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The Effect of Applying JOIN Strategy on Developing Iraqi EFL College Students' Comprehension of Short Stories

A B S T R A C T

There has been an increasing recent interest in using JOIN strategy in teaching various aspects of EFL. This study tries to find out the extent to which this strategy can be applied to teaching short stories. It also aims to find out whether or not using this strategy can lead to any progress in developing students' comprehension of short stories. To conduct the study, it is hypothesized that there is no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group, which is taught by the JOIN strategy and the control group which is taught by the traditional strategy in the posttest achievement in short stories. To achieve the aim of the study and verify its hypotheses two types of procedures have been following: Theoretical and practical. The theoretical procedures consist of presenting a theoretical framework of JOIN strategy including their characteristics, principles, The practical procedures consist of conducting an experimental which last for fifteen weeks. The total numbers of sample subjects was (75) students: (35) in experimental group and (40) students in the control group. The two groups were exposed to an achievement posttest after ensuring its validity and reliability. Suitable statistical tools have been used to analyses to the results of the study. The results have also shown that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in favour of the experimental group.

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أثر تطبيق استراتيجية JOIN في تطوير إستيعاب طلبة الكليات العراقية داري اللغة الانكليزية لغة
أجنبية في القصص القصيرة

نغم قدوري يحيى / جامعة تكريت/كلية التربية للعلوم للعلوم الانسانية
إسماعيل داود سلومي

الخلاصة:

شهدت الآونة الاخيرة أهتماماً متزايداً باستخدام استراتيجية JOIN في تدريس جوانب مختلفة في
اللغة الأنكليزية لغة أجنبية، وهذا الأهتمام المتزايد يتطلب دراسة فعالية استخدام هذه الاستراتيجية في تدريس

بعض المواد التي لم يتم دراستها ومن ضمن هذه المواد القصة القصيرة. وتهدف هذه الدراسة الى التعرف على مدى إمكانية تطبيق هذه الاستراتيجية في تدريس القصة القصيرة وكذلك تهدف الدراسة إلى معرفة مدى إمكانية تطبيق هذه الاستراتيجية في تحقيق التقدم في تطوير قابلية الطلبة في أستيعاب القصة القصيرة.

وتفترض الدراسة بأن ليست هنالك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطي درجات المجموعة التجريبية والتي تدرس بأستخدام استراتيجية JOIN ومتوسط تحصيل الطلبة في المجموعة الضابطة والتي تدرس بالطريقة التقليدية في الاختبار التحصيلي البعدي في مادة القصة القصيرة.

ولغرض تحقيق أهداف الدراسة والتحقق من صدق فرضياتها تم أتباع نوعين من الإجراءات: نظرية وعملية وتتألف الإجراءات النظرية من تقديم إطار نظري حول استراتيجية JOIN، ويتضمن هذا الإطار الخصائص والمبادئ والأنشطة الصفية الخاصة بهذه الاستراتيجية. أما الإجراءات العملية فتتمثل بإجراء تجربة أستغرقت خمسة عشر أسبوعاً وتم خلال هذه التجربة تطبيق هذه الاستراتيجية على المجموعة التجريبية في حين تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة بأستخدام الطريقة التقليدية. وبلغ عدد عدد أفراد العينة (٧٥) طالب وطالبة، (٣٥) في المجموعة تجريبية و(٤٠) منهم في المجموعة الضابطة. وتم تطبيق أختبار تحصيلي بعدي أعده البحث عن المجموعتين بعد التحقق من صدق الاختبار وثباته وتم أستخدم الوسائل الأحصائية المناسبة لتحليل نتائج الدراسة، وأظهر تحليل النتائج وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى (٥%) بين متوسطات تحصيل الطلبة في المجموعة التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة لصالح المجموعة التجريبية والتي تم تدريسها بأستخدام استراتيجية JOIN .

SECTION ONE: Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

One of the literary and innovative subjects in foreign language teaching methodology is teaching short stories. It is an influential and powerful way in increasing students' literary strategies, abilities and skills. It represents the imaginative art by the flow or connection of words and sentences to form wonderful literary texts. It portrays the particular conventions and regulations utilized to elicit emotional and figurative features students make use of to interpret the context. Teachers, on their part, feel that teaching short stories is necessary for precise and effective learning. In addition to providing artistic and aesthetic traits, short stories are fruitful grounds for teaching EFL, as they

provide examples and instances of authentic fields for examining and detecting linguistic aspects (Sage, 1987:1f).

Put it in another way, to teach short stories, many teachers focus on memorizing unlimited number of literary words and expressions, grammatical structures, and reading classical poetry only (Grammar translation method). They neglect the technological communicative, and imaginative aspects of teaching poetry, and the new reading strategies which are the most important part in developing the students' abilities in teaching poetry strategies (Arikan,2005:33f).

Hence, in correlation with the above discussion, the researcher finds that applying new strategies to teaching short stories might be so helpful to both EFL teachers and students, as those teachers are still facing difficulty in how to provide their students with positive experiences, opportunities and new strategies to learn literary texts, including short stories. This is due to the fact that teachers are enforced to reflect their negative experiences of teaching short stories (Trousdale and Harris, 1993: 33). Therefore, the researcher suggests applying JOIN strategy to teach Iraqi EFL college second-year students' short stories which attempt to raise the standards of students in English language. This strategy can be explained as follows:

- Judge the new information for telling facts.
- Observe obvious connections.
- Identify patterns, and find a fit.
- Name the connection that makes sense.

(Bellanca et al., 2012:149).

1.2 Aim of the Study

The study aims at:

The effect of JOIN strategy on the Iraqi EFL college students in the comprehension of short stories;

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

The aim of the study are supposed to be achieved through verifying the following hypothesis:

- There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group, which is taught by the JOIN strategy, and the control group which is taught by the traditional in their achievement in short stories.

1.4 Value of the Study

This study is thought to be fruitful to:

1. EFL college instructors (particularly those teaching literary subjects such as, short stories, drama, poetry and novel) in order to change their orientation from a view of teaching as static, with simple rules, to teaching as dynamic and ever changing.

2. Curriculum planners ought to include some knowledge on how to teach short stories at different levels at the beginning of the courses by suggesting different teaching strategies to be implemented by the teachers.

1.5 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to second year EFL College students at the College of Education for Humanities / University of Diyala who are studying short stories during the academic year 2017/2018.

1.6 Definitions of Basic Terms

The main terms that revolve around this study and which constitute the cornerstone of the basics of the chapters are:

1.6.1 Effect

Good (1973: 295) views an effect as "the effect of the experimental factor under controlled condition on the control variable".

1.6.2 Short Stories

A short story is often defined as a relatively short narrative which consists of less than 10.000 words. It is written to produce a "single dominant effect" and to involve the elements of drama". Generally, it revolves around "a single character in a single situation at a single moment". Nevertheless, a short story has to exhibit unity as its basic characteristics (Al-Je'zairi and Sesi, 1974:387).

1.6.3 Strategy

Generally speaking, a strategy refers to "a plan of action designed to achieve an overall aim" or as Brown (2000: 112f) puts it, strategies are "specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information.

1.6.4 Comprehension

Mrunalini (2008: 70) represents comprehension as "the first level of understanding. The handling of information extends beyond the memorization of previously learned material to changing its form or making simple interpretations".

1.6.5 JOIN

This strategy is defined by Bellanca et al. (2012:149), and therefore, no previous definition of this strategy has been given.

JOIN consists of:

- Judge the new information for telling facts.
- Observe obvious connections.
- Identify patterns, and find a fit.
- Name the connection that makes sense.

1.7 Plan of the Study

The following steps have been adopted to carry out the practical side of the study:

1. Selecting two groups: one as experimental and one as a control;
2. Specifying the topics to be taught to second year EFL College students during the experimental period of current study;
3. Identifying the steps to be followed for applying JOIN strategy then exposing the lesson plans to experts in ELT and literature;
4. Constructing a post achievement test in short stories;
5. Employing JOIN strategy for teaching the first experimental group,
6. Applying the posttest on the three groups at the end of the experiment; and
7. Analyzing the collected data by using suitable statistical methods and then stating results, conclusions, pedagogical recommendation, and suggestions.

SECTION TWO: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 An Introductory Note

This section is mainly devoted to the presentation of the theoretical background of strategies followed in teaching short stories, focusing on the **JOIN** as the ones that will be applied in this study to reveal their effects and influences on improving Iraqi EFL students' comprehension of short stories.. In order to account for the detailed description of the components of this chapter, it is divided into three parts:

PART ONE: SHORT STORIES: PRELIMINARIES

2.2 Short Stories: Introduction

A short story is an essential and interesting instructional subject of literary program, which is studied in Iraqi universities, particularly at the departments of English. In everyday life, people resort to short stories for attaining various

functions short stories are often manipulated as a means for increasing getting aware of centuries, for amusing and teaching the people because of their descriptive power and characteristic form. Short stories give the students a type of language, which would be somehow more fluent and acceptable than other types of prose (Aziz, 2012: 1-2).

Furthermore, a short story can be "as simple as a joke or an anecdote or as complex as a short novel". Our daily conversations are full of "stories, long and short, true or fictional". These stories inform us to share our "experiences with others", or mostly to teach, amuse, terrify, or motivate them. Many ideas in stories come from events of our everyday life, particularly from the writer's own life. Yet, writers maneuver in the way they present stories. For example, instead of retelling what happened, competent writers tends to "rearrange the chronology, change or combine characters, or move or invent setting – all to achieve some desired end" (Gordon and Kuehner,1999 :vii).

Generally speaking, they (ibid) expound that short stories are made on the basis of the following fundamental premises:

1. They *have a formal structure*, i.e. beginning, middle and end.
2. They *exhibit causality* (cause and effect) which reveals why characters act as they do and what the results of their actions are.
3. They *develop and end inevitably*, i.e. all actions, the happenings or the series of events in a story, should seem inevitable, particularly the end.
4. They *establish an atmosphere*, i.e. the mood of the story should complement the characters and their actions.

2.3 Characteristics of a Short Story

The modern short story form ascended from "oral story-telling civilizations, the short-term moralistic narratives of fables and parables and prose tale", all these forms of a "promptly drawn condition that rapidly comes to its point". Cox (2011:1-2) affirms that being short stories does not mean that

short stories are not easier to read than novels. In this respect, Upreti (2012; 27) sums up the most characteristic features that a short story exhibits as follows:

1. It has the shortness in the number of their dialogues, selection of words, characters, and the details about them. It can be narrated in one setting from half an hour to two hours.
2. It characterizes one aspect of human life only. Plot, setting and characters are fewer expanded in the short story.
3. It has the use of modest, effective and communicative language.

2.4 Techniques of Short Stories

When reading a short story, a lot of questions are raised in our minds concerning the explanatory power and nature that ultimately match with the technical apprehensions of the story. These include:

Traditionally, the existence of a short story form is based on our understanding of the specific elements of that genre. These Elements of short story involves: character, setting, plot, point of view, style, tone, and theme. Generally, these elements of short story can be utilized by readers to augment their understanding and entertainment of the story.

2.4.1 Character

Character is often defined as "the mental, emotional, and social qualities to distinguish one entity from another (people, animals, spirits, automatons, pieces of furniture, and other animated objects)". Characters in short stories are like "real people"; they are also unlike them ((Scholes 1981:11).

Four main types of characters are recognized: *Round*, *Flat*, *Animal* and *static* (stock). A *Round* character is that the reader/listener gets to know well. He/she has a variety of qualities that make them credible. This character is multi-faceted and complex. A *Flat* character is less well developed, and has fewer or limited qualities or belongs to a group, class, or stereotype. An *Animal character* in fact is best performed when a character acts like animals. That is,

the "characterization of animals, inanimate objects, or natural phenomena" are treated as people. Skillful writers exploit this technique to create imaginary even from stuffed toys (*Winnie-the-Pooh*). A *Static (stock) character* is round or flat character that does not change during the story. He/she is the same sort of person from the beginning to the end of the story (Perrine, 1974:67ff).

Setting refers to the scene (time and place) in which the story is to take place. It is a very important element in story building since it offers a background for the events that proceed (Gordon and Kuehner, 1999: 765). In certain cases, it may be symbolic, e.g. a "living room might symbolize isolation from the world so that it becomes more than a mere room". The background setting may often be an important component in the plot, "equal in importance to any of the characters" (Alexander, 1965: 65).

Temporally, the time in short stories can be either "limited"— "very few hours of the action or it may span several years". The place of the story also can be "unremarkable or it can be historical and memorable". Setting may involve various "places or definite the feelings of a particular class in region (Booth et al., 2006:15f). Additionally, Upreti (2012: 25f) illustrates that the setting is very significant in some stories, while it is not in others.

2.4.2 Plot

Plot is often defined as "an author's careful arrangement of incidents in a narrative to achieve a desired effect". This plot may be a long, miserable or entertaining story (Gordon and Kuehner, 1999: vii). Or as Cuddon (1998: 676) puts it, it is "the plan, design, scheme or pattern of events in a play, poem or work of fiction; and further the organization of incident and character in a such a way as to induce curiosity and suspense in the spectator or reader". More specifically, Gill (2006:43) expound that a plot is "the particular order in which an author has chosen to arrange the events of the tale". In other words, a plot is

used to involve "the order of events in which they appear in a tale. A story is the chronological order in which those events would have happened".

Al-Je'zairi and Sesi (1974:15) clarify that plot embraces "a sequence of related events, usually governed by causality". Some stories may comprise a complex network of events, intrigues, mixed identities and possibly violent incidents". Of such types are most suspense stories and traditional stories.

2.4.3 Point of View

Point of view is a technical term for "the way a story is told". It is directed by the writers' descriptions of characters, setting, and events told to the reader throughout the story. In a play, the stage direction provides the beginnings of a special point of view, while a story told in a dialogue would be seen as having no point of view. The reader's attitude which is developed towards the events in the story can be governed by the story writer through "his/her technical management of point of view" (Scholes, 1981: 15).

1. . In the First Person point of view, the story is told by a character within the story, a character using the first person pronoun, in the omniscient point of view, the story is told by the narrator in the third person whose choices and knowledge are free.
2. In the third person limited point of view, the story is told but from the point of view of one character in the story in the third person. In the objective point of view, the author disappears into a kind of wandering sound camera.
3. Style is concerned with how the author says something, the choice of words and the use of language, sentence construction, and imagery, not what the author says.

2.4.4 Theme

Theme is the central idea that binds the story together, which is expressed either directly or indirectly. Specifically, it is the "element that unifies human experiences and condenses their integrative insights"(Al-Muttalibi, 2011: xi).

Importantly, a significant theme which appears in a story may not in another. This is due to the fact that the purpose of one story is different from that of another; "the purpose of the adventure story may be simply to convey readers through a sequence of stimulating adventures, while the purpose of the horror story may be easily to frighten readers." In most cases, the writer exploits many linguistic devices, tools and rhetorical figures (metaphor, simile, symbol, allusion, personification... etc. to express his theme (Arp and Johnson, 2006: 188ff).

PART TWO: TEACHING SHORT STORIES

2.5 Teaching Short Stories

It has been noticed that the employment of literature in EFL classrooms may motivate students "better than abridged and simplified reading passages in students' course books" and that particularly short stories are "ideal literary means for classroom usage" Furthermore, short stories seem to be stimulating to use "both as materials for self-enjoyment and as components of language skill classes" (Pardede, 2011: 22). They present authentic and varied language material and provide students with "contextualized communicative situations, real patterns of social interaction", and use of language and highlight the dominant role of the learner in the learning process and stir up interaction in the classroom" (Collie and Slater, 1987).

The idea of teaching literature, particularly short story compared to other genres, Collie and Slater (1988: 196) confirm that "short stories are the ideal way of introducing students to literature". They provide the teacher with a

"rather convenient vehicle for examining literary elements in a limited context." In the same vein, Crumbley and Smith (2010: 292) maintain that teaching short stories is preferred since it associates "education with entertainment in order to make learning easier and interesting".

2.6 Methods of Teaching Short Stories

I- Subject- Centered Method

One main method of teaching EFL is “subject-centered”, dealing with a type of "classroom that does not discount human subjects and their encounters in a classroom with topics and other humans" (Palmer, 2007: 119,123). In this method, subject necessarily "becomes a double entendre, as the school subjects serve as the media of formation for the human subject" (Pinar, 2012: xv).

The second important facet of subject is linked to human subjects. Actually, teaching and learning are "relational and involve human beings with different views about what is being taught and learned. As human enterprises, teaching and learning acknowledge how complex human relationships are"(Palmer, 2007: 127f).

Active teaching and learning take place when both teachers and students concentrate on and correspondingly captivated by their mutual subject. In this respect, Palmer (1988:116), adopting an almost mystic air, describes this method as a "great thing that speaks to teacher and student alike and represents a transcendence of the two alternatives" (i.e. student- or teacher-centered approaches).

II- Teacher-Centered Method

In teaching a second or a foreign language EFL, the central attention is getting the students to do well on state assigned tests rather than supplying students' necessity (Zohrabi, et al., 2012).

In the same vein, Acat & Dönmez (2009:312) affirm that in teacher-centered teaching and learning, "teachers usually use particular textbooks, which are mostly grammar oriented and to compare the language structures of native and target languages".

In brief, Huba and Freed (2000) argue that in teacher-centered method students are seen as passive learners who inactively gain information. The emphasis is often placed on acquisition of knowledge, and teacher's role is to be mainly the source of knowledge, i.e. information giver and evaluator. Hence, there is no drive for student to improve and develop his knowledge.

III- Student-Centered Method

Student-centered method asserts that the first consideration in a course designing which should be taken is student needs. Besides, it focuses on exercise that requires students to adopt a big part of "responsibility for conducting inquiries, applying knowledge, and making meaning of what they have learned". Student-centered teaching is sometimes associated with "non-directive teaching, which reduces time spent on lectures and increases time spent in class on activities that engage students in analysis, evaluations, problem-solving, and processing information". Student-centered method aims to improve student gratification with the "learning experience and deepen students' understanding of how the knowledge may be valued in their own lives" (Weimer, 2013:47).

PART THREE: Strategies for Teaching Short Stories

2.7 Introduction

Because studying literature can express both cultural morals and universal human principles, its study can stimulate the international communication. In fact, Literature is considered the storeroom of human practices, philosophies and passions, which both teach and entertain readers. The genre of short stories in teaching classroom can be manipulated as a tool to enhance communicative competence and a source for performing interesting language skills and activities (Adhikari, 2006: 98 f).

One of the main reason behind encouraging teaching short stories comes from the fact that is easier to teach short stories in comparison with other types of literature genres (poetry, drama and novel), simply because a story has well defined and sole plot, an normal setting and a small number of characters.

In the literature available, there are a number of methods, strategies, and techniques of teaching short stories which tend to increase EFL students' ability to comprehend and grasp the meaning of the reading texts in English. Among these strategies, *Join* and *Show* strategies are the adopted ones in this study.

JOIN is the reading strategy, which involves: (1) **Judge** the new information for telling facts, (2) **Observe** obvious connections, (3) **Identify** patterns, and find a fit, and (4) **Name** the connection that makes sense (Bellanca, Fogarty and Pete, 2012:149).

2.8 JOIN as a Cognitive Strategy

In their introduction, Bellance, Fogarty and Pete (2012) remark that JOIN strategy is an updated strategy that demonstrates a particular effect. It enables learners to thoughtfully focus on various views. Thus, they attempt try to generate many ideas and themes associated with their own. Generating ideas, themes and relations within the story actually help them to focus on main basics and element to synthesize or appraise the main events of the story. This strategy is an effective device utilized to reach the "connections of the problem through brain storming".

Moreover, *JOIN* strategy can be explicitly used and taught in teaching classroom. It can be practiced limitlessly, and improved in all levels, involving all content spaces. It is essential to know that students make sense of new information by making connections (connecting the dots, themes, perceiving relationships, and noticing how ideas are associated).

Pressley (1995:52) clarifies that in order to apply JOIN strategy effectively, learners are required to own "declarative knowledge (knowing a variety of strategies or steps), procedural knowledge (knowing how to apply different strategies) and condition knowledge (knowing when to use a particular strategy) of strategies".

In conclusion, the application of cognitive strategies, particularly *JOIN* strategy, can stimulus the learners' peculiar "skills, preferences, intentions and interpretations", and the learning context which is comprised of numerous issues such as "task requirements, social environment, and tools available in the situation". In this respect, it is necessary to observe that these issues do not make "strategic activity in an additive manner".

2.9 Purposes of JOIN Strategy

There are a number of educational purposes and objectives behind applying the *JOIN* strategy. In their introduction, Bellanca, Fogarty and Pete (2012) list the main functions of this strategy as follows:

- 1- Determining the main theme,
- 2- Focusing on the other relevant themes,
- 3- Concluding the main theme with other themes,
- 4- Linking new knowledge with prior knowledge,
- 5- Using literary skills to connect disconnected information,
- 6- Writing a summary joining the themes,
- 7-Connecting all ideas,
- 8-Connecting events in time, place, and type, and
- 9- Relating causes to effects.

SECTION THREE: PROCEDURES

3.1 An Introductory Note

This section is devoted to the presentation of explanation of the methodology and procedures followed by the researcher to implement the study, attain the aims and verify the hypothesis of the study.

3.2 Experimental Design

The term experimental design refers to a plan for assigning experimental units to the treatment levels and the statistical analysis associated with the plan (Kirk, 1995:1). Experimental design, in fact, is one of the first steps in educational research to determine the adequacy of the design for answering the research questions (Wiersma and Jurs, 2005:101).

The posttest only control group design is recommended where test units are randomly allocated to an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group is exposed to a treatment and both groups are measured afterwards. This type of design is common when it is not possible to pretest the subjects (Shanghness et al., 2006: 371).

The posttest only control group has been adopted in the current study. This design takes the form illustrated in table (3-1) which includes the following steps:

1. Selecting two groups at random and assigning them to two experimental and one control groups.
2. Administering the independent variables only to the experimental groups.
3. Teaching the control group the same material (English short stories) according to the conventional way, and
4. Subjecting the three groups to a posttest. (Campbell and Stanley, 1963:25).

Table (3-1)**The Experimental Design**

Groups	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Posttest
Experimental	JOIN Strategy	Comprehension of Short Stories	Measurement After the Experiment
Control	Traditional Treatment	Comprehension of Short Stories	Measurement After the Experiment

3.3 Population and Sample Selection

According to Arikunto (2006: 130), population is the totality of the research subject, while sample is a portion of the population that is researched in a research. Definitely, the population involves all individuals that are related to object of the research. The population of the present study includes 118 second – year students, Department of English Language, Collage of Education for Humanities, at the University of Diyala. The population comprises 118 Iraqi EFL students distributed over two sections **A**, **B**.

(75) Second - year students have been selected to be the sample of the present study after excluding the other 43 students from three sections because some of them were repeaters and some were absentees. Two sections constitute the sample of the study depending on the nature of the current study. Suction **A** has been randomly chosen to be the experimental group being exposed to JOIN strategy includes 35 students, Section **B** as the control group includes 40 students following the traditional method.

3.4 Equalization

In order to assure the results' accuracy and obviate any peripheral intervention, the research attempts to control some variables before the study or to correspond the three groups in the following variables:

3.4.1 Age Variable

The age of students of the two groups is the first variable which has been calculated into months. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) has been used in order to determine whether there were any significance differences among the two groups in age.

It has been found out that the computed F- ratio is 1.563 and the tabulated F- ratio is (3.071) at the level of significance of (0.05). Since the computed F- ratio is lower than tabulated F- ratio with degrees of freedom 2 and 107, this indicates that there are no statistically significance differences among the three groups in the age variable.

3.4.2 Gender Variable

Chi- square formula has been used in order to determine whether there were any significant differences between the two groups in this variable. It has been found out that the computed χ^2 is 6.46 and the tabulated χ^2 is 5.99 at the level of significance of 0.05. Since the computed χ^2 value is higher than tabulated χ^2 value with degree of freedom 2, this indicates that there are statically significant differences between the two groups in the gender variable.

3.4.3 The Academic level of the Mothers' Variable

The Chi-square formula was also used to determine whether there were any significant differences between the two groups in this variable. It has been found out that the computed χ^2 value is 9.17 and the tabulate χ^2 is 9.49 at the level of significance of (0.05). Since the computed χ^2 value is lower than

tabulated χ^2 value with degree of freedom (4), this proves that there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups in this variable.

3.4.3 The Academic level of the Fathers' Variable

By applying the Chi- square, it has been found out that there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups in the academic level of the fathers' variable since the computed χ^2 value is 7.96 which lower than tabulated χ^2 value 9.49 at the level of significance of (0.05) with degree of freedom 4.

SECTION FOUR: DISCUSION OF THE RESULTS, CONCLUSION, AND PEDAGOGICAL RECOMENDATIONS

4.1 Discussion of the Results

This Section deals with findings and results of the study regarding the research achievement posttest. The data of the posttest were analysed statistically by using different statistical techniques. Results of the study conform with the results of previous studies. After examining the research results, there are several significant points that can be taking into consideration about the effect of applying JOIN strategy on developing students' comprehension of short stories.

1. There are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group, which is taught by the JOIN strategy, and the control group which is taught by the traditional strategy .
2. The students of the experimental group were taught by using JOIN strategy is a cognitive strategy in which several mental operations are linked. Consequently, the students achieve better achievement as compared to the students who were taught by using the traditional way. When applying JOIN strategy, the teacher divided the whole class into three or four groups.

3. The development of students' comprehension of short stories by using JOIN strategy may be due to the following purposes:

a. JOIN strategy aids the students to increase the original association in order to solve the problem in a design and an understandable manner.

b. JOIN strategy enables to show a positive impact on improving students' comprehension of short stories, and they play an important role of improving students' competence and stimulating them to study reading comprehension.

4.2 Conclusions

The results of the study have led to the following conclusions:

1. JOIN strategy is efficient in teaching short stories to EFL students;
2. JOIN strategy can involve students in activities where they can practise various scales and strategy of communication;
3. The activities of JOIN strategy can help EFL students to improve their cognitive and critical thinking abilities;
4. JOIN strategy is largely learner- centred due to autonomy given to the students;
5. Being indicative strategies JOIN can help teachers to develop their students high mental process, like reasoning, concluding, as well as other mental skills;
6. JOIN strategy has been proved to be more motivating to EFL students due to the variety of class activities recommended by this strategy; and
7. Applying JOIN strategy to teaching short stories can raise the level of students' awareness English cultural aspects.

4.3 Pedagogical Recommendations

Based on finding of the study, the following pedagogical recommendations can be put forward:

1. Encouraging EFL teachers to adopt JOIN strategy in teaching various English subjects;
2. Training in services teaching on how to use this strategy;
3. Incorporating JOIN strategy into the textbooks used for teaching EFL methodology;
4. Teachers of short stories as well as other literary subjects are advised to make use of the class activities suggested by this strategy; and
5. Textbook writers are advised to incorporate this strategy and their class activities into EFL textbooks.

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