



Elementary School Students' Perceptions of Learning Vocabularies Using Short Stories

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Abstract. Short stories are considered an excellent and highly significant teaching approach in elementary level teaching and learning as they provide a useful and unique learning resource and encourage language acquisition, progress and personal interest. This study aims to better understand how primary school pupils see vocabulary development. A mixed-methods study was conducted with thirty sixth graders at SD IT Cahaya Rabbani Kepahiang to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. To collect quantitative data, a questionnaire was employed, and to collect qualitative data, interviews were used. Using SPSS and Excel, the data were descriptively examined. Because short stories are engaging, practical, and simple to grasp, 80% of SD IT Cahaya Rabbani Kepahiang students highly agree and believe that using short story media can help students learn more words in English. The study's conclusions indicate that students are open to using short stories to broaden their vocabulary and find them engaging. Therefore, English teachers should employ short stories to assist students learn vocabulary. The instructor should be mindful of the significance of selecting short stories wisely and doing it in a way that is both engaging and amusing. The selected short stories must also pay attention to the interests, needs, and skills of students. In this study, only a subset of children from the same school participated. Information was only collected once, through questionnaires and interviews. As a result, only students in the same school can use the findings. Additional research should include more people from various institutions to provide more thorough results. Additionally, it is possible to investigate the effectiveness of using short stories to help students expand their vocabulary by using different research methodologies like experimental or action research.

Keywords: Students' perception; short story; vocabulary

Introduction

In general, English instruction focuses on memorization rather than comprehension. This is felt to be lacking support in preparing someone to be able to use English to communicate with people from other countries. The habituation of students in the learning process necessitates special care in presenting authentic material, thus motivating students to improve their English abilities. English is not a required subject in schools, but it is used as local content in several elementary schools. But students must start learning English at a young age since development science and technology need it. Learning English from a young age can be one strategy to keep kids from losing confidence. As a result, language instruction should be planned and tailored to the child's developmental stage so that learning is more meaningful and does not place an undue load on the participants.

Vocabulary is one of factor that support in English teaching learning process. English proficiency may be attained if there is more interaction by listening, reading, speaking, and writing and one of the important is vocabulary (Liando et al., 2021). Mastering vocabulary is essential to mastering the English language since it is the main tool for communication. Lack

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of language will make it difficult for students to communicate with one another. Students are taught vocabulary in both direct and indirect ways. They can share their views and understand those of others if they have a strong command of the language. Since vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of learning English and is linked to other skills in a way that makes them all dependent on one another, it is challenging to learn a language without studying vocabulary (Syafrizal & Haerudin, 2018). Learning new words is essential to mastering effective literacy and communication techniques. Students can use language in their listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Given the significance of vocabulary in both communication and language learning, every programme for teaching a language must put a strong emphasis on assisting students in building a broad vocabulary. Students should be frequently introduced to vocabulary by utilizing appropriate approaches to grasp and utilize words properly (Tahir et al., 2020). Additionally, good reading has been linked to successful vocabulary acquisition. Students that meet satisfactory or high standards often show high levels of reading comprehension, whereas students with weak language skills seem to have limited understanding of what they have read. For this reason, teachers should model a variety of engaging techniques in their lessons for kids who struggle to pick up terminology on their own (Akdogan, 2018).

Some students struggle with their vocabulary when studying English, and when they don't have the words, they need to express what they're thinking or when they can't comprehend the meaning of the key terms used in the course materials, they become frustrated and bored. As a result, they quickly stop doing or practicing English speaking, writing, or reading assignments because they find them tiring, difficult, and boring. Finding strategies to expand their vocabulary is very important to help children not get annoyed and bored easily. As such, we as educators must contribute to their success in some manner by utilising short stories to assist pupils expand their vocabulary.

According to Nazara (2019), a short story is a form of prose fiction that tells a story of an experience the main character has. Short stories are frequently written in prose with a narrative arc and are shorter than novels. Popular literature includes short stories; the best method for introducing students to literature is by using a short story. Suryadi and Nuryatin (2017) claim that the researched short stories highlight the value of tolerance and moral growth. Short stories suggest that combining instruction and pleasure helps make learning more engaging and simpler. Short stories elicit feelings from readers, instruct on behavior, and impart knowledge about human psychology. Analysis of short stories aids students in developing their critical thinking abilities. Short stories are enjoyable to read and debate as literary works. Short stories are one of the literary genres that may be used in EFL classrooms to increase students' motivation, language competency, and cultural awareness, according to Abuzahra & Farrah (2016). Reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities may all be practiced with short stories, which is beneficial for English language learners. According to Pardede (2021), short tales can boost students' vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing ability, and enthusiasm for learning. In essence, short stories are life itself. People so naturally have a desire to appreciate hearing and telling stories. Students might be motivated to emulate the heroic actions of the narrative's hero after reading or listening to a well-written story. Short stories thus have strong emotional, intellectual, and social appeal by nature.

Because it enables us to comprehend the multitude of activities occurring around us, perception is crucial in our daily lives. Sartika (2022) defines perception as the method through which people acquire and evaluate environmental information that could influence their behavior. Most of the students' perceptions of using short stories in class have been identified. Based on the findings of previous research by Sambiring (2022), if students' perceptions of short stories are positive, this will increase vocabulary. Perception is a crucial skill for pupils to develop, according to Syafrizal et al. (2021). This element influences how students respond to learning and can make the difference between success and failure. Perception is an internal process that aids in the selection, organization, and interpretation of outside information that may have an impact on our behavior. Additionally, people gather and assess environmental

data through perception, which may then be used to guide their behavior.

In this study, researchers examine students' impressions of the influence of short stories on their vocabulary growth. Because students' individual perceives things differently based on their responses and prior knowledge or experience to stimulate, interpret, and create meaning, each learner or individual may have a unique perspective on a certain phenomenon. Perception is the term used to describe how the senses and the brain organize, interpret, analyze, and integrate signals. When we combine, arrange, and meaningfully interpret sensory input, perception occurs (Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 2013). As a result, everyone has an opinion about everything in this world. However, people perceive things differently. According to Kazu et al. (2005), enabling students to pick and apply learning tools depending on their preferences and learning styles can help them learn more effectively. This is in line with Bloom's Theory of Mastery Learning. The opinions of students also affect all facets of learning. To make the most of using short stories to help students increase their vocabulary, it is crucial to consider the opinions of the students.

Numerous research has investigated how short stories might be used to teach and learn EFL. The bulk of the research examined how short stories may be used to build language abilities (Bartan, 2017) and teach language components (Arjmandi & Aladini, 2020). Using short stories to enhance communication and critical thinking skills (Heidari, Tabrizi, & Chalak, 2020). The benefits of utilising short stories to broaden one's vocabulary have also been the subject of several research (Bhatti et al., 2020). Several studies have also shown that it is useful to use short tales to help pupils increase their vocabulary. According to study by Beno (2019), students can readily grasp and recall new language when it is taught to them through the use of short stories. Nazara's research (2019) indicates that students are in favour of using short stories. They find short stories to be an engaging resource for vocabulary building. It is advised to use short stories to help students expand their vocabulary. According to earlier research by Sembiring (2022), students had favourable attitudes about the usage of short stories to expand vocabulary. As a result, many students at Regina Caeli Middle School in Cileungsi think that using short stories to learn English vocabulary is engaging, practical, and simple.

Based on the findings of previous studies, researchers found differences from previous studies, namely from the research sample, location, and place of research as well as different questions from each study. Therefore, this research will include interviews and observations with elementary school students about their perceptions of using short stories as a means of increasing their vocabulary. Consider that several studies have shown how students use short stories to increase their vocabulary, and since this is one of the key elements of successful learning, researchers are interested to find out more. This theoretical foundation led this study to investigate three different questions: (1) What did students think about using short stories to help them improve their vocabulary? (2) Does using short stories with students improve vocabulary development? and (3) How do elementary school students use short stories to expand their vocabulary?

Theoretical Framework

Perception

Since perception enables us to comprehend the numerous actions taking place around us, it is essential to our survival. Sartika (2022) defines perception as the method through which people acquire and evaluate environmental information that could influence their behavior. They also highlighted how people interpret their senses, personalize them, and alter what they see, hear, feel, and touch. This highlights how perception is subjective. Regardless of their many varied personal traits, including gender, age, grade level, life experiences, and interests in certain subjects. However, perception is also a dynamic system with ever-changing behaviors. Consequently, perception may also have an influence on a person's habit system. Humans must pass through the phases of the perception process involving their sense organs and perception to accept inputs. Results might be positive or negative.

The word perception is frequently used synonymously with assumptions, images, and viewpoints since perception is a person's response to an idea or thing. There are many different ideas that fall under the umbrella of perception. According to the descriptions and judgements of several experts, the sensory process—also known as sensing—seems to be a step preceding perception. Receiving stimulation through one's senses is a necessary step in this process. The premise being explored is that everyone interprets things differently and attempts to give them meaning, which causes them to give what they see or experience varied meanings. Thus, the process by which a person gives anything meaning may be described as perception. This process is influenced by the individual's knowledge, experience, emotions, and goals. A person's views, attitudes, and actions towards a particular object might provide insight into the value that person places on that object. One psychological feature that influences human existence and how it responds to the numerous elements and symptoms present in its environment is perception.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of factor that support in English teaching learning process. English proficiency may be attained if there is more interaction by listening, reading, speaking, and writing and one of the important is vocabulary (Liando et al., 2021). Mastering vocabulary is essential to mastering the English language since it is the main tool for communication. Lack of language will make it difficult for students to communicate with one another. Students are taught vocabulary in both direct and indirect ways. They can share their views and understand those of others if they have a strong command of the language. Since vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of learning English and is linked to other skills in a way that makes them all dependent on one another, it is challenging to learn a language without studying vocabulary (Syafrizal & Haerudin, 2018). Learning new words is essential to mastering effective literacy and communication techniques. Students can use language in their listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Given the significance of vocabulary in both communication and language learning, every programme for teaching a language must put a strong emphasis on assisting students in building a broad vocabulary. Students should be frequently introduced to vocabulary by utilizing appropriate approaches to grasp and utilize words properly (Tahir et al., 2020).

Short Story

A short story described by Nazara (2019), is a type of prose fiction that describes an experience the main character undergoes. Short stories are frequently written in prose with a narrative arc and are shorter than novels. Popular literature includes short stories; the best method for introducing students to literature is by using a short story. Suryadi and Nuryatin (2017) claim that the researched short stories highlight the value of tolerance and moral growth. Short stories suggest that combining instruction and pleasure helps make learning more engaging and simpler. Short stories elicit feelings from readers, instruct on behavior, and impart knowledge about human psychology. Analysis of short stories aids students in developing their critical thinking abilities. Short stories are enjoyable to read and debate as literary works. Short stories are one of the literary genres that may be used in EFL classrooms to increase students' motivation, language competency, and cultural awareness, according to Abuzahra & Farrah (2016).

Material and Method

The study's explanatory sequential mixed methods design strives to provide pertinent information necessary to comprehend the study's problem (Pardede, 2018). To better clarify or elaborate the quantitative results that had previously been gained, the study first collected quantitative data before moving on to qualitative data collecting.

Thirty sixth graders from SD IT Cahaya Rabbani Kepahiang took part in the study. A questionnaire with 18 statements and an interviewing protocol were among the study materials. Due to their large sample sizes, surveys are usually seen as a more impartial research

methodology that may result in consistent results, claim Harris and Brown (2010). It is made up of 18 statements that were validated with the Cronbach's alpha test. The questionnaire coefficient was determined to be 0.854. As a result, it is regarded as a trustworthy instrument. There are three sections to the questionnaire. The first section is about demographic data. The second section focuses on how students perceive the value of, show interest in, and accept reading short stories. The third section contains some unanswered questions. Students were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale, scored from Strongly Agree (five points), Agree (four points), Neutral (three points), Disagree (two points), and Severely Disagree (one point). To collect qualitative data, an open-ended interview was undertaken. After completing the quantitative portions of the questionnaire, the themes that surfaced throughout the interview sessions were categorized. A random sample of ten students was chosen to participate in a fifteen-minute interview.

The quantitative data was analyzed descriptively using means and percentages. A questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data, while interviews were employed to acquire qualitative data. The acquired data was descriptively analyzed using SPSS and Excel. The criteria used to define the perception levels generated from the quantitative data analysis were as follows:

Table 1. Perception Level Analysis Criteria

No	Mean	Criteria
1	4.01 – 5.0	Very High
2	3.01 – 4.0	High
3	2.01 – 3.0	Medium
4	1.01 – 2.0	Low
5	0.5 – 1.0	Very Low

Results and Discussion

Results

As previously indicated, students' evaluations of the usefulness, interest, and acceptability of using short tales in vocabulary acquisition were classified into three categories in this study. Table 2 demonstrates this.

Table 2. The Benefits of Short Stories on Vocabulary Learning (N=30)

No	The Questionnaire	SA	A	N	DA	SD	MEAN
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	
1	I am motivated to learn vocabulary through short stories.	10 (33)	17 (57)	2 (7)	1 (3)	-	4,2
2	Short stories make it easier for me to learn English.	8 (27)	14 (47)	6 (20)	2 (7)	-	4.0
3	Short stories teach me a lot of language.	9 (30)	16 (53)	5 (17)	-	-	4,1

4	Short stories help me expand my vocabulary.	5 (17)	17 (57)	5 (17)	3 (10)	-	3,8
5	I am better at improving my pronunciation when I read short stories.	10 (33)	14 (47)	3 (10)	3 (10)	-	4,0
6	Reading short stories assists me in expanding my vocabulary.	11 (37)	14 (47)	4 (13)	1 (10)	-	4,2
7	I usually increase my vocabulary by reading short stories.	5 (17)	15 (50)	5 (17)	5 (17)	-	3,7
Total							4.0
Mean							

Students were delighted about using short stories to learn vocabulary, according to table 2 (M = 4.0). The indicator with the highest median score (M = 4.2) focuses on the use of short stories to engage students and help them acquire vocabulary (the questionnaire numbers 2 and 6). The statement "Short stories help me extend my vocabulary, and I generally grow my vocabulary by reading short stories" has the lowest mean score (M = 3,7 and M = 3,8) and is connected to students' perceptions of increasing vocabulary through short stories (M = 3,7). No one gave a strongly disagree response to any of the seven questions.

Table 3. Student interest in Short Story Reading (N=30)

No	The Questionnaire	SA	A	N	DA	SD	MEAN
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	
8	I liked learning short stories in English.	9 (30)	12 (40)	7 (23)	2 (7)	-	4,0
9	Every day, I read a short story.	5 (17)	14 (47)	6 (20)	3 (10)	2 (7)	3,6
10	I like learning English reading short stories.	10 (33)	12 (40)	7 (23)	1 (10)	-	4,0
11	I enjoy reading short stories in my spare time.	7 (23)	14 (47)	6 (20)	3 (10)	-	3,8
12	When I begin reading a brand-new narrative or book, I become enthusiastic.	6 (20)	13 (43)	9 (30)	2 (7)	-	3,7
13	It is nice to learn English through short stories.	8 (27)	17 (37)	3 (10)	2 (7)	-	4,0
14	At home, I prefer to read short stories.	7 (23)	14 (47)	7 (23)	1 (10)	1 (10)	3,8
Mean Total		3,8					

As seen in Table 3, students agree that short stories are an effective instructional tool. Based on the questions answered by elementary students like reading short stories and learning English through short stories. In fact, students also have enjoyable learning short stories, which can be seen from the average score (M = 4.0) is high from criteria of perception level analysis. In answer to the question, 80% of students said they agreed or strongly agreed.

The interview results show that learning English through short stories is enjoyable for them to expand their vocabulary. Short stories give students a range of new concepts as well as new vocabulary.

Table 4. Student acceptance of short stories (N=30)

No	The Questionnaire	SA f (%)	A f (%)	N f (%)	DA f (%)	SD f (%)	MEAN
15	Short stories are the most effective method for expanding my vocabulary.	7 (23)	20 (67)	3 (10)	-	-	4,1
16	It makes me comprehend more if I read what I enjoy.	11 (37)	13 (43)	3 (10)	4 (13)	-	4,1
17	When I don't understand a word, I skip it and look it up in the dictionary afterwards.	7 (23)	13 (43)	7 (23)	3 (10)	-	3,8
18	When I read, I attempt to understand the message by looking at the images in the text.	6 (20)	14 (47)	7 (23)	3 (10)	-	3,8
Total Mean							4.0

80% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that short stories are the best tool for increasing vocabulary and helping students understand concepts more fully if students choose what they enjoy reading using perception level analysis criteria (M=4,1), according to the findings of Table 4's data on students' appreciation of short stories. The final two sentences, numbers 17 and 18, meet a high standard for perception level analysis (M=3,8).

Table 5. The interview questionnaire

The respondents / students		Do you think short stories are a useful technique for building vocabulary? In any case, state why.
Student 1	Yes, since I think learning with short stories is a good way to broaden vocabulary.	
Student 2	I agree that it is easier to comprehend.	
Student 3	Absolutely, short tales are the best way for me to increase my vocabulary.	
Student 4	I agree because I enjoy reading short stories in my spare time.	
Student 5	I disagree since I still need to open the dictionary when I don't know the term.	
Student 6	I agree since it can increase a student's motivation to learn.	
Student 7	Yes, as short stories are interesting and not monotonous.	
Student 8	I agree that short stories are simpler to grasp.	
Student 9	Yes, it makes me comprehend and enjoy	
Student 10	Not really because reading short stories is time consuming	

The writer can group the explanations provided by the interviewees for the selection of the short story materials used in class based on the responses provided by the students to the previous interview questions. As can be seen, most students had good reactions to the short stories by nodding in agreement or giving affirmative answers. However, some of the students also included additional material because the students did not know the meaning of the short stories and had to open the dictionary at that time, and according to one student reading short stories was time consuming. Based on the responses of the students, the writer can group the justifications offered by respondents to earlier interview questions on the choice of short story materials utilized in class. As can be seen, most students nodded in agreement or answered affirmatively when asked if short stories were a useful technique for expanding their vocabulary. However, some of the students also disagreed because they still must look at the dictionary when they don't understand the meaning and it takes time so according to them it is time spent studying. Based on these findings, 8 students agreed and 2 disagreed that short stories are a useful method for expanding vocabulary.

Discussion

The writers evaluate and trace the data findings in this part after the earlier results reported. The findings of 18 questions and interviews regarding students' perspectives of utilizing short tales to boost vocabulary provide evidence of this. A total of 30 students from SD IT Cahaya Rabbani Kepahiang participated in this study, all of whom were in the sixth grade. Based on their positive responses, around 80% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that short stories can help students learn more vocabulary when they are studying English. Short stories are a useful teaching method for students to expand their vocabulary since they make them feel cheerful and not bored while learning English. This indicates that short stories provide new concepts and add new vocabulary for students. As it paves the way for how effectively speakers can write, talk, listen, and read, vocabulary is an essential part of language proficiency (Richard and Rodgers, 2001). Students' desire to develop their comprehension of the tale is provided for and supported by using stories. Using stories to inspire, challenge, and have fun can help people adopt positive attitudes.

From the results of questionnaires and interviews, the authors found that most students considered short stories useful in learning English to add to their vocabulary. Students demonstrate this while utilizing short stories to study English; they are driven to broaden their vocabulary, learning is made simpler by using short stories, reading short stories improves pronunciation, and short stories assist students in increasing their vocabulary. Short stories can help students improve vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening skills, writing skills, and enthusiasm for learning, according to Pardede (2021). In essence, short stories are life itself. People naturally have a desire to value listening and telling stories. Students may be motivated to imitate the heroic actions of narrative heroes after reading or listening to well-written stories. Therefore, short stories have strong emotional, intellectual, and social appeal. However, from the results of the interviews, there were some students who disagreed because reading short stories would take up a lot of time and they had difficulties when they did not know the meaning of the word and they had to open a dictionary. Short stories are both enjoyable and valuable to employ in language competency training and for personal enjoyment. This indicates that short stories are a useful method for successfully enhancing vocabulary. Short stories help children acquire language in a fun and positive way. So, based on the second question, it is possible to conclude that the benefits of using short stories for elementary students to increase student vocabulary are extremely beneficial. By reading and learning short stories, students feel excited, happy, and enjoyable, with the emergence of a sense of enjoyment indicating that short stories can provide space as a tool for increasing students' vocabulary. If interest in reading short stories among Grade VI students at SD IT Cahaya Rabbani Kepahiang is likewise high ($M=3.8$), it is seen in the table 3. For learners, reading a little tale makes learning English interesting and fun. It stimulates students' interest in the target culture and language. The brief narrative promotes linguistic awareness and

learning (Nazara, 2019).

Reading short stories is fun and can be used in language contest practice. Short stories help students acquire vocabulary in a fun and positive way. Therefore, using short tales to increase vocabulary is particularly helpful for pupils in primary school. The emergence of a sense of fun and interest in students indicates that short stories provide space to increase student vocabulary. This is shown from the results of the researchers' research on elementary school students that students enjoy learning short stories, which can be seen from the high average value ($M = 4.0$) of the perception level analysis criterion. Because it creates the foundation for students' success in speaking, writing, and reading, vocabulary development is essential to language acquisition. From the results of this study, the answer to the third question is that students can add to their vocabulary by using short stories and reading them which students find fun, interesting and inspiring when learning to use short stories.

The authors' discovery that using short stories is beneficial and can boost students' vocabulary to be utilized in learning with the teacher throughout the process of learning English in the classroom can be deduced from the study data. Short stories are the most effective method for expanding student vocabulary. This is proven and shown from the results of research by researchers that as many as 28 students out of 30 elementary school students answered strongly agree and agree with the score ($M=4.0$), if reading short stories helps readers expand their vocabulary.

Conclusion

Considering the information and comments above, it is possible to infer that the participants in this study had a good attitude about learning vocabulary through shorttales. Most of them find short tales beneficial and engaging, and around 80% are enthusiastic about adopting short story reading for learning and increasing pupils' vocabulary. Short stories help children improve their vocabulary since the context of the story provides valuable indications for comprehending the meaning of new phrases. Students became more interested, motivated, and enthusiastic about acquiring language since they appreciated stories short by reading short stories. Through learning short stories, students can be more responsive in any learning context such as increasing and adding to students' vocabulary. Story is a literary work in the form of prose. Short stories can present human problems with the twists and turns of life. The results of the study suggest that students have favorable impressions of using short stories to broaden their vocabulary and think they are both useful and fun. As a result, English teachers should utilize short stories as often as possible to aid students in expanding their vocabulary. When doing so, the instructor must bear in mind the importance of selecting short tales with care, taking care to choose stories that are both engaging and amusing. The short tales chosen must also take the students' interests, needs, and skills into account. In this study, only a subset of kids from the same school participated. The information was gathered once only through a questionnaire and an interview. As a result, only students at the same school may use the findings. Future research should include more participants from different schools in order to obtain more through results. Additionally, different study methodologies, including experimental or action research, might be used to examine how short stories can help kids' vocabulary growth.

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