago, the bird had been a famous hunting bird. It was famous not only in their village, but in many of the other nearby towns and villages too, he said. People came from all over just to see this bird fly. Now there were very few hunting birds left, said his grandfather. Nobody knew how to hunt with them anymore.

Samir looked at the old bird on its perch, and tried to imagine how it had been when it was younger, and famous, and when people came from all over just to see it fly. It was difficult to imagine. Now the bird did nothing but sit on the wooden perch on the dry land behind their house. It looked tired. The bird's long beak was yellow with age.

Its long brown feathers were starting to fall off. There were now only a few dark feathers in the bird's tail.

When he gave the bird something to eat it jumped down off its perch and ate slowly. Other than that, it never moved. But sometimes the bird looked at Samir, and Samir could see that the bird's eyes were still bright and clear and awake and alive.

Samir was fascinated by the look in the bird's eyes, and he liked the way the bird had nothing to do with anyone else. He liked the bird's independence and its mystery.

"It can't fly anymore" said Samir's uncle to him one day. "There's no point in keeping it anymore. It costs us money to feed it. We're not rich people. We can't keep pets. What's the point of a hunting bird that can't hunt? We'll have to get rid of it."

Samir went to bed that night and thought about how he could persuade his uncle to let him keep the bird. The next morning he spoke to his uncle.

"We've had the bird for a long time" said Samir.

"Exactly! It's old and useless" replied his uncle.

"It's part of the family!" tried Samir.

"Hmmm ...t hat's not a good reason. I would like to get rid of your grandfather too!"



He's just as useless!" laughed his uncle.

"It only eats mice. It doesn't cost us money to feed it" continued Samir.

"Yes ... and now there are dead mice all over the place! It's not healthy to have dead mice all over the garden!"

"It's a hunting bird."

"Hunting!? That bird can't hunt anything!"

"If I can show you that the bird can still hunt, can I keep it?"

His uncle stopped and thought for a moment.

"Very well then, yes. Show me that the bird can still hunt, and you can keep it."

Samir was pleased but also worried. He didn't know if the bird could still hunt or not.

He went to his grandfather and asked him what to do. That evening, Samir and his grandfather went to the piece of dry land behind their house. His grandfather put on a big leather glove and took the bird off its perch. The bird stood on his grandfather's hand. Together, Samir, his grandfather and the bird walked away from their house, out to the edge of the village where they lived. The bird didn't move while they walked. Eventually, they came to the open land at the end of the village. Samir's grandfather stretched out his arm straight. The bird sat on his hand at the end of his arm. Then, very quickly, he took his arm away. Samir thought that the bird would fall to the ground, but it didn't. Instead, in less than a second, it opened its huge wings and flew upward, up into the sky so quickly that Samir could hardly see it. It flew so high that it was difficult to see. It went so high it almost vanished in the bright late afternoon sky. Samir could just see it - a tiny black dot against the sky. He watched the dot move until he was sure it was the bird, his bird. The bird seemed to stop in the middle of the sky. Samir wondered how it was possible. The bird held its huge wings open and floated in the sky like a duck on water, moving slowly from one side to another. Sometimes, it moved its wings gently up and down, and then was still again, as if he was on his perch in the middle of the sky. Then, in a second, the bird turned, moved its head down and fell like a stone out of the sky. Samir had never seen an animal move so fast.

His grandfather pointed to the place not far from them where the bird landed. They walked over to it and found the bird next to the dead body of a small rabbit. The bird had cut the rabbit open with its old but sharp beak. It was already eating.

The next morning, Samir persuaded his uncle to come with him. Samir took the bird on his arm as he had seen his grandfather do. Together, they walked to the open space at the edge of the village. Samir held the bird out on his hand, then quickly moved his arm away.

The bird fell to the ground. It opened its wings, then stood still. It didn't move again.

Samir's uncle laughed and laughed.

"See! I told you it was useless! Come on, Samir, I know you like animals, but you need to grow up a bit. You have to learn that we can't keep things just because you like them."

Samir went back to his grandfather and told him what had happened. His grandfather told him that a bird wouldn't hunt in the morning. The sun was too bright. He told him to persuade his uncle to go out again with him, in the late afternoon, when the light was less strong, when it was cooler. At that time of day, said Samir's grandfather, the bird could see a mouse from 50 metres up.

Samir had to work hard to persuade his uncle to come out with him a second time.

"No way, Samir" said his uncle. "I'm a busy man. I haven't got time to waste on a

stupid old bird.”

“Uncle, I promise you. If the bird won’t hunt this time, then you can get rid of it, and I won’t say anything ever again.”

His uncle thought for a moment, then sighed. “Very well, then, last chance.”

Again Samir took the bird from its perch. Again they went to the open space at the end of the village. The sun was beginning to set over the hills in the distance. The air was already a little cooler. Samir stood with the bird at the end of his arm. He took his arm away. The bird flew up into the sky like a rocket. It went so high that it almost vanished. Samir could see that his uncle was quiet with surprise.

“Where’s it gone?” said his uncle. Samir pointed to a tiny dot in the sky. They both watched the dot, as it rested in the middle of the sky for a few minutes, then turned, circled a couple of times, and began to fall like a stone. They watched as the bird came closer to them. It came closer and closer and closer, very quickly. For a moment,

Samir thought it was going to hit them. His uncle ran out of the way. They heard a *swooooosssh* and then a quick *thummmpp* and looked to where the bird had touched the ground. His uncle was impressed. The bird sat there on the ground before them. It had caught a mouse.

When they saw that it was a mouse, the expression on Samir’s uncle’s face changed.

He started to laugh again.

“A mouse! A mouse! A tiny little mouse! That’s all? Very good, I’m sure, but a bird that can only hunt mice isn’t much use, is it? We can’t eat mice!” He laughed. “Why can’t your wonderful hunting bird catch a goat, at least? Or even better, why can’t it go and catch twenty frozen pizzas!?!? Hmmm???” He laughed again. “Come on Samir, I’m not a bad man, you know. But there’s no point in having that old bird anymore. Hunting is a thing of the past.”

Samir walked home alone, taking the bird with him.

The next morning he woke up and when he went out, he saw that the bird had gone. His uncle came home at lunch time. Samir asked his uncle what he had done with the bird.

“Look” sighed his uncle. “It doesn’t matter what happened to the old bird. We didn’t need it anymore. We couldn’t keep it. Now I don’t want to hear any more about this story! Is that clear?”

Samir said nothing.

That evening two men came to their house in a big car. They banged on the door and started shouting to see Samir’s uncle. “We know you’re in there!” they shouted. Samir didn’t know who they were. “Let us in!” shouted the men. Samir saw his uncle behind the door. His uncle looked worried. Eventually, his uncle opened the door and the men came in.

“You said to us that the bird was a hunting bird!”

“You told us it could catch anything!”

“You sold us that bird and it won’t even fly!”

“It’s not a hunting bird! It just lazy, or stupid, or perhaps both!” “Like you!” “We want our money back!”

Samir’s uncle looked very worried. “Look” he started to say, “I can’t give you your money back .... I’ve already spent it ... but don’t worry!” He pointed at Samir. “Samir here knows how to make the bird fly! He’ll show you how to do it! If Samir shows you, the bird will do anything! It’s a great bird, that’s right, isn’t it Samir???”

The men stopped shouting at Samir’s uncle, and turned to look at Samir.

“Well then, “said one of the men, “Is that true? Can you make the bird hunt? Show us!!!”

Samir looked at the men. Then he looked at his uncle. Then he turned and walked out of the house. The bird was in the back of the car. Samir opened the door of the car and took the bird on his arm. He held his arm out, and then quickly moved it away. The bird flew high, high up into the sky, until they could hardly see it anymore.

**THE END**

### **IN MY FATHER’S FOOTSTEPS**

This is the day. Today’s the day.

Andy knew it the moment he woke up that morning. This was the day he had to make a decision. The sun came in slowly through the red curtains in his bedroom and made him wake up earlier than he wanted to. It didn’t matter. It didn’t matter because today was the day. Andy stayed in his bed for some time, thinking about what he should do.

It didn’t matter – he had lots of time – he had woken up very early this morning. He lay in his bed thinking about the day that was to come. He lay there thinking about what he should do. The sun shining in through his red curtains became stronger and stronger and eventually he got up, stretched, yawned and went into the bathroom to get washed.

When he was in the bathroom washing his face he looked at himself in the mirror. “What shall I do today?” he asked his reflection in the mirror. “Should I stay at home, like every Saturday, or should I go?” His reflection didn’t reply to him. He looked at his face, his hair, his eyes. He thought about how much he looked like his father. He was now 32 years old. This was the same age that his father was when Andy was born. 32 years old. Was today the right time to make the journey? When Andy’s father was 32 years old he had already made that journey hundreds of times. For Andy, it was going to be the first time.

Andy went back into his bedroom and carefully took his clothes out of his wardrobe. He had made the decision. Yes – his lucky shirt. And then, his favourite trousers. He hoped his trousers were going to be lucky trousers too. Then he went into the kitchen to make himself a cup of tea and some toast for breakfast. As he was eating he thought about other people in other parts of the world who went on journeys like the journey he was going to do today.

He was still thinking about it when he went out of his house and walked down the road to the train station. Such an ordinary beginning for such a special day! he thought. This day, he thought, was more than any ordinary journey. Today was a pilgrimage. Today – for Andy – was a day like going to Rome, or sick people to Lourdes, or the people walking to Santiago de Compostela, or even Mecca.

Perhaps this was a wicked thought, but that’s how he felt. He thought about his father and he felt how extremely important this day was to him.

The train arrived and he saw a lot of other people getting on the train who were also making the same pilgrimage as he was. Even though he didn’t know them, they smiled at each other and nodded their heads at each other in a greeting. They recognised each other even though they didn’t know each other. The train started to move out through the town where he grew up – he saw the school where he went when he was little, the park where he played football with his father, and eventually the cemetery where his father was now buried.

His father had made this pilgrimage many times, but Andy had never gone with him. Andy hadn't had a good relationship with his father when he was alive, but since he had died a year ago Andy found himself thinking more and more about his father. Now he was going to make the same pilgrimage that his father made so many times because he wanted to understand and remember his father. His father had made this pilgrimage, and his father's father before that. And now he was doing it. It was a tradition which he felt happy – no, more than happy – he felt proud to be a part of. Andy smiled again at the other people on the train. One man smiled back at him. "I haven't seen you here before", he said, "Is this your first time?" "Yes, yes it is" replied Andy.

"I've been coming here for years" said the man. The train arrived at the station and they all got off. Now there were hundreds – no, more than hundreds – there were thousands of people there. They were all dressed in the same colours. They were all walking in the same direction.

"Makes you feel proud, doesn't it?" said the man to Andy. He was right – Andy did feel proud. They walked together out of the station and onto the main road. The place of pilgrimage was there in front of them, only a few hundred metres away now. The thousands of other people became tens of thousands of people, everybody walking in the same direction, everybody together, lots of people singing old songs. Andy remembered his father singing some of those songs. He was happy now that he had come. He knew he had made the right decision.

As the tens of thousands of people walked slowly together along the road, Andy finally understood why his father and his grandfather had made this journey so often. It wasn't the object of the journey that was important – it was the journey itself that was important. It was important to do the same things with lots of other people sometimes, to feel a sense of a shared faith, and shared ideals. Andy turned round and smiled at the man beside him. The man smiled back at Andy. Even though these two men didn't know each other, they could see that they had something in common. They were walking in Andy's father's footsteps.

They walked in and up the concrete stairs. The noise of the tens of thousands of people was so loud that it was deafening. Andy started to laugh. He had made the right choice this morning. He was happy that he had come. He could almost feel his father standing there beside him. The teams ran out onto the pitch. There was a huge cheer. The match was about to begin.

**THE END**

## THE INVENTION OF NOTHING

To me, it seems that he spends more time sitting in a café talking to other scholars. I don't know if they are studying or not. To me, it looks like they are chatting. But I don't know, I'm only a woman. I look after our family, and I am not a scholar. I do not go into the café in town and spend hours talking with other men. I stay at home and look after our children and prepare food. When I am not preparing food or looking after children, I like to read books. I like to read books of adventure stories, of traveller's tales, of poetry. I like books that make me wonder and be amazed at the world we live in. I like books that take me far away from our town and the desert on one side and the sea on the other.

We live in a town that lies between the sea on one side, the desert on the other, and a river to each side of us. They call our country Mesopotamia, the land between rivers. Because our town is a port, and because it has two rivers, there are often many people from other lands here. My husband says he meets men from India, from China, from Europe and from Africa. People from all over the world come to our town. Often they come to buy or sell things, but they also come to talk, to meet other people, to share ideas and opinions, to think about different ways of seeing the world. When a lot of people from different countries and different cultures meet, new ideas are born.

At night I lie awake on our bed thinking. "What are you thinking about?" my husband asks me. "Nothing" I reply. My husband shakes his head in despair. "Women!" he says. "They think about nothing!"

My husband often brings back books when he goes to his meetings with other scholars. He stays awake at night pretending to read them. I say "pretending" because I know he doesn't read them really. Sometimes I go in to his study late at night and I find him asleep, snoring with a book open in front of him. When I wake him up he says how interesting the book he's reading is. I ask him to explain it to me, to tell me about it, but he says that women don't understand such things. I let him go back to sleep and take the books for myself.

Some of them are very interesting. There are collections of stories from all around the world. They make me think. They make me think about lots of things. And the books about arithmetic from Greece and India, and the books about astronomy and navigation from Europe and Africa, they make me think about nothing.

"How many numbers are there?" I ask my husband. He likes it when I ask him questions. It makes him feel wise and intelligent.

"Nine hundred and ninety nine thousand nine hundred and ninety nine" he answers.

"And if I add one more?"

"Then the world will end" he says. I don't believe him.

"How many stars are there?" I ask him. He doesn't know. "Where does the land end and the sky begin?", "What happens if a ship sails until the end of the sea?"

My husband can't answer any of my questions. He thinks I'm stupid because I ask them.

"Is 'nothing' a number?"

"Of course it isn't!!" he replies. "How can 'nothing' be a number? If a merchant has five horses, then he sells five horses, how many horses does he have?"

"No horses, but lots of money."

"If I buy ten aubergines from the market, then I eat ten aubergines, what do I have?"

"A fat stomach".

We laugh. He thinks I'm stupid.

His answers are right if we only think of merchants, traders, salesmen and market people. His answers are right as long as we think of money and buying things and eating things. I understand this. But when I read the books about philosophy that he brings back from his meetings, I think that there is more than this. I think that the world cannot be explained in terms of buying and selling things. We cannot describe the world as if it were only a huge market.

“Nothing” is not a number that is good for people who buy and sell things. But if you want to be a navigator, if you want to travel and discover other countries, if you need to know where the sea ends and the sky begins, you need different numbers.

I am helping my children to learn. We practice counting. We count all our fingers, then our toes too. Five fingers on each hand. Ten fingers altogether. Five toes on each foot. Ten toes altogether. “What comes next?” asks my son. “What comes after ten fingers and ten toes?”

“Then you have to start again!” I tell them. My son hides all his fingers and makes a fist. “How many fingers?” he asks me. “None!” I reply.

But how can “none” or “nothing” be “something”?

At night, when it’s cool I walk out into the desert because I like to be alone. I draw numbers in the sand. I draw a line for “one”, two lines for “two”, three for “three”... and for “nothing”? What should I draw for “nothing”?

I put a coin down in the sand, then I remove it. It leaves a small, empty circle in the sand. This is it – *sifr*, empty. Zero.

My sign looks like a plate after someone has eaten all the food. It looks like a cage when all the animals have gone. It looks like a sack with all the grain taken from it. It is nothing, and it is also something.

I write down my symbol on paper. I write down an explanation of what it means. I write down why it will be useful to geographers, mapmakers, travellers, astronomers, navigators, scientists, philosophers and poets. I put the piece of paper in one of the books my husband takes back to his meetings in the café.

The next day, my husband comes back from his meeting at the café looking very happy. He tells me that he has just made an important discovery. Some of the other men in the café were very interested in the piece of paper in the book. He will probably become famous, he tells me, rich and famous. “History will remember me as a great mathematician.”

I go out into the desert at night again. I try to count all the stars in the sky. I can’t decide how many there are, and what number could ever possibly describe them. I will be ignored by the important men in the café meetings. I will be forgotten by history. Perhaps that was because I invented something. I invented nothing.

## **THE END KING OF THE PUMPKINS**

Deep in the middle of the woods”, said my mother, “is the place where the King of the Pumpkins lives.”

“But pumpkins live in fields, not in forests”, I said to my mother.

She wouldn’t listen to me. “I’m telling you”, she said, “the King of the Pumpkins lives in the middle of the woods, and the woods that he lives in are the woods right next to our house, the woods you can see out of the window over there”. She pointed

with her hand to the woods that were, in fact, just outside the window behind our house. “He doesn’t live in a field like the other pumpkins” continued Mother, “because he’s not an ordinary pumpkin. He’s the King Pumpkin”.

I shut up and decided to believe her, like you do when you’re a kid. Firstly I knew that it wasn’t worth arguing with my mother. She always won. Secondly, when you’re a kid, you always believe what grown-ups tell you, no matter how stupid it is. Like Santa Claus and stuff like that. Kids always believe it, even though they know it’s stupid.

Still, I decided to go and find the King of the Pumpkins, partly because I was bored, partly because I was curious, and also – of course - because I wanted to know if my mother really was talking nonsense or not.

Mother often talked nonsense, I have to say that. There was the time she told me that the moon was made of cheese. I knew that was nonsense. Then there were all the stories she told me. Stories about frogs, princesses, princes and shoes. Stories about donkeys and unicorns, gnomes and elves, magic mirrors and magic cooking pots.

Stories about why the stars are exactly the way they are, why the river that runs through our town has the name that it has, stories about where the sun comes from, why the sky is so far away and why the elephant has a long trunk.

Some of these stories, I think, might have been true. I was never sure, and it was difficult to find out. This time though, with this story about the King of the Pumpkins, it was going to be easy to find out if she was telling the truth or not.

Some people used to call my mother a witch, but I knew that she wasn’t a witch. Just a bit strange perhaps. And she used to talk nonsense. Perhaps it was also because of the black cat we had. People say that witches always have black cats, and we had a black cat. But Mog wasn’t a witch’s cat. He was just a regular black cat. Mog could talk, though, I have to say that. Perhaps that isn’t so regular in a cat, now I think about it.

Anyway, I was telling you about the time I went to find the King of the Pumpkins. I set off with Mog the cat into the woods to look for the King of the Pumpkins. Even though we’d lived in that house near the woods all my life, I had never gone into the middle of the woods. This was the first time. I was glad I had Mog with me. I was a bit scared, even though I didn’t really think that the King of the Pumpkins lived there.

“Watch out for the wolves!” said Mog. “Yes...and the grandmothers too!” I joked. “Let’s not leave the path!” said Mog.

When people said my mother was a witch, I told them that witches don’t have children. “Yeah” they replied, “That’s true. But you look more like an elf than a regular kid.” I looked in the mirror to see if I looked like an elf or not. I think I looked like a regular kid, but you never can tell really.

“Do you think he’s real?” I asked Mog.

“Who, the wolf? He certainly is” replied Mog. “No, not the wolf. I know the wolf is real” I said to Mog. Sometimes I could hear the wolf howling at night. I knew he was real. “No, not the wolf. The King of the Pumpkins. Do you think he’s real?”

“Don’t know” said the cat. “Guess we’ll just have to find out.”

We walked on into the forest. The trees got taller and taller and taller. The path got narrower and narrower and narrower.

“What does he do, then, this King of the Pumpkins?” asked Mog.

“I don’t know really” I said. “I guess he just kind of is head pumpkin, boss pumpkin,

he decides on pumpkin rules and pumpkin laws, and punishes people who break them.”

“Oh, I see” said Mog. He was quiet for a bit, then said,

“What kind of things are pumpkin rules then?”

“Erm, how big you can grow. What colour you have to be. Stuff like that.”

“You’re making this up, aren’t you?” asked Mog.

“Yeah,” I said.

Eventually, we got to the middle of the forest. At least I think it was the middle of the forest, but it’s difficult to say exactly. There was a clearing, a big space where there were no trees. In the middle of the clearing was the King of the Pumpkins.

At least, I think it was the King of the Pumpkins. It looked like a man at first. He was quite tall and had legs and arms made from sticks. He was wearing an old black coat.

His head was a pumpkin. His head was the biggest pumpkin I had ever seen.

Me and Mog went up close to him. He didn’t say anything.

“Is that it?” asked Mog.

“I guess so.” I said.

“Disappointing” said Mog.

“Do you think he’s the real King of the Pumpkins?” I asked Mog.

“Who knows?” replied the cat.

As we walked back along the path out of the forest, I started to think about what was real and what was not. Could things that were made up also be true? What was the difference between “story” and “history”? One is real and the other isn’t – is that it? “What about all those other things that Mother talks about, do you think they’re real?”

I asked Mog.

“Hmmm...I’m not sure” said Mog. “Those stories she tells sometimes...about why the night is black and the day is blue, about golden eggs and girls with golden hair, about why people have ten fingers, ten toes, two feet, two hands and two eyes...”

Sometimes I think she’s crazy, and sometimes I think she might be right...”

I knew what Mog meant. I felt the same way.

“Perhaps the stories aren’t true” I said, “but what they mean is.”

**THE END**

## **LOOK WHAT THE CATS DUG UP**

I live in a town where lots of people live, a town which is a suburb of a city where millions of people live. It’s very crowded. Where I live there is one apartment block after another. I look out of my window and if I look to the left I can see another apartment block. If I look to the right I can see the railway and the local train station, and after that there are more apartment blocks. If I look straight ahead of me I can see another apartment block. But if I look straight down, I can see something different.

If I look straight down I can see a garden. It’s not a big garden – it’s about fifteen metres long and fifteen metres wide. It’s almost square-shaped. The space is as big as a small apartment block. The garden is there like a hole in the middle of lots of other apartment blocks. It is a space left by an apartment block which was bombed in the Second World War and – unlike all the other blocks around it – never rebuilt.

An old woman lives in this garden. Well, to be accurate, she doesn’t exactly live in the garden. She has a very small two-storey house in the corner of the garden. There only seem to be two rooms in her house, one room downstairs and one room upstairs, but I



don't really know because I've never been in it. But that's what it looks like from the outside.  
The woman who lives in the garden looks very old, but nobody is really sure how old she is.

In her garden, she mostly grows oranges and lemons, and in the winter when the oranges are in season, the dark green trees in the garden are covered in hundreds and hundreds of tiny orange dots. It's really beautiful. You can lean over the balcony and call the old woman, and if you lower down a basket on a piece of rope, she'll fill up the basket for you with oranges. The oranges have quite a bitter taste, to tell the truth, they're not sweet at all, and they're full of pips, but I always think that the old woman is very kind to give away all her oranges anyhow.

The old woman isn't the only one who lives in the garden, though. About ten stray cats live there too. I say "about ten", because there always seem to be different cats there. Sometimes you can look down and there are only three or four cats lying out in the sun or in the shade of one of the orange trees. Other times, though, especially if you throw a leftover bit of fish over the balcony for the cats to have, lots of them come running, sometimes as many as twelve, sometimes too many to count.

A lot of people want to come and live where I live now. The nearby city with millions of people who live in it is too crowded, and the prices of flats in the city are very high.

A lot of people want to move out of the city to the small town where I live, because it's a bit cheaper and a bit quieter.

Some people who live in my apartment block are saying that the old woman has been looking very unhappy recently. My neighbours are worried because they say that the old woman is very old and that she isn't well and that if she dies, someone will come and build another apartment block on the space where her small, green garden is. The people who live in our apartment block – me included – love the small garden. It's beautiful to wake up in the morning and go out onto the balcony and look at the orange and lemon trees, and the small vine where she grows grapes to make wine in the autumn, and the stray cats asleep in the sun.

One day we saw a group of men in the garden. They were all wearing suits and carrying maps and charts. They looked like engineers and builders. Everyone in my apartment block was worried. "The old woman's going to sell her garden", they said. "Those men are engineers and builders and they're going to build another apartment block where the garden is." Some of us went to speak to the old woman.

"No" said the old woman, "I'm not going to sell my garden. I love my garden. Yes, those men were engineers and builders, but they don't want to build another apartment block here."

"Well what do they want to do then?" we asked.

"They want to build a road across the garden."

"A road!?"

"Yes – because it's near the train station. Because a lot of people are coming to live here now, they think they need to build a new road from the station to the motorway to make it easier for more people to travel into the city."

We all went home and were very worried. But what could we do? Some of us wrote letters to the local council and the local newspapers. But the council said that it was necessary to have a new road so more people would come to our small town and bring more business with them. They said that there was too much traffic on the one small road that existed at the moment. The local newspaper agreed with the local council.

The building work on the road was to start almost immediately. It seemed like there was nothing that we could do. Now, instead of living next to a beautiful, quiet green garden we would be living next to a big, noisy road.

The night before the builders and bulldozers and diggers were supposed to come it was very hot, and I stayed awake late into the night, sitting out on my balcony looking out over the garden for the last time. Even though it was dark, I could see something strange happening in the garden. I was sure I could see all the stray cats who lived there, as many as twelve or thirteen of them, and they were all digging a big hole. Sometimes cats dig holes, that's normal, but I'd never seen anything like this. All the cats seemed to be working together, digging an enormous hole on one side of the garden. Because it was very late and very dark, I couldn't see properly though, and thought that perhaps I was just imagining things. I went to bed thinking that perhaps I was already dreaming.

The next morning I woke up feeling unhappy because I could hear the noise of the builders and the bulldozers already. Big, loud noises of heavy machinery. "This is it", I thought, "This is the end of the lovely garden." But I was surprised when the noises stopped and everything went quiet.

I got out of bed, pulled on my clothes and went out onto my balcony to have a look what was happening. Why had the builders and bulldozers stopped?

When I got out onto the balcony I could see a big group of builders, one big bulldozer and an important-looking man in a suit who must have been the boss. They were all scratching their heads and looking very puzzled. The old woman was standing with them. She was looking very pleased. The stray cats were all lying asleep under the trees around the edges of the enormous hole that they had, indeed, dug.

Everyone was looking into the hole.

At the bottom of the hole was an enormous mosaic. "It's Roman" I heard somebody say. "It's must be ancient" said one of the other builders. The boss was looking very upset. "We can't possibly build here" said another one of the builders. "He's right" said another one, "This must be a historical site." The boss walked away and threw his hat on the ground.

They never built the road. Now on sunny mornings I sit out on my balcony I sit out and look at the beautiful green garden with its Roman mosaic. The mosaic shows a picture of a huge banquet, with lots of people sitting at big tables eating, and lots of cats eating fish and sleeping under the shady tables.

### **NOT A DROP TO DRINK**

Two thousand years ago the Romans tried to turn this desert into an oasis, a place full of rivers and lakes and canals. The Romans wanted to build big white temples and big houses under the hot sun. They wanted to turn this desert into a new paradise, full of trees and flowers and fields. They planned to sail their ships across the desert. But they failed.

The Romans failed because they looked only at the surface of the land. They tried to make the desert into a paradise with water and trees by digging canals and building aqueducts. They dug canals to connect the sea and the rivers. They built their aqueducts, long pipes to carry water, for many miles across the desert, to carry water from one town to another.

Now, I can still see some of the old aqueducts. There are a few white stone arches under the hot sun in the dry desert. They are falling down. The water in the aqueducts dried up. There is nothing left of the Roman canals. The water in the canals disappeared and the canals filled up with sand again, but if you look carefully it is still possible to see where they were. There are lines across the desert that look like very old roads.

In 1777 a Portuguese explorer called Emanuel de Melo Pimento came to this desert with a plan to turn it into an oasis. At that time in history, everybody was very excited by new discoveries in science and technology and engineering. Emanuel de Melo Pimento was a man of his times, one of the new scientist-philosopher-engineers who believed that all the problem of people in the world could be solved by science and philosophy. He believed that he could turn the hot, dry desert where nobody had enough water to drink into an oasis, into a utopia. He wanted to build a completely new city here; he wanted to build a completely new country. He wanted to call it “Pimentia”, named after him, of course.

Emanuel de Melo Pimento had a lot of money. He had a lot of money because a lot of rich people in Portugal and Spain gave him money to go around the world and explore. These rich people invested in Emanuel de Melo Pimento’s journeys of exploration and discovery. Now they had given him money to build a new city, a new country, a utopia, to create an oasis in the desert. These rich people hoped to become even richer. Emanuel de Melo Pimento took their money and used it not to try and change the surface of the land, like the Romans, but to change what is under the surface of the desert. Emanuel de Melo Pimento wanted to dig canals under the desert, to make big underground rivers where the water would not dry up under the heat of the sun.

He failed, of course.

Some of his plans still survive. I have some of them here in my office in the Institute of Hydro geological Research where I write this. They are very beautiful works of art.

But not one of his plans was ever completed – they needed too much money, more money than even the rich people in Portugal and Spain gave to Emanuel de Melo Pimento. Instead, Emanuel de Melo Pimento spent all the money on building beautiful buildings where he could live and dream of his new city.

From where I write in my office in the Institute I can still see one of the old buildings that Emanuel de Melo Pimento lived in before he went mad and died here. He failed because he tried to look only under the land. The Romans failed because they looked only at the surface of the land. Now, I will succeed, because I am not looking at the surface of the desert, or under it. I am looking up above the desert. I am looking up at the sky.

Now, at the beginning of the 21st century we have the ability to go up into space. We have the ability to build satellites. Some people have said that I am mad, just like Emanuel de Melo Pimento, but I know that I will succeed. I have spent many years making plans to build satellites that can not only forecast the weather, but change it.

The first of the satellites went up into space last week, and now, using a computer here in my office, I am telling it what to do. The programmes I spent many years planning and designing all work perfectly.

I look up at the sky, and it is starting to rain.

It has now been raining for three weeks. It has not stopped raining for 21 days. At first, the people were very happy to see so much rain. Now the desert has flooded. Where before there was only sand, now there is water. Where there was desert, now there is sea.

But the rain that has come down from the sky has destroyed many houses. Some people now have nowhere to live. The rain was stronger and heavier than I planned. I was right to look up above the desert, not at its surface or under the sand, but I did not expect the force of nature to be so strong.

Have I too failed? I do not know. Will people in the future think of me as I now think of the Romans and of the failed mad scientist Emanuel de Melo Pimento?

I have turned the desert into a sea. We can now sail ships across the desert, like the Romans dreamed. But the people do not thank me. They have water, but they have nothing to drink.

**THE END**

**RIVER**

My name is Kate Connor. I am a river guide. I live in Colorado. Colorado is a state in America which takes its name from the long, wide, green river that runs through it. I live by the river. My job is to take groups of people along the river. Usually we use small boats or rafts. The people who I guide along the river come from the city. They are usually groups of businessmen who come from New York or Chicago or Los Angeles, places where they work all the time and never see mountains or

This year, the river has dried up. There is no water. I look out of my window every day and walk down to the river, or rather; I walk down to where the river used to be. There wasn't enough rain this spring, and it has been a hot summer. The river is now just one thin, green trickle of water. You couldn't sail a raft in this. You couldn't even sail a child's paper boat down this river.

The river is never what it seems, the river changes, every day there is less water. Today I went down to the river and there wasn't even the thin green trickle. There were just stones and dust at the bottom of where the river used to be.

I have always wanted to be by rivers. I grew up next to the river, where my father worked. When I was a child and other children wanted to be astronauts or football stars or supermodels, all I wanted to do was work on the river. I wanted to work on a tugboat on the Hudson or the Mersey or the Thames. I wanted to catch fish in the Loire or the Volga or the Rhine. I wanted to swim in the Ganges or the Amazon or the Mississippi. I wanted to take rafts across the wild white waters of the long, strong Colorado River.

Today, a man came to my house. I didn't recognise him at first, until he reminded me who he was. "I'm Joel", he said. "Don't you remember me?" I didn't remember his face, though I remembered his name. He had changed a lot. I guess he changed because of what happened last summer.

Last summer Joel was one of a group of people who came to Colorado from Pennsylvania. The people were all colleagues from work. They came to the river to go rafting because they thought it would be a good idea. A week rafting on the white water of the river, they thought, would build up their interpersonal skills. It would

make them work as a team. On the river they would get to know each other better. Then they could go back to their office in the city and work better together.

“It’s good to see you again!” said Joel.

“You look different” I said to Joel. He smiled. “Better or worse?”, “Not better or worse. Just different.”

Last summer I took Joel and his colleagues down to the river for five days of white water rafting. White water rafting is the most difficult thing you can do on the river. Usually people who have no experience of rivers just want to go camping, or perhaps fishing, or perhaps just swim in one of the places where the water is wide, tranquil and calm. These people wanted to do something dangerous, something that they thought would test them, and make them better people. Something which would make them work together better.

“What have you come back for?” I said to Joel.

“I came back to see the river” he said. I pointed to where the river used to be and smiled.

“It’s gone” I said. “There’s nothing to see.”

He shrugged.

“The river wasn’t the only thing I wanted to see again” he said.

There is no sound at night anymore. For all my life I have gone to sleep and woken up with the rushing sound of the water in my ears. Now I just hear silence, and the tiny sounds of the trees in the wind. I hope that the wind will bring clouds which will bring rain which will bring the river back to me.

The first day with Joel and his colleagues was good. The weather was clear and warm, the river gentle. I told the people all about the safety precautions they had to take. I made sure they could all swim well. I made sure they all had life jackets. I made sure they all knew what to do if there was an accident or an emergency. We spent a day learning how to use the rafts. We sailed them on slow, gentle water.

That night there was a big storm. We were all asleep in our tents, though, and there was no problem.

The next morning, on the second day, the sun was shining again, and everything looked fine. They all wanted to go out on the river again. I told them that this was not a good idea. I told them that even though the weather looked fine, a storm in the night meant that the water in the river would be stronger and faster. People who were not experts should not go out on the river on the day after a storm. Even if the weather looks fine, the river is still angry.

They insisted.

“We’re paying you!” said one woman. “You have to do what we tell you!”

We went out again on the dangerous, angry river. I made sure that everyone had their life jackets on. I made sure again that they knew what to do if there was an accident. At first it was exciting – everyone was laughing and shouting because the water was much louder and faster than the day before. There was so much noise, I couldn’t tell when the laughter became screaming.

“He’s gone under!” shouted one woman. “He’s under the water and he hasn’t come up again!” Joel had fallen off the raft. Usually, people come back up immediately, but not Joel. It was possible to see his body being pushed about by the wild angry river. His body moved from one side of the river to the other.

There was only one thing to do. I jumped into the water and pulled Joel onto the raft, then moved the raft to the solid bank of the river. I pulled him off the raft and on to the solid land. Joel was not breathing. I thought he was dead. I opened his mouth and gave him artificial respiration. He still did not breathe. I pushed on his heart and he breathed in and opened his eyes. He looked surprised to be alive.

Last night I lay awake listening to the silence where the river used to be. I listened to the trees in the wind. I didn't know what to say to Joel. I didn't know if I should tell him to go back to the city and his office, or ask him to stay here with me.

The wind grew louder. I heard the sound of rain falling. The sound grew louder.

This morning Joel came into my room.

"I came back here to see you" he said. "I came back here because you saved my life. I was dead, and then I was alive again."

Outside the rain was pouring down. I could already hear the river. The river was alive again.

Joel didn't know why I told him to go back to his job and his office in Pennsylvania. I didn't need to tell him.

I live by the river, and just like the river, I can change too.

**THE END**

### **THE THREE TREE THIEVES**

Terry had a problem. He had a beautiful house. No, that wasn't the problem. The problem was something else. Near his house there was a lake, some hills, and the sea. That wasn't a problem, either. Terry wanted to look at the wonderful view of the lake and the hills and the sea from his house. And now here's the problem: Terry couldn't see the wonderful view from his window. It wasn't possible to see the lake, the hills and the sea. And Terry really, really liked to look at the lake. But he couldn't see the lake, because between his house and the lake, there was one very, very big tree. This very, very big tree was in the garden of the house next door. Terry asked his neighbour if it was possible to cut the tree down.

"No!" said the neighbour. "I love my big tree!"

This made Terry angry. He really, really wanted to look at the lake, to see the ships on the sea and the sheep on the hills around the lake.

There was only one thing to do.

Terry became a tree thief. He decided to steal the tree. One night, when it was very dark, he went out to the tree with a spade and he started to dig. He dug and dug and dug. Then he dug some more and some more. But the tree didn't move. The tree had very long, strong roots. Terry was very tired. He went to bed. He felt very depressed.

The next morning, he had an idea. He needed another tree thief! He called his friend Trevor and Terry told Trevor that he needed a tree thief.

"Why?" asked Trevor.

"I can't see the sea!" replied Terry.

"I see", said Trevor.

"Don't worry. I'll come tonight. I'll bring a spade."

That night, Trevor went to Terry's house. Trevor brought a spade with him. Terry and Trevor very quietly went into the neighbour's garden and started to dig. They dug and dug and dug. Then they dug some more and some more. But it was no good. Even with Terry and Trevor, they couldn't dig deep enough to steal the tree.

The next morning Terry had another idea. They needed another tree thief. With three tree thieves, he thought, they could surely steal the tree! There was a problem. Terry didn't know any other tree thieves. He asked Trevor.

"Sure!" said Trevor. "I know a man called Thomas. I'll come tonight with Thomas and two spades!"

Terry was very surprised when he saw Thomas arrive with Trevor. Thomas was 80 years old.

"Are you sure he can be a tree thief?" Terry asked Trevor.

"I'm sure!" said Trevor.

That night, when it was very dark and very quiet, the three tree thieves went quietly to the neighbour's garden. They started to dig and dig and dig. Then they dug some more. And some more. And this time, the three tree thieves dug so deep that they were able to take the tree from the ground, and steal it. The three tree thieves pulled the tree up out of the ground, and carried it far away. The three tree thieves carried the stolen tree to Trevor's house. Then the three tree thieves put the stolen tree in Trevor's garage. The three tree thieves were all very pleased with themselves.

But there was a problem.

"There's a problem!" said Thomas.

"What's the problem?" asked Terry.

"I've lost my teeth" replied Thomas.

"Your teeth???!?" said Terry and Trevor.

"Yes, my teeth, my false teeth" said Thomas. "I don't have any real teeth. I'm too old. I have false teeth. Sometimes my false teeth come out. They came out when we were digging up the tree ..."

"That's not a big problem" said Trevor. "You can buy another pair of false teeth."

"No" said Terry, "It is a problem – if the police find Thomas' teeth, they will know who took the tree."

"Oh no!" said Trevor, "If they find the tree thief's teeth, they'll know who the tree thief is ..."

There was only one thing they could do. The three tree thieves decided to go back to the garden and look for the lost teeth.

When they arrived at the garden, it was too late ...

There was already a police car next to the big hole in the ground where the tree was. A photographer from the newspaper took a picture of a policeman holding Thomas' teeth.

The next morning there was a story in the newspaper: "The Mystery of the Tree Thief's Teeth"

Before long, a policeman saw that Thomas had no teeth.

"Where are your teeth, Thomas?" he asked. "You are the tree thief! I'm arresting you!" The policeman arrested Thomas. Thomas told the police about Terry and Trevor. The police arrested Terry and Trevor too. The police were very pleased.

In prison, Thomas put his hand in his pocket. He had a surprise.

"My teeth!" he shouted. "Here are my teeth! The night we took the tree I made a mistake. I put my wife's false teeth in!"

"Now the police will think your wife is the tree thief!" said Terry and Trevor.

"No, that's impossible!" replied Thomas, "That night she was playing bingo with her friends. Lots of people saw her playing bingo!"

The police asked an expert dentist to identify the teeth. The expert dentist looked at the teeth.

“No!” said the expert dentist. “These teeth are not Thomas’ teeth! Thomas is innocent!”

Terry, Trevor and Thomas cheered.

The police were no longer pleased, and the three tree thieves were free.

### WHERE HOME IS

Fouad sits in the café that looks out over Jaffa Street listening to the sad, sad music playing on an old tape recorder. “OumKhalsoum”, says one of the other men sitting in the café to nobody in particular. “This is OumKhalsoum singing”.

Fouad takes another sip of sweet mint tea and nods in agreement without saying anything. Fouad’s uncle lives in Egypt, and every time Fouad visits him, he tells Fouad the story of how he saw the legendary singer at one of her concerts in Cairo in 1970, not long before she died. The song seems to go on forever, and it’s very sad. Fouad thinks it’s beautiful, but he doesn’t want to hear it now. It’s too sad for him. It makes him think of his uncle in Egypt who he hasn’t seen for many years now, and also about the reason why his uncle lives in Egypt while his aunt lived in Lebanon and why he, on the other hand, lives in Jordan, and why he is in Jerusalem now.

Fouad’s father had died a few months ago. After that, Fouad found that there were so many things that he had wanted to ask his father, but had never asked. He realised that he knew very little about his own family, and decided to try and find out more about the place where his father had grown up, and where his grandparents (who had died when he was very young) were from.

He has now spent a couple of days wandering around Jerusalem with an old, torn photograph in his hand. The photograph shows the whole family, his grandparents standing proudly at the centre of a group of four children in front of a house on a busy street. Next to the house there seems to be a garden with what look like cedar or olive trees in it.

Fouad, though, can’t find anywhere in this modern Jerusalem that looks much like the street or the house where the photograph was taken. He feels sadder than the sad song playing in the café, thinking now that he might never find the place where his father had been born and the place where his grandparents had lived until they moved away in 1947.

At first they had gone to Lebanon, then to Jordan and finally to Egypt, always staying with some distant relatives or old friends, trying to find work and a place to live. They left parts of their family, sons, daughters, cousins, uncles and aunts all over the Middle East. Some of them went to France or Britain or America. None of them ever lived in same place for long, never being able to find a home.

OumKhalsoum keeps on singing her sad, sad song, and Fouad decides to head back home over the bridge into Jordan, hoping the checkpoint hasn’t been closed. He pays a few shekels then goes out onto the street.

As he walks out he accidentally bumps into a young man about his own age hurrying in the opposite direction. They look at each other in the eyes for just one second as they both apologise, then walk on, in different directions along the street.

Yossi is in a hurry because he has to get to Tel Aviv to catch a plane. He thinks he’ll probably take a taxi as it’s the quickest and easiest way, and nobody really likes



travelling by bus at the moment. He's going to Poland to visit to his great aunt who has just moved back to Warsaw at the age of 93. His great aunt has spent most of her life in America, but said that she wanted to come back to the place where she was born before the end of her life. Yossi thinks she's a silly, sentimental old woman. Surely she's much better off in America than in Poland! However, he understands her need to find her home again. Yossi's great aunt was one of the lucky ones in his family. His grandparents, too, had been lucky - in a way. They had stayed in Poland, and were still alive in 1945. Many other people in their family hadn't survived. After that, they moved to Israel, and had never been back to Poland again. "This is our home now" they said to Yossi.

As he finally gets on the plane, Yossi thinks about his friend Agnieszka who he had met in Poland the last time he had been there. He went to see the small village near Krakow where his grandparents had been brought up, and to see the small Jewish Quarter in the old part of Krakow. He thought it was very beautiful, but was amazed at how different it was from his life in Israel. He found it difficult to imagine how different his grandparents' lives had been from his own.

He had been hoping to meet up with Agnieszka again, but unfortunately he had received an email from her a couple of months ago. Agnieszka was leaving Poland. In the small town where they were from it was too difficult to get a job, she said. She had managed to get a visa to stay in Britain.

After she had arrived in London, she had written another email to Yossi. "I feel like a refugee" she said. She had found a job working in a café in Finsbury Park in north London, she said. It wasn't the job she really wanted to do, but it was OK while she studied English and looked for something better. Yossi remembered the name of the café, which was run by Turkish people: "The OumKhalsoum".

Fouad is walking back over the bridge to a land which is where he lives but which he doesn't feel is his home. Yossi is on a plane going from one home to another, more distant, home. Agnieszka is in London, feeling homesick; thinking about making a new home in a country she knows will never be hers, in a place where nobody seems to be at home.

She cleans another table and looks at the people who come into her café: from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Congo, Sri Lanka, people who have looked for refuge from famine, oppression and poverty from all over the world. They spend time listening to OumKhalsoum singing sad, sad songs and wondering if they will ever go home, and wondering where home is, and thinking that they could all sing songs that are even sadder than those of OumKhalsoum.

**THE END**