



Using Mini-stories as Teaching Techniques: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Background: Mini stories are short, fictional narratives illustrating a particular concept or idea. This study aims to explore the effectiveness of mini-stories as a teaching technique based on teachers' experiences who have used this approach in their classrooms.

Methods: A qualitative research approach was used to gather data from teachers using mini-stories as a teaching technique. A total of 8 professors from different scientific fields were selected for this study. Each participant was interviewed individually, and the interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. The data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach.

Results: Student-centered and teacher-centered are two categories extracted with ten sub-categories extracted, including relevance to the lesson, attractiveness, brevity, informality, creativity, reflection, problem-solving, age appropriateness, effectiveness, and reflection.

Conclusions: The study's findings reveal a two-fold teaching approach, encompassing teacher-centered and student-centered modes. Mini-stories represent a valuable teaching technique, captivate students, elucidate complex concepts, and stimulate critical thinking.

Keywords: Educational Technics, Students, Short Story, Mini-story

1. Background

Education and learning are important investments in developing communities and all sectors of society (1, 2). The educational process has undergone changes over time, reflecting the efforts of researchers to improve this process in the field (3, 4). Also, various organizations and centers, especially military organizations, have played an important role in developing education and training. Military units rely on training and education to prepare troops and personnel at high skill levels for critical situations. Due to the necessity of the two factors of efficiency and effectiveness in military environments, these organizations have been pioneers throughout history to achieve techniques that can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education and training (5).

One of the most important questions for researchers is how to motivate learners or students during the

teaching process (6, 7). Despite the progress made in this area of research, students' dissatisfaction with classroom-centered teaching processes is evident, with students having to sit in class for hours and listen to teachers talk. The same as traditional systems (3, 8, 9).

In these classes, most students were bored and fatigued; perhaps an enthusiastic teacher could solve this problem properly (10-13). Most teachers seek new ways to motivate learners, although teachers can facilitate educational work with various teaching materials and equipment (11, 14). However, most of this Educational technology equipment and Educational content is expensive for Education systems because they often need to be updated and improved in quality (15). On the other hand, the education field needs innovation to increase productivity and efficiency of learning and improve learning quality. Innovation and new ideas

must be carried out within the educational system. These innovations can be effective at different levels. This innovation may involve a fundamental change or even a simple change in teaching style or suggestions for improving the conditions of teachers and teaching (16).

2. Objectives

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of mini-stories as a teaching technique based on the experiences of teachers who have used this approach in their classrooms.

3. Methods

We used the qualitative method. Eight professors, including one full professor, two associate professors, and five assistant professors, volunteered to participate in the interview. Participants were selected based on specific criteria, such as their expertise in the field of study and availability during the interview. To recruit participants, the research team contacted eligible professors via email and invited them to participate. The email included a description of the study and the interview process. Participants who agreed to participate were then scheduled for an interview at a mutually convenient time.

To ensure accuracy and completeness, the primary data collection method utilized in-depth interviews, and the information obtained was transcribed and repeatedly reviewed by researchers to create concise semantic units. The extracted data was then classified using induction to identify similarities and differences using the continuous comparison method. The resulting classes were organized to ensure internal consistency and external compatibility. The accuracy and precision of initial coding were evaluated by qualified experts using standard procedures, and the study's strength was assessed using the Lincoln and Guba criteria.

To maintain data authenticity, ongoing verification and coding were performed with the assistance of participants, and two research team members independently coded the data to ensure dependability. The data collection and encoding processes were conducted carefully and with sufficient time, and external experts reviewed and approved the gathered information for transferability. The research team observed ethical considerations such as obtaining informed consent, maintaining sample anonymity and confidentiality, and respecting the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

To ensure that the interview aligns with the research objectives, it is crucial to ask helpful questions. Three vital questions that help achieve this are: How do you use stories in teaching? Which features do you consider essential? The participants determined the time and place of the interview, with a minimum and maximum duration of 17 to 55 minutes. The interviews continued until saturation, meaning that no new data was obtained beyond that point.

4. Results

Student-centered and teacher-centered are two categories extracted with ten sub-categories.

The ten sub-categories extracted include relevance to the lesson, attractiveness, brevity, informality, creativity, reflection, problem-solving, age appropriateness, effectiveness, and reflection (Table 1).

5. Discussion

The integration of student-centered and teacher-centered approaches is an important factor in the effectiveness of using mini-stories as a teaching technique. Student-centered learning emphasizes the active participation of students in the learning process, allowing them to take ownership of their learning and develop critical thinking skills. On the other hand, teacher-centered learning emphasizes the role of the teacher in guiding and facilitating the learning process.

In the context of using mini-stories as a teaching technique, an effective approach would be to combine both approaches. The teacher can present the mini-story to the students but then encourage them to engage in group discussions, ask questions, and analyze the story. This allows students to actively participate in learning while benefiting from the teacher's guidance.

Furthermore, mini-stories can also be tailored to the specific needs and interests of the students, making the learning process more student-centered. For example, the teacher can ask students to create mini-stories based on a particular concept or idea, allowing them to use their creativity and imagination.

Overall, integrating student-centered and teacher-centered approaches can enhance the effectiveness of using mini-stories as a teaching technique by creating an engaging and interactive learning environment that supports both the students and the teacher. One of the important factors of the effectiveness of Using mini-stories as teaching techniques is the integration of student-centered and teacher-centered in the teaching process.

Table 1. Categories, Sub-categories, and Examples of Codes

Categories and Sub-categories	Examples of Codes	The Number of Participants Who Had a Consensus
Teacher-centered		
Relevance to the lesson	The short story should have some relevance to the subject of teaching.	8
Brevity	The short story should be presented within 5-15 minutes before the beginning of teaching.	6
Attractiveness	The short story should be appealing to the audience.	7
Informality	The short story needs to be casual, not very formal.	6
Creativity	The short story must be creative.	8
Student-centered		
Contemplation	The short story should create a question in the mind of the audience, and the audience should always think of the answer.	7
Problem-solving	It is appropriate for the story to be used with an open ending, and this open ending should be like a puzzle completed by the teacher in the course of teaching.	7
Age appropriateness	The story should be appropriate to the age group of learners.	8
Effectiveness	The short story should arouse a sense of need or a sense of responsibility and encourage the learner to follow the teaching process more closely.	7
Reflection	The teacher needs to answer the remaining questions of the learners at the end.	8

The impact of storytelling (17) depends on the attraction of each story (18) and the method of storytelling (19). Teachers can take on this task. Researchers have emphasized the effectiveness of storytelling in the teaching process (20, 21).

Based on the participants' experiences in this study, it is important to reflect on the short stories drawn by the students during each session. Teachers sometimes receive verbal feedback during each session through observation or sometimes through written questions. Feedback is an interactive process between the teacher and the learner and an essential part of the learner's teaching and learning process (22, 23). Of course, the fundamentals of constructive feedback were taken into account, including first, exclusive, non-public feedback and second, feedback that focuses on learner behavior rather than their personality traits; third, non-evaluative and descriptive feedback; and fourth, efforts have been made to ensure timely and ongoing feedback (23).

Students will easily remember the story. There is even a way for students to memorize the details of this story. The content of instruction will begin and develop through a short story. Story expansion will also happen automatically in this way. At the same time, in this way, teachers can relate science topics to real life concretely. Without a doubt, these teachers will become more popular among students.

The concepts extracted in this qualitative research can be the basis of intervention and educational works in teaching methods. We suggest that such research be

conducted in a larger statistical population in educational centers.

5.1. Conclusions

The study's findings reveal a two-fold teaching approach, encompassing teacher-centered and student-centered modes. Mini-stories represent a valuable teaching technique, captivate students, elucidate complex concepts, and stimulate critical thinking.

Footnotes

Authors' Contribution: E.F. conceived and designed the evaluation and drafted the manuscript. H.B. and F.M. participated in designing the evaluation, performed parts of the analysis, and helped draft the manuscript. M.B. and E.M. revised the manuscript, performed some analysis, and revised the manuscript. E.F. P. K. and H.D. collected the data, interpreted them, and revised the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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