

# SCREENING STUDENTS PROBLEMS IN LEARNING SHORT STORIES AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, BALKH UNIVERSITY

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this mini research is to find out students' problems in learning short stories at English Department, Balkh University. During this field research, the researchers studied many academic articles and journals related to this topic and try to figure out the effective approaches and strategies on developing students' problem in learning short stories. In this study the questionnaire method was used and data were collected from 50 students, English Department, Balkh University. As a results, this mini research suggest the following useful strategies and approaches such as, reading practice, writing short pieces of dairy, and childhood memories would help students to learn short stories and becoming a good reader.*

**Keywords:** *Students' problems in learning short stories, lack of interest in reading culture, lack of students interest in literature genre.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

In this research paper, the researcher tries to find, why students have problems in learning short stories at English Department, Balkh University. As we know learning is an important tool and a light that shows us the right way of achieving our goals therefore, I believe that by reading different types of short stories students can develop their learning abilities. Moreover, through short stories they can learn other subjects especially four skills effectively. Therefore, most of researchers claim that short stories are very useful in different learning classes. In addition, as the researcher clarified the importance of short stories such as, history of short story, elements of short stories, strategies for learning short stories and the role of motivation in learning short stories could be very effective and useful during learning process.

### 1.1 Research Questions

This mini research aims to find the following answers:

- Why do students have problems in learning short stories?
- What are the effective approaches to develop students interest in learning short stories

### 1.2 Research Objectives

- To identify student's problems in learning short stories.
- To suggest effective approaches in learning short stories
- To motivate students in reading literature genre (short stories)

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Short stories are preferred the most important genre of literary text for learning a language. According to Bouache (2010), a short story is an effort of fiction that is commonly written in prose, often in narrative format. It is usually but not necessarily short in size. It is brief and recites a series of events with casual or temporal relationships between them. The short story has a single mood; comic or tragic. So it is the point to be mentioned that we cannot have more than one mood because it is short. Mainly, it presents no more than two characters and one significant event around which the story built. (p.14).

According to Farrah & Abu Zahra (2015), the use of short stories in the language classroom increases student's language awareness, motivation, personal reflection and cultural understanding. So, from this point of view it can be clearer that short stories increase language awareness and the student's motivation. In some classes it is very big problem that the students couldn't have language awareness as well as motivation so it really help them. Personal reflection and cultural understanding is also another important part in a class which can improve through short story. (p.12).

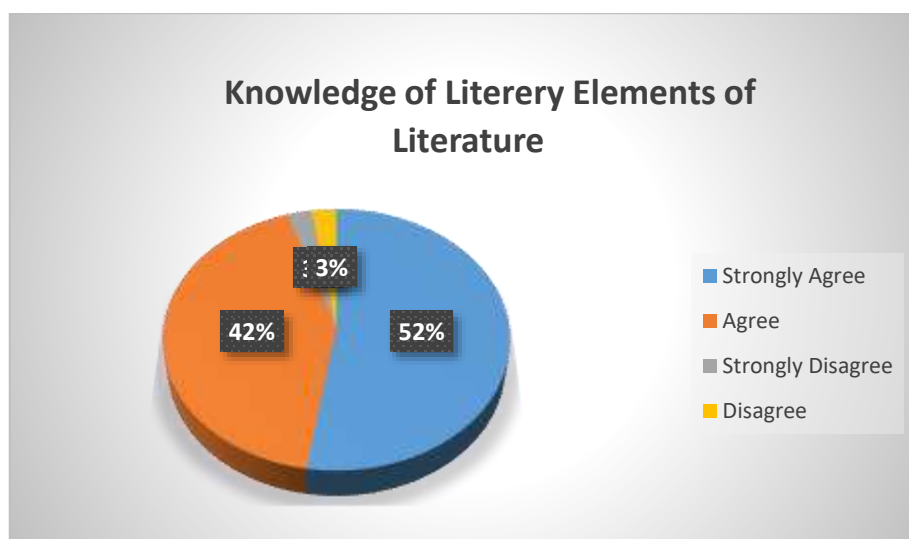
## 3. METHODOLOGY:

This research is based on quantitative research approach using survey design. The respondents of this study were

sophomore and juniors of English Department, Balkh University. They were 50 students both male and female who were selected randomly. The adapted questionnaire consisted of ten open-ended and close ended questions about importance of using movie in learning literature. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in Microsoft Excel (2010).

#### 4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

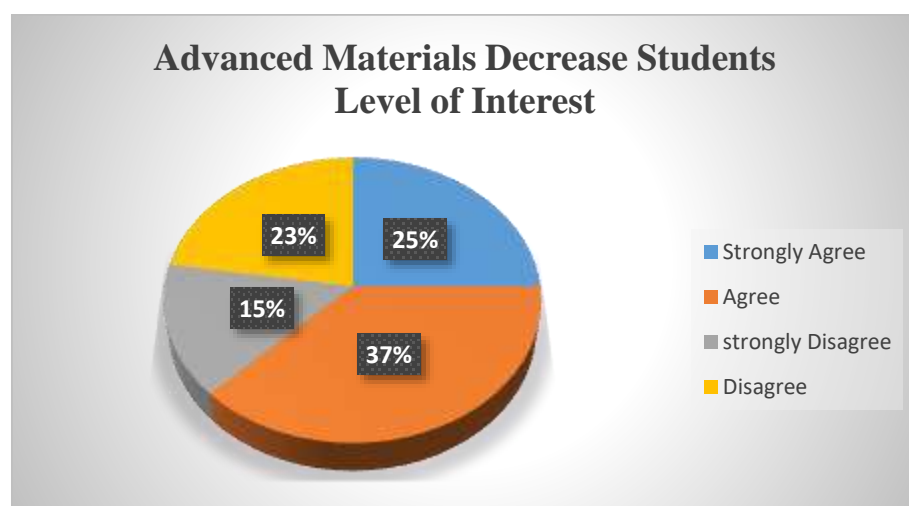
This research paper has been planned to identify students' problems in learning short stories at English Department, Balkh University. Throughout this study, the researchers gathered the answers for the following questionnaires and concluded the findings based on participants point of view. This finding suggests that background knowledge, professional teachers, effective approaches will help students of English Department to learn short stories effectively. In addition, the following tables show how to address consent of student's speeches and their level of agreements throughout research.



**Figure 1:** Knowledge of Literary Elements of Literature

Figure one shows that 52% of students at English Department strongly agreed and like to learn and use elements of short stories. About 42% of them were agreed. The remaining 3% of participants strongly disagreed and 3% were disagreed to use elements of short stories in literature classes.

Figure two states that advanced materials create problem in learning short stories for students. Around 37% of students agreed that using advanced text books and stories will make their job difficult to learn short stories while 25% of students strongly agree on above issues and 23% of them disagreed and 15% of students strongly disagree.

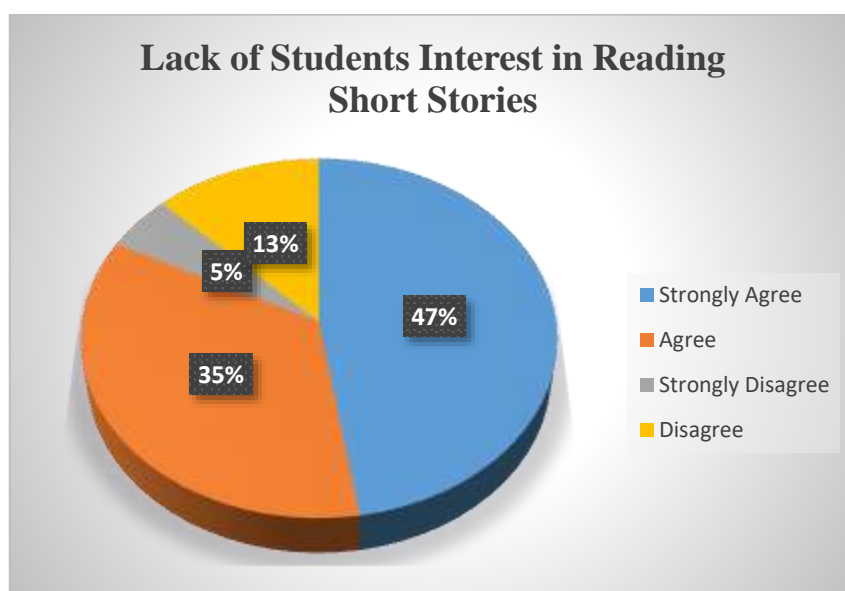


**Figure 2:** Advanced Materials Decrease Students Level of Interest



**Figure 3:** Professional Teachers Help Students to Learning Short Stories Effectively

Figure three illustrates that students were asked about the role of professional teachers in learning short stories. 47% of them strongly agree and said that professional teachers can help them to improve their learning styles and motivate them to read short stories, While 43% Of students agreed and only 5% of them strongly disagree.



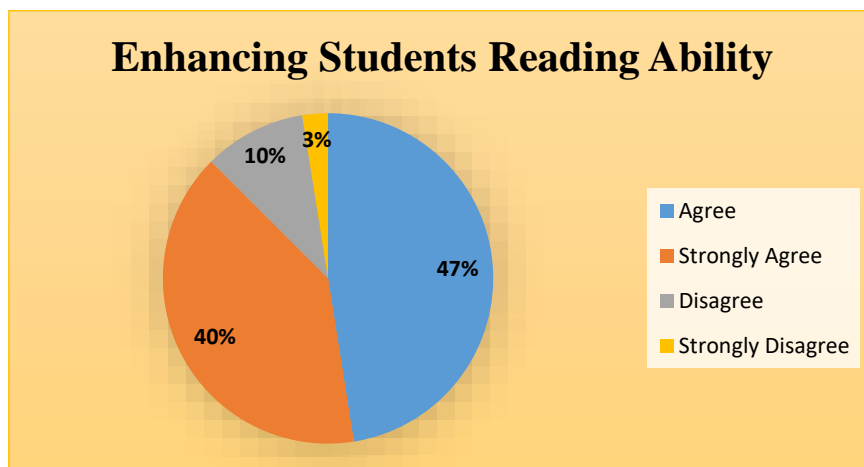
**Figure 4:** Lack of Students Interest in Reading Short Stories

Figure four states that 47% of students strongly agree, 35% of them only agree. The remaining 13% of them declare that lack of their interest is not the only factors that stop them to read short stories, while 5% of the students strongly reject this idea.



**Figure 5:** Effective Strategies of Teaching Short Stories

Figure five illustrates that effective approaches have the highest percentage of motivating students to learn short stories. The result shows that 77% of students strongly support this idea that effective teaching strategies could help them. In addition, the remaining 23% of them only agreed.



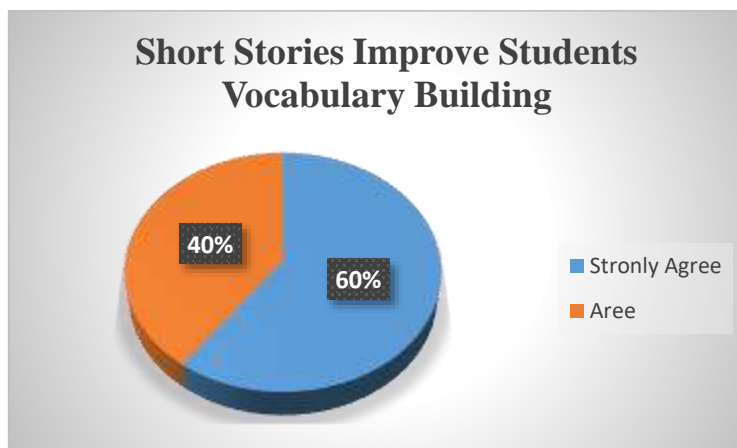
**Figure 6:** Enhancing Students Reading Ability

Figure six states that 47% of students agree that reading short stores can enhance their reading ability. In addition, 40% of them strongly support this idea. Whereas, 10% of students disagreed with this question and the remaining 3% of them strongly reject this idea.



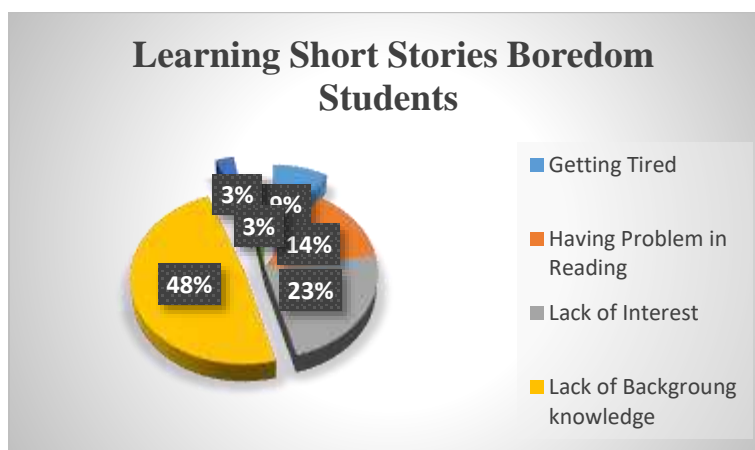
**Figure 7:** Learning Short Stories Help Students to Learn other Subjects Easily

Figure seven shows that, students will easily understand other subjects especially reading and linguistics by learning short stories. In this research the results shows that 60% of them strongly voted yes to and the remaining 40% agreed with idea.



**Figure 8:** Short Stories Improve Students' Vocabulary Building

Figure eight illustrates that reading short stories can improve students' vocabulary building and make the text easy to understand. The finding shows that 60% of them support this idea the remaining 40% only voted yes.



**Figure 9:** Learning Short Stories Boredom Students

Figure nine declares 48% of students believe that lack of background knowledge make them bored while reading a short story. While 23% of participants selected lack of interest, 14% of them have problems in reading, 9% of students chose getting tired, 3% of participants selected less motivation and the remaining 3% of them thinks that lack of professional teachers make them bored to reading short stories in their EFL classes.

## 5. CONCLUSION:

The research shows that most of students at English Department have problems in learning short stories. They believe that number of factors and strategies like, reading practice, effective approaches and background knowledge would help them to learn short stories properly, additionally; students will increase their vocabulary and grammar through reading short stories.

Furthermore, they suggested that learning short stories will increase their motivation and will rich their background knowledge which makes the lessons interesting and effective during learning process. In addition, understanding the importance of short stories elements, types of short stories and having professional teachers in literature classes, will improve students' ability to learn short stories effectively. As we know that literature is one of the basic subjects at English Department therefore, it's highly recommended that literature teachers should consider student's problems in their literature classes. Overall, this research clarified that majority of students at English Department believe that effective approaches; teaching strategies and background knowledge are the main factors which help students to improve learning short stories.

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