



INVESTIGATING TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS USING ENGLISH SHORT STORIES TO INCREASE TERTIARY STUDENTS' VOCABULARY

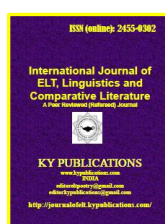
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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at investigating the role of students' attitudes towards using short stories to increase tertiary students' vocabulary. The researchers have used descriptive method via questionnaire as primary tool for gathering the data of the study. The study sample comprises of (30) University teachers of English. The data yielded from questionnaire has been computationally processed with SPSS program to check the truth of hypotheses of the study and to see whether teachers' attitudes towards using short stories increase tertiary students' vocabulary. The results have shown that teachers have positive attitudes using short stories.

Keywords: Short Stories, Comprehension and Communication and Motivation

Introduction

Vocabulary is the set of known words and their meanings which can be used in a language. There are a lot of teaching materials which can help students develop their vocabularies such as songs, novels, articles, games and short stories. It is widely acknowledged that short stories play crucial role in enhancing EFL learners' vocabulary. That is because when students read short stories, they grasp the meaning of idiomatic expression and phrasal verbs which can help them to increase their command of vocabulary. Vocabulary knowledge is vital in developing foreign language skills.

Aim and Scope of the Study

This study aims to investigate whether using English short stories in English class will increase tertiary students' demand of vocabulary. The scope of study is limited to teachers of English at Sudan University of Science and Technology.

Literature Review

A short story is a fictional work of prose that is shorter than a novel. Edgar Allan Poe, in his essay "The Philosophy of Composition" said that a short story should be read in one sitting, anywhere from a half an hour to two hours.

Elements of a short story

According to Lazar (1993:20) states that a short story consists of the following key elements:

Character

It is a person or a thing who takes part in the action of the story.



Setting

It is the time and place of the short story.

Plot

It is a series of events and characters' actions that relate to the central conflict.

Conflict

It is a struggle between two people or things in a short story.

Theme

It is the central idea or belief in a short story.

Short Stories and Vocabularies

Though there exist many methods and strategies of teaching to develop EFL learners' vocabulary, short stories play a crucial role in developing vocabulary of students. The students acquire vocabularies through oral comprehension of the short stories. It is argued that students who read widely have extensive vocabularies. Although there are methods and strategies of enhancing vocabulary of EFL learners, the importance of extensive reading in the development of EFL learners' vocabulary is of great importance (Nagy and Anderson, 1984).

Vocabulary and Language Learning

The knowledge of Vocabulary enables EFL learners to establish and achieve successful communication which is the main goal of any foreign language teaching and learning. Brown (1994:12) claims that learning words with enjoyment guarantees a sense of achievement on the part of the learner and can help in developing motivation for further learning. Harmer argues "if language is structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is the vocabulary that provides the vital organs and flesh". (p.153). Therefore, learning more lexical items will activate students' writing, listening, reading and speaking skills.

According to Tasneen (2014) a short story is the story of a length of about 5,000 words and because students usually find it interesting, they try to find words' meaning to understand the story. In addition to that, when students read short stories, they grasp the meanings of idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs. All that can help students to increase their command of vocabularies which can be expressed in oral communication.

Finally, short stories play a crucial role in developing vocabulary of students. The students acquire the vocabulary through oral comprehension of storytelling bridges the decreasing gaps of vocabulary and comprehension. As use of language in short stories is simple, students can engage in meaning making and guessing through comprehension. This leads them to acquire vocabulary and its usage in greater way. So, vocabulary is one of the most important parts of language acquisition.

Materials and methods

This study was carried out at Sudan University of Science and Technology. The sample used in this study includes (30) teachers of English who were experienced in the field of teaching English.

Tools of the study

The researchers have used the questionnaire as primary tool for gathering the data of this study. The questionnaires were administered to (30) teachers of English. The researchers have adopted descriptive method in conducting this study.



Results and Discussion

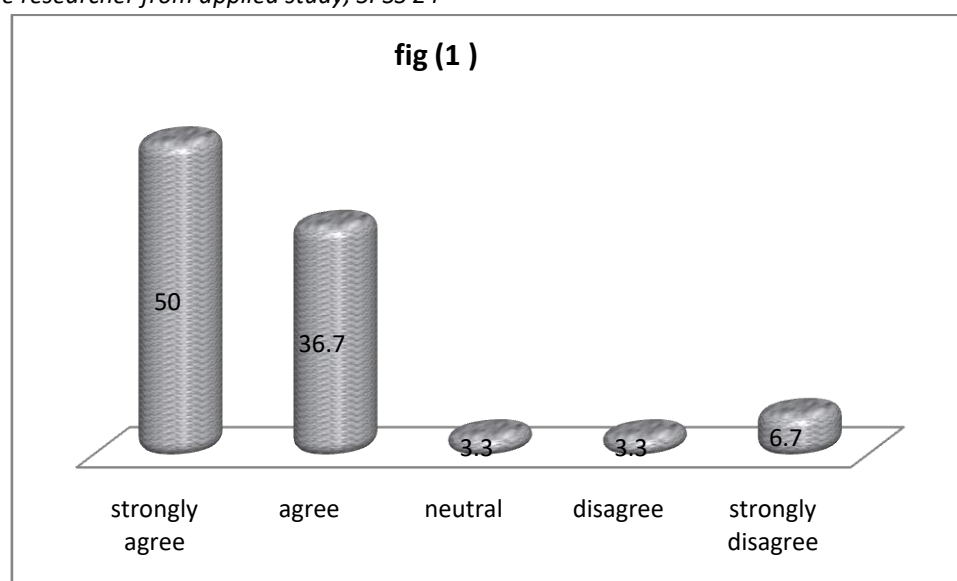
The researchers have used the questionnaire as primary tool for collecting the data related to this study. The researchers have designed the questionnaire to measure whether teachers have positive attitudes towards using short stories in the language class. The tables and percentage below illustrates what has been stated above.

Item No. (1): Short stories play a crucial role in enhancing EFL students' vocabulary.

Table 1: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Question No.(1)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	15	50.0	50.0	50.0
Agree	11	36.7	36.7	86.7
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3	90.0
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	93.3
strongly disagree	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

It is clear from the above table (1) and figure (1) show that there are (15) respondents in the study sample with percentage (50.0%) strongly agreed with "Short stories play a crucial role in enhancing EFL students' vocabulary." There are (11) respondents with percentage (36.7%) agreed with that and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) were neutral and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) disagreed. While (2) respondents with (6.7%) are strongly disagreed. This demonstrates that vocabulary can be improved through teaching short stories

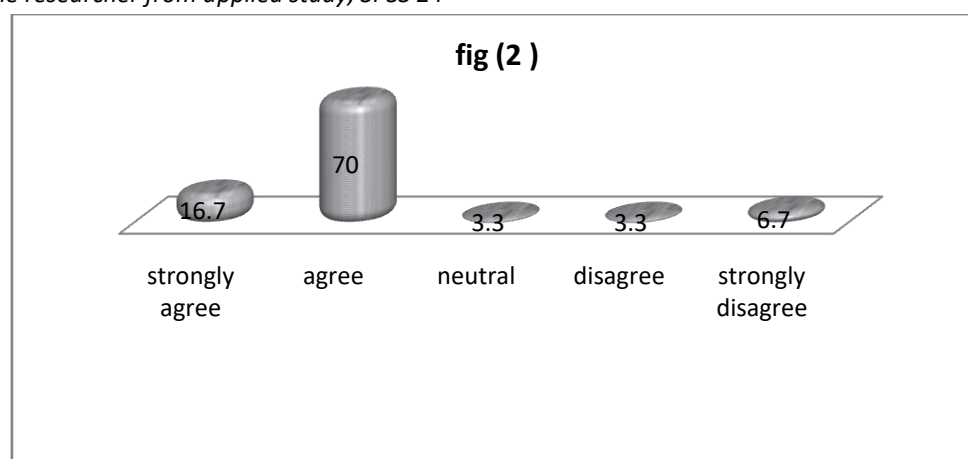


Items No. (2): Short stories can be used as teaching materials to develop students' vocabulary.

Table 2 : The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Question No.(2)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
Agree	21	70.0	70.0	86.7
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3	90.0
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	93.3
strongly disagree	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

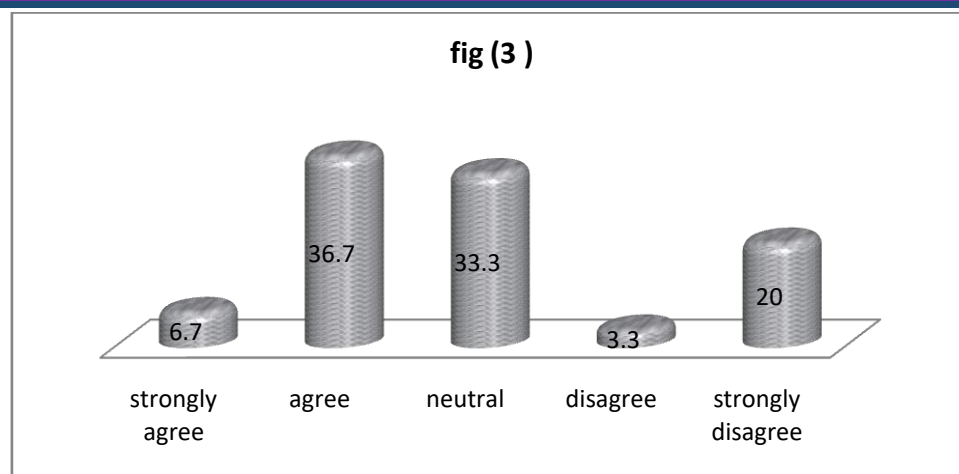
It is observed from the above table (2) and figure (2) that there are (5) respondents in the study sample with percentage (16.7%) strongly agreed with "Short stories can be used as teaching materials to develop students' vocabulary." There are (21) respondents with percentage (70.0%) agreed with that, and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) were neutral, and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) disagreed. and (2) respondents with 6.7% are strongly disagreed. This justifies that students' vocabulary can be developed by teaching materials.

Items No. (3): Lack of vocabulary significantly affects students' comprehension of short stories.

Table 3 : The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Question No.(3)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	2	6.7	6.7	6.7
Agree	11	36.7	36.7	43.3
Neutral	10	33.3	33.3	76.7
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	80.0
strongly disagree	6	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

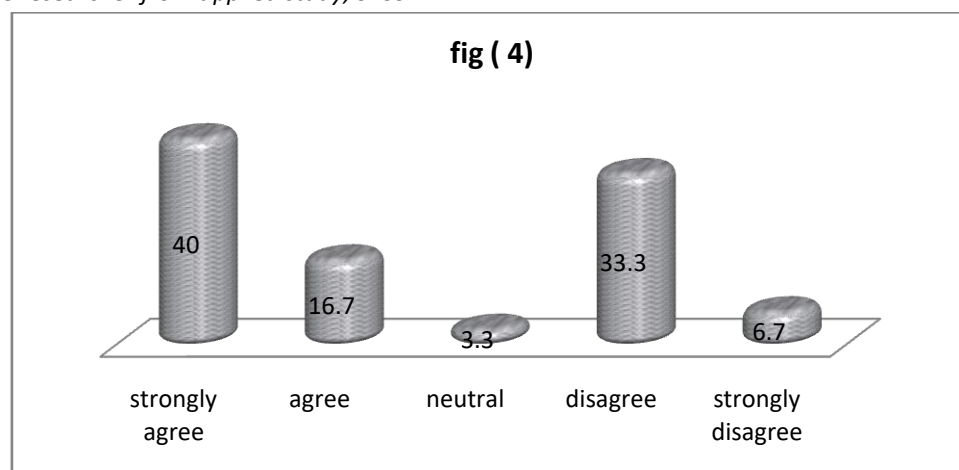
It is noticed from the above table (3) and figure (3) display that there are (2) in the study sample with percentage (6.7%) strongly agreed with " Lack of vocabulary significantly affects students' comprehension of short stories.". There are (11) respondents with percentage (36.7%) agreed with that and (10) respondents with percentage (33.3%) were neutral and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) disagreed. whereas (6) respondents with (20.0%) are respondents strongly disagreed. This indicates that short stories can develop students' vocabulary.

Items No.(4): Knowledge of vocabulary enables EFL students to grasp short stories.

Table No 4: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Question No.(4)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	12	40.0	40.0	40.0
Agree	5	16.7	16.7	56.7
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3	60.0
Disagree	10	33.3	33.3	93.3
strongly disagree	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24



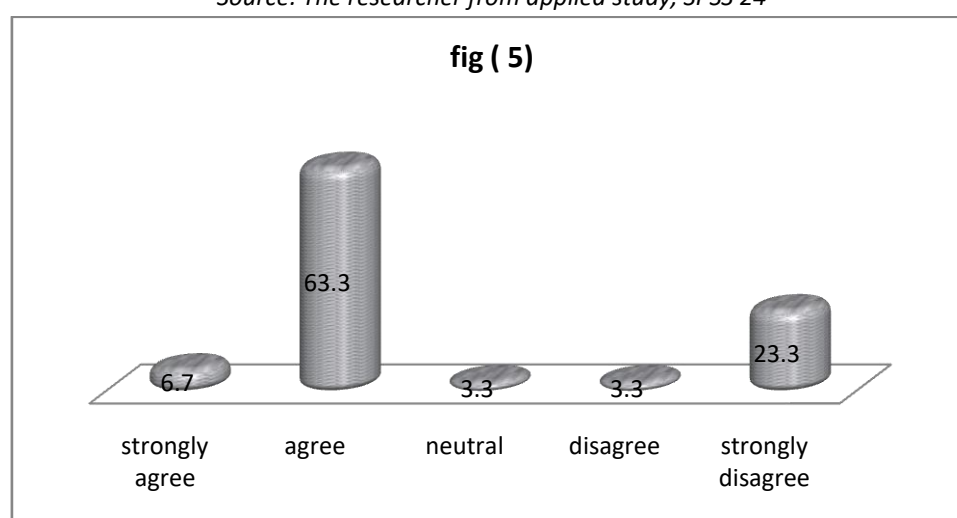
As seen from the above table (4) and figure (4) propose that there are (12) respondents in the study sample with percentage (40.0%) strongly agreed with " Knowledge of vocabulary enables EFL students to grasp short stories. ". There are (5) respondents with percentage (16.7%) agreed with that, and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) were neutral, and (10) respondents with percentage (33.3%) disagreed. while (2) respondents with (6.7%) are strongly disagreed. This proves that EFL students can grasp short stories by vocabulary knowledge.

Items No.(5): Understanding vocabulary is regarded as an important part of learning short stories.

Table No 5: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Question No.(5)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	2	6.7	6.7	6.7
Agree	19	63.3	63.3	70.0
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3	73.3
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	76.7
strongly disagree	7	23.3	23.3	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

It is obvious from the above table (5) and figure (5) show that there are (2) respondents in the study sample with percentage (6.7%) strongly agreed with " Understanding vocabulary is regarded as an important part of learning short stories.". There are (19) persons with percentage (63.3%) agreed with that and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) were neutral, and (1) respondent with percentage (33.3%) disagreed. whereas (7) respondents with (23.3%) are strongly disagreed. This confirms that learning short stories can be related to vocabulary.

**Chi-Square Test Results for Respondents' Answers of the Questions of the Hypothesis (1)**

No.	Statement	mean	SD	Chi square	p-value
1	Short stories play a crucial role in enhancing EFL students' vocabulary.	2.4	0.7	26	0.000
2	Short stories can be used as teaching materials to develop students' vocabulary.	2.4	0.5	24.9	0.000
3	Lack of vocabulary significantly affects students' comprehension of short stories.	2.3	0.8	24	0.000
4	Knowledge of vocabulary enables EFL students to grasp short stories.	2.9	0.6	24.4	0.000
5	Understanding vocabulary is regarded as an important part of learning short stories.	2.8	0.7	26	0.000

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (1) question was (26) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (8.22). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Short stories play a crucial role in enhancing EFL students' vocabulary.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (2) question was (24.9) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (8.22). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Short stories can be used as teaching materials to develop students' vocabulary.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (3) question was (26) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (8.22). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Lack of vocabulary significantly affects students' comprehension of short stories.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (4) question was (24.4) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (8.22). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Knowledge of vocabulary enables EFL students to grasp short stories.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (5) question was (26) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (8.22). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Understanding vocabulary is regarded as an important part of learning short stories.



Report Discussion

The data collection was analyzed in relation to the hypotheses of study. The data was gathered by virtue of a questionnaire which had been administered to teachers of English at Sudan University of Science and Technology. Having analyzed and compared the results with main hypothesis; the results have shown that using short stories in language classes can increase tertiary students' vocabulary; Teachers of English have positive attitudes towards using short stories in English classes.

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