

Investigating Perceptions of Teachers Towards Teaching of English Language Using Short Fiction

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research study was to unfold the efficacy of literature in general and short story in particular in teaching and learning English language skills at higher secondary level. The populations of this study are twenty higher secondary schools of Swat KPK, while 10 were chosen as a sample for the study. Data were collected thorough semi structured interview from 20 teachers from the selected schools on purposive sampling basis. The study found that teaching English language through short stories is effective and interesting for both teachers and students. In addition, teaching English language through short stories enables learners to learn the language in proper contexts and empowers them to use it creatively. Besides, it develops high order thinking and exposes learners to specific socio-cultural expressions, which facilitates and expedites language learning process. Based on these findings, the study suggests to revisit the prevalent practice of teaching in order to design a syllabus that meets the needs, level and interest of the students. The study further suggests that teachers should adopt teaching strategies and methodologies in accordance with the prevailing teaching practices. Moreover, the study recommends that teaching of L2 can effectively be taught through integration of Short Stories (SS).

Keywords: Second Language, Short Story, Higher Secondary

INTRODUCTION

It is a common belief that the goal of teaching Second Language is to improve learners' communicative competence yet most of the language teachers still insist on mastering only linguistic components. However, the recent trend of teaching English has necessitated the integration of literature because of its rich potential and authentic materials (Khatib, 2011). The present study was conducted to unfold the efficacy of literature as a technique for enhancing language proficiency with particular focus on the productive skills; speaking and writing, and language areas such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation at higher secondary level in district Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Short stories have been chosen because of its effective, motivational and cultural enrichment embedded in them and being one of the suitable options among literary genres with its promising nature of enhancing the learner's four basic skill (Warsi, 2004). Literature has approved stuff, cultural enrichment, language development and individual involvement. As many educators and professionals argue that it is not feasible to teach English without teaching culture (Bretz, 1990). In view of Elklinic, (2011), teaching of cultural as a fifth skill for language learners that "enhances students' overall learning experience." It is not enough just to have linguistic competence when communicating with someone in a foreign

language. Specific cultural references from geography, pastimes and historical events and personalities always appear in language, and each culture follows special rules regarding formal and informal address, and conversational routines (Hismanoglu, 2005). Only memorizing vocabulary and grammar points do not make one proficient in a foreign language unless one knows sociocultural rules native speakers use when communicating. Not knowing the cultural component of language is problematic (Carter, 2007).

According to Widdowson (1983) literature is an act of communication. For example, fictitious characters and situations in the stories provide students with an abundance of situations and social contexts of how human beings in their real life use the language. For example, the literary works of Mark Twain reconstruct the way language is used in certain geopolitical context. These reconstructions provide learners with a good idea of how language is used by a contemporary low class youth in (Edinburgh) by native speakers in Mississippi shore. Learners can also develop an aesthetic reading of the text, and through social and personal experience learners can easily develop a closer relationship with the language because they fiddle around or reconstructing the L2 on their own for their learning processes.

Murdoch, (2002) indicates that “short stories can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency”. He explains why stories should be used to reinforce ELT by discussing activities instructors can create such as writing and acting out dialogues. Also, Ghosn (2002) affirms that literature helps students to write more creatively. However, there is no controversy over the fact that English is a global language, and owing to its ever-increasing popularity as an important language, learning English has become imperative. It is more than a century since it was introduced in this part of the world and English being the official language of our country, all the legal and legislative proceedings are documented in it (Baumgardner, 2006). Though there are many languages in the world and every language is important in its own place but English seems more important due to its utility and practicality in the business of the world. With people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds when come into contact, will certainly need a language that is common and understood by them all (Elliot, 1990). English has become the lingua franca of the world and is used in most contexts. The numbers of its learners increase just as the employment of English expands. The importance of English cannot be ignored in the present era as a global language (Gajdusek, 1988). In some countries it is used as first language while in other it is learnt as a second language and used as the medium of instruction (Liddicoat, 2000). This makes English widespread. In addition to that, there are many reasons which have contributed to its wide spread use. For instant, it is used for communication purpose among people all over the world. It is also the language of science and technology (Lao, 2000). Those equipped with English language can utilize modern technology with great ease and proficiency being regarded as a milestone in the field of information technology (Maley, 1985). Learning English is imperative now, as it is used in different fields of life such as Information Technology, e-commerce, space science, natural sciences, medical sciences, nuclear sciences, biological sciences, aviation and navigation (Littlewood, 1981). In addition, it is the language of tourism industry across the globe. These multiple applications of English oblige us to learn it.

Other major reasons of its being dominant among other languages are its use in the field of education, corporate organizations, cellular companies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and Airlines (Murdoch, 2002). It is essential in most of government, private sector and

non-governmental jobs. In today's world affairs, it necessitates the learning of English language because we require it in various field of life (Muyskens, 1983). Like French, English was also transplanted in different parts of the world during colonial period. English, like (Sell, 2005) most of the African countries, was implanted in Sub-continent by the British Colonizer (O'Brien,1999). Pakistan being the former colony of British had to use English as an official language. Hence, learning English Language has become compulsory and being the above circumstances, Teaching English language starts right from grade 1 through grade 12, (Abbas, 1993). Although it is taught as a compulsory subject right from grade 1 through grade 12, yet most of the students lack the expected proficiency at the graduate level as well as at the post-graduate level. It seems due in part to the problem that teaching of English language is carried out in isolation and units. Learners are not equipped with the four basic skills. The current language teaching practice at school levels is based on Grammar Translation Method (GTM. As a result, speaking, listening and pronunciation are neglected; critical reading and creative writing are sacrificed at the expense of memorization and product writing, which is in stark contrast to the modern demand of communicative teaching approach.

In this method the main focus is only on the rules rather than the communicative aspects of language (Warsi, 2004). Furthermore, English language is divided into many grammatical units such as narration, voices and essay writing which make language learning as a boring activity for the learners (Haque, 1982). Apart from this, English language is taught in isolation having no connection with real life situation. Consequently, the learners do learn various units of grammar but they are unable to make creative use of the language.

The researcher on the basis of the above mentioned facts believes that teaching of English language through literature (short stories) will help the students learn language in general whereas speaking and writing in particular. However, the researcher to test his hypothesis has selected only short stories from the whole body of literature for this study. It is better to use literature rather than a communicative textbook because it can change the learning approach from focusing on grammar to creative thinking (Wheeler, (2001) & Parkinson, (2000) and believes that literature-based programs focus on the interpretation of the language allows students to experiment with the language (Hashemi, 2012 & Liaw 2001). It can be assumed that literature allows the students to be creative in their thinking and to use the language creatively from the platform provided by literature, (Alemi, 2010).

Learning SL in a non-native speaking community is both challenging and demanding. Learners apply lots of efforts and time to learn the target language in classroom setting. Learners learn grammar and vocabulary from their teachers. But linguistic and grammatical knowledge is not sufficient to be competent in L2. For example, teaching L2 through grammar translation method in which word to word translation is done, teacher uses native language for teaching target language. Language thus, learned does not meet the needs of the learners because it is both ineffective and unnatural. In addition, teacher is an authority in the classroom and it is necessary for the students to get correct answer. Students learn grammar deductively rather than inductively which hinders them from using language creatively and effectively, though this method gives much mental exercise. But the fundamental objective of this method is to enable students to read and write (product writing), ignoring process writing. Product writing is viewed as an ultimate achievement of education, and error is considered as a failure rather than a process

of learning. Students are not allowed to think or write beyond what they are expected. Moreover, they are asked how and what to write which not only restricts the flow of their creativity but also reduce the opportunity to write of their own choice. Writing and ideas are viewed from fragmentation point of view that is why students are supposed to go according to the instruction/directions given by teachers, hence, leaving no room for self-improvement free thinking and creative writing. In Pakistan English language teaching is considered as being dissatisfactory, non-conducive and counter-productive for learning the language, (Warsi, 2003). Speaking and listening are given no importance, and pronunciation is ignored altogether. Vocabulary memorization and grammar is emphasized at the cost of communicative competence. Ultimately, students end up with some knowledge about the target language but do not know how to use them in the real life situation.

Aim of the Study

The present study aims at highlighting flaws causing failure of teaching and learning English (teaching English through GTM) at Higher Secondary school level of District Swat (KPK).” The purpose of this study is to call attention of teachers to the weaknesses and incongruity of Grammar Translation Method, which has been in practice since long. The current method of teaching L2 is not productive; learners are not equipped with the right kind of communicative competence. Therefore, on the basis of this study the writer investigated the effectiveness of literature in teaching L2 at higher secondary level in Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan.

Research Objectives

- To identify the role of short stories in teaching of English Language.
- To describe the role of short stories in speaking and writing skills.

Research questions

- What is the role of short stories in teaching of English language?
- What is the impact of short stories on developing speaking and writing skills?

METHODOLOGY

The current study is descriptive in nature which examines the relationship between short story and English language teaching and learning. Thematic analysis approach was adopted for data analysis.

Population and sampling

All the male and female higher secondary school teachers in district Swat constitutes the population of the current study. For data collection, 20 teachers from ten schools were selected on the basis of purposive sampling.

Research Instruments

To collect data, semi-structured interview was used. It is a widely used method in qualitative studies, Nunan (1992) states that it is used in research as it has been used by second language acquisition researchers seeking data on stages and processes of acquisition. The interview explored the utility of using short story in teaching English Language. For the interview, all the 20 teachers selected for the study participated but only 13 out of 20 agreed to be interviewed. Two teachers from each higher secondary schools participated in the interviews out of which four teachers did not allow researcher to type record their interviews, so they gave their interviews in writing and the rest of the sixteen preferred to be type recorded. The interviews were analyzed and the results were compared.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Interview Question No 1:

Do you think teaching English through short story is interesting? How?

Analysis

Most of the respondents supported the notion by simply agreeing with the statement that teaching and learning English through short stories is interesting, whereas, some of the respondents (teachers) went in a bit detail saying it mirrors life and depicts society, and further added that some of the characters are the true representative of ourselves representing a particular segment of our society, and how language is used in a certain context. Short Stories mostly have a beginning, middle and an end; hence students are encouraged at every levels of language proficiency to continue reading until the end to find out how the conflict arises and resolved, and what happens to different characters with whom learners develop affinity. It is this element that keeps their interest alive and active all the way along.

Interview Question No 2:

Teaching and learning English language (L2) through short stories enables learners to learn and teachers to teach in a proper context.

Analysis

Majority of the respondents strongly supported the idea that teaching and learning English through short stories is helpful to teach in a proper context, whereas, some of them narrated that short stories are purely and simply taken from real life context, and have good examples of language in use, thereby giving learners a sense of achievement. Since stories consist of authentic, contextualized, natural and actual dialogues which can help L2 learners not only in understanding the usage of English in a better way but also in using these dialogues and the structures in their own life (Custodio, 1998).

The respondents argued that linguistic elements used in short stories are authentic materials because they are used by native writers for native speakers. It can be said that teaching/learning English through short stories is a suitable means. Moreover, it is not just enough to be contended only with linguistic competency; there is more to language than just learning vocabulary and grammar. That is, sociocultural rules governing the learning of language. Cultural references are important as each culture follows special rules regarding formal and informal address and conversational routines, Lieb (2012) and English education means much more than just the study of a linguistic system; it can also be seen as “an international language for communication with people from around the world” and a subject for “learning about the world’s peoples, countries, and problems.” Cultural familiarity on the part of speaker is of great importance, even if the two speakers communicating in English happen to be non- natives. It is due in part to what Ziesing (2001) contends is a link between cultural literacy and language fluency. Learning L2 is not only pattern practice but communication practice, as Adrian Palmer argues, “Communication implies novelty. If all responses were predictable, there would be no communication. Therefore, the teacher should train the student to take the proper attitude toward the unknown, both in understanding and in producing speech”.

Interview Question No 3:

Do you believe that sharing and discussing the events and occurrences in short stories improve learners’ communicative skills? How?

Analysis

Most of the respondents replied that sharing and discussing different themes and characters improve learners’ communicative skills, as it is natural when something is constantly or regularly practiced it not only becomes perfect but also permanent. And most importantly, students with weak linguistic competence and lack of confidence, seeing other learners engaged in an activity are encouraged to join them in the ongoing activity. Moreover, these activities will reflect real life language use while providing the instructor with the opportunity to assess the learner’s efforts. Some of the respondents stressed that the use of short-stories provide them with the much needed target language exposure. They believed that by using stories in English language classrooms they could overcome the problem of lack of exposure to the target language.

Interview Question No 4:

Do you believe teaching /learning English through short stories improves learners writing and speaking skills?

Analysis

The data obtained through semi-structured interviews based on using short stories for teaching English language skills, indicates that all the respondents came up with a multifarious of reasons for using short stories in teaching English language skills, some said that it offers a lot of activities and opportunities for writing and speaking, and further added that, it exposes learners to different styles and structures as to how much English language is flexible that the

native speakers bend it according to their use. Others asserted that if proper arrangement for presentation and written tests is made for the learners to present their ideas or write summary of a story will not only improve their writing and speaking skills but also develop their critical thinking and cognitive abilities. Some added that it will teach them how language is used figuratively. One of respondents remarked that in speaking class, learners have access to valuable oral practice for the connectors and discourse markers. Students relate the story in their own words in small groups wherein each student has the opportunity to practice the relevant connectors or other discourse markers (by giving them a list of the connectors and discourse markers beforehand.) in a meaningful context.

The text of short story is suggestive and can be interpreted in different ways, and many ambiguous points prompting learners' inference skill. One of the interviewees held that using short stories in English language classroom, learners can be assigned to write a letter to a doctor, psychiatric, one's relatives, and teachers, on behalf of one of the characters with some sort of abnormal behavior to ask for advice. Similarly, students have the opportunity to practice different registers by varying the people to whom they write letters. In writing class they can learn how to make physical descriptions of characters. Students can also avail of the opportunity of practicing descriptive language. Thus, focusing on both physical and character description help them introduce or elicit many adjectives or phrases about the characters. In groups, the students prepare a list of adjectives and phrases about the characters which they can compare with the lists of other groups. And thus, they add different descriptive phrases to their respective lists.

Interview Question No.5:

Do you think teaching English through short stories enriches learners' vocabulary?

Analysis

Majority of the respondents stressed that short stories have contextual vocabulary used in a natural manner, and learners also encounter new lexis which they can put to their use. Some of the respondents revealed that new words and expressions are used appropriately, and the vocabulary is mostly unmodified and authentic. Few said that it exposes learners to specific sociocultural expressions which are not usually available in their texts books

Interview Question No. 6:

Teaching English through short story enables learners to speak and write about the culture depicted in the story. How?

Analysis

The remarks given by the interviewees are versatile and multifaceted with regard to using short story, speaking and writing about the depicted culture. Majority of the respondents spoke about its sociocultural benefits asserting that it gives insight into foreign culture and reduces antagonism towards the target language. Teaching English language through short stories gives

learners moral and ethical training, and they are also warned of the consequences of indulging in evils activities, thus it inculcates morality into our youth who are less bothered about it.

Interview Question No. 7:

Do you agree that teaching English through Short stories make English language learning easy because of their rich vocabulary (phrases, expressions and grammar points)?

Analysis

Majority of the respondents replied in positive to the question and added that short stories are taken from real life situation and the language used in them is classical and natural, which truly represents rich, authentic expressions, phrases and vocabulary.

Interview Question No. 8:

Can you teach English grammar rules through short story more easily than teaching them in isolation? If No why, if yes How?

Analysis

Some of the respondents were divided due to certain reasons and some of them were ignorant of teaching grammar through short story or otherwise. Here some are in favor of it and some are against it, forgetting that language is shaped by culture and culture by language in turn. They are interdependent and cannot be separated from each other. So the notion of teaching grammar rules in isolation is a bit absurd compare to through short story, for it is interesting and easy to learn grammar through it because it engages learners in certain activities and those activities are based on grammar in a proper social context.

Interview Question No.9:

Do you agree that reading out dialogues or acting out different roles in short stories improve speaking skill and pronunciation? How?

Analysis

Their assumption is based on behavioristic theory arguing that acting out dialogues and performing different roles improve their speaking skill and pronunciation provided that they are closely watched and supervised by instructors. Further, it can also augment their existing knowledge of the target language. Majority of the respondents agreed that reading out dialogues or acting out different roles improve speaking skill and pronunciation. They thought that reading out dialogues naturally improve their speaking skill because they speak and pronounce the way the characters do and this is done under the supervision of their instructors.

Interview Question No. 10:

Do you believe that through short story, one can learn meanings of words easily because they are directly connected to the situation or the context? How?

Analysis

According to the respondents, meanings of words can pretty easily be grasped as they are used in proper contexts and situations and requiring little efforts on the part of learners. Contrarily some argued that some of the words carry connotation and associative meanings which make it difficult for learners to get meanings as it requires a bit different interpretation. However, another linguistic benefit that short-stories offers in ELT classrooms, are authentic, contextualized, natural and simple dialogues which can help EFL learners not only in understanding the usage of English but also in using these dialogues and structures in their own life. One of the respondents opined that apart from this using short stories in language class also help learners in guessing meaning of the difficult words from the context as they are directly connected to one another compared to other informative texts. From short stories they not only learn essential, selective vocabulary and structures but also idiomatic expressions which the learners need in their day to day life.

Interview Question No.11

Do you think that learning English language through short story facilitates interaction in classroom? How?

Analysis

Majority of the respondents replied in positive that short story has plot, characters, settings and theme, each character has his/her respective role to perform. It has also the beginning middle and end, and usually based on some past historical event or fiction per se but the language is from real life contexts. So, it definitely facilitates interaction in the class. It appeals to learners' emotion and involve them to share their personal opinions on a given topic. Learners have to discuss the plot, setting, characters and theme. It is not just a surface appreciation rather a critical one requiring a lot of consideration and deliberation on the part of the students.

Interview Question No.12:

Do you think that elements of suspense and surprise in short story motivate learners to read it? How?

Analysis

Majority of the respondents replied that short story has beginning, middle and an end which keep their interest alive so learners are anxious to read the whole story in order to know what is likely to happen next. This element of suspense and surprise compel learners to glue to the story just as cricket fans do while watching a cricket match being played between India and

Pakistan. While others replied that one event leads to another that is how learners' interest is kept alive and active throughout, and they are motivated to go through the whole story. In that case, knowing the meanings of individual words or phrases becomes less important for learners than pursuing the development of the story. Due to being short, it makes the students' reading task easier. And another important feature of short story is its being universal. To put it differently, students all over the world have experienced stories and can relate to them.

Interview Question No.13:

Do you believe that teaching English through short stories develops creative faculty of learners?

Analysis

Some of the respondents replied that teaching English through short story enhances learners' creativity, higher-order thinking and imaginative faculty because they are interacting with text in a creative and critical way. It also enlarges readers' worldviews about different cultures and different groups of people. Others recommended that the learners are obliged to share and discuss their understanding of the given story with their classmate leads to critical and imaginative thinking, and involve personal exploration. Short stories also develop students' interpretative abilities and help them expand their language awareness. It also serves as a springboard for the development of critical thinking and aesthetic appreciation while discussing the intricacies and twist of the plot. Learners can be asked to write something creatively using short story as a prompt for their writing. It also came up during the interview that it allows the learners to think outside the box and develop their own ideas.

Interview Question No.14:

Do you think that teaching English language through short stories is easy because learner identifies himself/herself with characters in a story? How?

Analysis

Most of the interviewees said that short fictions have mostly universal themes and often attractive topical sentence that arrest readers' attention to itself, so learners are inclined to read it to the end to find out what is going to happen in the story or how the conflict arises and resolved finally. Learners' identification with some characters in a short story is motivating for their personal involvement. Students can also learn how characters use. English for various purposes, or in different contexts, and also get the opportunity to understand the usage of English in a better way. They may find a character in some conflicts and problems which the learner himself or herself is passing through. It helps them in learning and understanding many problems in their own life in a better way. Likewise, help them in their personal growth as they feel quite motivated after reading the story. At times they may imagine themselves with some characters and get involved in the stories emotionally. Sometimes they laugh and sometimes they cry with characters in stories as they making emotional appeal to them and help them to release their pent up feelings.

Interview Question No.15:

Do you think teaching English language through short stories is beneficial because they often deal with universal themes such as love and war which are not usually available in the course books?

Analysis

Some of the respondents thought that short stories based on the themes of war and love etc. gives learners an opportunity to explore their feelings through the experiences of others. For example, (A1) said that characters in short stories represent us through their roles and action that closely resemble our personalities and character, and hence we get an opportunity of discovering our ignored grey area. Similarly, it becomes easy and interesting for them, as it displays their inner feelings, to read it to the end and find out what is likely to happen and how different events are taking place and new developments are made. Likewise, the incorporation of short stories with different themes will cater for different individuals' interests and tastes. The themes of war and love are alluring to students because of their glorified nature. It also teaches them how war and love are viewed in other societies and culture. It opens up new avenues to learners to look into them and get insight into the cultures of the world. While comparing their culture to other cultures of the world, they come to know about similarities or differences between different cultures. Textbook contents are often unreal and not related to the learners setting in the classroom. Text books usually do not cover the breadth of whole life (there is no topic in the text books where there is any talks about sex, drugs, human relations, sexual relations, sexual orientation, drugs, alcohol etc.). So it is literature that steps in to fill the gap, and beef up topic with authentic materials which has the capability of engaging learners effectively,

Interview Question no 16:

Do you think that teaching English through short stories enables learners to learn English at discourse not at a sentence or words level? How?

Analysis

Majority of the respondents agreed that teaching through short story provides learners with opportunities to learn language in a proper context. It also relates language teaching to real life situations. It enables teachers to teach language as a composite whole. Teaching through short story enables the learners understand the true meaning of the situation presented. It also makes the students learn the applications of language rules in their practical lives. Moreover, Short story is a supreme resource which not only allows learners to observe language but also life itself. In short fiction, characters act out all the real and symbolic acts people carry out in their daily lives, and that is done in a variety of registers and tones. The world of short fiction both mirrors and illuminates human lives (Sage 1987 & Khan 2014).

Interview Question No.17:

Do you believe that using short stories in English Language classroom is beneficial because it gives opportunity to students to talk over characters or events in a story?

Analysis

Majority of the respondents viewed that short story represents life in miniature. It has characters and situations like real life. The characters interact with each other differently in different situations thereby giving learners an insight and thorough understanding of life and people with regard to language use. Furthermore, it empowers the learners to talk about these characters and events in detail (Short, 1986). This practice develops their speaking and writing skills.

Interview Question No.18:

Do you think translating short stories into first language enables learners to learn English language easily?

Analysis

Most of the respondents opined that translation will definitely enable the learners to understand the story in a better way and will almost never forget it but it will not ensure in the least language learning. It may improve the translating skill of the learners but will definitely stifle their language proficiency and communicative competence. Besides, first language interference will be a great barrier for the learners to learn language. Based on their personal experience and the English language teaching practice in vogue since very long, they thought that translation of short stories will impress the whole story in their minds perfectly.

Interview Question No.19:

Do you think that Teaching English language through language games based on a short story is an easy way of teaching or learning it?

Analysis

A modest majority upheld that teaching through games-based short stories, will make language learning an interesting activity for the students. Some of them remarked that teaching through games-based activities will engage them in unconscious learning of the target language. Consequently, teachers will get a satisfactory feedback from the learners which in turn will make teaching an enjoyable task for the instructors as well. It will make language classroom an attractive and delightful place for the learners. Such kind of language teaching will also sharpen the creative faculty of the learners.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The research Question No 1 examines the efficacy of literature in teaching of English language skills (speaking and writing) in general and short stories in particular at intermediate

level. The study revealed that teaching L2 through short stories is useful. During the interview, it was discovered that the integration of literary genre (short stories) is one of the suitable means of teaching L2 skills at higher secondary level. While elaborating on the benefits of short stories, majority of the participants suggested that short stories provide learners with a much-needed target language exposure because it is used in proper context of events. The findings of the current study are in line with the previous research. For example, Littlewoods (1981) emphasizes the importance of using of literature in EFL classes by saying that: lack of creating authentic situations in language teaching classroom causes a major problem in language classrooms, and especially those outside the native community, which are cut off from the real social context where natural language is produced. In this case, literature can overcome it because it can create its own context. Literary genre (short stories) has the potential to enable learners to use it in their real-life situations. The respondents emphasized that short stories are interesting and involving forcing learners to read them till the end to find out what will happen in the end, and how the conflict is resolved. They further added that they can teach idioms, phrases and special expressions. According to the respondents, short stories inform them of sociocultural aspects of language such as cultural familiarity. To support this, Ziesing (2001) contends that there is a link between cultural literacy and language fluency. They say that it exposes learners to specific cultural expression which are not usually available in other text books. With respect to speaking and writing skills, they believe that by arranging proper presentations, assignments and different roles for students to enact, and having the opportunities to share ones' experiences with another classmate not only promote speaking skill but also reinforces a thoughtful and critical discussion, and enrich their cognitive abilities such as critical thinking and reflection. Through short stories, learners can explore as to how much English language is flexible that native speakers bend it to meet the need of the conditions. This enables learners to fiddle around with linguistic elements. The respondents said that learners have abundance of opportunities to learn and practice figurative use of language, and different registers by varying the people to whom they speak and write.

5. Recommendations

The study presents the following recommendations for improvement of teaching and learning of L2. Teachers should adopt teaching strategies and methodologies in accordance with the prevailing practices, and be tailored as per students' needs and expectations, and level of language proficiency. Short story can be used to provide variety of activities by using communicative approach in the class such as reading, listening, writing and speaking. In order to address the absence of clear-cut objectives in teaching L2 professional or relevant trainings for teachers in the field must be given. Teachers should create English speaking environment and avoid using first language.

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