

## **ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH SHORT STORIES AS AN AUTHENTIC MATERIAL FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS**

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
The intention of the research is investigating the effects of English short stories in the process of teaching the foreign language. The Short stories method cannot be ideal and unique for all kinds of learners since what can seem appropriate for one student can be discouraging for another. Perhaps the best way to develop speaking activities appropriately and productively is to explore students’ feelings and beliefs about the language. The research includes a literature review where the researches on speaking teaching methods and ways are discussed.	Short stories, speaking activities, authentic materials, teaching methods, activities, pronunciation, error correction.

### **Introduction**

In this article we tried to highlight the effects of the use of English short stories as an authentic material for developing speaking skills, based on the rationale that short stories can provide students with motivation necessary in speaking as well as in reading. The article intends to provide some practical use of short stories to create lively and communicative lessons with the occasional provision of forms and functions. It aims to integrate communicative speaking activities with several short stories. Exercises and activities are devised according to the Communicative Language and Task – based Approach.

We should note that, the lack of motivation is one of the main difficulties in speaking classes; moreover, learners/students are also too shy to speak with the classmates/group mates. Their interests, teaching material and techniques also determine the success or failure of speaking skill development. Therefore, there is a need for authentic materials to use as comprehensible input.

Short stories can be easily understood and enjoyed by people of all ages due to its universal themes such as love and hatred, war and peace, etc. furthermore, the richness of its genres, the shortness of its length to cope within one sitting and long – lasting impression it has on people indicate the practicality to apply it in language classes as a teaching tool. Interesting and communicative exercises and activities are devised upon the use of short stories.

Our article was carried out according to some of the core assumptions of the Communicative Language Teaching Methodology; language learning is better facilitated when learners are engaged in communicative interaction, which is meaningful and relevant.

The previous teaching and learning situations on short stories are carried out only in mother tongue. Exercises that are they are familiar with are mainly “close – ended answers and questions on reading

comprehension". The learners/students do have the exposure to the communicative activities such as "story completion, jigsaw reading, discussion", etc.

To provide learners/students with opportunity to practice speaking in every lesson, teacher should form pair works and group works. The following is the sample teaching procedures that might be used during the investigation.

The first two periods are concerned with teaching the learners/students with useful classroom expressions, reviewing the story elements, carrying out the activities to familiarize the students, free discussions on books, authors and short stories, eliciting their literary background knowledge. All short stories should be taught within ten hours – duration taking five hours for each story.

At the beginning of the class period, the teacher lets the learners/students spend at least five minutes speaking the target language on any topic with their partner (Chit Chat). If the students are not speaking, the teacher selects light topics such as movies, music, shopping or daily routines.

Brainstorming is a type of warm – up activity used to generate ideas in a small group. This activity recalls the existing knowledge of the students concerning the theme, characterization or the plot through questions, important words or phrases, and titles or even some paragraphs or sentences from the story. The learners/students enjoy brainstorming because their ideas are not criticized.

In Jigsaw reading, each member has one or a few pieces of the "puzzle" or story and all the members should cooperate to fit all the pieces of the story into a whole.

Learners/ students have to do a presentation on a concise version of the story they had studied beforehand. This enhances learners'/students' creative thinking. Teacher provides learners/students with the part of the story. Then, each student narrates from the point where previous one stopped.

Retelling story should be in a form of telling a story in one's own words rather than reading it aloud a text or from memory. Learners/students work in pairs to interpret the text. Then, they retell the story to other groups. It's enjoyable when another member in the group mime while his/her partner retells the story.

In reading aloud the text, students are told to read either as an individual or as a chain reader. It is used at the beginning of the course where some of the learners/students are not able to speak the target language. It helps to practice pronunciation not only on individual sounds but also on linking words or contractions; intonation and rhythm. As the activities are easy, they are helpful for the shy learners/students to overcome their fears.

The main speaking activities in the story are story completion, retelling and miming and discussion.

At the beginning of the course, the learners/students might have little confidence to share their ideas and participate in the activities. As the course goes on, more and more learners/students will participate in the activities and they become curious of what other learners'/students' points of views are. Finally, there is no doubt that all the learners/students will be friendly to each other and every student will want to talk and involve in the activity.

It is admitted that learners/students are different between score of role – play and individual performance. The possible explanation for that is the type of activity that might influence learners'/students' performance in speaking. For instance, learners/students feel anxious if they speak alone so they make few errors. However, it doesn't appear when they are in role-play.

Types of activity, numbers of students who get involved in the activity influence the performance so far. It might be concluded that their speaking is not stable yet as it is still up and down.

Learners/students have confident to speak and not worried about making mistakes and errors, then give them good model how to speak naturally in daily context and formal situations as well. In the future, their abilities will be factor that can be used in the upper level of study, university level.

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