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**THE USE OF SHORT STORIES TO TEACH VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE CLASSES**

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Sibel TEMİZKAN

**ABSTRACT****THE USE OF SHORT STORY TO TEACH ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND  
VOCABULARY****Sibel TEMİZKAN****Master of Arts, Department of English Language Education****Supervisor: Dr. Zehra KÖROĞLU****October 2018, 66 pages**

The purpose of the study is to emphasize the use of literature, especially ‘short story’ for teaching language and vocabulary. The short story has lots of benefits for the students to create a difference in their learning style and learning desires. According to some instructors, literature is a confusing material for the students. In this study, the researcher realized that idea of using literary genres are suitable to teach language. This idea was improved by using short story in fifth grade students to teach language. Short stories help students learn and develop knowledge of vocabulary and language areas. In addition to this, short stories affect students positively to develop their world of thought, cultural awareness and personal growth. The short story is one of the best materials to provide different and authentic activities. The benefits of short story are mentioned in the study. It is understood that short story has a power to create an exciting class atmosphere for learning.

**Key Words:** Literature, Short Story, Vocabulary

**ÖZET****İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE KELİME ÖĞRETİMİNDE KISA ÖYKÜNÜN KULLANIMI****Sibel TEMİZKAN****Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı****Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Zehra KÖROĞLU****Ekim 2018, 66 sayfa**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, kelime ve dil öğretiminde edebiyatın özellikle de kısa öykü kullanımının önemini ortaya koymuştur. Kısa öykünün öğrencilerin öğrenme tarz ve isteklerinde bir farklılık yaratmak yönünden birçok faydası bulunmaktadır. Araştırmacılar dil öğretiminde edebi türlerin uygun olduğunu fark etmiştir. Bu fikir beşinci sınıf öğrencilerinde dili öğretmek için kullanılan kısa öykü ile desteklenmiştir. Kısa öykü kelime bilgisi ve dil alanının öğrenilip, geliştirilmesinde öğrencilere yardımcı olmaktadır. Bununla birlikte kısa öykü, öğrencilerin düşünce dünyalarının, kültürel farkındalıklarının ve kişisel gelişimlerinin gelişmesinde pozitif etkileri vardır. Kısa öykü farklı ve özgün etkinlik sağlamada en iyi araçlardan biridir. Kısa öykünün bu faydalarından çalışmada bahsedilmiştir. Kısa öykünün öğrenmede heyecanlı bir sınıf ortamı yaratma gücü olduğu bu çalışma ile ortaya konulmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Edebiyat, Kısa Öykü, Kelime.

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## CHAPTER I

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This study questions the effectiveness of using literature in language institution and how short story promotes language acquisition and to improve knowledge of vocabulary. This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, limitations of the study and definition of terms.

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

Depending on my observations and students' expressions during my teaching practices, students perceive English as one of the difficult lessons. Instead of perceiving the language as a tool which dominates every aspect of life, they perceive it as a lesson in which most of them have difficulty (Sekmez, 2017).

From birth to death, the use of language takes different forms both verbally and in written form. For example; we use language to make daily interactions such as shopping, working, meeting our friends, express our feelings, listen to music and so on. Even though the use of language extensively dominates our daily lives, students are not aware of the given fact. They build a barrier between themselves and the language due to the lack of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation mistakes and hesitation in speaking. These are the commonly experienced difficulties in most of the classes. I believe that these difficulties arise from our education system in which we teach English by mainly focusing on the theoretical domain like Mathematics. That means the main focus in English teaching is to teach the perfect grammar and deal with the grammatical issues. However, Selinker (1972) states that learning a language is a developmental process and it is consisted of a lot of aspects that the learners should be trained on. Therefore, training the students only on the linguistic competence will not be enough to reach all the targets of teaching a second language such as communicative, pragmatic and socio linguistic competences. As students try to digest the structure of the language, they miss the other parts which become a huge problem and even hinder the language learning process.

Vygotsky (1978) puts forward that active engagement in social dialogs is important and culturally organized activities are the key terms for learning. Since

learning happens within the social interactions, the selection of teaching materials plays a great role to make them love and use the language and it also helps to transform language learning into an attractive journey. Vodickova (2009) states that, it is the task of teachers to motivate their students and make their lessons as interesting as possible, and that is why it is not enough to use good textbooks, but also some entertaining activities, which are based on supplementary materials to remove the barrier between the students and the language.

Teachers should motivate their students and create efficient teaching opportunities for them. Since students and teachers have mutual interaction during the lessons, teachers should lead them in a proper way to reach the intended goals. If we need to define a metaphor for teaching process, teaching can be seen as a single body whose parts are consisted of teachers, students and materials. Students have major part of this body, they build their own ways to learn and understand new items presented by the teacher while learning. Therefore, while presenting, as being the other major part, teachers must be careful with the selection of materials. If the materials are not convenient, the learners start to get bored and lose interest, so their motivation decreases. Therefore, a good foreign language teacher has to prepare the materials she/he will use while she/he is preparing his/her lesson plan. Also the teacher has to know how and when she/he will use those materials, because the more she/he uses these materials during the course, the better students concentrate on the lesson. The most important consideration is that the materials should meet our students' needs as Cunningsworth(1984) puts it: "Students particularly more sophisticated adults and teenagers need to feel that the materials from which they are learning have to be connected with the real world and at the same time they must be related positively to the aspects of their inner make up such as age, level of education, social attitudes, the intellectual ability and level of emotional maturity."(p. 71)

Firstly, students must be aware of the benefits of learning a language. They should be led in a way that they realize language is not only for getting high grades. They should notice the benefits of knowing language in their daily conversations, cultural knowledge and education. At this point, literature offers many opportunities for both teachers and learners. As Savvidou (2004) states, literature offers many benefits for teachers such as providing students with authentic and attractive materials to increase their attention level and increase the level of language input. In other words, literature is like a deep ocean and in this ocean, there are many chances of catching fish for the

students. Teachers should provide students with proper equipment to enable them grab the appropriate one easily. Teachers should not expect their students to catch a whale with a hand rot.

I defend in this study that short stories are one of the most effective tools to help students catch the fish in their own zone in the ocean. Short stories are not long and not complicated to deal with. Collie and Slater (1991) supports the given claim as short stories are not complicated for students to work with on their own and have a variety of choices for different interests and tasks. Therefore, when the students interact with literature, their learning process becomes more meaningful, appealing and enjoyable. Learners start to wonder, read and learn language inductively.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

As stated in the former part of the study, learning a language is solely perceived as learning the linguistic patterns. Lazar (1994) states that teachers have been of the opinion that bringing literature to language classroom is unnecessary. Based on this belief, teachers tend to present as many grammar rules as possible and then the evaluation process only deals with the memorization and use of the presented rules which dominates 1940s within the scope of behaviorism approach. Therefore the main idea is habit formation by exposing students some formulized grammar rules. Many instructors and teachers think that teaching of grammar and grammar rules leads to better learning. However, the only thing they learn is "S+V+O", and verbs.

Within the scope of this limited view, literature has not been considered as a useful teaching tool in the second language learning. There are lots of methods and approaches used in teaching a language and most of them do not include any literacy genres. Lazar (1994) states that teachers have been of the opinion that bringing literature to language classroom is unnecessary. The logic behind this idea is stated as an intensive work for teachers and alternative options of literary text available which makes the selection process hard and difficult for each student in the class. Therefore, teaching certain grammar rules accepted by the majority is easier and it lets teachers stay in their comfort zones. However, as for the students, there is no excitement, no entertainment and there is nothing intriguing. As a teacher researcher, I accept the importance of grammar in Turkish education system; however, there should be some effective means to make this traditional instruction more colorful. Short story can be

one of the effective solutions to encourage students and motivate them to learn language. Hişmanoğlu (2005) states that many teachers consider the use of literature in language teaching as an interesting and worthy concern. Short stories offer an entertaining atmosphere and learners have fun while learning. For these reasons, the benefits of literature and short-story in language learning should be clearly presented to the language teachers.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the benefits of using short stories to teach vocabulary and grammar rules. It also aims to present the enjoyment, motivation and positive contribution to the learning process of the students that short stories bring. Another aim of the study is to present the ways to implement short story in language learning.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Traditional methods and approaches form language teaching. Language course books and textbooks are written based on the current education system. However, most techniques in this system are related to behaviorism and grammar teaching approach which is proved to be useless for teaching all language skills. One effective method of teaching vocabulary, which involves both direct and indirect instruction, occurs within the context of literature and reading (Dole, Sloan, & Trathen, 1995). Therefore, the results of this research can present a clear way of using short stories in learning a language to improve the students' knowledge of vocabulary and knowledge of grammar. Literature can be one of the best ways to teach language. Because of its feature, literature gives many linguistic privileges to the learners of language and makes the tutor create an comprehension the goals that are established on the resources that have the strength to motivate the enthusiastic participation (Carter, & Long,1991 p.3). Literary genres can be chosen according to the level of the learners and age of the learners. In my experience, among these genres I observed that short story is one of the most appropriate one to teach a language. Therefore, the results of this study can provide teachers with some basic and easy ideas to make their lessons more effective, enjoyable and fun in a dialogical way.

### 1.5. Research Questions

In order to reach to the stated aims above, the research questions of the study are formed in a way that are presented below:

- How can short stories be implemented into teaching process to expand the vocabulary knowledge of language learners?
- What are the positive contributions of implementing short stories in language teaching?

### 1.6. Limitations of the Study

In this study, the researcher used questionnaire as a data-gathering tool. The study was conducted on fifth grade students. Therefore, the results cannot cover all levels in language learning. It was limited to 40 junior students of ELT. It was limited to the short stories chosen by the researcher.

### 1.7. Definitions of terms (literature, short-story, vocabulary)

**Literature:** Pieces of writing that are valued as works of arts, especially novels, plays, and poem (Hornby, 2005).

**Short Story:** A story, usually about imaginary characters and events, that is short enough to be read from beginning to end without stopping (Hornby, 2005).

**Vocabulary:** Hornby (1995; 1331) defines vocabulary as the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings.

## CHAPTER II

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

Literature has not been considered a useful teaching tool in the second language learning. From the nineteenth (19th) century to the late seventies (70's), there were a lot methods and approaches used in teaching language. For instance, The Grammar Translation Method was used in teaching language with translating texts from second language to the first language. Then, structuralism was used and generally it was thought that teaching second language was concerned with linguistics; it was dealing with the correctness of grammatical form. However; this teaching style was changed and many instructors realized that literature could be useful to improve knowledge of language and language teaching. Many instructors put opposing views against using literature for language teaching. Savvidou (2004) emphasized that there is a general perception that literature is particularly complex and inaccessible for the foreign language learner. The instructors believed that literature is a difficult language tool and makes language learning difficult. According to this thought, literature and literacy genres are not likely to be beneficial to improve language. This is because language learning should be structural and the grammar of the language is believed to be taught first. If you know the grammar rules of a language, it means you know the language. At this point, literature is an unnecessary language tool because it is not enough to teach language and it is difficult because of its complexity. For example, since one of our main goals as ESL teachers is to teach grammar of the language, literature due to its structural complexity and its unique use of language does little to contribute to this goal (Mckay, 1982, p. 529). This idea doesn't consider the learners' desires, thoughts, feelings and motivation. As a result of these beliefs, teachers have an attitude to teach the language by using grammar-based technique.

However, a language does not only include grammar rules, but also has many features such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. Without improving these skills, neither language production nor language comprehension would be possible. Grammar cannot merely do it alone, other solutions should be found as well. Literature can be one of the best solutions. Because in recent years, literature is generally seen that it has a great role to motivate the students and to raise knowledge of language. O'

Sullivan (1991) states that ‘ literature is beginning to be viewed as an appropriate vehicle for language learning and development since the focus is now on authentic language and authentic situations’ (p.2).

The students can analyze another element of language, (writing, speaking, listening and reading) thanks to literature which can attract learners with different and enjoyable learning styles. Literature is a rich source because of its genres: prose, novels, poems, plays, songs and short stories. They can be chosen according to the level and age of the students. Among these literary genres, short stories appear the most suitable one for fifth grade students due to its qualities. The use of short story enables students to have a chance to open a different world and to touch beyond the seen. Students have experience and can learn the world. Stories are dealing with daily life, experiences, feelings and memories. The short stories are not long and complicated to work. This quality is vital because the students can be bored easily while they are reading long stories, especially fifth grade students. The use of short story helps students enhance their vocabulary, knowledge of language, their language and also they can improve their critical thinking skills. Oster (1989, p.85) confirms that ‘Focusing on point of view in literature enlarges students’ vision and fosters critical thinking by dramatizing the various ways a situation can be seen’. According to Oster, when students read, they interact with the text. By interacting with the text, they interpret what they read. By interpreting what they read, they can work toward speaking English more creatively. The short stories also have different interests and thoughts, the students can infer something from the stories, ask some questions about a sentence or they can think about a word they read and they can find their own answers with specific attention. This is so important to improve their minds and skills. Lazar (1993, p.19) says “Literature is a particularly good source for developing students' abilities to infer meaning and to make interpretations. This is because literary texts are often rich in multiple levels of meaning, and demand that the reader/learner is actively involved in 'teasing out' the unstated implications and assumptions of the text”. Therefore, students can put forward an idea and develop their imagination and creativity. In brief the usage of short story promotes language acquisition. The short story is a rich literary genre in every aspect. Especially for young learners, it is very enjoyable. The student does not fear when they start to read because the short stories are short and can be understood easily.

The idea that short story is easy is supported by Collie and Slater (1991, p.196) as short stories are not complicated for students to work with on their own and have a variety of choices for different interests and tasks.

Appearance is very important for the students, appearance of length of the story affects the students' point of view. If the story is long to read, the students are afraid of reading and they do not want to begin. The students think that the story is boring and its complex due to its length and new words. But if the story is short, it offers the students a short voyage, in which they like.

## **2.2. Why Short Story?**

There are various literary genres that can be used in language teaching. However, the short story is considered to be the most suitable one to use in second language learning. The usage of short story in the classroom leads the learners to become better readers. Lubliner and Smetana (2005) state that 'Children with larger vocabularies find reading easier, read more widely and do better in school'(p.163). A rich vocabulary level helps the students improve their language skills. While reading the story, the students feel like there is something they have to complete like an adventure. The short story makes a connection between students and the world outside of the school. Kaya (2004) emphasizes that literary works such as short stories give place universal themes such as affairs of heart or relationships among people although school books don't include such subjects. The students read and find some common points in their lives. They improve their ability to criticize the events and they can infer some points from the passage and they can understand the key phrase as if to solve the code and then they feel like they complete the adventure. It is so satisfying for the students. The short story don't take longer time because its short but that doesn't mean the words and the characters in the story are limited. Lazar (1994) states that '...many teachers often have very limited time in which to complete a syllabus, and consider including literary texts in the lesson an unnecessary and time-wasting distraction, while students themselves frequently lack the interest and motivation to work with such texts'(p.116). The short story may finish in one class because it doesn't take longer time as the long story. The short story gives the learners enough time to imagine. They take them high and further. They feel a pleasure of finishing a story. The students are eager to finish a story because it is a crucial for them. If the reading text is difficult for them, they can

easily get bored and give up before the end of the story. So they would feel discouraged and disappointed. However, the researcher observed what happens when they finish a story, they feel wonderful and an exciting feeling comes at the end. They feel proud of themselves and feel that they have accomplished something. We can call it "pleasure of finishing". That's a great feeling; it is a feeling of accomplishment. While students read the story, they should be encouraged to continue reading. Elliot (1990) 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 indicates that importance of developing students' competence in literature by reading.

The short story is a voice among the papers. The learners hear something in the papers. The words and sentences invite them to the world of story. Each word in the story is light in order to discover what is going on in the story. They express their thoughts and feelings what they discover and believe. For especially young learners, curiosity and escapist are the key words to learn. According to Phillips (1993), if the learning is enjoyable, then it can be memorable (p.8). They all want to feel curiosity, excitement and they all want to see similarities and differences between their own language, culture and the target language and its culture. The learner's desire is combined to see, hear and consider. They want to be surprised, challenged, and they want to fail and succeed. They want to have an experience because they are young. The short story summarizes the entire language and culture in the story, which is easy for the students. When they start reading a short story, they try to understand the text and they wonder to find what happens in the other pages. They encounter the character and share their characteristics, as emotional and intellectual. Short story creates an inner world in the learners. They start to talk to themselves to understand what they read and predict what's next. Canagrajah (1991, p.176) states that learners should learn "to use English not mechanically and diffidently but creativity and critically". Short story teaching does not only develop critical thinking and improve cultural awareness. Therefore, short stories offer so much richness to teach language.

In addition, a short story teaches moral lesson in a simple way. This is important to understand themes. Each of the story has a theme which is generally universal. The universal theme sometimes gives moral lesson. The learners realize every story has a moral lesson. Saka (2014, p.18) emphasizes that short story brings learners a different perspective to understand life through creating empathy between the text and readers'

own life and culture. These similarities take them close to the language. For instance, the students in this study read the story of "Pied Piper of Hamelin". At the end of the story, students learnt a lesson; that is "always keep your promise". They didn't learn only the meaning of keep or promise as a word, they also took a lesson from the story. They discovered not only lexical meaning of these words but also literary meaning of these words. Hence, language learning becomes more enjoyable and productive. Because it provides the long term learning and these words become unforgettable.

### **2.3. Usage of Short-Story in Vocabulary Development**

In language teaching, vocabulary plays a crucial role. Language learning doesn't work without vocabulary. Khatip (2005, p.203) states that vocabulary learning is a significant part of language learning. Vocabulary learning is an essential part in second language learning. It is also one of the main parts to language teaching. Harmon, Wood, & Keser (2009, p.60) state that learners' vocabulary development is an important aspect of their language development. Students can communicate and improve their skills in the language, thanks to vocabulary. Knowledge of vocabulary is one of the major parts of the language. Students express all their thoughts and feelings by using vocabulary.

Harmer (1991, p. 153) emphasizes, "if language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh". There are many methods and techniques to teach vocabulary but teachers should find the most appealing, easiest and enjoyable way to teach vocabulary. But according to the others, it can be inferred that learning vocabulary can be problematic. Because finding an appropriate way to teach vocabulary is the main issue so if it is not provided, it becomes problematic. Teachers should teach how vocabulary is important while learning language. Without vocabulary, the students can not express their ideas and feelings. They can not read, speak, listen and write and also they can not make contact with anyone. Moreover, they can not understand the messages. This idea is supported by Rivers in (1991, p.117) states that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary, we will be unable to use the structures and functions that we may have learned for comprehensible communication. Therefore, if the students don't improve their vocabulary, they are not able to develop their language learning. Nation (2001) also indicates the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary knowledge of

vocabulary enables language use and conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary is the first part that can be kept in the mind for the students. The students feel that they need to have a store of words to speak or write. They firstly need to vocabulary to speak not grammar. Wilkins (1972) states that ‘ There is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentences if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say...While without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed’ (p. 111). Teaching vocabulary is one of the most difficult parts of teaching second language. It is not possible to learn a language without vocabulary. This idea is supported by Thornburry (2002), according to him, teaching word is a crucial aspect in learning a language as languages are based on words. The teacher should find the appropriate technique to gain successful results. Students realize that vocabulary is new and different topic from their own language, they want to understand their meanings not only memorizing. During the teaching process, some problems can be occurred if an appropriate method is not found. The teacher tries to find how to teach new vocabularies and also the students try to understand new concepts. If there is no balance between teaching and learning, problems become inevitable. Modern techniques should be used to make the lesson interesting and to create a joyful learning process in the classroom because vocabulary is a new concept and different from their own language. They want to make a connection between these two languages so this connection should be provided. On the other hand, some researchers assert that vocabulary includes two kinds; one of them is passive vocabulary and the other one is active vocabulary. The first one is taught and the students can use these words. The other one is recognized by the students but they may not pronounce. Hatch and Brown (1995) state that these two kinds of vocabulary are named as receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary is like passive, it can be understood but the students can not use in their speech. On the other hand, productive vocabulary is like active vocabulary. The students can understand and use in speaking. Also this idea is supported by Stuart Webb (2005), the learners can use the words to express their ideas so productive vocabulary can be identified as an active vocabulary. Both of them are so significant. But in order to understand the language, vocabulary should be recognized and then the learner should express their ideas. Active process plays a great role to obtain the language in every aspects, that means the students should learn the meaning and form of vocabulary. Learning vocabulary should be practiced and revised to remember. The teacher should

find the most appropriate technique to teach vocabulary. There are so many techniques to teach vocabulary. One of these techniques is short story. Short story is beneficial to create a good atmosphere in the classroom activities. It can be thought that the use of short story is not a good way to enhance vocabulary because it can be difficult because there are lots of many new words. However, there are many stories, which are suitable for every age. While students express their thoughts and emotions, they use words, so vocabulary is the most important element in teaching language. However, learning vocabulary is not easy for young learners. According to them, learning vocabulary is difficult and boring stage so they think that English is not easy to understand and speak. The reason of this idea is there is lack of knowledge of vocabulary. Their vocabulary level is weak. Short story can be used to improve student's vocabulary achievement. As teachers are presenting new words in the story, they should be careful about all aspects of vocabulary. Since these words are totally different from their first language. They have difficulty in learning new concepts. They want to build the new concepts in their minds. As learning new words, they start to use words effectively. Nance (2010, p.8) agrees with this idea and indicates that "developing the skill and habit of literary reading enables and encourages continues language use, helping all students to maintain and improve their skills even after their formal language study ends.

When students learn new words, they are generally expected to learn the new words in way of memorization and translation. However, the students can easily forget these new words by these techniques. In this way, the students start to put prejudices about learning vocabulary because this technique includes each of the words is written again and again, ten times or twenty times. It is so boring and unnecessary. Students can not contribute anything to themselves, and it causes them to lose their motivation. When they read a story, they learn new words and concepts by their own efforts. They give all attention to learn these new words. This is because, without vocabulary, they don't understand the story. Vocabulary learning should be transformed from boring to enjoyable classroom activity. In this way, they start to feel good with teachings and they don't lose their excitement and motivation. In order to create this atmosphere, short story can be very beneficial alternative. Hişmanoğlu (2005) states that "...the use of a short story seems to be very helpful technique in today's foreign language classes. As it is short, it makes the students' reading task and the teacher's coverage easier" (p.62). There are lots of activities and these activities transforms the lesson into a theme park. To create a theme park, a playful environment, teachers should find authentic materials

to enrich the learners' knowledge of vocabulary. If short stories make it possible, it can take them to a higher level of vocabulary and develop their competence. This is because reading is an essential way to develop learners' level of vocabulary and their skills. As they read the story, they realize how their knowledge vocabulary improves. Therefore, the teacher should find an interesting and enjoyable story in order to have children's attention to create successful reading process. If the story is selected according to student's desires, they learn the vocabulary of the target language by enjoying. The learners will start to recognize the importance of vocabulary. They can see the similarities and differences between the target language and their first language. Carter and Long (1991, pp. 2-4) indicate the importance of using literature "Literature enables students to understand and appreciate other cultures, societies and ideologies which are different from their own. It encourages personal growth and intellectual development. Students can learn universal values and aware of their own culture and other cultures. These are necessary for communication in target language.

Vocabulary learning is one of the most significant parts of language acquisition. Teaching new words is one of the first steps for further development of the language level of learners. With development of vocabulary provides the learners discover the properties of the target language through a great variety of new words. Allen (1983, p.03) emphasized the importance of vocabulary "lexical problems frequently interfere with communication. Communication breaks down when people do not use the most important stage of language acquisition. Vocabulary is not seen as a subject to learn according to learners, they try to learn in a normal class session, while reading or writing is done. Generally, vocabulary learning is taught by a list of new words with meanings without thinking. Students learn the new words directly; they don't try to predict the new concepts from any reading context. They write these words constantly without realizing the real meaning of them and how they are used in context. They see only the translation of the word into their native language. They try to learn vocabulary by memorizing. In this way, they learn the vocabulary but they don't know how to use it in a sentence or during conversation. Thus, they should know the real meaning of the words to use in communication. Nation (1991, p.6)states that "learning new words is a cumulative process, with words enriched and established as they are met again".

There are lots of methods and techniques for improving vocabularies of learners. Words can be learned through short story. New words can be given in a sentence directly or the words can be discussed before reading. Also, word games can be

prepared and it encourages the learners. After they feel ready to read the story, they start reading. Reading is an essential part because without reading, they cannot enrich their vocabulary. They can ask questions, make comments about characters, predict the next parts and they can discuss each other. For all of these, they need to use vocabulary.

The usage of short story is a good way to teach vocabulary. The teacher can find lots of activities, which students can communicate with. Learners can personalize the meaning of the word. Ghosn (2002) states that "...literature can contribute to language learning. It presents natural language at its finest, and can thus foster vocabulary development in context" (p.173). When students learn new words, they want to think and make a connection between the word and the theme.

For instance, my students learnt a phrase "keep your promise". They firstly tried to find the meaning of the phrase through sentences and then what it means to them individually. It can be said that using short story to teach vocabulary is effective and helpful.

#### **2.4. The Benefits of Using Short Story**

There are various literary genres that can be used in language teaching. However, the short story is considered to be the most suitable genre to use in second language learning. Povey (1967) emphasized the importance of this idea; containing real examples of grammatical structures and vocabulary items, the literary texts raises learners' awareness of the range of the target language and advance their competence in all languages. It is the most suitable and enjoyable literary genre. The use of short story helps the learner's language skills, knowledge of vocabulary, their cultural information and thinking abilities. Murdoch emphasized that (2002, p.9) " short stories can be selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency. According to this idea, short stories have a significant role to develop language skills. Short story has an important role in improving reading comprehension. Reading short story leads the learners to become better readers. Short story creates an atmosphere, which provides class discussions. It is also mentioned by Hismanoglu (2005) class discussions about the story will help students to think critically. Reading can be seen as complex. It occurs between the learners and the text. Grabe (1991) describes Goodman's perception of reading as an interaction between the reader and the text, which requires efficient

knowledge of world, topic and the language. When the learner reads a story, they are faced with many characters; incidents and they can interpret what they understand. During reading process, students can take notes, predict and write the new words. They try to find the meaning of these words by themselves. They don't want to learn the lexical meaning of the new words; they want to discover the literal meanings by interpreting what they read. O' Sullivan (1991) states that "literature generates creativity in language and imagination and should feature in any education system that regards discovery and enjoyment as essential components of the learning process" (p.4). They construct images, which deals with the words in their mind. They find their own strategies. After finding their way, they try to complete their story. They should pay attention to what they read to perceive the meaning otherwise they only read sentences and it is called as a reading unconsciously. They will have completed the story without learning anything. To achieve effective and enjoyable reading, it is important to use appropriate material. Short story has enough power to succeed.

Short story also creates efficient writing activities to develop students' writing skills. They can write their opinions about characters or situations. They have an opportunity to develop the voices of different characters and they learn how to express themselves while writing. According to Oster (1989), writing activities and literature help students to write more with creativity (p.85). Writing is not an easy skill due to its contents. It includes grammar, vocabulary, spelling rules. Therefore, most of the students have difficulty in writing. Heaton (1988) supported this idea by his view; teaching writing is not easy because it does not only require teaching grammatical and rhetorical devices but also conceptual and judgmental elements. Because of these reasons, students get bored in writing activities. In writing, the teacher should select a material, which doesn't bother the students and assert what they write. In young learners, genre, which is so intensive, shouldn't be selected. Short story is the most convenient one for it. They can analyze the story easily and then write their thoughts. They can create some questions about the character or themes. For instance, think about the main character of the story or what do you think about the main character of the story. These are the questions, which they can understand, analyze and write. It is understood that short story helps the learners to improve their writing skills.

Short story contributes a crucial effect in listening and speaking skills. According to Helgesen (2003), listening is an active, purposeful process of making sense of what we hear. Listening is an active skill. It differs from hearing. In listening,

there is a reception consciously what the speaker says, the listener pays attention to understand the message. By selecting the right listening material, students comprehend the listening text eagerly. Short story creates lots of listening activities. Listening activities enable students to understand the story. There is an example to listening activity called "bingo". It can be used for short - story activity. Words in the story are written on the board and students choose some words to write their papers. Then, they listen to the story and circle their word if they have got the word. When they find all the words, they can complete the activity and they shout "bingo". It can be pre-reading activity. This is so enjoyable for young learners. It is an effective activity for listening through short story for the students. Nicholas, Rossiter & Abbot (2011) states that "telling and listening to personal stories provided opportunities not only for enhanced language learning, an understanding of genre, and the creation of a new English-speaking community" (p.263).

The short story improves speaking skills as well. Students have problems to produce meaningful sentences in target language. Short story is an important source for teaching speaking. While they read aloud, they can develop their speaking skills. For instance, a topic is chosen from the story for speaking activity. They can express their ideas for the topic. Raising curiosity for speaking is a crucial point for the learners. Another way to rise the speaking after the story is role-play. After reading the story, they can choose their character from the story to act. Elliot (1990) mentions that it is necessary for students to need feel involved in the target language as a native speaker. They become which character they want. Then they start to think about the characters they want to act. They create a conversation between them without thinking about mistakes. Most of them feel shy or scared to speak. During the class session, they can read and write something but when it comes to speaking, they don't want to speak or they speak hesitantly. However, short story motivates the children to speak. A play enables the children on understanding of the power of language. They learn how to tell a story or act and organize the play. To assign a role improves the children's communicational and conversational skills. While acting a story, they are encouraged to listen and say the characters' speech. As they repeat, their ability of speaking is getting better. By this way, they improve their understanding of the words. Acting motivates the learners. It takes the learners monotony atmosphere of the boring class. They can discuss their roles, learn what they do and say. It is such a motivating way to learn speaking.

The short story is also very powerful to indicate cultures. The short story gives information about people, customs and traditions. The culture has an important role in personal development. The students realize the differences and similarities and they start to understand other people. Carter and Long (1991, p. 24) indicates the importance of using short story "literature enables students to understand and appreciate other cultures, societies and ideologies different from their own, it encourages personal growth and intellectual development. Students can learn universal values and be aware of their own cultures and other cultures.

The short story leads the students to think more critically and deeply. After each story, the students get better and they can analyze what they read and make comments about the events and characters. Howie (1993) indicates that the use of short stories to improve critical thinking by saying; everyone needs to make judgments, be decisive, come to conclusions, synthesize information, organize, evaluate, predict and apply knowledge (p. 24). This statement shows that short story improves the students' critical thinking. The short story is a motivating strategy to teach language.

## **2.5. How to Select Suitable Short Story**

The short story selection is one of the most important part in this teaching. The lengths of the story and clarity have a great role. The shortness of story is significant because it is easy to read for students. Also, content of the story is determined by the student's level. Vocabulary and sentence - structure of the short story should not be complex and challenging. The short story is suitable for the student to understand because when they understand what they read and infer from some ideas from the story, they feel good. If the sentences are long and difficult for students, they don't want to read and they get bored. Therefore, while the short story is selected, this must be student-centered. Hill (1994, p.15), stated that "the needs and abilities of the students, the linguistic and stylistic level of the text, the amount of background information required for a true appreciation of the material. While choosing a suitable story, these criteria's should be considered.

## CHAPTER III

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This study aims to investigate the implementation of literature, especially short stories, into language teaching and how they promote language learning in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Here under this chapter, the participants, research design, data collection tools and data analysis procedures that applied in the study will be presented.

#### 3.2. Settings and Participants

The study, which is conducted at Amerikan Kültür Koleji in Gaziantep, takes place in the first semester of fall 2017-2018 academic year. Even if the students come from different cities, the majority of the students are locals of Gaziantep.

The participants of the study are enrolled at this institution and at the age of 11. They attend classes from 9.40am.to 17.30pm. lasting about 50 minutes. They take 16 hours of English lessons which are including grammar and the skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking lessons shared by two English teachers per week. The participants are required to have two exams that include grammar and skills part each term.

The main aim of the lessons is to improve their vocabulary, speaking, writing, listening and reading skills besides grammar. At the beginning of the research, the participants were informed about the aim and the procedures of the study. In the beginning, they didn't want to participate when the students heard this research included reading short story, they thought that reading a story was difficult and complex. Also they thought it would be boring. Even though their views about reading a story, the students were relieved and they volunteered when the students were given chances to read enjoyable short stories. The stories were chosen according to the age and language level of the students. The students would make a connection with their life and their interests. Besides this connection, the shortness of the text was vital for the students to read, understand and finish. The very long sentences are not easy for the students to understand. While choosing the story, the researcher should decide the readability of the story. In order to find the correct story, graded or simplified stories can be read.

According to Ur (1996), "... the use of authentic text with less proficient learners is often frustrating and counter-productive" (p. 150). Therefore; the simplified stories can be suggested for the students because of their age and language level. The stories studied were as follows and these stories were decided to these criteria:

- Ø The Pied Piper of Hamelin by Robert Browning
- Ø Bed and Breakfast by Stephan Speight
- Ø Animal Stories by Sharon Hurst

40 fifth grade students with the average of 11 years, 25 males and 15 females, are volunteered to participate in the research. Therefore, convenience sampling, which is defined by Fraenkel, Norman, and Hyun (2012) as "a group of individuals who (conveniently) are available for study" (p.99), has been used in the study because the researcher is also the main course teacher. Since the study uses teacher as a researcher method, observing and getting honest feedback from the students are more reliable with convenience sampling.

### **3.3. Instruments**

Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods are used in the study to gather reliable data. Different tools, which are presented below under different subtitles, are used throughout the study. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) qualitative research methods such as participant-observation, unstructured interviews, direct observation, describing records are most commonly used for collecting data. Bryman (2012) identified quantitative research as, "A research strategy that emphasizes quantification in the collecting and analysis of data..." (p. 35).

#### **3.3.1. Three-Point Likert Scale Questionnaire**

For quantitative data collection, three point likert scale questionnaire, which was taken from the study carried out by SAKA (2014) ,is employed in this study. The participants are given a questionnaire consisting of 9 questions to find out their attitudes towards literature and short stories. The items in the questionnaire are translated into Turkish to get clearer answers from the students participating in the study basing on

their age. Questionnaire is given to the students in the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the study (See Appendix D, E).

For the validity and reliability, non-related items are carefully taken out and both adapted and original version of the questionnaire have been given to other researchers to sustain the validity and reliability. The translated version of the questionnaire have also been proof-read and crosschecked by other researchers.

### **3.3.2. Teacher's Notes**

Teacher's notes are used as an in-class tool to observe their progress of learning and how the implantation of short stories works in the classroom during the research. Since the researcher as the teacher of the class inside classroom herself, it made her see the results easier and clearer. During the beginning or at the end of the lessons students are asked unstructured reflective questions about short stories and their answers are recorded by the teacher. In addition to deliberately asked questions, students' verbal feedback on each others' work or the activity in general are also noted down.

As for the reliability and validity perspective, the collected data have been weekly discussed with other researchers to gain a wider perspective about the given comments by the participants.

### **3.3.3. Semi-Structured Interview**

The third data was interview which was employed to confirm the quantitative findings. It was used at the end of the study. Five questions were asked to the students to learn their thoughts about reading stories. Each interview took 6 minutes.

To keep the validity and reliability, the given questions in the interview have been presented to other researchers to ask for their ideas and suggestions. The interviews held in Turkish to provide the participants with a non-threatening and relax environment to get more reliable results.(See Appendix D, E).

### **3.3.4. Pre and Post Tests**

The fourth and last data collection instruments pre-test and post-test are used to show how short story improved the students' level of language. In order to indicate the difference between pre-existing knowledge and the knowledge they acquired after reading stories.

### **3.4. Research Design**

This mixed design descriptive study employs both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools in order to increase the validity and reliability of the gathered data. The study is claimed to be descriptive because Fraenkel, Norman and Hyun (2012) state that descriptive qualitative study is a “research to describe existing conditions without analyzing relationships among variables” (p. 691). Naturally, the study also gives the clues of students’ about the use of short stories in the classroom regardless of the relationships between the variables.

The qualitative research methods are preferred to integrate into the research basing on the fact that qualitative data in education mainly presents the meaning and understanding of the learning situation and personal reflections of participants (Merriam, 2009) and this kind of research mainly deals with understanding situations and events from the viewpoint of the participants (Fraenkel, Norman & Hyun, 2012). As an outsider (researcher), semi-structured interview questions are used to gather data.

In quantitative research, the focus is on the representation of the observable change or the differences through the systematic, statistical techniques (Given, 2008). Since data is consisted of numbers and statistics, the analyzed results can be generalized to a larger context (Fraenkel, Norman & Hyun, 2011). This type of research is preferred in order to find out the relation between the variables, which are short stories classrooms and learning process of the students.

### **3.5. Data Collection Procedure**

The study investigates the benefits of implementing short story for the fifth grade students in a language classroom. This study has lasted for 6 weeks at a secondary school in Gaziantep. Firstly, in the introduction part the students are provided with information about the research. The researcher has given the questionnaire at the end of the research.

Because of their age and level, during the questionnaire, the researcher has helped the students understand the questions and answer the questions. Also, the researcher kept an observation diary. After the participants finished each of the stories, the researcher wrote her comments about their behavior. These comments and the answers of the interview were analyzed. Moreover, pre-test was made to discover the level of students and then post-test was carried to find out how they improved their

English. At the end of the research, the interview is used to learn if they were satisfied with their improvement in English or not.

### **3.6. Data Analysis Procedure**

During six weeks, analysis of data was formed depending on the reflections of the students about the questions that are given in the questionnaire. After they finished the entire story, the researcher gave a questionnaire to find out their thoughts about reading short story and whether it was a good technique or not. The questionnaire included three options, these were "agree, disagree, and neither". The participants chose the option that fits their thoughts. Then the results were presented in nine different graphs. Moreover, the researcher wrote her own observations in the observation part. The researcher analyzed the participants' behavior, improvement and thoughts.

On the other hand, in this study pre-test and post-test were used to gather data about the students' knowledge of language. These tests helped to present the progress of improvement of the participants.

First of all, the participants were given a pre-test to test their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Then, the participants in the experimental group used short stories as a material to improve their knowledge. After each story, the participants noted down the unknown words and then they tried to guess the meanings from the context of the story. At the end of each story, learners were given a test to evaluate their level of comprehension and knowledge of vocabulary. Finally, at the end of this process, the participants were given a post-test to examine their development.

The participants in the control group were taught by using traditional methods. They learnt the new words by looking up in a dictionary. At the end of the process, they were given a post-test to show their improvements.

## CHAPTER IV

### 4. FINDINGS

Within the scope of this study, a questionnaire consisting of 9 questions are asked to 20 participants. The results of each item are shown in graphs in the following pages. To support the obtained data, researcher's comments will be shared under observation subtitle. As for triangulation, statistic data obtained via pre and post tests will be presented. During the evaluation process of the data tested basing on Mann Whitney U Test. The Mann Whitney U Test is a non-parametric alternative test to analyze the independent sample t-test. It is a parametric test that is used to compare two sample means that come from the same population. A popular non parametric test to compare outcomes between two independent groups is the Mann Whitney U test. The Mann Whitney U Test, sometimes called the Mann Whitney Wilcoxon Test or the Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test, is used to test whether two samples are likely to derive from the same population. The Mann-Whitney U test can be used to answer the questions of the researcher concerning the difference between the groups. This test has the great advantage of possibly being used for small samples of subjects (five to 20 participants). The results of the pre-test and post-test are seen in below;

#### 4.1. Results of the Pre-Test and Post-Test

Table 1.

*The group in the study; Pre-test and Post-test, Mean and Standard Deviation Values.*

	<b>Experimental</b>			<b>Control</b>		
	<b>N</b>	$\bar{X}$	<b>Ss</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{X}$	<b>Ss</b>
<b>Pre test</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>55.25</b>	<b>4.72</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>34.75</b>	<b>4.43</b>
<b>Post test</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>86.75</b>	<b>6.54</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47.75</b>	<b>6.38</b>

Table 2.

*The groups - in the study; Mann-Whitney U Test Results for Pre-test.*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>of U</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Pre Test</b>	<b>Experimental</b>	20	30.50	610	210	-	0.000***
	<b>Control</b>	20	10.50	210			

(\*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001)

Table 3.

*The groups in the study; Mann-Whitney U Test Results for Post-test.*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>of U</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Post</b>	<b>Experimental</b>	20	30.50	610	210	-	0.000***
	<b>Control</b>	20	10.50	210			
<b>Test</b>						5.492	

(\*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001)

Table 4.

*The students who were in Experimental Group; Wilcoxon Matched-Pair Analysis Test Results for Pre-test and Post-test.*

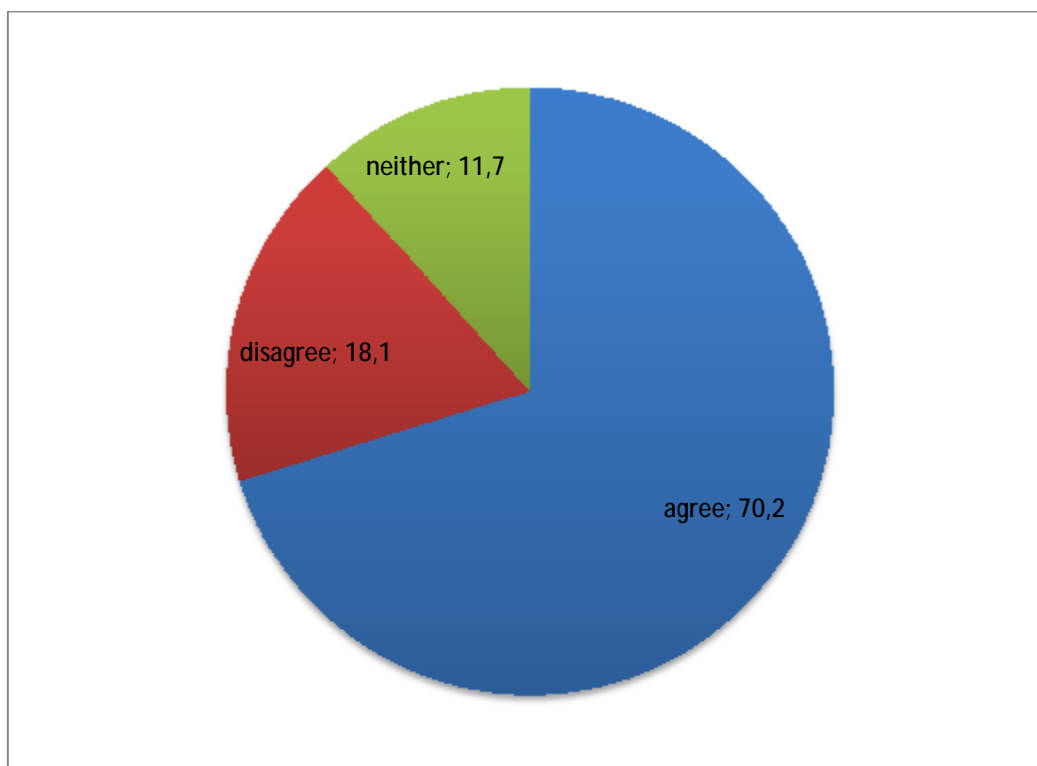
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>Total of</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>p</b>
Negative	0	0	0	-3.982	0.000**
Positive Rank	20	10.50	210		
Equal	0				
Total	20				

(\*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001)

The results of the data analysis indicate that there is a significant difference between the two groups. Pre-test and Post-test are employed to find out whether the implementation of short story improves the students' vocabulary and grammar learning or not. As it is seen in the tables, both groups have improvements but the experimental group shows a statically higher success. Since the results of the test are statistically significant, short stories can be claimed to be useful in the context of the study. The items and their result are given in gaps below.

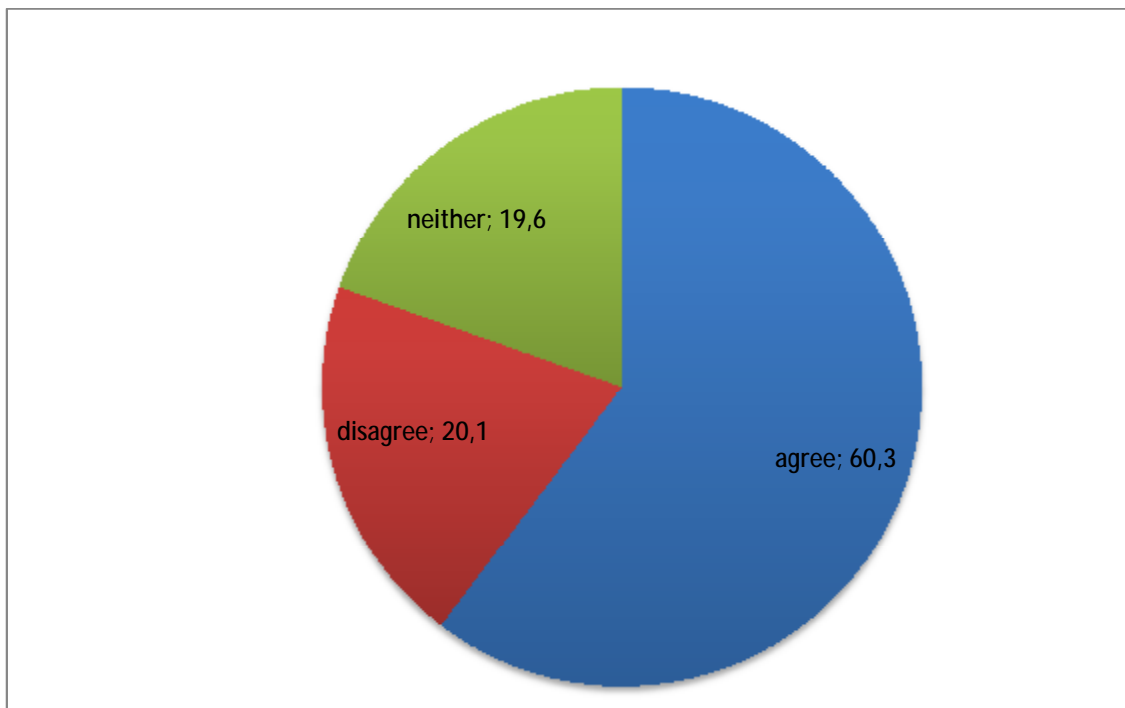
## 4.2. The Results of Questionnaire

### QUESTION 1



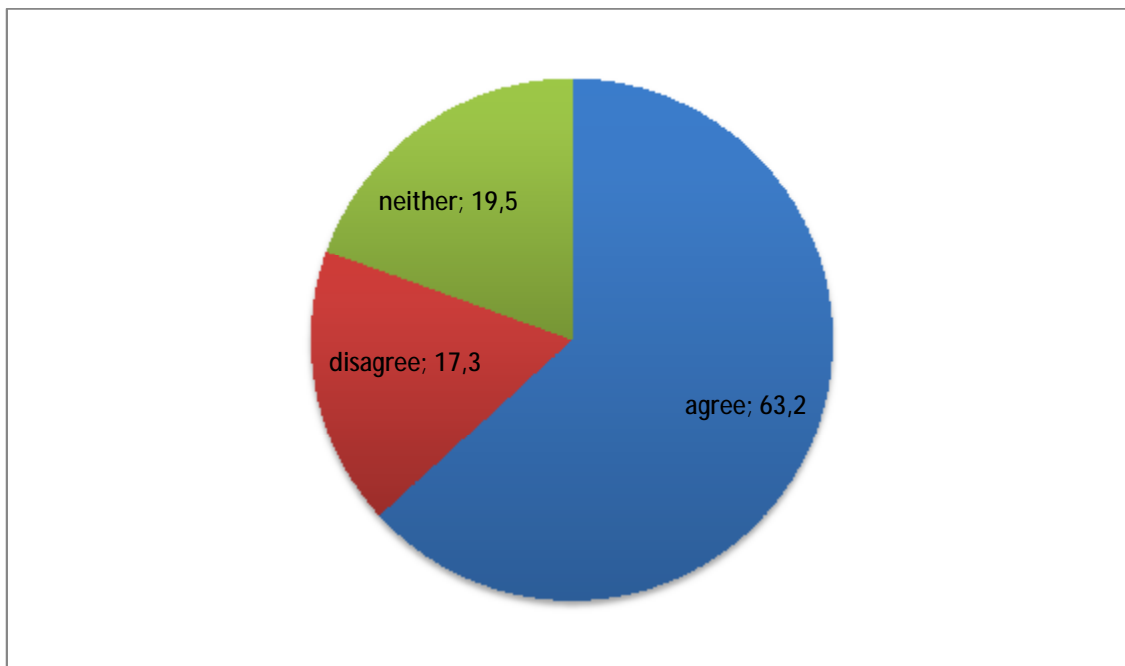
*Graph 1.* Short story is an enjoyable material.

**Graph 1:** In the first question, participants are asked for their opinions towards short stories. In the graphic, 70.2% of the students agreed with the statement that short stories are fun and 18.1% of the students disagreed with the statement and 11.7% of the students selected neither agree nor disagree. It is obvious that most of the students agreed with this statement. The short story creates a motivating atmosphere in the class. While they are reading a story, they want to discover new people, culture and events. It makes them excited to learn because curiosity comes out. The curiosity is an important element to take the students' attention in the class. If they wonder what they learn, they want to learn. Otherwise, they do not want to learn anything. Short stories provide the curiosity and they enjoy while reading. The short story can be helpful for relaxation while enjoying. While they read together, they really have fun.

**QUESTION 2**

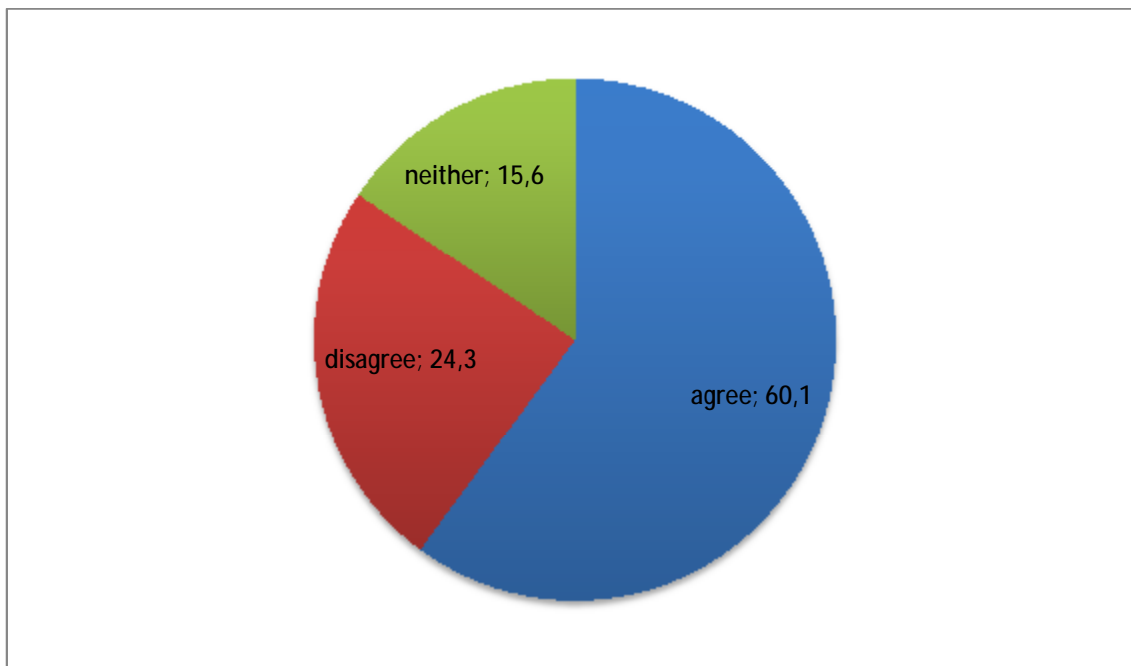
Graph 2. Implementation of short stories provides better understanding.

**Graph 2:** In the second question the participants are asked if short stories help them to get a better understanding of the language. It is seen that 60.3% of the class agreed to the idea, 20.1% of the students disagreed with the idea and 19.6% of the students chose neither agree nor disagree option. Thanks to the implementation of short stories, the students discovered that the language is not only consisted of grammar and rules. At the beginning, all the students used to think that a language is only consisted of technical rules. They are always exposed to grammar-based teaching and they think that if they learn the structure of the language, language learning is finished. However, they recognize the other areas of the language and they start to understand the presence of a language. The researchers who investigate the use of short stories found the similar results. One of them is Saka's research. The researcher asked the students if reading short stories provides readers with a better understanding. 51.4% of the participants believes that it provides with a better understanding. It is clearly understood that the short story helps the students a better understanding of a language.

**QUESTION 3**

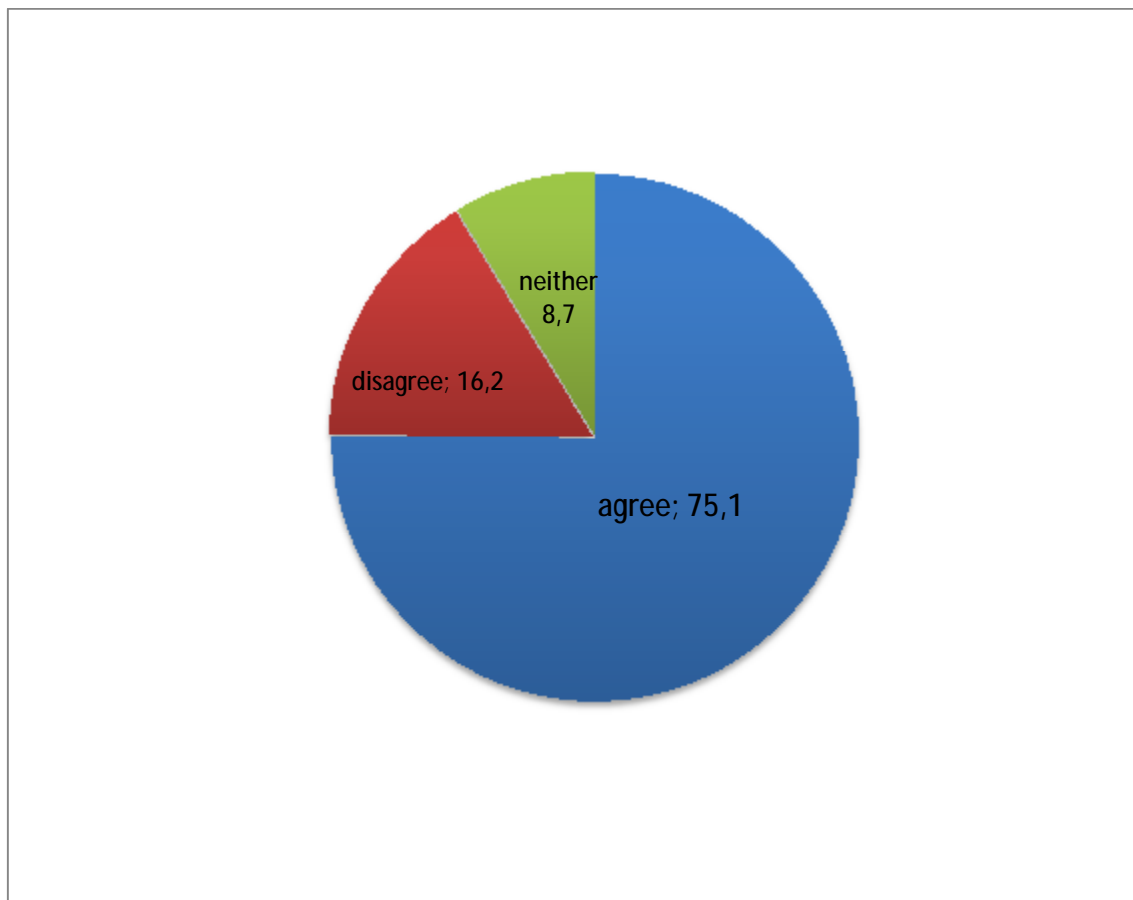
*Graph 3.* Short story improves language skills

**Graph 3:** In the third question, the students are asked if the implementation of short story helped them to improve their language skills. It is seen that 63.2% of the students agree with the idea, 17.3% of the students disagreed with the idea and 19.5% of the students neither agree nor disagree. It is understood that students improve their language skills by using short story. The old techniques in language teaching do not give any opportunity to improve the students' language skills. They do not believe themselves they can write or speak because there is no chance to show their ability. With reading short story, they realized their potential in using language. Each student has lots of opportunities to practice skills. They can produce what they understand.

**QUESTION 4**

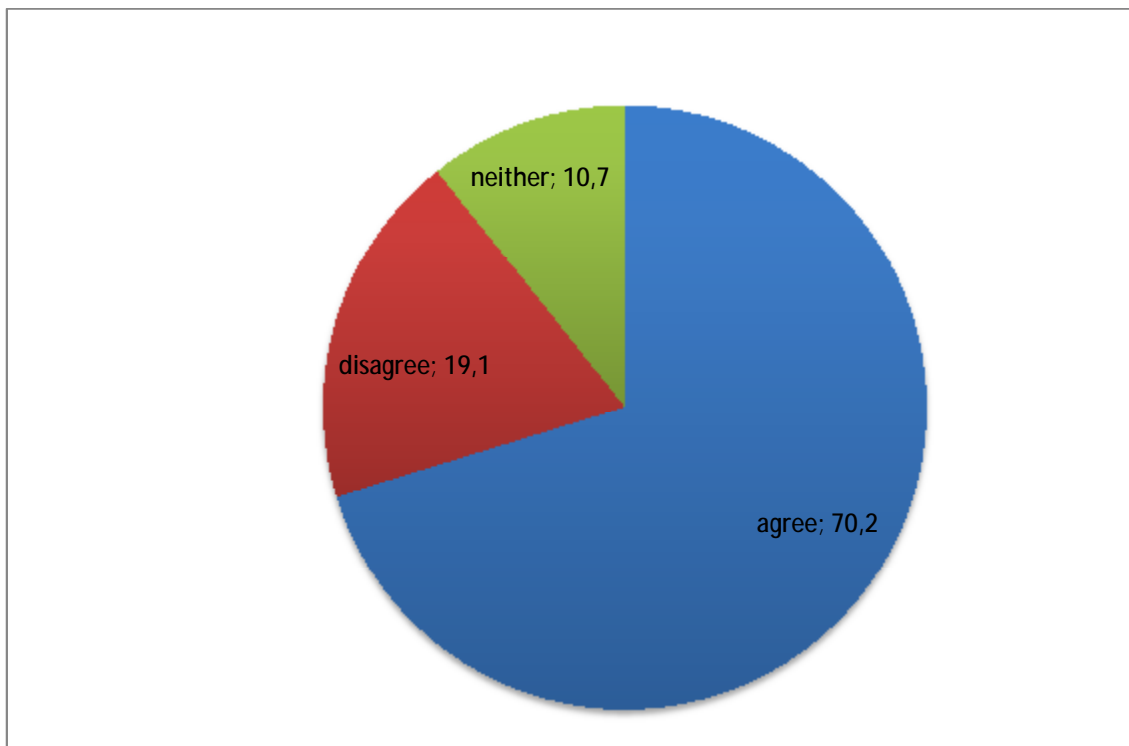
*Graph 4.* Short story improves language learning

**Graph 4:** In the fourth question, the students are asked if the short story has benefits for language learning. 60.1% of the class agreed with this idea and 24.3 disagreed and 19.5 neither agree nor disagree. It is understood that the short story is a rich source to acquisition of the language. The short story has lots of activities which are helpful to practice language in every area. They can improve their knowledge of grammar and ability of language. The short story creates an authentic atmosphere for the students. To improve language learning, we need real-life practice. Sometimes when the students learn a topic in Maths, most of them question the real life use of it. However, when the same question is asked for language learning, the answer is so simple; that is for your life. Because the language is an integral part of our life. In every area of life, all of us use a language and each language has some functions, not only technical but also literal. The short story enables the student to learn these functions of a language.

**QUESTION 5**

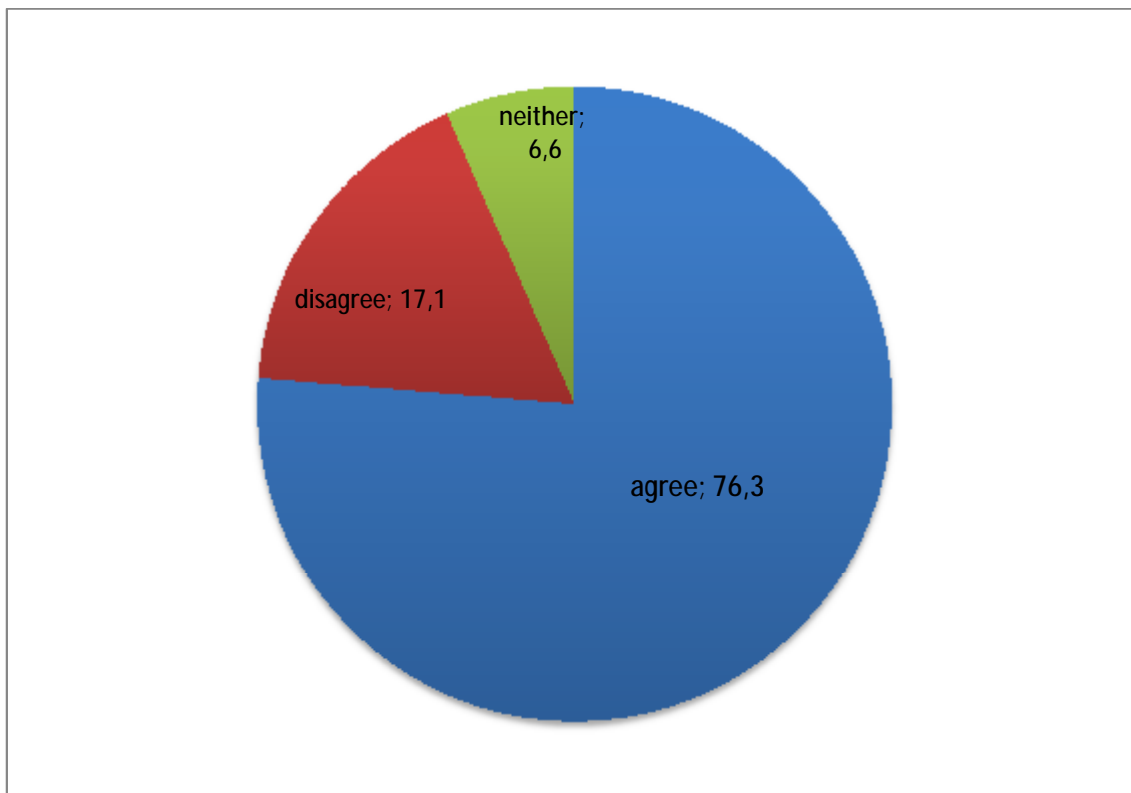
*Graph 5. Short story develops personal growth*

**Graph 5:** When the students are asked if short story improves personal growth, 75.1% agreed with the idea and 16.2% disagreed. The ratios of the students who were neither agreed nor disagree were 8.7%. It is clearly understood that most of the students think short story is beneficial for developing personal growth. When the students compared their former situation and the current situation, they could understand how they improved themselves as a person. They attend lots of activities during the reading sessions and they build their self-confidence. After completing their story, they feel an achievement of success and this raises their confidence. Short story also lets students gain positive self-development. The short story is one of the most effective ways to add wisdom, vision, and personal awareness in the students' life. The students realized the differences in themselves after reading stories. They are more sensitive and they are more considerate. These are valuable features in personality.

**QUESTION 6**

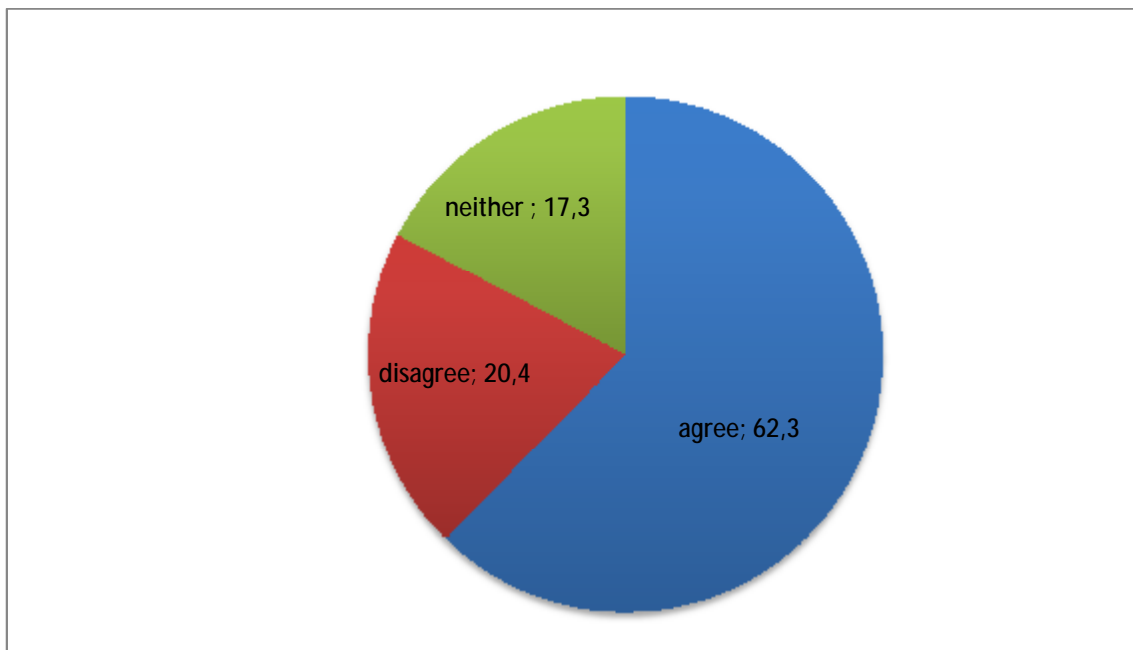
*Graph 6.* Short story rises understanding of different characteristics

**Graph 6:** In the sixth question, the students are asked if short story enables to understand different characteristics. The ratio of the students who agree with the statement are 70.2% and 19.1% of the students disagree with the idea. The rest of the group 10.7% neither agree nor disagree. This rate shows that students believe reading short story helps to understand people with different characters. While reading, students meet many characters who have faced different situations and events. The students witness their sadness, happiness and anger. The characters show different reactions for every feeling and the students realize how the other people feel and think. They see a lot of people and they talk to many people in their daily life. However, they cannot understand these peoples' features or psychology because they do not focus. During the reading process, they understand that each human being have different characteristics. At that time, they begin to understand instead of being prejudiced. The short story shows us people in our life. There is always a new characteristic to discover.

**QUESTION 7**

*Graph 7.* Short story extends world of thought

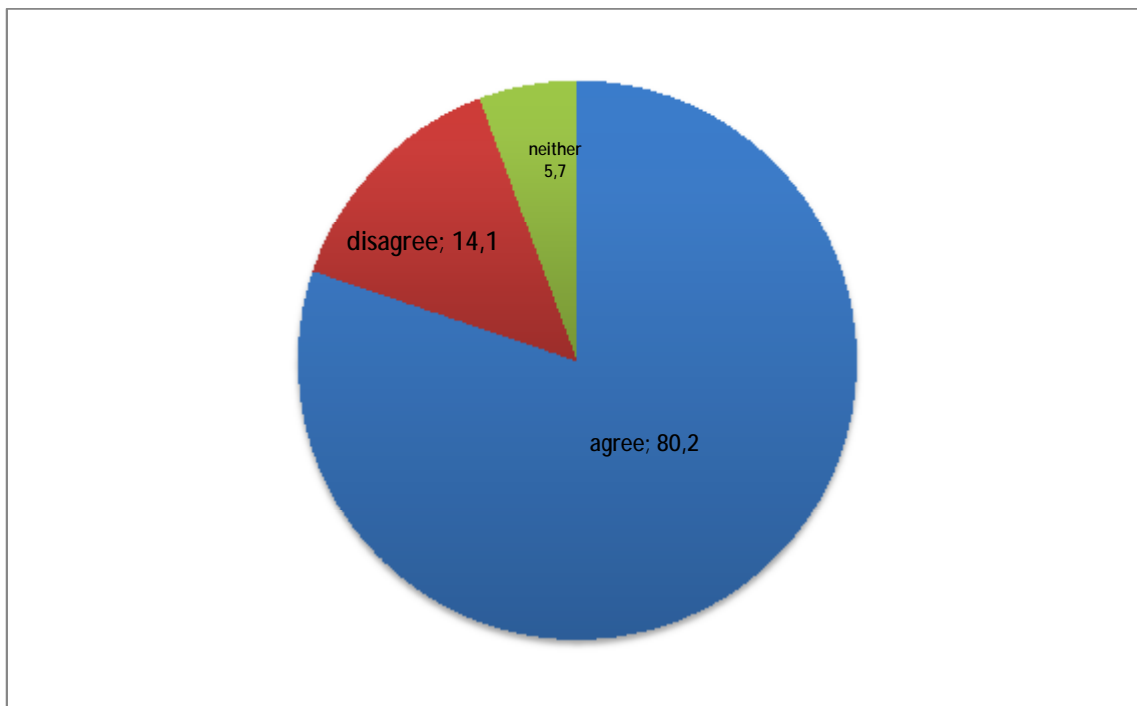
**Graph 7:** In the seventh question, the students are asked if the short story extends their thoughts about the world. 76.3% of the students agree with the idea while 17.1% of them disagree and 6.6% neither agree nor disagree. In this graphic, it clearly shows that students develop their thoughts about world by reading stories. The short story helps students to improve their imagination by seeking spectacular worlds, other cultures, people and different time spans. They realize that they can think and imagine what they want. Short story expands their minds and helps them learn how to see the world in a different view. They try to understand the time and people in the story and try to find some similarities between their real lives.

**QUESTION 8**

Graph 8.Short story improves the critical thinking

**Graph 8:** In question 8, the students are asked if the short story improves the ability of critical thinking in different situations. 62.3% of the students agree with this idea while 20.4% of them and 17.3% neither agree nor disagree with the given statement. Students recognized that they could criticize more and think deeply. After each story, the students can make comments, analyze the given information and evaluate them. Thinking right is one of the most important things in a students' life to learn better. While reading a story, they evaluate situations and characters and they learn to think critically and more analytically. Thanks to this learning, they can understand their daily life better and people in their life. Great story provides a window into various aspects of conditions of life and people. It is like a guide which provides us to think critically.

## QUESTION 9



*Graph 9.* Short story enable to make a comparison between cultures

**Graph 9:** Question 9 is about if short story improves cultural knowledge. 80.2% of the participants agree with this idea while 14.1% of them disagree and 5.7% neither agree nor disagree. It is clearly seen that short story gives information about people, customs and traditions. The students learn the culture in which the writer lived and also various universal themes and artistic movements of the given time. By learning language and other cultures, they can communicate with people from different cultures. The story offers a chance to enlighten the students and it also gives an opportunity to widen the students' perspectives and thoughts. They learn two different languages and it helps them to see similarities and differences in various cultures. They can learn universal values and be aware of their own cultures and other also cultures.

### 4.3. Observation

The researcher kept the diary. It includes some notes and comments about the students' behavior and thoughts. The researcher observed the improvements of the students both personal and language. As reading, the students improve their vocabulary level and with improving knowledge of vocabulary, they could use the language easily.

Their confidence in language was improved. The short story improves the students' critical thinking and by this way they could feel emotions of the characters in the story and they could recognize lives and problems are similar to their own lives. Reading a story is like going on a journey for the students. The short story creates a difference in their life and it is one of the most effective ways they can expand themselves. The students can interpret what has happened and is happening. When I prefer the short story, I want them to expand their minds and find new ways of seeing the world, not only structure of the language. The short story creates emotion and attempt to find the truth. When the students learn new things, they want to feel. The feelings of the students include expectations, excitement and doubts. They thought as if they were in the story. When they finished the story, they came back. I realized that while the students were reading their story, they felt as if they escaped from their responsibilities of the school, world and marks. Unfortunately, their world is consisted of school exams and marks. Therefore reading short story sets them free. However they do not forget their responsibility, they only go an adventure beyond their imagination. Their mind and imaginations are getting powerful. There is an image, which shows the students' minds while reading story and to show how the students feel while reading short story. Moreover, their knowledge of vocabulary was improved. The students predicted meaning of the new words in the beginning of the reading. I presented pictures for every word and gave some clues. After they predicted the meaning of the word, they wrote the words at the end. They didn't write the words with their meanings in the beginning. Firstly predictions came then writing. This way is more permanent and enjoyable. For instance; one of the words was 'composer'. Firstly I showed a picture and they started to predict some meanings then I began to give some clues. This process lasted one class session. But they really enjoyed and they forgot some other words but they still have not forgotten the word 'composer'. The short story has many contributions to them both social and educational.

#### **4.4. Results of the Interview**

Five questions were asked to the students. The number of the questions was determined according to age and level of students. If the interview questions were much more than five, the students could be bored because speaking is the most difficult skill to them. Interview results are seen in below;

- 1. Do you think learning English is easy or difficult?:** Most of the students told that learning English was difficult beforehand. They can make mistakes in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary usage because they have lack of vocabulary and grammar. In the past, they did their lessons only book-based technique. They opened their books, they read without listening and write whatever it is written on the board. So they have pronunciation problem and they hesitate in speaking. They weren't encouraged to speak. They memorized the topics and words. After a while, they forget everything easily. So English learning was so boring and difficult for them. They said the English is different from our language, we don't know anything but our teachers always want us to memorize something, it is so difficult. But now it is different. English is not same as the other lessons. They improved their vocabulary and grammar because they can see grammar in the stories because all the sentences are shaped according to grammar. Even if they don't know which grammar rules is in the sentences, they can get used to usage of sentences; subjects, verbs, and objects or times. Also they can learn lots of new vocabularies and they don't forget because they talked about the vocabularies. Therefore; learning English is easy and funny.
- 2. Do you believe that your vocabulary level is improved?:** All of the students answered this question positive. They said that when they read and come to a word that they don't know the meaning of, they try to understand and find without using a dictionary. It is more effective. They can remember easily .After each of the story, they learn lots of ne vocabularies and they are happy for learning new vocabularies.
- 3. Do you think literature is useful for learning English?:** Most of the students believe that they improved their skills and language level. Before reading the stories, they listened to stories and they tried to understand the stories. They tried to understand actions, characters and they expressed their thoughts, feelings and reactions. They could talk about the questions dealing with the stories. Also literature is enjoyable for them because they listened, read, and talked about the stories. They did role-play activity. The students wonder about the story because they are hunger of reading. Because of the system, they always do exams and tests. In every lesson, They have lots homework and these homework generally include tests. It is so boring to them. They can't find time

to read. But in English lessons, they can read stories and they can speak. Nowadays they can't speak with their families at home, friends and teachers at school because most of the people in their life think about their exam and marks. They said that it is so saddening situation. They are hunger of reading and speaking. The literature feeds their hunger. They can speak and express their thoughts and they can learn lots of things. According to students, literature is an example of learning by amusing.

4. **Do you think short story is difficult?:** Most of the students answered this question, absolutely no. They read according to their age and level. It is not complicated and difficult. If it is complicated and long, it can be boring and difficult. But when they try, they can understand and learn. Stories are not difficult for them.
5. **Do you think short story is useful for learning English?:** All the participants answered this question, of course yes. One of them wanted to ask questions. These questions; 'Do you remember what you did in your English lesson when you were 5<sup>th</sup> grades?' The researcher answered the question, 'no I can't remember'. And then students went on her speech and said that children don't forget the stories. They can forget most of their lessons but they don't forget the stories. They can remember. That means the students will remember these stories and they won't forget the things which they learn. That is a wonderful thing for them. They can remember words, characters even a sentence and what you feel while reading. That's the reason. The student said that people can forget everything but they can not forget the thing which they feel. Most of the students agreed with this idea. While they were reading, they didn't memorize the words , they talked about that and they understood them. So short stories are useful. The students think that the short stories help them to learn English by experience.

## CHAPTER V

### 5. CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter includes overview of the research, conclusion which explains the finding of the study and recommendation.

#### 5.2. Overview of the Research

The main aim of this study is to show the benefits of using the short story to teach vocabulary and improve students in language area. As a researcher, I conducted my study with my class, which includes 40 students who are age of 11.

To improve their language, the only thing which we should do is to find the right material. The researcher selected the short story to develop their language. It is an authentic and enjoyable material. They liked it so much. The researcher gave them a questionnaire to collect information about their thoughts and these thoughts were mentioned in findings part. The other tool is pre-test and post-test. One of them was given to the students in the beginning of the study and the other one was given at the end of the study. The results were indicated in findings part.

#### 5.3. Conclusion

This research, which was performed in a school, searched the benefits of using short stories to teach vocabulary and improve second language learning. According to findings of the research, students liked using short story in the class. The students thought that short stories were enjoyable and that was great. While the students were reading the stories, they enjoyed a lot especially in the acting part. Realizing these, the idea that using short story in second language learning was confirmed by the findings. The findings were evaluated according to the Research Questions.

##### 5.3.1. Research Question 1: How can short stories be used to improve vocabulary knowledge?

According to the findings, vocabulary improvement in the pretest and posttest has helped us find out the answer to the research question of the study. The pretest was

designed for testing the subjects' English vocabulary knowledge to get some pre-examination of the two groups before the experiment. The comparison of the post test showed that there was a significant difference between the performance of control group and experimental groups. It is clearly seen that the use of short stories has positive effect on the learners' English vocabulary learning. Krashen's (1982) and Nation's (1991) theories of L2 vocabulary acquisition, the use of short stories was designed to be in the contents of comprehensible reading materials which were aimed to encourage learners to read a lot to acquire vocabulary and develop reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. Also, Nation (1988), and Krashen (1989) claim that incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading short stories does occur.

### **5.3.2. Research Question 2: What are the advantages of using short stories in language teaching?**

In this research, it was seen that the students were eager to read, share thoughts and act. While acting, they behaved as a character in the story and this was very beautiful. The literature has a crucial role in English language teaching. Also, the teacher has a significant role to teach language through short story. The teacher should find teaching method and activities and select an appropriate story. Short story teaches not only language competence but also cultural knowledge and improves personal growth. The students open a new window into the different world in each of the story. Reading short story improves personal growth. According to the psychologists David Comer Kidd and Emanuele Castano, at the New School for Social Research in New York, stated that reading literary works enhances the ability to detect and understand other people's emotions, and improves social relationships. The students enhance ability of empathy. They are getting thoughtful. Also Oatley (1999, p. 8) told that people who read more fiction were better at empathy and understanding others. When the students read, they can imagine themselves into the characters' position and it makes them better understand people.

Students believe that short story widens their views and world of thought. They learn to look at events from different perspectives or angles. When they read different stories and see different lives and events which they have never experienced before, they realized that the same event can be seen differently from different perspectives. As Cadorath and Harris (1998, p.188) point out "text itself has no meaning, it only provides

direction for the reader to construct meaning from the reader's own experience". Short Story can widen learners' understanding of their own and other cultures, it can create opportunities for personal expression as well as reinforce learners' knowledge of lexical and grammatical structure. While they are reading the short story, they sometimes have the feeling or the idea of the character as if they were their own. Therefore they mostly agree that short story develops empathy.

By this way, they improve better understanding for the events and other behaviors. Short story enables them to discover the other cultures. They see similarities and differences between cultures. It is clear that short stories present different lives and life styles.

The students learn universal moral lessons from the story. It is very important for personal growth. The personality is shaped according to moral and human values and desires. The short story helps the students to find their personality. Therefore, the selection of short story should be done in accordance with the desires and needs of the students. When the students are asked if they have a change in their behaviors and knowledge of language, the answer of the student is "yes" we have lots of things from the story and we improve our vocabulary, skills and our personal growth. We really like reading short story. We change our ideas, feelings and thoughts. We have better understanding of the attitudes and behaviors of the people in different situations. When short stories are chosen carefully according to desires, interests and needs of the students, the students develop their language level by having fun. During the sessions, students have opportunities to improve cultural understanding and abilities of language with suitable activities.

Custodio and Sutton (1998, p.20) states his idea about literature that literature can open horizons of possibility, allowing students to question, interpret, connect and explore. Students widen their world by using authentic material. The short story prepares a motivating, entertaining and exciting lesson. Every teaching strategy is valuable and unique. However, every teaching method and strategy are not suitable for the students. Each of the students has different character, knowledge and level. Especially for young learners, to find suitable materials is so difficult. Because of its quality, the short story is one of the best material. Ghosn (2002, p.172) mentions that literature as a language material can touch upon the feelings of people. The students improved their vocabulary in literary genre 'short story'. The short story is not complex and difficult to understand. The students perceive language learning as a very easy way.

In the beginning they have prejudices towards language learning. Because they have to complete their school program for every lesson and it makes the students demoralize. There are many requirements of the education system and these requirements limit the students' desire of learning and imagination. However, the short story removed these prejudices. The short story motivates them instead of discouraging to learn. It is a good way to improve the students' knowledge of vocabulary and language. The short story provides students to be active in the class with entertaining activities instead of sitting and writing. The learning material should be attractive, interactive, and entertaining. Therefore; short story can be preferred to teach language. The short story has simple language and lots of playful activities. The activities have a significant role while learning process. Short story enables to students playful learning. The playful learning has intrinsic rather than extrinsic motives and also has active management. According to Rieber (2001, p.4), a simple way of understanding serious play in education is with the advice of experience first, explain later. According to results of the tests, short stories are likely beneficial material and a rich source to create opportunities and to improve the vocabulary level and knowledge of language. The study suggests that the students can be successfully taught English using short story. The short story may be found to be a good resource to language teaching and learning.

#### **5.4. Implications And Suggestions For Further Research**

This study aimed to apply short story in order to improve vocabulary level and language knowledge of students. The study was conducted in a time of six weeks. The time could be at least two semesters to investigate long term effects of short story for further research. In this way the researcher could determine all the effects of short story in language acquisition.

This study was carried out at only Amerikan Kültür Koleji. Further studies can be conducted in some other schools at the same time to enhance the reliability of the research.

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## 7. APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Questionnaire

- 1) Do you think using short story is an enjoyable material to learn language?
- 2) Do you think reading short story helps the students a better understanding of a language?
- 3) Do you think the usage of short story provides the students to improve language skills?
- 4) Do you think the use of short story has benefits to improve language learning?
- 5) Do you think the use of short story has any contribution to the students' development of personal growth?
- 6) Do you think reading short story enables the students' to understand better for people having different characteristics?
- 7) Do you think the short story extends the students' world of thought?
- 8) Do you think reading short story provides the students improve their ability of critical thinking in different situations?
- 9) Do you think the use of short story gives the opportunity to make a comparison between his/her culture and other cultures?

**Appendix 2: Anket**

1. Dil öğretimindekısaöykününeğlencelibirmateryalolduğunudüşünüyorsunuz?
2. Kısaöyküokumanınbirdilidahaiyanlamadayardımcıolduğunudüşünüyorsunuz?
3. Kısaöykükullanımınındilbecerilerinigeliştirmedeöğrencilereyardımcıolduğunudüşünüyorsunuz?
4. Kısaöykükullanımınındilöğreniminigeliştirmedefaydalarıolduğunudüşünüyorsunuz?
5. Kısaöykükullanımınınöğrencilerinkişiselgelişiminekatkısagladığınıdüşünüyorsunuz?
6. Kısaöyküokumanınfarklıkarakterleresahipinsanlarıdahaiyanlamadaöğrencilereyardımcıolduğunudüşünüyorsunuz?
7. Kısaöykününöğrencilerindüşüncedünyasınıgeliştirdiğindüşünüyorsunuz?
8. Kısaöyküokumanınöğrencilerdefarklıdurumlardaeleştireldüşünceyetisininelişiminekatkıdabulduğunudüşünüyorsunuz?
9. Kısaöykükullanımınınkendikültürünüzleđer kültürlerarasındakıyaslamayapmaolanıverdiğindüşünüyorsunuz?

**Appendix 3: Interview Questions**

1. Do you think learning English is easy or difficult?
2. Do you believe that your vocabulary level is improved?
3. Do you think literature is useful for learning English?
4. Do you think short story is difficult?
5. Do you think short story is useful for learning English?



**Appendix 4: Röportaj Soruları**

1. Sence İngilizce öğrenim kolay mı?
2. Kelime seviyenilerle diğerlerini biliyor musun?
3. Edebiyatın İngilizce öğrenimi için yararlı olduğunu düşünüyor musun?
4. Kısa öykünün zor olduğunu düşünüyor musun?
5. Kısa öykünün İngilizce öğrenimi için yararlı olduğunu düşünüyor musun?



## Appendix 5: Pre- Test

### I.TEST

Name/Surname:

Class:

A) Read the text and write the correct form of the verbs in the brackets. (20x1=20)



Hank \_\_\_\_ (be) a cowboy. He \_\_\_\_ (live) on a farm.  
 He \_\_\_\_  
 (have) a horse named Ginger. Hank \_\_\_\_ (love) Ginger.  
 He \_\_\_\_ (ride) Ginger every day. Sometimes they \_\_\_\_  
 (walk) slowly, and sometimes they \_\_\_\_ (run) fast.  
 They always have a good  
 time. Ginger \_\_\_\_ (be) Hank's horse. She \_\_\_\_ (be) light  
 brown. Her tail and mane \_\_\_\_ (be) dark brown. She  
 \_\_\_\_ (be) three years old. She \_\_\_\_ (live) in the stable by the  
 house.

Ginger \_\_\_\_ (wait) for Hank every morning. She \_\_\_\_ (enjoy) their time together.  
 Often, Hank \_\_\_\_ (give) her apples. After long rides, Hank always \_\_\_\_ (wash)  
 and \_\_\_\_ (brush) Ginger. He usually \_\_\_\_ (brush) her tail. Then he \_\_\_\_ (give)  
 her food and fresh water. Ginger \_\_\_\_ (love) Hank.

B) Answer the questions.(40)

1) Where does Hank live?

-

2) Is Hank a cowboy?

-

3) Has Hank a horse?

-

4) How is Ginger old?

-

5) What does Ginger eat?

-

C) Write the meaning of the words. (40)

1) farm:

4) stable:

2) tail:

5) enjoy:

3) mane:

**Appendix 6: Post- Test****II. Test****Name/Surname:****Class:****A) Read the passages and answer the questions. (50)*****Bob the Sailor***

Bob was a young sailor. He lived in England but he was often away with his ship. One summer he came back from a long journey and found new neighbours near his mother's house. They had a pretty daughter and Bob liked her very much. He wanted to marry her. Bob promised to send a present from all of the places he visited. Bob first went to Cape Town in South Africa. He sent a parrot to the girl. The parrot was very expensive, it spoke three languages. When Bob's ship went to Australia there was a letter from the girl. The letter said, ' Thank you for the bird, Bob. It was delicious.'

- 1) What was Bob's job?
- 2) What did Bob promise?
- 3) What did Bob send the girl?
- 4) How many languages did the parrot speak?
- 5) What did the girl do with the parrot?

**B) Write the meaning of the words. (50)**

- 1) **Sailor:**
- 2) **Ship:**
- 3) **Journey:**
- 4) **Neighbours:**
- 5) **Pretty:**
- 6) **Promise:**
- 7) **Present:**
- 8) **Letter:**
- 9) **Delicious:**
- 10) **Send:**

**Appendix 7: National Education Directorate Approval for Gaziantep**

Gaziantep Amerikan Kùltür Koleji Ortaokulu Mùdùrlùğùne,

Gaziantep

Kayıtlı olduğum Çağ Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans programını tamamlamak amacıyla gerçekleştirdiğim tez çalışmamada kullanmak üzere 5. Sınıf öğrencilerinizden ön-test, son-test, anket, röportaj ve gözlem yöntemlerini kullanarak veri toplamak istiyorum. Bu veri toplama işlemleri hususunda müdürlüğünüzden gerekli izinleri talep ediyorum.

Gereğini bilgilerinize saygılarımla arz ederim.

Araştırmacı

Sibel TEMİZKAN

Çalışmanın yapılması uygundur.





## 8. BIOGRAPHY

1990 yılında Hatay'da doğan Sibel TEMİZKAN, eğitim hayatına Haydar Mursaloğlu İlköğretim Okulu'nda başlamış, lise öğrenimini Hatay Atatürk Süper Lisesi'nde, lisans öğrenimini de Gaziantep Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünde tamamlamıştır. Son olarak, Çağ Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi (Yüksek Lisans) bölümünden mezun olmuştur.

