

Using Short Short stories in the EFL Classroom

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Abstract

Short stories of about one page in length can be a good motivation for EFL students. First of all, it is short and can attract students to finish the story within a short span of time. Secondly students can practice not only reading skills, but also other necessary language skills like speaking, writing, grammar, and listening. Thirdly, it can be used in class or as a supplementary material which students can do any time any where they feel like to. This paper will discuss the short story that I collected for EFL use which are divided into 4 categories. Besides being short and do not take too much time to complete, many skills in reading eg. vocabulary meaning from context, testing cohesion references or asking for the main idea can all be tested. Furthermore, I'll discuss how the same story can be an input to practice other language skills as stated before. Next, I'll explain how True False questions at the end of the story serve the purpose of testing. Finally, I will discuss the result of my survey I conducted with EFL students in Thailand.

Introduction

Motivating the students to read in the midst of technology breakthrough is a challenging task for teachers. Teachers have to fight with strong competitors like television series, movies, mobiles, internet games, mp3, and other gadgets that the digital technology has offered. It is timely then to turn our attention to the use of short stories in order to motivate the EFL students to read.

Reasons for Using Short Stories in the EFL Classroom

Short story reading taken from current popular British, American magazines will appeal to the new generation of students because of many reasons. First of all, students need to read something whose topic really matches their interest. Short stories' theme is something students can relate to and not something so far away beyond their daily living imagination as Goodman (1972: 117) reaffirmed that "the content of the reading materials must be within the interest, background and experience of the reader...The reader should have his own purpose for reading and it must be important to him." Anderson (1967) also echoed the same idea that reading program can be successful if more reading material according to each child's ability and interest levels are provided. Mary Finocchiaro (1969:139) shared the same line of thinking when saying "the themes should be those which appeal to students because they talk about people, situations, and incidents which they can identify." Secondly, more varieties of short stories or giving more "choices" to read is better for motivating the students as Goodman (1972:117,) stated that "Readers should be encouraged to select material on the basis of their own criteria of interest and ease.