



Sudan University of science and Technology
College of Graduate Studies

The Role of Short Stories in Developing Reading Skill for EFL Learners

دور القصص القصيرة في تطوير مهارة القراءة للدارسين الناطقين بغير اللغة
الإنجليزية

This thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters Degree

In English Language (Applied Linguistics)

By:

Ikhlas Mubarak Ahmed Elhaj

Supervisor: Dr. Wigdan Yagub M.Sherif

2017

Dedication

To my family

Acknowledgements

I am highly grateful to God for enabling me to complete this research.

Great thanks are due to (my) supervisor Dr. WigdanYagub for her crucial role in starting and completing this research .

Appreciation and gratitude are extended to parents , staff member , colleges and friends for their help and assistance in the editing of this task .

Abstract

The aim of conducting this research is to investigate the role of short stories in developing reading ability for EFL learners. The study has adopted the descriptive analytical approach. The sample of the study has been chosen from Al-Nukhba secondary school for girls. The researcher availed (30) questionnaire and a test papers for the students and analysis done using SPSS program. The researcher has reached to some findings the most important ones are: Secondary school students at Al-Nukhba see that short stories help them a lot in developing their reading skill through vocabulary and grammar. Based on the findings the researcher recommends the following: Teacher, educationist need to take into account teaching students through short stories to develop their skills in general and reading in particular.

المستخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة لمعرفة الدور الذي تؤديه القصص القصيرة في تنمية مهارة القراءة لدى الطلاب الذي يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. . لقد اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وكانت عينة الدراسة تتكون من ثلاثين طالبة من مدرسة النخبة الثانوية للبنات بمحلية أمدرمان، ولاية الخرطوم. وقد قامت الباحثة بتسليم العينة (30) ورقة استبيان وأخرى للاختبار ومن ثم تحليل البيانات بواسطة برنامج (SPSS)

لقد توصلت الدراسة إلى بعض النتائج أهمها: أن الطالبات في مدرسة النخبة يرين أن للقصص القصيرة دور كبير في تنمية مهارتهن في القراءة عن طريق تقوية الذخيرة اللغوية والنحو.

وفقاً للنتائج فإن الباحثة توصي بضرورة اعتبار استخدام القصص القصيرة في تعليم مهارات اللغة بصورة عامة ومهارات القراءة بصفة خاصة.

Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Dedication	I
Acknowledgement	Ii
Abstract	Iii
المستخلص	Vi
Table of Contents	Vii
Chapter One	
Introduction	
1.1 Background Overview of study	1
2.1 Statement of the study problem	1
3.1 Objective/s of the study	1
4.1 Questions of the study	2
5.1 Hypotheses of the study	2
6.1 Significance of the study	2
7.1 Limitations of study	3
8.1 Methodology of the study	3
9.1 Research Outline	3
Chapter Two	4
Literature Review and Previous Studies	
2.0 Introduction	4
2.1 Literature and Reading	5
2.2 Advantages of Using Literature in Language Classes	5
2.3 The Role of Short-stories in Developing Reading in EFL context	6
2.4 Benefits of Using Short Stories for Developing Reading	7
2.4.1 Reinforcing the skills	7
2.4.2 Motivating students	8
2.4.3 Introducing literary elements	9
2.4.4 Teaching culture	10
2.5 Cultural Benefits of Using Short Stories	10
2.6 Reading Comprehension Benefit of Short Stories	11
2.7 Previous Studies	14
2.8 Summary of the chapter	16

Chapter Three	17
Methodology	
3.0 Introduction	17
3.1 Methodology	17
3.2 Study sample	17
3.3 Tools and Instruments	17
3.3.1 The questionnaire	18
3.3.2 The Test	18
3.4 Procedures	18
3.5 Validity and Reliability	19
Chapter Four	20
Data Analysis and Discussion	
4.0 Introduction	20
4.1 Frequencies and Percentage of the First Hypothesis	20
4.2 Descriptive Analysis of the First Hypothesis	21
4.3 Chi-square Analysis of the First Hypothesis	22
4.4 Frequencies and Percentage of the Second Hypothesis	23
4.5 Descriptive Analysis of the Second Hypothesis	24
4.6 Chi-square Analysis of Second hypothesis	25
4.7 Frequencies and Percentage of the Third Hypothesis	26
4.8 Descriptive Analysis of the Third Hypothesis	27
4.9 Chi-square Analysis of the Third Hypothesis	28
Chapter Five	31
Conclusion Findings, Recommendations and Suggestions	
5.0 Conclusion	31
5.1 Findings	31
5.2 Recommendations	32
5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies	32
References	33
Appendix	34
Test	36

Chapter One

Introduction

Background Overview of Study

1.1 Background Overview of Study

Majority of English language teachers think that literature and language are poles apart. But the truth is that literature teaches us how to use language. The prime motive of a language teacher is not to teach about the language, but to foster the learners' abilities so that he is capable of using the language for a variety of communicative purposes. This is done best when the learners are involved actively in the learning process. Involvement comes only if sufficient interest is aroused and sustained in the classroom. The most fascinating and pleasurable of the literary genres is the short story. Considered as one of the most resilient forms of edutainment a short story always augments intellectual stimulation and definitely has a great impact on human psychology/mind. In addition to it has linguistic, psychological, cognitive, social and cultural relevance as well. Catering to the EFL learners, the syllabus should be revised and the curriculum should include short stories which will evince keen interest among EFL learners.

2.1 Statement of the study problem

The problem which the present study attempts to investigate is the reading skills problems when dealing with English short stories. The

researcher noticed that learners make errors when reading English short stories. That may consist of pronunciation.

3.1 Objective/s of the study

The main objective of this research is to develop reading of EFL learners.

4.1 Questions of the study

- 1- How do the short stories help developing the reading skills of the students?
- 2- How do the short stories reflect the authors ideas and cultural background which help the reader to understand different types of texts?
- 3- How do the short stories help reader recognize different types of sentence patterns?

5.1 Hypotheses of the study

- 1-short stories help developing the reading skills of the students.
- 2-short stories reflect the authors ideas and cultural background which help the reader to understand different types of texts .
- 3- Shortstories help reader recognize different types of sentence patterns

6.1 Significance of the study

This study analyze the role of short stories in developing reading at the classroom of the third year female students of Al-Nukhba secondary school.

The study expect that short story help the students in developing their reading skills.

7.1 Limitations of study

The population of this is limited to the third year female students of the AL NOKHPA secondary school2016.

8.2 Methodology of the study

The researcher uses descriptive sample chosen for the third year (female) students of Al-Nukhba secondary school.

The data collected using the statistical package (SPSS).

9.2 Research Outline

- 1-0 Background of study
- 2-0 Statement of the problem
- 3-0 Objectives of the study
- 4-0 Questions of the study
- 5-0 Hypotheses of the study
- 6-0 Significance of the study
- 7-0 Limitation of the study
- 8-0 Methodology

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Introducing literature, represented in short stories, in class is one of many ways teachers use develop the reading ability of their students. Currently many schools are concerned about how to address the needs of students who have difficulty reading and understanding extended text.

The use of literature in language classes is not new. The use of literature in foreign languages dates back to nineteenth century where literature was one of the essential materials in Grammar Translation Method. Students were supposed to translate the literary texts to their native language. Learners only focused on the surface level such as the meaning of vocabulary or the grammatical structures. They do not care about the literary value of texts Khatib, (2012).

Reading, being one of the most important language skills, has been the focus of attention for ages for the foreign language professionals, pedagogues, researchers, teachers and teacher-trainers. It plays a very crucial role in learning and mastering of foreign language like English. It is the channel through which a learner gets the exposure of the target language which is a must in foreign language teaching and learning context like Sudan.

So many reasons lay behind using short stories in classes, such as vocabulary enriching and building sentence along with idea arranging. Reading ability tends to be the most objective teachers aim to reach.

Hismanoglu (2005, p. 54) stated the use of literature in language classes in recent years as the following:

“The use of literature as a technique for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and

pronunciation) is very popular within the field of foreign language learning and teaching nowadays. Moreover, in translation courses, many language teachers make their students translate literary texts like drama, poetry and short stories into the mother tongue”.

2.1 Literature and Reading

Reading is one of the most important skills for mastery of a foreign language. Some scholars believe that ability to read is the prerequisite for autonomous learning Khatib, (2012). Most learners in EFL contexts have little or no opportunity to contact with native speakers, so reading literary text will give them the opportunity to have a better interaction with foreign culture and people. Besides literary texts are too amusing that keeps learners to continue reading and the more learners read the more input they receive. In fact literary texts can be used as a valid and authentic source for increasing the amount of comprehensible input students receive. According to Krashen (1982) students should be provided with enough comprehensible input which is also interesting so that reduces students’ anxiety. And since literature is rarely used for pedagogical purposes it can be a good authentic source for language learners. Sage, (2005) called the use of short stories as a useful technique in language classes. He pointed out that since short stories are short; it helps both teachers and students to easily cover it. Besides, since stories are about universal problem, it may relate to students’ own situation, in this case students would definitely get more involved in the story and try to put more time and effort to comprehend it. In addition, as mentioned by Hismanoglu (2005) class discussions about the story will help students to think critically.

2.2 Advantages of Using Literature in Language Classes

Numerous studies have discussed the benefits of using literature in language classes. For example Maley, (1989) lists the following reasons for using literature in the language classroom:

1. Universality.

2. Non-triviality .
3. Personal Relevance.
4. Variety.
5. Interest
6. Economy and Suggestive Power
7. Ambiguity

Parkinson and Reid Thomas (2000) also made a list of ten reasons for using literature in the language classroom:

1. Cultural enrichment
2. Linguistic model
3. Mental training
4. Extension of linguistic competence
5. Authenticity
6. Memorability
7. Rhythmic resource
8. Motivating material
9. Open to interpretation
10. Convenience

Although scholars named many advantages for using literature in foreign language teaching, but as Chiang (2007) mentioned there are four major reasons for incorporating literature into English language teaching. First literature is used as an authentic source in language classes

2.3 The Role of Short-stories in Developing Reading in EFL context:

The role of short stories in EFL classrooms, to develop reading comprehension skill, has always been acknowledged by many pedagogues and professionals due to numerous pedagogical benefits this use of stories can offer for the EFL teachers and learners. In the following section, some of the major benefits of using short-stories in

EFL classrooms for developing reading comprehension skill are discussed, focusing on their implications for the Libyan EFL teachers and learners.

2.4 Benefits of Using Short Stories for Developing Reading

Benefits of short stories Researchers who advocate the use of short stories to teach ESL/EFL list several benefits of short stories. These include motivational, literary, cultural and higher-order thinking benefits. Nevertheless, before instructors look at these benefits in more details, they need to be reminded of one benefit that all instructors should take advantage of, reinforcement of skills.

2.4.1 Reinforcing the skills

Short stories allow instructors to teach the four skills to all levels of language proficiency. Murdoch (2002) indicates that “short stories can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at

intermediate levels of proficiency” (p. 9). He explains why stories should be used to reinforce ELT by discussing activities instructors can create such as writing and acting out dialogues.

Also, Oster (1989) affirms that literature helps students to write more creatively (p. 85). Instructors can create a variety of writing activities to help students to develop their writing skills. They can ask students to write dialogues (Murdoch, 2002, p. 9) or more complex

writing activities if students have reached a high level of language proficiency. For example, if instructors bring to class “The Wisdom of Solomon,” they can assign the following writing activities:

- a. Write a dialogue between King Solomon and the guard holding the sword after the mother and the son, and the other woman left the palace.

- b. Paraphrase the first four sentences of the paragraph, “And in this way they argued . . . whose child it was” (fourth paragraph from the bottom).
- c. Summarize the story in three sentences, including the main character, setting, conflict, climax, and resolution.
- d. Write one sentence on the theme of the story.
- e. Write a paragraph on what causes people to lie.
- f. Write a classification essay on different kinds of lies.

Activities (a) and (b) are suitable for beginning levels; activities c, d, for intermediate levels; and activity f, for advanced levels.

In addition, stories can be used to improve students' vocabulary and reading. Lao and Krashen (2000) present the results of a comparison between a group of students that read literary texts and a second group that read non-literary texts at a university in Hong Kong.

The group who read literary texts showed improvement in vocabulary and reading. Three activities can be added to “The Wisdom of Solomon,” to help students to acquire more vocabulary. These activities are related to form, meaning and use respectively.

2.4.2 Motivating students

Since short stories usually have a beginning, middle and an end, they encourage students at all levels of language proficiency to continue reading them until the end to find out how the conflict is resolved. Elliott (1990), for example, affirms that literature motivates advanced students and is “motivationally effective if students can genuinely engage with its thoughts and emotions and appreciate its aesthetic qualities” (p. 197). He stresses the importance of developing student–response (individual and group levels) and competence in literature. In addition, one of the reasons Vandrick (1997) lists for using literature with students is that literature motivates students “to explore their feelings through experiencing those of others” (p. 1). In addition, according to the Internet article (author not named)

“Using Literature in Teaching English as a Foreign / Second Language” (2004),
“Literature is motivating. . . .

Literature holds high status in many cultures and countries. For this reason, students can feel a real sense of achievement at understanding a piece of highly respected literature. Also,

literature is often more interesting than the texts found in course books.” As a result, instructors should agree that literary texts encourage students to read, and most literary texts chosen according to students’ language proficiency levels and preferences will certainly be motivating.

By selecting stories appropriate to students’ level of language proficiency, instructors avoid “frustrational reading” (Schulz, 1981, p. 44). To choose stories according to students’ preferences, stories should have various themes because, as Akyel and Yalçin (1990) point out, variety of themes will offer different things to many individuals’ interests and tastes (p.178). But the themes should be “consistent with the traditions that the learners are familiar with” Widdowson, (1983, p. 32) to avoid conflicts.

2.4.3 Introducing literary elements

Instructors can introduce literary elements with short stories. With beginning and low intermediate levels, instructors can teach simple elements, such as character, setting and plot.

The same and more complex elements, such as conflict, climax, resolution, etc., can be introduced with more advanced levels. Gajdusek (1988) explains how literature can be introduced by describing the order of activities: pre-reading activities, factual in-class work, analysis and extending activities. In the pre-reading activities, students have the opportunity to learn about the background of the story and vocabulary (p. 233). Instructors can start by asking students questions before they are introduced to “The Wisdom of Solomon”:

a. What is justice?

- b. How can people behave in a fair way?
- c. Have you ever been treated unjustly? When? Why?

In factual in-class work, students should be introduced to who, what, where and when of the story, or point of view, character, setting and action (pp. 238-239). If “The Wisdom of Solomon” is the first story that students will read, instructors can add questions to the left margin of the story. Each question should be placed next to the paragraph in which the answer is found so students can begin to understand with the help of the instructor what each literary structure means. The questions can be the ones below:

- a. Who is the main character of the story?
- b. Where does the story take place?
- c. When does the story happen?

2.4.4 Teaching culture

Short stories are effective when teaching culture to EFL students. Short stories transmit the culture of the people about whom the stories were written. By learning about the culture, students learn about the past and present, and about people’s customs and traditions.

Culture teaches students to understand and respect people’s differences. When using literary texts, instructors must be aware that the culture of the people (if different from that of the students) for whom the text was written should be studied. As students face a new culture, they become more aware of their own culture. They start comparing their culture to the other culture to see whether they find similarities and/or differences between the two cultures. Misinterpretation may occur due to differences between the two cultures as Gajdusek (1998, p. 232) explains.

To avoid misinterpretation, instructors should introduce the culture to the students or ask them to find relevant information about it.

2.5 Cultural Benefits of Using Short Stories

Various advantages have also been proposed for the use of short stories in the language classes. Short story like other literary texts can raise cultural awareness, linguistic awareness, motivation, and etc. Short stories is claimed to improve all four skills. Murdoch (2002) indicates that “short stories can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency” (p. 9). Krashen (2000) also conducted a survey in Hong Kong found that the group who read literary texts showed improvement in vocabulary and reading. According to Erkaya (2005) reading literary text can lead student to be critical thinker. He points out that when students read they interact with the text and interpret what they read and this analysis makes them to be more creative and critical. Young (1996) discussed two advantages of using short stories for raising critical thinking in students as the following: "because they are entertaining, students' pervasive apprehension is reduced, and they learn from the beginning that critical thinking is natural, familiar, and sometimes even fun. Second, the stories put issues of critical thinking in an easily remembered context" (p. 90). According to Erkaya (2005) short stories motivate students to continue reading so that they can solve the problem. And since it is interesting for students they would not easily get frustrated. Arigol listed the following advantages for pedagogical advantages of short stories over other literary texts:

- ☐ Short stories makes the students’ reading task easier because it is simple and short
- ☐ Give learners a better view of other people and other cultures
- ☐ Requires more attention and analysis
- ☐ offers a fictional and interesting world

2.6 Reading Comprehension Benefit of Short Stories

The use of short stories in developing reading comprehension skill in EFL classroom has many benefits. Many intellectuals like Brumfit and Carter, (1986); mention a very few, strongly recommend the use of short-stories for effective teaching of foreign language

skills. Some of the benefits of the use of short-stories, for developing reading comprehension skill, and their implications for the Sudanese EFL teachers and learners are listed below.

[1] Short stories are considered as highly useful resource material in EFL classrooms as they provide rich linguistic input, effective stimuli, for students to express themselves in other languages, and a potential source of learner motivation.

[2] They can be the main teaching and learning material in reading comprehension class as well as can supplement the main course materials for the in-class and out of class activities of foreign language teaching, learning, and practice. The Sudanese EFL teachers can exploit this aspect for the same purpose in their class.

[3] Stories can be more beneficial than any other informational materials, in stimulating the acquisition process, as they provide authentic contexts for processing new language. So, they should form an important place in the teaching material, selected by the Sudanese EFL teachers, to teach reading comprehension skill.

[4] The real examples of grammatical structures in stories, presented in a very simple form, and the essential vocabulary items, presented in context and in use, can help the Sudanese EFL in learning these aspects and using them in real life conversations.

[5] As stories increase foreign language learners' insight into the country and the people whose language is being learnt, by providing cultural information about the target language, Sudanese EFL learners can also benefit from them. Also such use of stories will help them in fostering their ability to interpret discourse in different social and cultural target language contexts.

[6] As stories expose students to a wide variety of styles and language functions, they can help the Sudanese EFL learners to enhance their thinking and language abilities, as well as other study skills such as learning vocabulary, discovering questions, evaluating evidence etc.

[7] According to Collie and Slater (1991: 196), stories are 'practical for the English language teachers' to use as their length is long enough to cover, entirely, in one or two class sessions and they are not complicated for students to work with on their

own which can be helpful for developing EFL learners' self-dependency while learning foreign language. Being the product of creative writers, who have better command over language, stories are rich in language and can be ideal material for reading comprehension skill class. Therefore, the Sudanese EFL teachers should take the advantage of these benefits for developing the reading skill of their students in effective way.

[8] According to Brumfit and Carter (1986:194), stories are easy to finish, definite to understand and 'attract the students' attention more than any other normal passage' which can be considered as another benefit for the Sudanese EFL teachers to attract their students towards reading in English.

[9] As Murdoch, G. (2002: 09), believes, the proper use of short-stories can offer opportunities for EFL teachers to integrate reading comprehension skill with other productive skills, like speaking and writing, and if selected and exploited appropriately, this use 'allows instructors to teach the four language skills to all levels of language proficiency and can enhance ELT courses for the learners'. This pedagogical aspect, embedded in the use of short stories, can be very helpful in developing the Sudanese EFL learners' language skills, by integrating them, wisely and creatively, with one other and in interesting way.

[10] The use of the authentic, natural dialogues, in the short-stories, can also be helpful for the Sudanese EFL learners to get familiarized with actual, functional language use. They can also be helpful for the teachers to maintain high interest and attention levels of their students, which is quite crucial while developing reading comprehension skill in EFL classroom.

[11] Stories command the reader's attention more effectively making him/her react emotionally with the events and leading to his/her personal involvement. This can be exploited to sustain the Sudanese EFL learners' attention in the class as well to motivate and promote reading among them, as most of them have negative attitude towards reading. Stories thus, can help arouse liking and love for reading in English among them.

[12] As stories are contextual, they can help EFL learners to develop various learning strategies such as predicting and guessing meaning of the difficult words from the context etc. This aspect of the use of short stories can help a lot to the Sudanese EFL teachers not only in overcoming the vocabulary related problems of their students but also in effective fostering of their other target language skills.

[13] Stories, according to Bretz (1990), can help in improving communicative competence of EFL learners and in developing critical thinking and aesthetic appreciation. They also help in developing EFL learners' interpretive abilities and expand their language awareness. So, they should be used in the Sudanese EFL classrooms for the stated reasons.

[14] According to Lazar, G. (1993:18), stories provide the teaching and learning material 'which is motivating, authentic and has great educational value'. Therefore, the Sudanese EFL teachers should opt for them, instead of the informative materials which they use in reading comprehension skill class.

[15] The controlled length, with the concise writing and with carefully selected vocabulary and lexis, is another linguistic benefit of the use of short-stories for EFL teachers and learners for developing reading comprehension skill which can also be taken into consideration by the Sudanese EFL teachers and learners.

[16] As stories are very enjoyable to read, provide examples of different styles of writing, and represent various authentic uses of the target language, they can be a good basis for vocabulary expansion and for effective foster of reading comprehension skill of the Sudanese EFL learners.

[17] Stories can expose the Sudanese EFL learners to rich, authentic language, which they otherwise would not encounter in foreign language learning context like Sudan and listening to them, in the form of films, would help them in becoming aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of the target language.

[18] According to Mourão, S. (2009), stories help develop EFL learners' personal creative powers and other higher level thinking skills and can contribute in developing emotional intelligence as well.

2.7 Previous Studies

(1) Study of Mohammad Khatib (2012). *Enhancing Reading Comprehension through Short Stories in Iranian EFL Learners* .

This study tries to test using literary text in improving reading comprehension ability of Iranian foreign language learners. A group of 26 students majoring in English at the Islamic Azad University Babol Branch and Amol Branch has been sampled for the purpose of this study. The students were then divided into two groups– the control group and the experimental group. Both the groups were administered identical Pre-Test and Post-Test which consists of selected reading passage from different TOEFL books.

The findings of the study shows that the experimental group did not show a significant improvement over the control group. So the using of literary texts seems unsatisfactory for Iranian EFL learners’.

(2) Study of Pourkalhor and Kohan (2013). **Teaching Reading Comprehension Through ShortStories In Advance Classes**

The study has examined the effects of short story instruction on 20 advanced-level tenth-grade students to show if the method had an impact on student reading comprehension. . To serve this purpose,

an instrument was used in this study: a reading comprehension test. Two groups were engaged in the study. In one, students were exposed to a method of reading instruction over ten weeks. The other just get the traditional way of teaching reading comprehension .The

data obtained from the instrument was analyzed using t- tests. The result showed that students in experimental group did better on the comprehension test than those in the control group.

(3) Study of Handayani (2013). *Using Children Short Stories To Enhance Students' Reading Comprehension*

The study informs the use of children short stories in teaching reading comprehension in one of junior high schools in Bandung.

The data were collected through various sources: observation sheet, reading test, questionnaire, and interview. The data then were analyzed through triangulation method and reported in qualitative descriptive analysis.

The findings revealed despite some limitations, the use of children short stories helped the students to improve their reading comprehension. The result of reading test showed a slightly improvement on the students' average score from 61.09 in diagnostic test increased to 76.28 in Cycle 3 therapeutic test. The result of observation implied that the employment of reading strategies and the characteristic of children short stories gave influences to the improvement of students' reading comprehension.

(4) Study of Mustafa Pathan (2012). *Advantages of Using Short-stories in ELT Classroom and the Libyan EFL Learners' Perceptions towards them for Developing Reading Comprehension Skill*, Libya

The study followed the descriptive approach. The sample are EFL learners from university of Sebha, Libya.

The study has reached into so many findings such as:

- The use of short –stories offers the material which is real, creative and rich in language selection, as well as is amusing and motivational in nature.
- It is also considered as a highly effective approach for teaching and learning of foreign language like English and is recommended for the same reasons by eminent intellectuals comprehension skill.

- The present status of the use of short-stories in the Libyan EFL classrooms and the researcher's perspective on the use of short-stories in the Libyan context also form an important part of the discussion in the paper

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter has reviewed the literature with relationship with the study topic. The previous study relevant to the topic also reviewed.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher reviews the methodology adopted in the study. The sample used and the method of data collection along with procedure followed is discussed as well. The researcher reviews also the validity and reliability on data collection and analysis.

3.1 Methodology

To fulfill the main aims, the study has adopted the descriptive analytical method where primary data have been collected from students' questionnaire and test. The secondary data source was the literature review done with regard to study topic. The research adopted such method in a quest to obtain overall result and finding of the problem being tackled.

3.2 Study sample

The researcher has chosen (30) students who study at Al-Nukhba secondary school for girls. The sample has been extracted from the entire population available in Omdurman locality. The researcher has delivered the questionnaire and test papersto the (30) students regardless to their age variance.

3.3 Tools and Instruments

The tools used in this study is a questionnaire designed for students which consists of (12) statements and a test designed for the students. Each of the study hypotheses represents a number of statements in the questionnaire. The test covers the qualitative side of the analysis, the researcher aims at taking closer look on the performance of the students in reading skill.

3.3.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was done to obtain the required results about the view of students towards the role of short stories in developing reading . The questionnaire paper consists of (12) items with Likertsacle (Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly disagree). The first four questions covers the claim of the first hypothesis, the second four statements cover the claim of the second hypothesis and the last four statement cover the claim of the last hypothesis of the study.

3.3.2 The Test

The test designed for the students is a qualitative tool that measures the performance of students in reading. The test consists of one short story with sequence of events and different sentence patterns. The idea of the test is to simply evaluate students reading skill through understanding the short story. The researcher makes three questions for the students to answer.

3.4 Procedures

The researcher has delivered the questionnaire papers to the sample of the study and asked them to give their response about the statements. For paving the way for students to give their response frankly, the researcher advised the participants to take the questionnaire in an empty classroom without giving their names. The data have been collected then and analysis was done through SPSS program.

A Test session was held by the researcher for the students in their classroom. The test was a comprehension task where students have read a short story about a man 'Mr. Chin' as his brave saved his daughter and wife. The analysis was done to the collected data where the researcher calculated percentage for each question

3.5 Validity and Reliability

The researcher has consulted experts in the design of the questionnaire paper. Some modifications were made and the final version of the paper was printed.

The reliability analysis was done through SPSS program and the result was obtained with degree of 89.4% which indicates the reliability of the questionnaire.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher analyzes the obtained data using SPSS. Each of the tables is accompanied by brief comments. Descriptive analysis is done to each of the three hypotheses along with Chi-square value test analysis.

4.1 Frequencies and Percentage of the First Hypothesis

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Short stories help me in gaining more vocabulary through new words used in different context	27	2			1
	90.0%	6.7%			3.3%
I develop my reading skill through short stories	23	5	1		1
	76.7%	16.7%	3.3%		3.3%
Short stories help me recognize how sentences are built grammatically	16	9	5		
	53.3%	30.0%	16.7%		
The more I read short stories, the quicker I become in reading different articles	19	9	1	1	
	63.3%	30.0%	3.3%	3.3%	

The above table shows the frequencies and percentages of the first hypothesis statements. As it is seen in the table, in the first statement "*Short stories help me in gaining more vocabulary through new words used in different context*", (27) of the participants strongly agree, (2) agree and only one participant strongly disagree with the statement with percentages (90%), (6.7%) and (3.3%).

In the second statement, "*I develop my reading skill through short stories*", (23) of the participants response with 'strongly agree' and the percentage (76.7%), (5) agree with

percentage (16.7% while only one remains neutral and one strongly disagree with the statement and the percentages are (3.3%) and (3.3%) respectively.

Looking at the third statement "Short stories help me recognize how sentences are built grammatically", (16) of the participants strongly agree with the statement and the percentage is (53.3%), (9) agree with percentage of (30%) while (5) remain neutral with percentage (16.7%). Like the case in the previous statement, the frequency of 'strongly agree' is the highest.

The last statement of the first question "The more I read short stories, the quicker I become in reading different articles" shows (19) of the participants strongly agree with the statement with percentage (63.3%), (9) of them agree while one remains neutral and also one disagrees with the statement with percentages (30%), (3.3%) and (3.3%) respectively.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of the First Hypothesis

Statements	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
Short stories help me in gaining more vocabulary through new words used in different context	4.8000	5.00	.76112
I develop my reading skill through short stories	4.6333	5.00	.85029
Short stories help me recognize how sentences are built grammatically	4.3667	5.00	.76489
The more I read short stories, the quicker I become in reading different articles	4.5333	5.00	.73030

The table () shows the descriptive analysis of the first hypothesis " *Short stories help developing the reading skills of the students* ". the total mean (average) value (4.5)

indicates that most of the participants tend to strongly agree with the four statements of the hypothesis. The value of mode, the most frequent value is (5) which strengthen the indication of the mean value. The standard variation is not more than (0.8).

4.3 Chi-square Analysis of the First Hypothesis

Statement	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Short stories help me in gaining more vocabulary through new words used in different context	43.400	2	.000
I develop my reading skill through short stories	44.133	3	.000
Short stories help me recognize how sentences are built grammatically	6.200	2	.045
The more I read short stories, the quicker I become in reading different articles	29.200	3	.000

The table above shows the Chi-square value test of the first hypothesis "*Short stories help developing the reading skills of the students*". The values of Chi-square are (43.400, 44.133, 6.200, 29.200). the degree of freedom (df) values are (2, 3, 2 and 2). The last column shows the values of standard significance (Sig.). as it is noticed, the values (.000, .000, .045 and .000) are all less than or equal (0.05). this is an indication that the statements of the hypothesis are all accepted and hence valid. The hypothesis "*Short stories help developing the reading skills of the students*" is then valid and accepted.

4.4 Frequencies and Percentage of the Second Hypothesis

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree
I strengthen my cultural knowledge through short stories	16	10	4	
	53.3%	33.3%	13.3%	
Short stories help me understand different thoughts and ideas	15	12	3	
	50.0%	40.0%	10.0%	
I face problem when reading short stories with more words of specific field	21	4	3	2
	70.0%	13.3%	10.0%	6.7%
There is relationship between the type of the text and the general understanding of it	21	8		1
	70.0%	26.7%		3.3%

The above table shows the frequencies and percentages of the second hypothesis statements. As it is seen in the table, in the first statement " I strengthen my cultural knowledge through short stories ", (16) of the participants strongly agree, (10) agree and (4) participants remain neutral with the statement with percentages (53.3%), (33.3%) and (13.3%) respectively.

In the second statement, " Short stories help me understand different thoughts and ideas ", (15) of the participants response with 'strongly agree' and the percentage (50%), (12) agree that short stories help them understand different thoughts and ideas with percentage (40%) while (3) remain neutral and the percentage is (10%).

Looking at the third statement "I face problem when reading short stories with more words of specific field", (21) of the participants strongly agree with the statement and the percentage is (70%), (4) agree with percentage of (13.3%) while (3) remain neutral with percentage (10%) and (2) of the participants strongly disagree with the statement and the percentage is (6.7%). Like the case in the previous statement, the frequency of 'strongly agree' is the highest one.

The fourth statement of the second question "There is relationship between the type of the text and the general understanding of it " shows that (21) of the participants strongly agree with the statement with percentage (70%), (8) of them agree while one strongly disagrees with the statement with percentages (26.7%) and (3.3%) respectively.

4.5 Descriptive Analysis of the Second Hypothesis

Statements	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
I strengthen my cultural knowledge through short stories	4.4000	5.00	.72397
Short stories help me understand different thoughts and ideas	4.4000	5.00	.67466
I face problem when reading short stories with more words of specific field	4.4000	5.00	1.13259
There is relationship between the type of the text and the general understanding of it	4.6000	5.00	.81368

The table () shows the descriptive analysis of the second hypothesis "*Short stories reflect the author's ideas and cultural background which help the reader to understand different types of texts*". the total mean (average) value (4.45) indicates that most of the participants tend to strongly agree with the four statements of the hypothesis. The value of mode, the most frequent value is (5) which strengthen the indication of the mean value. The standard variation is not more than (1).

4.6 Chi-square Analysis of the Second Hypothesis

	Chi-Square	Df	Asymp. Sig.
I strengthen my cultural knowledge through short stories	7.200	2	.027
Short stories help me understand different thoughts and ideas	7.800	2	.020
I face problem when reading short stories with more words of specific field	32.667	3	.000
There is relationship between the type of the text and the general understanding of it	20.600	2	.000

The table above shows the Chi-square value test of the second hypothesis "*Short stories reflect the author's ideas and cultural background which help the reader to understand different types of texts*". The values of Chi-square are (43.400, 44.133, 6.200, 29.200). the degree of freedom (df) values are (2, 3, 2 and 2). The last column shows the values of standard significance (Sig.). as it is noticed, the values (.000, .000, .045 and .000) are all less than or equal (0.05). this is an indication that the statements of the hypothesis are all accepted and hence valid. The hypothesis "*Short stories*

reflect the author's ideas and cultural background which help the reader to understand different types of texts " is then valid and accepted.

4.7 Frequencies and Percentage of the Third Hypothesis

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Different types of sentence patterns can be found in different texts of short stories which help reader to some extent	12	14	3	1	
	40.0%	46.7%	10.0%	3.3%	
The differences in syntactical forms help reader in further reading	12	14	4		
	40.0%	46.7%	13.3%		
Short stories help improve the understanding of semantic and meaning	17	11	1		1
	56.7%	36.7%	3.3%		3.3%
Short stories help creating ideas and thoughts	18	10	1		1
	60.0%	33.3%	3.3%		3.3%

Looking at the above table which shows the frequencies and percentages of the second hypothesis statements, it is seen that in the first statement "*Different types of sentence patterns can be found in different texts of short stories which help reader to some extent*", (12) of the participants strongly agree with the statement, (14) agree, (3)

participants remain neutral with the statement while only one participant disagrees the percentages are (40%), (46.7%), (10%) and (3.3%) respectively.

In the second statement of the hypothesis, "The differences in syntactical forms help reader in further reading", (15) of the participants response with 'strongly agree' and the percentage (50%), (12) agree that short stories help them understand different thoughts and ideas with percentage (40%) while (3) remain neutral and the percentage is (10%).

Looking at the third statement "Short stories help improve the understanding of semantic and meaning", (17) of the participants strongly agree with the statement and the percentage is (56.7%), (11) agree with percentage of (36.7%) while (1) remain neutral with percentage (3.3%) and (1) of the participants strongly disagree with the statement and the percentage is (3.3%). Like the case in the previous statement, the frequency of 'strongly agree' is the highest one.

The fourth statement of the second question "Short stories help creating ideas and thoughts" shows that (18) of the participants strongly agree with the statement with percentage (60%), (10) of them agree while one strongly disagrees with the statement with percentages (33.3%) and (3.3%) respectively.

4.8 Descriptive Analysis of the Third Hypothesis

	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
Different types of sentence patterns can be found in different texts of short stories which help reader to some extent	4.2333	4.00	.77385
The differences in syntactical forms help reader in further reading	4.2667	4.00	.69149
Short stories help improve the understanding of semantic and meaning	4.4333	5.00	.85836
Short stories help creating ideas and thoughts	4.4667	5.00	.86037

The table () shows the descriptive analysis of the Third hypothesis " *Short stories help readers recognize different types of sentence patterns*". the total mean (average) value (4.4) indicates that most of the participants tend to strongly agree with the four statements of the hypothesis. The value of mode, the most frequent value is (4 and 5) which strengthen the indication of the mean value. The standard variation is not more than (.79).

4.9 Chi-square Analysis of the Third Hypothesis

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Different types of sentence patterns can be found in different texts of short stories which help reader to some extent	16.667	3	.001
The differences in syntactical forms help reader in further reading	5.600	2	.061
Short stories help improve the understanding of semantic and meaning	24.933	3	.000
Short stories help creating ideas and thoughts	26.800	3	.000

The table above shows the Chi-square value test of the third hypothesis "*Short stories help readers recognize different types of sentence patterns*". The values of Chi-square are (16.667, 5.600, 24.933, and 26.800). The degree of freedom (df) values are (3, 2, 3 and 3). The last column shows the values of standard significance (Sig.). As it is noticed, the values (.001, .061, .000 and .000) are all except the second one less than or equal (0.05). This is an indication that the statements of the hypothesis are all accepted and hence valid. The hypothesis "*Short stories help readers recognize different types of sentence patterns* " is then valid and accepted.

Test Analysis

In this section, the researcher analyzes the test designed for the students. The test is a comprehension task for students which consists of three questions. Students need to read the a passage and answer the three questions.

First Question

	Frequency	Percentages
Correct answers	19	63.3%
Incorrect answers	11	36.7%
Total	30	100%

The table above shows the frequency and percentage of the first question "*Why did Mr. Chin look toward the jungle for a moment?*". The answer of the question depends on the understanding of the passage.

As shown in the table, the frequency of the correct answer is (19) and the for the incorrect answer is (11), the percentages are (63.3%) and (36.7%) respectively.

The result of this question indicates that most of the students have succeeded to figure out the correct answer. This is a clear prove that short stories help readers develop their reading skills by understanding the sequence of events within the story.

Second Question

	Frequency	Percentages
Correct answers	26	86.6%
Incorrect answers	4	13.4%
Total	30	100%

The second question shows that students get the maximum frequency and percentage of correct answer so far in the test. Only (4) students fail to guess the correct answer while the majority (26) succeed in answering the question correctly. The percentages for correct and incorrect answers are (86.6%) and (13.4%) respectively.

Short stories help reader recognize different types of sentence patterns. This is true when looking at the result of the second question. It doesn't make difference to students how sentence are written when they understand the whole text.

Third Question

	Frequency	Percentages
Correct answers	22	73.3%
Incorrect answers	8	26.7%
Total	30	100%

In the third question "*Where was Mr. Chin's daughter when the tigress attacked him?*", most of the students (22) again guess the correct answer with percentage (73.3%) while the rest (8) fail to give the correct answer with percentage (26.7%). The result shows that how students' good skill in reading has helped them give the correct answer by fully understanding the meaning of the passage.

Summary of the chapter

The researcher has analyzed the questionnaire using SPSS. The analysis calculates the frequencies and percentages of the statements of questionnaire along with hypotheses testing against Chi-square value test.

Chapter Five

Conclusion, Findings and Recommendations

5.0 Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to investigate The role of short stories in developing reading for EFL learners. To achieve the desired goal of the study, descriptive approach were used along with questionnaire paper as tool for data collection. The research has been divided into five chapters, the first chapter is an introduction to the research methodology and framework. In the second chapter, the researcher reviews the topic of the research in literature. The third chapter is the methodology of the research, while the fourth chapter is data analysis where the researcher discussed the obtained results. The fifth chapter concludes the research with findings and some recommendations. The researcher also provided some suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Findings

Based on the data analysis, the research has reached into the following findings:

- 1- Secondary school students at Al-Nukhba see that short stories help them a lot in developing their reading skill through vocabulary and grammar.
- 2- There is relationship between the frequency of reading short stories and the development in reading skill.
- 3- The cultural knowledge is strengthen through reading short stories as students strongly agree with (Chi-square table in Chp4).

- 4- There is relationship between the type of the text and the general understanding of it. That is to say texts about science and specific terms tend to be more difficult for students to comprehend.
- 5- Short stories have great impact on developing students reading skill, this can be seen from the result of the test.
- 6- Most of the students have understand the short story events with less difficulty; their percentage of correct answer is much greater than percentage of incorrect answers.
- 7- The test result has revealed that the more students read the short stories the more they recognize grammatical rules and sentences patterns.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Teacher, educationist need to take into account teaching students through short stories to develop their skills in general and reading in particular.
2. Popular novels can be simplified for students to understand them and poems also can be introduced during language teaching.
3. Teachers need to maintain the factors that keep students in full desire for reading short stories.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Some suggestions can be made as follows:

- 1- Researches need to be done that look on the environmental factors that help students develop their reading.
- 2- Conducting research that investigate the role of short stories in developing other skills related to writing (speaking) is of great advantage.

References

References

- Chiang, M. (2007). Improved reading attitudes and enhanced English reading comprehension via literature circles. *Lagos Papers in English Studies*, 1(1), 168-183.
- Elliott, R. (1990). „Encouraging reader-response to literature in ESL situations.“ In *ELT Journal*. Vol 44. No. 3
- Erkaya, O. R. (2005). „Benefits of using short stories in the EFL context“. In *Asian EFL Journal*. Vol8. page 38-49. <http://asian-efl-journal.com>. Current as of January 5th , 2013.
- Hismanoglu, M. (2005). Teaching English through literature. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 1(1), 53-66.
- Khatib, Muhammad. (2012). „Enhancing Reading Comprehension through Short Stories in Iranian EFL Learners.“ In *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. Vol.2. No.2. <http://academypublisher.com>. Current as of January 15th , 2013.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- Murdoch, G. (2002). Exploiting well-known short stories for language skills development. *IATEFL LCS SIG Newsletter* 23.

Mustafa *Mubarak Pathan*. (2013) Investigating the Role of Short-Stories in Overcoming the Problems Faced by the Libyan EFL Learners in Reading Comprehension Skill. Vishwanath, Libya.

Appendix

Appendix

No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Dis/strongly agree
1.	Short stories help me in gaining more vocabulary through new words used in different contexts.					
2.	I develop my reading skill through short stories.					
3.	Short stories help me recognize how sentences are built grammatically.					
4.	The more I read short stories, the quicker I become in reading different articles					
5.	I strengthen my cultural knowledge through short stories					
6.	Short stories help me understand different thoughts and ideas					
7.	I face problem when reading short stories with more words of specific field					
8.	There is relationship between the type of the text and the general understanding of it.					
9.	Different types of sentence patterns can be found in different texts of short stories which help reader to some extent					
10.	The differences in syntactical forms help reader in further reading					
11.	Short stories help improving the understanding of semantic and meaning					
12.	Short stories help creating ideas and thoughts					

Test

One day a tea contractor, Mr Chin, was working on an estate in the Cameron Highlands with his wife and daughter. He noticed a slight movement on the edge of the jungle, so he stopped to watch for a moment. To his astonishment a large tigress appeared and came towards Mr Chin. The tea contractor was a very brave man. He told his wife and daughter to run towards a nearby road, while he stopped to fight the tigress with a knife.

The tigress sprang at Mr Chin and knocked him down, but he managed to wound it with his knife. As a result, the tigress and Mr Chin knocked each other unconscious. Luckily for Mr Chin, a friend heard the noise of the fight and came investigate . He found Mr Chin and carried him to the road. Then he stopped a car and sent the injured man to a hospital, where he eventually recovered.

The tigress disappeared for a few days but was later hunted down and shot by Game Ranger, Mohamed Said . The Game Ranger discovered that the tigress had injured a paw in a wire trap and had been unable to hunt wild animals in its normal manner

Answer the question below:

(a) Why did Mr Chin look towards the jungle for a moment?

- 1- He noticed a tigress coming out from among the trees .
- 2- He heard a slight noise which attracted his attention.
- 3- Because he saw something moves.

(b) Why did Mr Chin stay to fight the tigress?

- 1- He couldn't run as quickly as his wife and daughter.
- 2- He wanted to try to protect his wife and daughter.
- 3- He was a strong man who loved fighting.

(c) Where was Mr Chin's daughter when the tigress attacked him?

- 1- On the road.
- 2- Standing beside her father.

3- At home.

(d) When did Mr Chin's friend go to see what was wrong?

- 1- When he heard something unusual.
- 2- When he saw the tigress attacking his friend.
- 3- Early in the evening

(e) What is a contractor?

- 1- A man who grows tea on an estate.
- 2- A person who grows smaller every day.
- 3- Somebody who agrees to carry out a task for an agreed amount of money.

(f) What is the meaning of astonishment in line 3?

- 1- Fear.
- 2- Surprise.
- 3- Great anger.

(g) Which of the following titles best sums up the passage?

- 1- On Safari in the Jungle.
- 2- A Brave Man gives his life for his Family.
- 3- Contractor saves Family from Tigress.