

Investigating the Misconception among English Language Teachers in Teaching Abridged Shakespeare Plays

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Abstract:

This study aimed at investigating the misconception among English Language teachers in teaching Abridged Shakespeare Plays to explore its role in enhancing students' learning of spoken discourse marker to improve oral fluency. The study followed the descriptive method, and employed a questionnaire as a tool of data collection. The study sample is represented in (50) English language teachers. The questionnaire was administered to teachers of English for data collection. The data collected was analyzed by using Statistical Packages of Social Sciences (SPSS). The results show reluctance among high school teachers to teach Shakespeare play despite the abridged version due to its Elizabethan language and the questionnaire shows the highest variance of (30%) being neutral. Teachers' misconception can be altered if suitable training, textbook and teaching resources affects the readiness among teachers to handle abridged Shakespeare play this is expressed in the highest variant of (46%) agree in the questionnaire.

Key words: Shakespeare plays, oral fluency and misconception.

المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة الي التحقق من الفهم الشائع بين معلمي اللغة الانجليزية في تدريس مسرحيات شكسبير المختصرة لاستكشاف دور هذه المسرحيات في تعزيز تعلم الطلاب لعلامات الخطاب المنطوق لتحسين الطلاقة الشفوية. اتبع الدراسة المنهج الوصفي, وأستخدمت الإستبيان كأداة لجمع البيانات, وتكونت عينة الدراسة من (50) معلم من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية. تم توزيع الإستبيان للمعلمين من أجل جمع البيانات, وتم تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها باستخدام الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الإجتماعية (SPSS). أظهر تحليل الاستبيان الي ممانعة معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لتدريس مسرحية شكسبير علي الرغم من النسخة المختصرة بسبب لغتها الإليزابيثية ويظهر الاستبيان أعلى تباين بنسبة (30%) محايد. يمكن تغيير المفهوم الشائع لدي المعلمين اذا توفر التدريب المناسب والكتب المدرسية وكذلك فإن الموارد التعليمية تؤثر إيجابا علي إستعداد المعلمين للتعامل مع مسرحية شكسبير المختصره والتي تم التعبير عنه في أعلى متغير بنسبة (46%) يوافقون في الإستبيان.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مسرحيات شكسبير, الطلاقة الشفهية والفكرة الخاطئة.

Introduction,

William Shakespeare works are presented in several forms. In its original modern English i.e. Elizabethan English and in a simplified version as well as abridged. However, the simplification requires less

linguistics knowledge but reduces the literary value whereas the term abridged in Oxford dictionary is "made shorter by leaving parts out." The researchers intend to present an abridged version of Romeo and Juliet play to girls' secondary school.



Abridged play of Romeo and Juliet is a concise version of the play in modern English that falls into thirteen pages with less than ten characters in the play. The researchers think in presenting a small portion of language that challenge the students reflects positively on students. Moreover, to show students that language is not stagnant but it is flexible and regenerates constantly by presenting to them few vocabulary from the old as well as the new. Similarly, the language among themselves being young generation whether it is their mother tongue the Arabic language or the foreign English language it regenerates and is never still.

Statement of the Problem

According to researchers' observations and experience, English language has witnessed a steady drop in the standard and performance among Sudanese students and Sudanese people in general over the last two decades or more in Sudan. High secondary school's syllabus in Sudan neglected the inclusion of teaching English plays. The students were not exposed to the English language through literature in the last twenty years.

Significance of the Study

This study seeks to eliminate the psychological barriers connected with the name "*Shakespeare*" among teachers and students alike in Sudan, it will positively contribute to the educational process in Sudan and provide a strong and better foundation in English language and literature. Nevertheless, with the absence of Shakespeare literature in the minds of students, we present a lost generation of both basic knowledge and awareness in

English language Literature. The researcher thinks that people know the name of Shakespeare but might not know more than that. We quote Shakespeare regularly and don't even know it for example "own flesh and blood" Hamlet, "what's done is done" Macbeth.

Objectives of the Study

The research is intended for the students at high secondary schools and is willing to change the negative opinion laid upon Shakespeare work in general and in his plays in particular as being difficult to read for example, early modern English to both English language teachers and students for achieving expected aims of the language skills by means of getting a number of goals.

Questions of the Study

To what extent does the misconception of English language teachers in teaching abridged Shakespeare plays can be changed positively?

Hypothesis of the Study

The misconception among teachers of English language teachers in teaching abridged Shakespeare plays can be changed positively.

Literature Review

This Research is basically deeply concerned about the current status of English Studies and the erudition of learning and the integration of high school students to the world of Shakespeare that is so essential and relevant for beginners, undergraduate and alma maters all over the world, so how can Sudan lag behind. Moreover, this chapter aims to accentuate the importance of Shakespeare's plays in a student's curriculum.

Status of English Language in Sudan

In the post-independence Sudan, i.e., after 1st January 1956, English at first retained its status as the language of instruction in secondary schools, administration.....language of possibility and prestige, Josephine O'Brien (2003). The decades succeeding independence, early 60s witnessed a compelling and more persuasive call for Arabicisation. "Arabic was swapped with English instruction in all primary, elementary and secondary schools and universities." S. Hala, (2014).

The succeeding Sudanese governments took the responsibility to design new English curriculum, which resulted in the poor quality of study outcomes. Many academic institutes tailor- made materials to the need of learners. "The Longman project was drawn up and a new integrated course was introduced in the early 1980s. The designing of the New Integrated Longman English Course (NILE) for Sudan was partially accountable to the declining standards of English.....The essential features of the course were that it was designed specifically for Sudan with content relevant to the lives of the students, Josephine O'Brien (2003) turning an absolute blind eye to the simple fact that being an international language thus learners needed to learning the nature of English language itself, unfortunately it faded into English is a second and finally to a foreign language. Two added factors are accountable to the decline of English language in Sudan, not material or curriculum wholly, but rather the teachers and the students themselves. Teachers of the English language astonishingly enough were not English language teachers themselves. Whoever was seeking a job, he/she could opt to be an English language teacher. In addition, teachers did not practice the

language aside from inside the classrooms where they met with the students and once again it relates to lack of natives. Despite the individual attempt to provide a native teacher of English language he/she didn't have the official background of teaching nevertheless a genuine background methodology in teaching. This led to the fact that there was a lack of trained teachers.

The author of "The NILE" text book course for Sudan, Corbluth, J (1981), actually pointed this out and said that... "no English language course is sufficient and it must be supplemented by wide reading at appropriate linguistics levels. This fact leads to the third and last factor the students. It appears if they are passive or do not command the learning process. On the contrary, they need to be motivated and engaged in learning English. In the 80s English language was curtail to entering intermediate schools and university it was a way to compete for government professions. This was a motivation for students to acknowledge English language. And since students and teachers alike did not attain an English-speaking environment with the forceful Arabicisation taking place, learners found to be incapable to utter simple sentences, attempting spelling mistakes and indulge in a minimal situational conversation.

Shakespeare's life

William Shakespeare was a renowned English poet, playwright, and actor born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. His birthday is most commonly celebrated on 23 April, which is also believed to be the date he died in 1616. Shakespeare was a prolific writer during the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages of British theatre (sometimes called the English Renaissance or the Early Modern Period). Shakespeare's plays are perhaps his most

enduring legacy, but they are not all he wrote. Shakespeare's poems also remain popular to this day. {<https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/>}

The Value of Teaching Shakespeare to High School Students

"Literature is considered as the Back bone of any language because it reflects culture, traditions, customs, and religion and believes of different groups in the society. Moreover, literature is known as a window through which once acquaint to all human activities which help a learner to know more about the target group in the society. The Integration of literature in language teaching encourages students to read and to experience language in use. Moreover, the study of literature prepares students for literary studies at the university level." Abdallah, S. and Gadallah, B. (2017).

Shakespeare's Modern English Pronounces

Moving on to another technique to prepare student to start understanding some of Shakespeare's writing before reading the abridged play, a modern translation to the pronounces used by Shakespeare is noteworthy. It facilitates comprehension of the addressor and addressee. Shakespeare characters were of kings, queens, nobles, peasants, servants and ordinary people too, with social and financial differences. It is indeed interesting to reflect upon to students the different pronouns Shakespeare used when he is addressing characters.

Shakespeare's Use of Vocabulary and expression

Very few might know that many English words and expression used in the present-

day English is invented by Shakespeare. "The estimated numbers and phrases coined by the Brad is approximately, 1.600 including such standards as countless, majestic and excellent." (R. Lampert, 2008).

"In Romeo and Juliet, as in all of Shakespeare's writing, more problematic are the words that we still use but that now have different meanings. In the opening scenes of Romeo and Juliet, for example, the word heavy has the meaning of "sorrowful," the word envious is used where we would say "malicious," sadly where we would use "gravely" or "seriously," his where we would use "its," happy where we would say "fortunate," cousin where we would say "kinsman," and still where we would say "always." Such words, too, will become familiar as you continue to read Shakespeare's language." (Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* from The Folger Shakespeare.) Shakespeare changed nouns into verbs and verbs into adjectives, connecting words never before used together adding prefixes and suffixes and advising words wholly original. (Mabillard, A. 2000). Shakespeare was the first to use the word friend as a verb:

"And what as poor man as Hamlet is May do, to express his love and *friending* to you." Hamlet Act 1, scene 5.

Methods of the study

The researcher will use the descriptive method. Questionnaire was used to collecting data to confirm the hypothesis of the study, and to know more about the answer of the study. The researcher will concentrate on frequencies and percentages.

Data Analysis
Gender

Table (1) Show the frequency distribution of the study members according to gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentages
Male	27	54 %
Female	23	46 %
Total	50	100 %

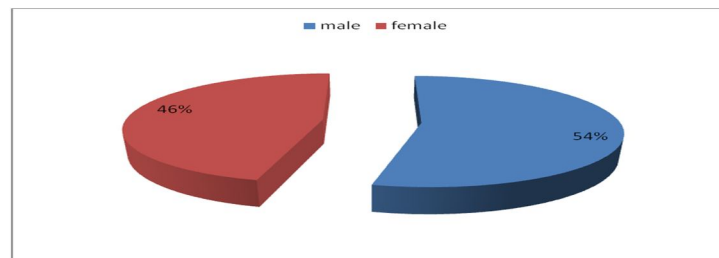


Figure (1) show the frequency distribution of the study members according to gender. From the table (1) and the figure (1) most of the study members are male, where they numbered (27) males with a percentage of (54%), and (23) are females with a percentage of (46%).

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play, introduce learners with William Shakespeare the famous English dramatist and poet.	23 46 %	21 42 %	6 12%	0 0 %	0 0 %

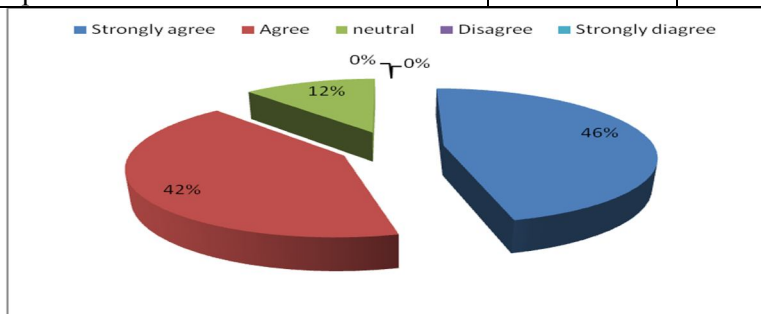


Figure (2): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 1 Answer:

From table (2) and figure (2) there are (23) respondent in the study's sample with percentage (46 %) have strongly agreed, There are (21) of teachers with percentage (42 %) have agreed on that, and (6) participants with percentage (12 %) are not sure about that, and (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (2): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 1 Answer:

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play, enhance learners' imagination with reference to his time and place.	17 34 %	30 60 %	3 6 %	0 0 %	0 0 %

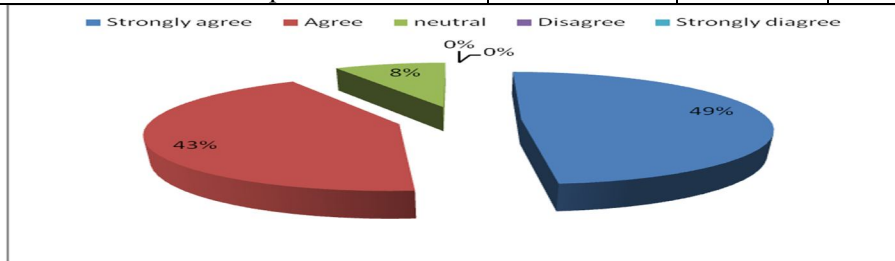


Figure (3): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 2 Answer.

From table (3) and figure (3) there are (17) teachers in the study with percentage (34%) have strongly agreed. There are (30) participants with percentage (60%) have agreed on that, and (3) teachers with percentage (6%) are not sure about that, and (0) of sample with percentage (0%) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0%) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (4): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 3 Answer.

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play, equips learners with everlasting quotes and expressions from his characters.	13 26 %	26 52 %	10 20 %	1 2 %	0 0 %

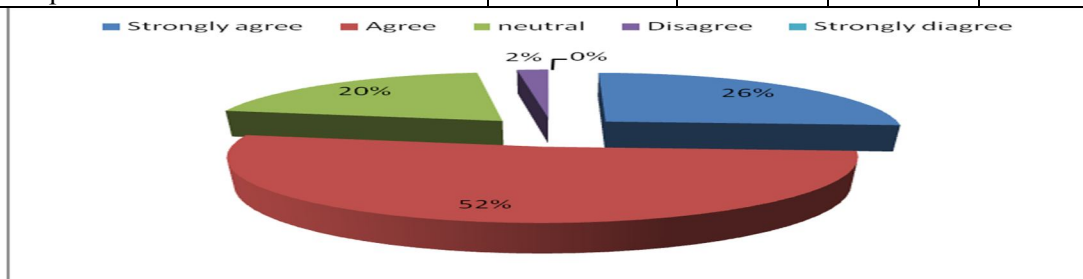


Figure (4): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 3 Answer.

From table (4) and figure (4) there are (13) participants of study's sample with percentage (26%) have strongly agreed. There are (26) teachers with percentage (52%) have agreed on that, and (10) persons with percentage (20%) are not sure about that, and (1) persons with percentage (2%) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0%) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (5): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 4 Answer.

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	Studying character's lines loudly encourage self-confidence among shy learners.	14 28 %	25 50 %	9 18 %	2 4 %	0 0 %

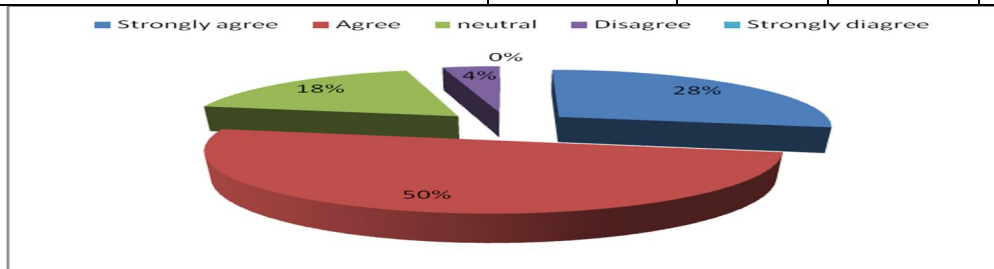


Figure (5): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 4 Answer.

From table (5) and figure (5) which show that there are (14) participant in the study with percentage (28%) have strongly agreed. There are (25) teachers with percentage (50%) have agreed on that, and (9) of sample with percentage (18%) are not sure about that, and (2) persons with percentage (4%) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0%) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (6): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 5 Answer.

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	Reading abridged Romeo and Juliet play, improve learners reading skills i.e. role plays and turn -taking.	23 46 %	20 40 %	7 14 %	0 0 %	0 0 %

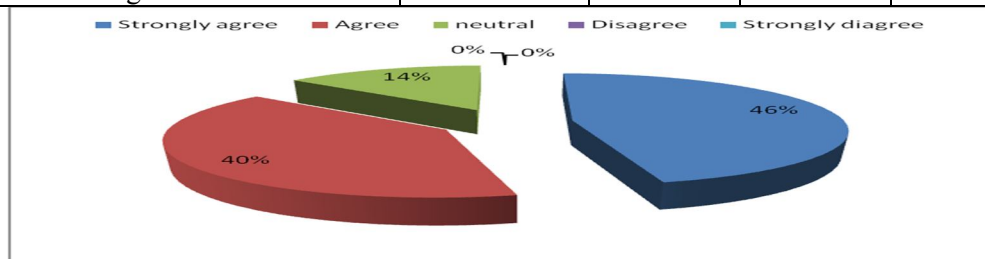


Figure (6): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 5 Answer.

From table (6) and figure (6) there are (23) participant in the study with percentage (46%) have strongly agreed. There are (20) teachers with percentage (40 %) have agreed on that, and (7) persons with percentage (14 %) are not sure about that, and (0) persons with percentage (0%) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (7): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 6 Answer.

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play enrich learners with new lexical and vocabulary.	26 52 %	19 38 %	4 8 %	1 2 %	0 0 %

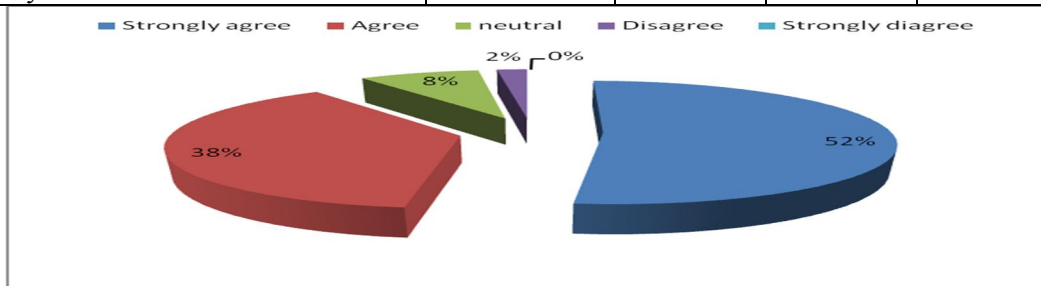


Figure (7): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 6 Answer.

From table (7) and figure (7) there are (26) participants of study with percentage (52%) have strongly agreed. There are (19) teachers with percentage (38%) have agreed on that, and (4) of sample with percentage (8 %) are not sure about that, and (1) persons with percentage (2 %) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (8): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 7 Answer

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet introduce learners for the first time with terms such as “plot”, “theme” and “protagonist”.	18 36 %	16 32 %	11 22 %	5 10 %	0 0 %

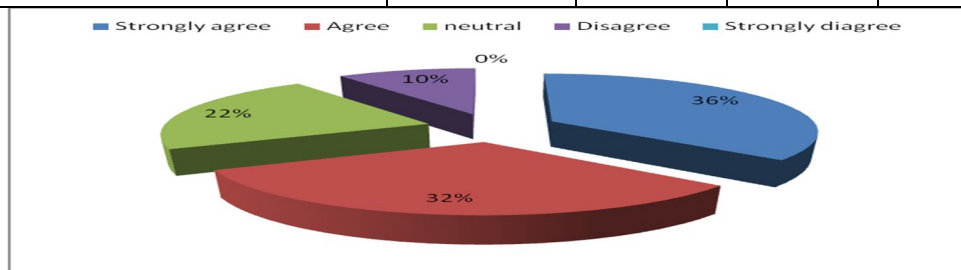


Figure (8): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 7 Answer.

from table (8) and figure (8) that there are (18) participant in the study's sample with percentage (36%) have strongly agreed. There are (16) persons with percentage (32%) have agreed on that, and (11) persons with percentage (22 %) are not sure about that, and (5) persons with percentage (10 %) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (9): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 8 Answer.

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet improve writing skills of summary, short notes and description of characters among learners.	12 24 %	29 58 %	8 16 %	1 2 %	0 0 %

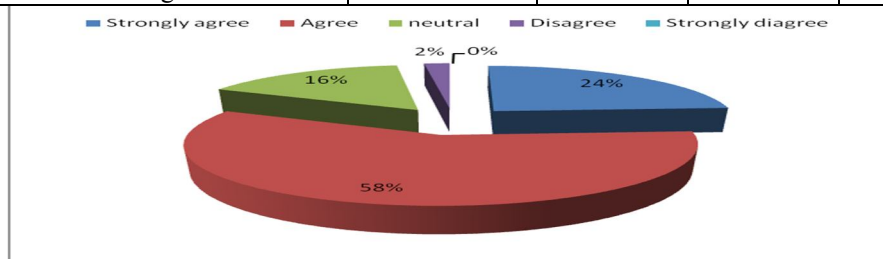


Figure (9): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 8 Answer.

from table (9) and figure (9) there are (12) of participant in the study with percentage (24 %) have strongly agreed. There are (29) persons with percentage (58 %) have agreed on that, and (8) persons with percentage (16%) are not sure about that, and (1) persons with percentage (2 %) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (10): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 9 Answer.

No.	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	Reading abridged Romeo and Juliet loudly in and outside class improve learners' intonation, stress and pronunciation	18 36 %	21 42 %	10 20 %	1 2 %	0 0 %

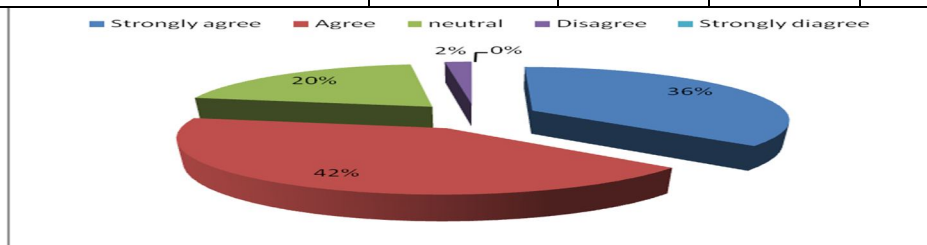


Figure (10): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 9 Answer.

From table (10) and figure (10) there are (18) of participants in the study's with percentage (36 %) have strongly agreed, There are (21) persons with percentage (42%) have agreed on that, and (10) persons with percentage (20 %) are not sure about that, and (1) persons with percentage (2 %) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

Table (11): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 10 Answer.

No	Statement	Frequency and percentages				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	Acting out few scenes from abridged Romeo and Juliet play, develop peer and group work among learners.	23 46 %	23 46 %	3 6 %	1 2 %	0 0 %

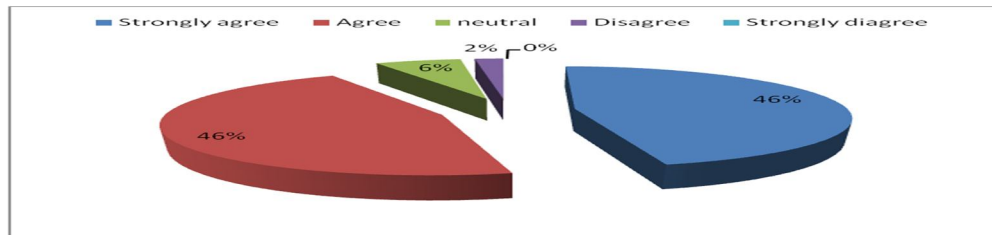


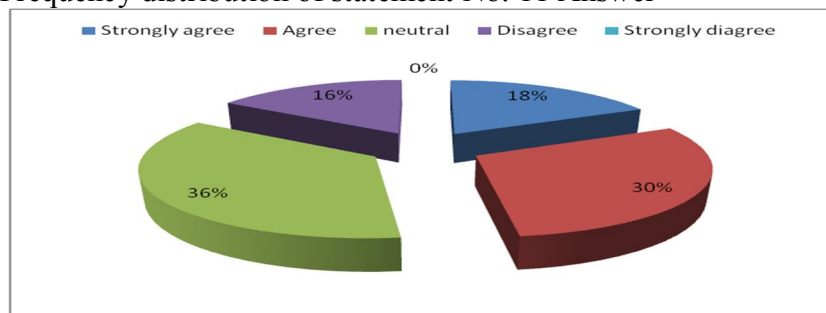
Figure (11): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 10 Answer.

From table (11) and figure (11) there are (23) of participants in the study sample with percentage (46 %) have strongly agreed. There are (23) of teachers with percentage (46 %) have agreed on that, and (3) persons with percentage (6%) are not sure about that, and (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have disagreed about that, while (1) of sample with percentage (2 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

No.	Statement	Frequency and percentages%				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11	Teachers might feel reluctant to teach abridged Romeo and Juliet due to its Elizabethan English.	9 18 %	15 30 %	18 36 %	8 16 %	0 0 %

Table (12): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 11 Answer.

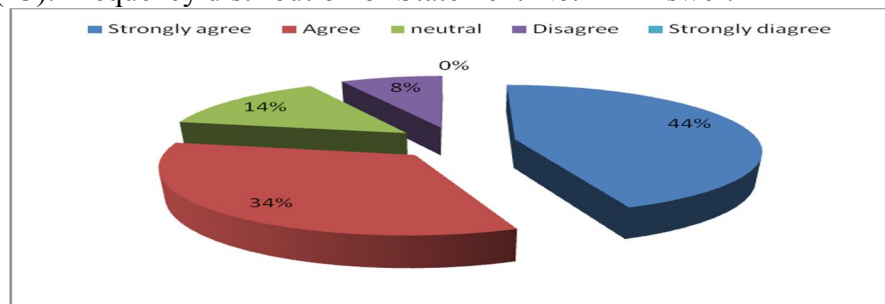
Figure (12): Frequency distribution of statement No. 11 Answer



from table (12) and figure (12) that there are 9 participants in the study sample with percentage (18 %) have strongly agreed. There are (15) persons with percentage (30%) have agreed on that, and (18) persons with percentage (36%) are not sure about that, and (8) persons with percentage (16%) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0 %) have strongly disagreed about that.

No.	Statement	Frequency and percentages%				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
12	Teachers with suitable training, teaching aids and resource materials can overcome their fear on Shakespeare work.	22 44 %	17 34 %	7 14 %	4 8 %	0 0 %

Table (13): Frequency distribution of Statement No. 12 Answer.



from table (13) and figure (13) that there are (22) participants in the study's sample with percentage (44 %) have strongly agreed, There are (17) persons with percentage (34 %) have agreed on that, and (7) persons with percentage (14%) are not sure about that, and (4) persons with percentage (8 %) have disagreed about that, while (0) persons with percentage (0%) have strongly disagreed about that.

No.	Statement	Chi-square value	P-value	Median	Trend
1	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play, introduce learners with William Shakespeare the famous English dramatist and poet.	10.36	0.006	4	agree
2	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play, enhance learners' imagination with reference to his time and place.	21.88	0.000	4	agree
3	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play, equips learners with everlasting quotes and expressions from his characters.	25.68	0.000	4	agree
4	Studying character's lines loudly encourage self-confidence among shy learners	22.48	0.000	4	agree
5	Reading abridged Romeo and Juliet play, improve learners reading skills i.e. role plays and turn -taking.	8.68	0.013	4	agree
6	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet play enrich learners with new lexical and vocabulary.	34.32	0.000	5	Strongly agree
7	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet introduce learners for the first time with terms such as "plot", "theme" and "protagonist".	8.08	0.044	4	agree
8	Studying abridged Romeo and Juliet improve writing skills of summary, short notes and description of characters among learners.	34.0	0.000	4	agree
9	Reading abridged Romeo and Juliet loudly in and outside class improve learners' intonation, stress and pronunciation.	19.28	0.000	4	agree
10	Acting out few scenes from abridged Romeo and Juliet	35.44	0.000	4	agree

	play, develop peer and group work among learners.				
11	Teachers might feel reluctant to teach abridged Romeo and Juliet due to its Elizabethan English.	5.52	0.1374	3	neutral
12	Teachers with suitable training, teaching aids and resource materials can overcome their fear on Shakespeare work.	17.04	0.001	4	agree
Hypothesis		23.44	0.002	4	agree

Table (12): Chi-square test results:

Discussions and Results

The hypothesis states that: the misconception among teachers of English language in teaching abridged Shakespeare plays can be changed positively. The questionnaire shows reluctance among high school teachers to teach Shakespeare play despite the abridged version due to its Elizabethan language and the questionnaire shows the highest variance of (30%) being neutral. Teachers misconception can be altered if suitable training, textbook and teaching resources affects the readiness among teachers to handle abridged Shakespeare play this is expressed in the highest variant of (46%) agree in the questionnaire. Moreover, with suitable training, teaching aids and resource materials teachers can overcome their fear on Shakespeare work, this is shown in a highest variant of (44%) agree to the question.

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and discussion the following are revealed, the negative attitude from high school teachers to teach Shakespeare play, also teachers misconception can be altered if suitable training, textbook and teaching resources were provided which can affects positively on the readiness among teachers to handle abridged Shakespeare play.

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