

## **BRIDGING LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE: THE CONSEQUENCES OF TEACHING GRAMMAR USING SHORT STORIES**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the impact of teaching grammar using Afro-Asian short stories on Grade 8 student participants in one of the schools of Misamis Oriental, Philippines. The focus was on these student participants' proficiency levels and behaviors through closed-ended self-assessments. Employing a quasi-experimental design, 16 students participated in 5-day grammar sessions covering context clues, structural analysis, modal verbs, transition signals, and parenthetical phrases, accompanied by a self-assessment survey. Pre-test results showed a mean score of 20.94, reflecting low initial grammar proficiency. The lessons integrated Afro-Asian short stories aligned with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) and the English Curriculum Guide (ECG), utilizing Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Sysoyev's 3Es (exploration, explanation, expression) as theoretical foundations. Posttest results indicated a mean score of 32.75, demonstrating a significant improvement in students' grammar proficiency. The Wilcoxon Signed-rank test confirmed a highly significant difference between pre-test and posttest scores, indicating the effectiveness of the intervention and a marked enhancement in students' grammar proficiency.

**Keywords:** Afro-Asian Short Stories, Grammar Learning Interventions, Teaching Grammar, Quasi-Experimental Design, Zone of Proximal Development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, English became the most common language. As the globe unified into a global civilization regularly affected by new technology, the requirement for English language ability grew. Wilkins (2007), as cited in Research and Education Journal (2020), asserted that language had a grammatical framework for expressing meanings. As a result, grammar was inextricably linked to language. English had long been a requirement for many academic programs in the Philippines. It still is part of the core components of any evolved curriculum. With a majority of Filipinos having some fluency, the Philippines is one of the largest English-speaking countries in the world. More than 14 million people speak English, which has traditionally been one of the country's official languages (Cabigon, 2015).

However, according to the Philippines' English proficiency standards, (Filipino) English proficiency had been decreasing for years because of some specific factors or reasons (Fernandez, Ilustre, and Santos, 2022). English was always used as the primary language of instruction in the majority of courses in Philippine schools; however, students frequently encountered difficulties in honing their grammar skills. Moreover, there was a discernible gap in their grasp of basic grammar sentence formation (De Vera & Sioco, 2018). Grammar, along with motivation, pronunciation, and vocabulary, were some of the primary elements impacting the competency of the student participants in Pangket's (2019) study entitled "Oral English Proficiency: Factors Affecting the Learners' Development" as cited in Fernandez, Ilustre, and Santos's study (2022). The elements that demotivated students from learning English included a lack of enthusiasm, inadequate vocabulary, and inadequate training. Also, the English spoken by Filipinos had "deteriorated," according to Suarez (2020) as cited in Fernandez, Ilustre, and Santos (2022).

On the other hand, according to Brun-Mercer (2022), with some creativity, grammar may be taught through stories to help students improve their grammatical skills. Incorporating short stories into grammar practice both inside and outside of the classroom was particularly effective because students could: (1) see how grammar was used in authentic contexts; (2) remember the grammar more easily than with discrete sentences on unrelated topics; (3) develop their creativity; (4) learn about significant people and events, both in the past and present; (5) feel recognized and empowered when they succeeded, and (6) be motivated to learn more or take action on a topic that was very important to them.

Sharma et al. (2022) found that reading literature enhanced grammar and syntax knowledge, supporting this study's finding that short stories improved grammar learning with authentic content. Similarly, Dio and Estremera (2022) highlighted literature as a popular method for teaching language skills and areas in their study, 'Literature: An Essential Tool in Language Teaching.' Rodriguez's (2017) study also showed that listening to and reading short stories enhanced students' linguistic competence. This technique could be used at different levels, as proven by Vandana (2022), who demonstrated that storytelling was the best approach for students of any age group to practice vocabulary and grammar.

This study was based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), along with Sysoyev's 3Es: exploring, explaining, and expressing language. It was believed that language is a social process that works best when students collaborate with each other. This type of learning happens through social interaction where children engage with people, objects, and events in their surroundings, as stated by Vygotsky (1986) as cited in Alqahtani (2022). Language exploration, explanation, and expression were the three processes that comprised integrative grammar, according to Sysoyev (1999) as cited in Alqahtani (2022).

Taking into consideration the findings of the researchers aforementioned, the present study selected suggested designed grammar activities to be integrated in the Afro-Asian short stories discussion in Grade 8 student participants. The concept of 3E's by Sysoyev followed procedures as they enabled the integrative grammar process. The student participants were given different sentences in the first stage to teach a certain grammatical rule. Following that, the instructor had the students work in groups to identify the grammar pattern and explore the new grammar rules. The student participants were required to summarize what they had learned in the first stage, this time with a form-specific focus. In the last stage, student participants were required to set the rules they had learned to work by engaging with their peers. Students could learn to tackle problems above their present levels with the help of an adult or a more experienced peer. Another concept of Vygotsky's ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) was utilized in the same research (Alqahtani, 2022) to describe the cognitive growth that resulted from the interaction between a student and other knowledgeable peers and/or teachers. He asserted that knowledge was different from learning and that learners could increase their knowledge if given a setting for social interaction in which they could benefit from such encounters. In this study, the researchers aimed to answer the following questions: 1) What was the Grammar Proficiency level of Grade 8 student participants before the use of short stories in teaching grammar lessons? 2) What were the short stories and their grammar lessons that were used in teaching? 3) What was the Grammar Proficiency level of Grade 8 student participants after the use of short stories in teaching grammar? 4) What were the student participants' attitudes toward the use of short stories in teaching grammar?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review highlighted the significant role of short stories in enhancing students' grammar proficiency by integrating these narratives into grammar teaching. This method provided authentic, engaging, and contextualized content that helped students grasp and apply grammatical concepts more effectively. According to Brun-Mercer (2022), literature offered authentic language exposure, which increased linguistic awareness and grammar skills. According to Hansen (2022), short stories are characterized as concise narratives with characters and incidents which make them suitable for classroom use. The key elements of short stories, as outlined by Al Alami (2012) as cited in Al Alami (2016), similarly with Yamasaki (2022), include: point of view, character, plot, setting, theme, and style. These provided multiple opportunities for students to practice grammar. It was also emphasized by Rodriquez (2017) that combining grammar instruction with short stories allowed students to

enhance their language proficiency through naturally applying grammar rules. Literary texts were discovered to have connected with various learning styles and offered multisensory experiences, which enhanced grammar learning outcomes, according to Dio and Estremera (2022). The researchers reviewed the use of Afro-Asian short stories in Grade 8 English classes, including works such as "The Soul of the Great Bell" by Lafcadio Hearn, "Open House" by Musa Nagenda, "The Story of the Aged Mother" by Matsuo Basho, "Makato and The Cowrie Shell" by Supanee Khanchanathiti, and "Outwitting A Crocodile" retold by Chok Yoon Foo. These culturally rich stories served as valuable resources for capturing students' attention and improving their language skills.

Sharma et al. (2022) suggested that captivating stories found in Afro-Asian literature provide a valuable way to teach grammar in enhancing both the student interest and skill. Lazar (1993) in Clanfield (2018), as cited in De Vera and Sagun, (2019) and Choden et al. (2019) supported the idea of teaching of grammar in context, as this approach allows students to understand and apply grammar rules more effectively. Kahraman and Şentürk (2020) also highlighted that being proficient in grammar is essential for language learning and in professional settings, reinforcing the need for innovative teaching methods such as integrating short stories.

Verdeflor (2018) and Yoshida (2019) also explained as cited in Rodriguez and Rodriguez (2022) how Afro-Asian literature's oral traditions and modern expressions showed different cultural stories, helping students improve both their cultural understanding and language skills. Similarly, it also highlighted the value of using literature in language teaching, stating that it helped developed four language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—while also teaching grammar rules and vocabulary, as Pardede (2011) mentioned in Kahraman and Şentürk (2020).

Furthermore, De Vera and Sagun (2019) emphasized the value of Afro-Asian literature in the DepEd K to 12 Curriculum for Grade 8 English, pointing out its contribution to improving literacy and language learning. This method not only made grammar lessons more interesting but also led to the significant improvement of students' ability to understand and use of grammatical concepts. By using short stories into grammar instruction, teachers create more meaningful and contextualized learning experience, which in turn strengthened their grammatical abilities and overall proficiency.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

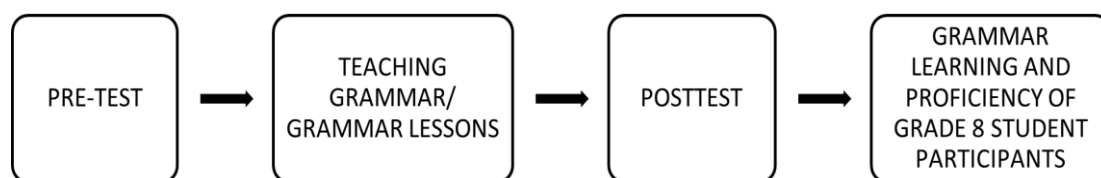
#### ***A. Research Design***

The study employed a quasi-experimental design, conducting both pre-test and posttest to assessments to assess the influence of short stories on grammar learning. In this approach, a single group of student participants was selected, and their grammar skills were measured both prior to and following the intervention. The goal was to identify any improvements in their grammar proficiency that could be attributed specifically to the use of short stories as a teaching tool.

### ***B. Research Subject***

The study involved 36 Grade 8 student participants from a school located in Misamis Oriental, Philippines. However, only 16 students completed the entire process of testing and survey participation. These 16 student participants were provided with a specific and representative sample, which was used to assess the effectiveness of integrating short stories into grammar instruction. Their responses were carefully analyzed to determine whether the use of short stories could enhance the student participants' understanding and learning of grammar concepts.

### ***C. Conceptual Framework***



**Figure 1: Schematic presentation of the Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of the study was based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which highlighted the crucial role of social interaction in the learning process. Higher levels of understanding could be reached by students through proper guidance and collaboration as suggested by Vygotsky. Sysoyev's 3Es (experience, engagement, and environment) were also integrated in the study, with a significant emphasis placed on the creation of a learning environment that is not only interactive and engaging, but also supportive. This approach aimed at providing students with an atmosphere as conducive to active participation and deeper connection, ultimately to foster improved language acquisition.

### ***D. Data Gathering Procedures***

The researchers began by collecting information about the students and securing permission to conduct the study from the school. The study was conducted for five days, with sessions that included pre-tests, interventions, teaching of short stories and grammar, and posttests. The pre-test was designed to evaluate student participants' grammar skills before teaching, while the posttest was used to assess their progress after the intervention. Both tests were adopted from published materials and Department of Education modules. To ensure fairness, different examples in the context of the stories were included in the posttest discussion which were not given in the test assessments. On the final day, self-assessment surveys were administered to gather student participants' views on their learning experience. The collected data was then analyzed.

### ***E. Materials for Teaching***

The teaching materials consisted of a selection of Afro-Asian short stories, carefully chosen for their cultural significance and their ability to capture student participants' interest. The short stories were selected not only for their literary quality but also for their diverse cultural perspectives. This helped broaden student participants' understanding of diverse traditions and

values in the short stories providing real-life contexts, making grammar instructions more relatable. These stories included "The Soul of the Great Bell" by Lafcadio Hearn, "Makato and The Cowrie Shell" by Supanee Khanchanathiti, "The Story of The Aged Mother" by Matsuo Basho, "Open House" by Musa Nagenda, and "Outwitting A Crocodile" retold by Chok Yoon Foo. Each short story was the basis to create a series of grammar exercises aimed to improve student participants' comprehension and use of grammar rules. These exercises were carefully designed to not only test the student participants' knowledge of grammar but also to encourage them to actively apply the rules in context. The short stories served as a meaningful and engaging medium for teaching grammar, making the learning process both enjoyable and effective by exposing student participants to diverse cultural contexts. To support the lessons, PowerPoint presentations (PPTs) were incorporated. These PPTs included contextualized examples from the short stories and interactive exercises, which helped reinforce grammar concepts. Designed to visually engaged student participants' the presentations provided clear explanations of grammatical rules using excerpts from the short stories.

#### ***F. Survey Questionnaire***

In the methodology, established frameworks from previous research, particularly those by Lhorsumeth (2017) and Şentürk and Kahraman (2020) were used to develop the survey questionnaire, which served as an essential tool for data collection. The questions in the questionnaire were thoughtfully adapted to evaluate student participant's attitudes toward learning English grammar, as well as to examine their perceptions of the role and effectiveness of short stories in instructional settings with the aim to enhance grammar learning.

The survey questionnaire consisted of 15 items, each designed to capture different aspects of student participants' views. A 5-point Likert scale was utilized, offering student participants the options to express their level of agreement, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree," with a neutral midpoint, providing a balanced option for those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements. This scale was in accordance with the guidelines provided by SurveyPlanet (2022) to ensure consistency and reliability in measuring attitude.

In order to ensure face validity, three English teachers from a private school in Kütahya examined the content and structure of the instruments. According to Şentürk and Kahraman (2020), Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the belief questionnaire, which produced a score of .725. This score is considered to indicate satisfactory reliability, as values between 0.5 and 0.9 are generally accepted as reliable, further confirming the reliability of instruments used in their study and, consequently in this study. Furthermore, Lhorsumeth (2017), originally based on the studies of Tantowijaya (2015) and Uysala and Yavuzb (2015), validated the adapted questions of this study in their respective studies. It has been shown through previous application that the items have successfully collected data relevant to the objectives of this study, confirming their validity and reliability in different contexts. As a result, the credibility of the findings is enhanced by the alignment of the survey questionnaire with the recognized methodological standards. This study was guided through a range of different opinions by this scale (survey questionnaire, and other tools and methods in analyzing the data from the survey questionnaire), which helped highlight the various views on

grammar learning. It also revealed how short stories are seen as a tool for improving grammar skills.

### ***G. Pre-test and Posttest***

The pre-test and posttest assessments of this study were pivotal in assessing the effectiveness of teaching grammar using Afro-Asian short stories. They were designed to align with the English Curriculum Guide and the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) from the sources including published textbooks and Department of Education modules. This is to ensure that the targeted grammar skills are effectively measured. Additionally, three experts, including the panelists and adviser of this study further examined the test and questions to ensure validity. The baseline proficiency level was established by the pre-tests' scores. The indicated difficulties experienced by the student participants with the grammar topics such as context clues, modal verbs, and transitional signals had shown below average scores (with the mean of 20.94). The test items were adapted from supplemental materials from Grade 8 learners, including the *Voyages in Communication and Overcoming Challenges* modules, and DepEd materials collaboratively developed by educators. After implementing literature-based interventions, the posttest results revealed a substantial improvement, with average scores rising (with the mean of 32.75). This increase, validated by Wilcoxon Signed-rank Test ( $p = 0.000$ ), confirmed a statistically significant enhancement in grammar proficiency. The findings suggest that integrating short stories provided authentic contexts that improved student participants' understanding and application of grammatical concepts.

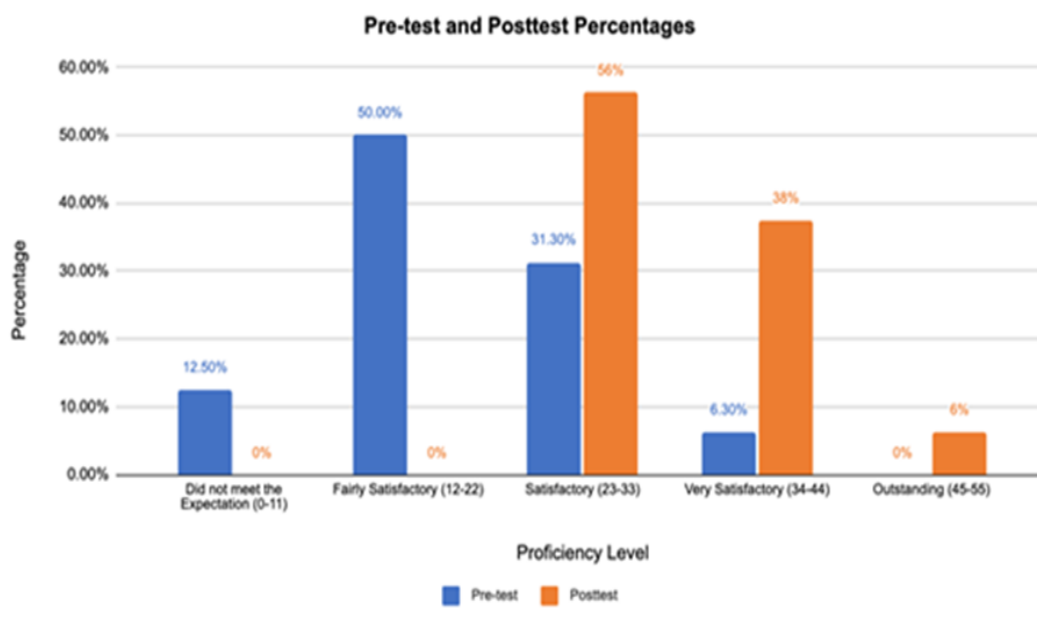
### ***H. Data Analysis***

The study utilized a quasi-experimental approach that combined quantitative assessments through pre-test and posttest questionnaires, along with qualitative interventions and activities, to comprehensively evaluate the impact of teaching grammar using short stories on students' grammar proficiency. Initially, a pre-test was administered to identify the students' baseline grammar proficiency levels. Following the educational interventions, which involved teaching grammar through short stories, a posttest was conducted to determine any improvements in the students' grammar skills. Data from the pre-test and posttest were analyzed by calculating the percentage of students in various performance categories, including Outstanding, Very Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Fairly Satisfactory, and did not meet the Expectation. These percentages allowed for a visual and quantitative assessment of performance shifts. Additionally, the mean scores were calculated to summarize the average student performance before and after the intervention, providing a measure of central tendency. To validate the effectiveness of the teaching method, the Wilcoxon Signed-rank Test, a non-parametric statistical test, was employed to compare the pre-test and posttest scores of the same group of students, determining if the score differences were statistically significant. Through this methodology, the study systematically assessed the initial grammar proficiency of students, implemented an educational intervention using short stories, and measured the outcomes, demonstrating whether the intervention had a significant impact on improving their grammar skills.

#### 4. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

##### A. Grammar Proficiency Level of Grade 8 Student Participants Before the Use of Short Stories in Teaching Grammar Lessons

Before each grammar lesson, students received stories and participated in guided reading sessions of Afro-Asian short stories. They then completed a pre-test on grammar topics like context clues, structural analysis, modal verbs, transition signals, and parenthetical phrases across five sessions. Initially, 36 Grade 8 student participants were part of the study, but only 23 attended at least three sessions and completed both pre-tests and posttests. The researchers further narrowed this group to 16 students who consistently attended all sessions and completed all assessments, ensuring data authenticity. Among the final 16 participants, six had low reading proficiency, including one non-reader and five at the frustration level. Excluded students either attended too few sessions or did not complete the necessary assessments. The researchers switched from the Wilcoxon 2-Sample Paired test to the Wilcoxon Signed-rank test, which was more appropriate for comparing paired data from the same sample. This adjustment provided more accurate results in assessing grammar proficiency improvements after the intervention. Initially, students' grammar proficiency was low, as indicated by pre-test results before the integrated grammar lessons and interventions.



**Figure 2: Students' overall pre-tests and posttests results**

Before incorporating grammar lessons using short stories, 16 students were assessed. Eight fell into the Fairly Satisfactory category with scores between 12-22, and two did not meet expectations with scores between 0-11. Only six students showed higher proficiency: five in the satisfactory category (23-33) and one in the Very Satisfactory category (34-44). After



integrating grammar lessons with short stories, significant improvement was observed. Of the 16 students tested post-intervention, nine reached the satisfactory level (23-33), six achieved Very Satisfactory (34-44), and one excelled to the outstanding level (45-55).

The pre-test scores indicated that unfamiliar grammar topics contributed to students' struggles. However, the use of short stories in grammar lessons improved their proficiency. This method contextualized grammar, enhancing both their understanding and reading skills, which differed from the usual teaching methods, where short stories were only used to enhance reading comprehension. The enhancement of test scores confirmed the effectiveness of using short stories in teaching grammar.

The whole process of social interaction and collaborative activities were facilitated by the theories anchored in this study which are Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Sysoyev's 3E's concepts. In turn, these concepts enriched that student participants' learning experiences within the timeframe of the conduct. These results suggest that the differences in interest, prior knowledge, and motivation differences of student participants reflect with their posttest scores. Nevertheless, the study showed that combining recognized teaching theories with the method of teaching grammar using short stories allows students to achieve Satisfactory, Very Satisfactory, or Outstanding proficiency levels in grammar. This study suggests making stories shorter and activities more engaging to maintain the student participants' interest and participation, as a counter to the short attention span noted during the conduct. These strategies are thought to reduce attention-related issues even with larger student groups, which could enhance future studies.

### ***B. Short Stories and Grammar Lessons Used in Teaching***

The teaching sessions for Grade 8 took place from October 16 to October 23, 2023, following a structured approach that combined short stories, grammar lessons, and activities. Each session was based on the English Curriculum Guide and MELCs, where student participants were involved in distinct topics of pre-tests, short story overview and grammar discussions, activities, and posttest to support their learning. Session 1, on October 16, 2023, tackled context clues centered on "The Soul of the Great Bell" by Lafcadio Hearn, combined a film viewing of the short story. "Open House" by Musa Nagenda was the focus of Session 2 conducted on October 17, 2023, which had a distinct grammar discussion on the basics of structural analysis with story classroom games and activities.

Session 3 held on October 18, 2023, emphasized modal verbs through "The Story of the Aged Mother" by Matsuo Basho with group activities. Session 4 (October 19, 2023) explored "Makato and the Cowrie Shell (A Summary)" by Supanee Khanchanathiti, discussing transition signals through group activities in writing.

Lastly, Session 5 (October 23, 2023) delved into "Outwitting a Crocodile (Kisah Sang Kancil dengan Buaya)" retold by Chok Yoon Foo, emphasizing parenthetical phrases through group discussions and sentence creation exercises.

**C. The Grammar Proficiency Level of Grade 8 Student Participants after the Use of Short Stories in Teaching Grammar**

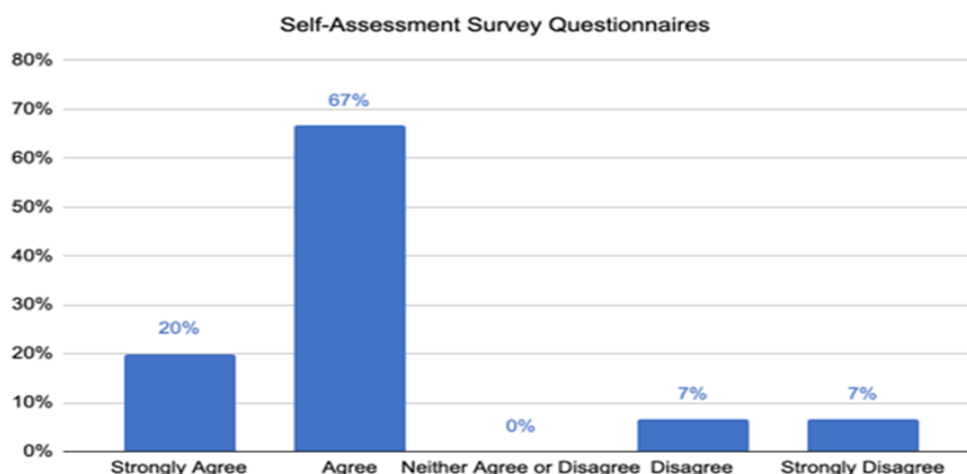
**1) Pre-test and Posttest of Grade 8 Student Participants:**

**Table 1: Wilcoxon Signed-Rank (W) Test for the Grammar Proficiency Level Pre-Test and Posttest Scores**

Variable	N	Mean	Mean Difference	p-value	Interpretation at $\alpha= 0.05$
Pre-test	16	20.94	-11.81	0.000	Highly Significant
Posttest	16	32.75			

In the results detailed in Table 1, utilizing short stories to teach grammar resulted in improved test scores, indicating its effectiveness. Both quantitative data and qualitative feedback from students supported this conclusion. Collaborative activities fostered engagement, transforming initially passive students into active participants. Despite challenges with certain topics, combining short stories with educational theories yielded positive outcomes, notably in test scores and language skills. However, instances of disinterest and distraction were observed, impacting comprehension and test performance. Statistical analysis, with a p-value of 0.000, confirmed a highly significant difference ( $p < 0.001$ ) between pre-test and posttest scores (20.94 out of 54 or 38.78%) and posttest scores (32.75 out of 54 or 60.65%), affirming the effectiveness of the teaching approach. Although the Wilcoxon value is almost zero, the result still implies highly significant. The result suggests that the observed improvements were unlikely due to random chances, strengthening the study's findings. Overall, the study provides robust evidence supporting the efficacy of using short stories for grammar instruction and reliability, affirming the efficacy of integrating short stories into grammar instruction to enhance student learning outcomes.

**D. The Student Participants' Attitude toward the Use of Short**



**Figure 3: Response Description of each percentage in the Self-Assessment Survey Questionnaire acquired from the student participants**

The Self-Assessment Survey Questionnaire shows that most students have positive views on grammar teaching. Specifically, 20% strongly agree, and 66.67% agree with related statements. The survey combines questions from previous studies to comprehensively assess attitudes toward grammar learning, aiming to capture diverse perspectives. Using questions from prior research is crucial for evaluating attitudes before and after a week-long teaching session involving short stories. The absence of "Neither Agree nor Disagree" responses suggests clear opinions, while equal rates of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" responses indicate a low level of disagreement, supporting the overall positive sentiment.

**Table 2: Mean and Responses Description Obtained from the Self- Assessment Survey Questionnaire Answered by the Student Participants**

Statements	Mean	Response Description
1. I generally like the study of grammar.	4.25	Strongly Agree
2. Studying grammar is the basis of fluent English.	3.5	Agree
3. The study of grammar is helpful to my future career.	4.25	Strongly Agree
4. I need conscious knowledge of grammar in order to improve my language.	3.75	Agree
5. My English language will be improved if I study and practice English grammar.	3.81	Agree
6. I tend to give up and not pay attention when I do not understand the teacher's explanation.	2.44	Strongly Disagree
7. When I do not understand English grammar lessons, I feel that it's because of the teacher's teaching style.	1.81	Disagree
8. I need to be consciously aware of the structural forms of English and its function before using English proficiently.	3.44	Agree
9. I can learn English through short stories that are appropriate for my level.	4.06	Agree
10. Contextualized grammar teaching through short stories ensures better understanding.	4.19	Agree
11. Literary texts are more enjoyable than reading passages in our course books.	3.94	Agree
12. I would like to learn English grammar through enjoyable activities such as stories.	4.5	Strongly Agree
13. Learning English grammar through interesting and enjoyable activities can help reduce my anxiety level.	4.13	Agree
14. Literary texts are helpful for my language learning.	4.13	Agree
15. I like reading English literary texts.	3.49	Agree
<b>Overall Mean = 3.74</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 employs a formula ( $C = R/k$ , C: Class size, R: Range, K: Number of options of responses) to assign Response Descriptor scores, translating means into descriptors and capturing student perspectives through self-assessment. This ratio distinguishes agreement levels, like "Strongly Agree" or "Disagree," with a mean of 3.74 suggesting general agreement. Analyzing the survey, drawing from Lhorsumeth (2017) and Şentürk and Kahraman (2020), reveals students' positive attitudes toward grammar learning and the efficacy of short stories in teaching. Majority of the student participants align with survey statements.

## 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Summary of Findings

#### 1) Grammar Proficiency Level of Grade 8 Student Participants Before and After the Use of Short Stories in Teaching Grammar Lessons:

The study focused on Grade 8 student participants' grammar proficiency, comparing their performance before and after integrating short stories into lessons. Prior to the lessons, 50% of students demonstrated a Fairly Satisfactory proficiency level, scoring between 12 and 22 on the pre-test. Additionally, 31.30% achieved a satisfactory level, scoring from 23 to 33, while 12.50% fell below expectations, scoring from 0 to 11, and 6.30% attained a Very Satisfactory level, scoring between 34 and 44. The average pre-test score across all students was 20.94. Following the lessons, the average score significantly improved to 32.75. Posttest results revealed that 56.30% of students reached a satisfactory level, scoring between 23 and 33, indicating the highest participation rate. Moreover, 37.50% achieved a Very Satisfactory level, scoring from 34 to 44, while 6.30% attained an outstanding level, scoring between 45 and 55. These findings underscore the substantial enhancement in students' grammar proficiency attributed to the integration of short stories into teaching. The study reveals significant progress in students' grammar proficiency through the use of short stories in teaching. Before the interventions, a majority of students fell into Fairly Satisfactory or did not meet Expectation proficiency levels, with only a few reaching Satisfactory or Very Satisfactory levels. However, after the lessons, all students showed improvement, with the majority achieving Satisfactory or Very Satisfactory levels, and some even reaching outstanding proficiency. This positive shift is evident in both quantitative analysis and comparison of pre-test and posttest scores. Additionally, statistical tests confirm the effectiveness of the interventions. These findings align with previous research on the benefits of incorporating literary texts in language learning.

#### 2) Short Stories and their Grammar Lesson that were Used in Teaching:

The teaching sessions incorporated various short stories to highlight specific grammar lessons. In Session 1, the focus was on understanding Context Clues through Lafcadio Hearn's "The Soul of the Great Bell." Session 2 delved into prefixes, root/base, and suffixes (Structural Analysis) using Musa Nagenda's "Open House." Session 3 centered on Modal Verbs with Matsuo Basho's "The Story of the Aged Mother." Transition signals were explored in Session 4 with Supanee Khanchanathiti's "Makato and the Cowrie Shell (A Summary)." Session 5 introduced different types of parenthetical phrases using Chok Yoon Foo's "Outwitting a Crocodile (Kisah Sang Kancil dengan Buaya)." These stories were sourced from DepEd English Modules for Grade 8 and Voyages in Communication Learner's Material for Grade 8. The lesson structure included pre-test, story reading (supported by video viewing in Sessions 1 and 4), comprehension tasks, contextual discussions, intervention, and posttest assessments.

#### 3) Students' Attitude toward the Use of Short Stories in Teaching Grammar:

The Self-Assessment Survey Questionnaire revealed that 87% of statements, or 13 out of 15, showed positive attitudes towards English grammar, learning, and teaching methods, including

short stories. Conversely, 13% of statements, or 2 out of 15, expressed negativity towards teaching style and grammar lessons. Student behaviors reflected this positivity, with most agreeing with positively framed statements and strongly disagreeing with negative ones. There were some hesitations among the student participants when encouraged to participate in the lessons. Some student participants also showed signs of disinterest and got distracted during the sessions, which affected their performance. This explains why a few still had trouble with some topics such as structural analysis and modal verbs. Even so, the study noted significant improvement in the student participants' engagement and enthusiasm with the grammar instructions grounded on the short stories, as seen in other similar studies. Furthermore, students soon became more involved in learning, reflected in the fact that most students improved their understanding of grammar which led them to gain higher test scores and higher proficiency levels as measured. Consequently, the study does not only highlight the effectiveness of the method in enhancing student participants' engagement, but also the value of using short stories to teach grammar to foster more meaningful learning experiences.

The findings are supported by various prior studies in a way that their perspective resembles the effectiveness of short stories in teaching grammar, and despite some challenges noted, the method allows students to engage more in meaningful learning experiences. The authors, similarly, assert the following consequences:

One of short stories' role is an authentic context for comprehending grammar, in Brun-Mercer's (2022) "Once upon a Noun: Stories to Teach Grammar."

Short stories are marked by its valuable contribution to enhancing grammar learning in English language teaching, in Rodriguez (2017) and Ziya (2009) as cited in Kahraman and Şentürk (2020).

Literature which includes short stories, is highlighted significantly in refining knowledge in grammar and syntax, as stated in Sharma et al. (2022).

Literary works such as short stories functions as a crucial source of English language teaching-learning process aiding the grammar instruction, which Kahraman and Şentürk (2020) supports.

## ***B. Conclusions***

The session included pre-tests, introductions of the short stories, discussions, post-discussion activities, posttest, and yielded higher test scores of the student participants. This reflects the effectiveness of the concepts used in the study. The teaching-learning process, integrating Vygotsky's ZPD theory and Sysoyev's 3Es, allowed the Grade 8 student participants' progress in their grammar proficiency, from Fairly Satisfactory to Satisfactory, Very Satisfactory and Outstanding levels. Afro-Asian short stories did not only made grammar more relatable and memorable for the student participants' but also fostered attitudes and behaviors toward grammar and stimulated their engagement and comprehension abilities. Thus, this method enhanced student participants' language learning success whilst improved comprehension and retention in grammar lessons through the connected grammar rules and real-world experiences.

### ***C. Recommendations***

The integration of diagnostic test into the study is recommended to improve the validity of outcomes. The need to give more attention to the student participants' reading skills was also realized. It was understood that it could have led to outcomes and perspectives highly expected and leaning more to the positive side, with approaches such as allocating additional time and considering the use of shorter, localized stories. In other words, to improve the overall results, including this advice alongside extending the period of the research would also help attain more favorable test outcomes. When the goal is mitigating bias and enhancing data reliability, involving larger groups of student participants is beneficial as well as identifying the suitable statistical tools early on will ensure a more thorough and reliable analysis.

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