

USING LITERATURE IN EFL CLASSES: ASSESSING THE SUITABILITY OF LITERARY TEXTS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of this study is to assess the suitability of the literature textbooks assigned to the Sudanese secondary school students. The data were collected through content analysis of the literature books: **Things Fall A Part, Treasure Island, Jane Eyre, The Prisoner of Zenda, Oliver Twist, Anna and the Fighter.** The researcher has adopted the descriptive, analytical research method adopting mainly the **content analysis** technique in analyzing the six literary textbooks. The linguistic input and the cultural aspects of these literary texts are compared with the students' linguistic level and their cultural background. The findings show that the selection of the textbooks do not meet the students' needs, L2 language competence, age, culture, and literary background. This means that these literature books have been haphazardly selected, without consideration to the students' actual needs. Thus, it is recommended that all these factors, students' needs and requirements must be considered when selecting reading texts to be taught to secondary school students in Sudan.*

KEYWORDS: Criteria For Selecting Textbooks, Students' Needs, Using Literature In EFL Classes.

INTRODUCTION

Using literature in the English language classroom is a fruitful way of involving the learner as a whole person. It provides excellent opportunities for the learners to express their personal opinions, reactions and feelings. In Sudan, however, the teaching of literature has recently witnessed a very hard time of absence due to a faulty political decision. That period witnessed a remarkable deterioration in the students' linguistic ability. This is because literature is vitally important in providing the students with the required help and assistance to go about learning the target language i.e. English language. Now literature is reintroduced to accompany the present taught English language course-books in the secondary schools (Spine 4,5, and 6). The idea is to help improve students' ability in English language. This has undoubtedly been a good attempt, but the question is : Do the selected literature books really meet the students' needs?.

Statement of the Problem

In choosing literary texts for use with students, it is often suggested that the text that is chosen should suit the students' linguistic needs, their background, culture, religion, traditions, attitudes and interests. The selection of these literature books, "*Things Fall Apart*", "*Treasure Island*", "*Jane Eyre*", "*The Prisoner of Zenda*", "*Oliver Twist*", "*Anna and the Fighter*",

was unsuccessful. Many teachers and students express their dissatisfaction with these books. So this study is an attempt to investigate the suitability of these books.

Aims

The study aims to assess the suitability of the literature text books to secondary school students in North Sudan. The study seeks to analyze the textbooks elements and compare these to the students' needs and linguistic level.

Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are the literature textbooks assigned to secondary school students suitable to the students' age, language level and cultural background?
2. How far are the themes of the textbooks relevant to the students' culture?
3. Do these textbooks fit with the rest of the syllabus?

Hypothesis

The study hypothesizes that the textbooks are culturally and linguistically unsuitable to the Sudanese secondary students.

Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute to the field of language education. It is expected to help those who are concerned with the selection of literature textbooks for schools.

Limits

The study deals with the six literature textbooks assigned to secondary school students. The study was conducted in the school year 2012- 2013, in North Sudan.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts the descriptive analytic research method using the content analysis technique for data collection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature in English Language Classes

Literature provides students with excellent opportunities to express their feelings, emotions, opinions and ideas. Also it helps them to gain meaning from the text. Some of the most important reasons for using literature with the language learner can be summarized as follows (Lazar, 1993).

Motivating Material

Using literature in the classroom gives a real sense of achievement for the students of English. Knowing literature in their own language and studying some literature in English can provide interesting opportunities and enable them to make comparison. If the materials are carefully chosen, students will feel that what they do in the classroom is relevant and meaningful to their own lives. Widdowson (1984,149) thinks that literature exposes students to complex themes and fresh, unexpected uses of language.

Encouraging Language Acquisition

Literature stimulates acquisition because it provides meaningful and memorable context for processing and interpreting new language. Moreover, reading of literature is an important way of supplementing the inevitably restricted input of the classroom. Literature also helps to promote activities where students need to share their feeling and opinions. This is because literature is rich in multiple meaning which helps the acquisition of language.

Expanding Students' Language Awareness

Literature helps students to become more sensitive about the features of English language, because literary language is different forms of discourse, so literature breaks the more usual usage of syntax, collocation and cohesion. It has been argued that asking students to use the literary language will encourage them to think about the norms of the language use. To understand the stylistic effect of a literary text, students will need to be aware of how they differ from more common usage.

Developing Students' Interpretative Abilities

Studying new forms of language helps students form hypotheses. This helps them to know how far a grammatical rule can be generalized or what is implied behind the literal meaning. It has been argued that literature is a good source for developing students' abilities to infer meaning and to make interpretations.

Education of the Whole Person

Lindsay (2011:1) thinks that literature has an important educational function in the classroom as it helps to stimulate the imagination of the students to develop their emotional awareness. So, they can be able to express their own ideas and emotions in English and relate it to their own society. By examining values in literary texts, teachers encourage learners to develop attitudes towards them. These values and attitudes relate to the world outside the classroom. Thus integrating literature into EFL syllabus is beneficial to the learners' linguistic development. This requires the selection of an approach which serves the needs of the EFL learner syllabus. The rationale for the use of the three main approaches to teaching literature underneath can be described as follows:

Approaches to Using Literature

The Language Model

Carter and Long (1991) think that the most common model to literature is the language-based approach. This approach enables the learner to access a text in a systematic and methodical way in order to exemplify specific linguistic features. Studying the language of a literary text helps students integrate the language. Also detailed analysis of the language of the literary text helps them make meaningful interpretations. Students will accordingly increase their general awareness and understanding of English. Material is selected for the way it illustrates certain stylistic features of the language and for its literary merit.

The Cultural Model

This model requires learners to interpret the social, political, literary and historical context of a specific text. Using such model not only reveals the universality of such thought and ideas but also encourages learners to understand different cultures and ideologies. Texts are selected

for their importance as part of literary traditions. The understanding of texts is enhanced by situating them within their literary and historical contexts.

The Personal Growth Model

In this model students are encouraged to express their opinions, feelings and make connections between their own personal and cultural experiences and those expressed in the text. This model can help students develop knowledge of ideas and language. *“A text itself has no meaning; it only provides direction for the reader to construct meaning from the reader’s own experience”*, (Cadorath and Harvies, 1998,188).

Integrated Model

The reason for integrating models is linguistic, methodological and motivational. Linguistically, is by using texts that introduce students to a variety of types and difficulties of English language. Methodologically, as literary discourse sensitizes students to the processes of reading. Motivationally, is by enjoying reading of literary texts. An integrated approach enables students to grow as a whole.

Selecting Literature Books

To select a literary text to be taught to the students, there are three areas that should be considered: 1. Students’ age, emotion and intellectual maturity, interests, and hobbies; the type of course and 3. factors connected with the text. Selecting such material needs finding texts that are suitable for the majority of the students in the classroom. Then the selection should take into consideration students’ cultural background, linguistic proficiency and literary background. These are the most important criteria for selecting a literary text. Students are not only intellectual but also social and emotional beings, and all these dimensions interact to impact learning and performance. To plan an effective course, it is important to consider who are the students that are learning the course? Taking into account their : Prior knowledge. , intellectual development, cultural background, generational experience and expectations.

Prior Knowledge

New knowledge is built on existing knowledge. So it is important to determine what students are likely to know and how well they know it.

“Students come to formal education with a range of prior knowledge, skills, beliefs and concepts that significantly influence what they notice about the environment and how they organize and interpret it. This, in turn, affects their abilities to remember, reason, solve problems and acquire new knowledge”, (Pransford, Brown and Cocking:2000:10).

Intellectual Development

In the early stages of intellectual development, students tend to see the world in terms of good-bad, right-wrong, black-white. Distinctions to their mind is unambiguous and clear, and learning a simple matter of information-exchange. In the next stage, students realize that experts can disagree and facts contradict one another. At this stage, everything becomes of perspective and opinion. Then, students begin to recognize the need to support their opinion with evidence. At last, students make choices and decisions in the outside world.

Cultural Background

While all cultures value learning, the kind of learning valued in particular cultures, the manner in which learning is believed to best occur, and the ways in which the roles of students and teachers are conceptualized may differ from culture to another. When students study a text that belongs to a different culture, it is important to consider how cultural background can affect classroom dynamics and learning.

Generational Experience and Expectations

Generations have their own culture informed by different social trends and world events. Generational differences can influence the habits and expectations students have.

Material Evaluation

In selecting material to be taught there are certain factors to be considered: age, gender, socio-cultural background, grading, methodology, motivation, attitude, educational background, knowledge, ease of use, illustrations, interests, and beliefs. To evaluate such materials, we have to look at some important aspects such as: variety, availability, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject, content and guidance.

Previous Studies

In Sudan the researcher has not found any significant studies which were conducted in the secondary school context. However, the only available reference was Abdo-Al Jabar (2012). He attempted to investigate the situation at the Basic Level context. Surprisingly, the findings of the survey are to a great extent the same as the ones the researcher has arrived at. He found that the selected textbooks were not related to the learners' level. Moreover, the learners' literary background is insufficient to cope with the selected textbooks. There was no linkage between the linguistic input of the literary textbooks and that of learner's taught course in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Finally, the allotted time for teaching these textbooks is not enough.

METHODOLOGY

The study uses the descriptive analytical method particularly the content analysis to gather data from the literature textbooks: to *Things Fall Apart*, *Treasure Island*, *Jane Eyre*, *Anna and the Fighter*, *Oliver Twist* and *The Prisoner of Zenda*. These literature textbooks have been analyzed in terms of elements to see whether they are suitable to the students' ability, interest and needs.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of *Things Fall Apart* by *Chinua Achebe*

a. Language and Style

Achebe's choice to write in English has caused controversy. While both African and non-African critics agree that Achebe modeled *Things Fall Apart* on classic European literature, they disagree about whether his novel upholds a Western model, or, in fact, subverts or confronts it.

"English is something you spend your lifetime acquiring", so it would be foolish not to use it. Also, in the logic of colonization and decolonization it is actually a very powerful weapon in the fight to regain what was yours. English was the language of colonization itself. It is not simply something you use because you have it anyway." (Achebe: 2013).

Achebe is noted for his inclusion of and weaving in of proverbs from Igbo oral culture into his writing. This influence is explicitly referenced by Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*: "Among the Igbo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten."(Achebe:2013).

b. Setting

Most of the story *Things Fall Apart* takes place in the village of Umuofia, located west of the actual city of Onitsha, on the east bank of the Niger River in Nigeria. The story is about life in Africa before the Europeans came, and about the destruction of this life by the Europeans. The people in the story lived in a district of Nigeria called Umuofia. The people of Umuofia were farmers. They produced crops, such as palm oil, that the European wanted. Umuofia was a small district of nine villages. The people of these villages belonged to the same clan. In time of war, all the people of the clan helped each other and fought together.

c. Background

The events of the novel unfold in the 1890s. The culture depicted that of the Igbo people, is similar to that Achebe's birth place of Ogidi, where Igbo-speaking people lived together in groups of independent village rule by titled elders. The customs described in the novel mirror those of the actual Onitsha people, who lived near Ogidi, and with whom Achebe was familiar. Within forty years of the arrival of the British, by the time Achebe was born in 1930, the missionaries were well established. Achebe's father was among the first to be converted in Ogidi, around the turn of the century.

e. Plot

Okonkwo, as a well-known warrior, lived in his village Iguedo, in the district of Umuofia. Everyone was proud of him. He had three wives. He liked two things wealth and brave deeds. All the people were committed and worshiped family gods and so was Okonkwo. The people of the village had their own customs and traditions and during the funeral of Ezeudu, Okonkwo accidentally killed one of the boys of the dead man. According to this, Okonkwo should have to leave his village for seven years. After this period he could come back again. Okonkwo left for the village of his mother. Winds of change were blowing before he completed his exile term. European missionaries were approaching the village of his mother and building churches. They were converting his countrymen Christians besides the increasing of European influence and decreasing of the influence of the native leaders especially the leadership of Okonkwo. The troubles of Okonkwo were two folds: first the new religion and second the conversion of his son Nwoye and his joining the missionaries. When Obierika told Okonkwo that things were changing, Okonkwo did not pay heed. After seven years, Okonkwo returned to his village and found the change, and the people were interested in the new religion or the new government or the new trading place. They did not talk about the bravery of Okonkwo. After the burning of the church, Okonkwo and some of the leaders were arrested and humiliated. When they were set free, Okonkwo killed a messenger and tried to inspire his people to revolution against the Europeans but the people were indifferent Okonkwo being desperate, he ended his life by hanging himself in his compound.

f. Themes

Themes in the novel include the relationship between the individual (Okonkwo) and his culture, and the effect of one culture upon another(culture conflict).

g. Evaluation

Many of the old Ibo beliefs and customs are violent and superstitious. It is violence of men towards one another and towards women and children that will strike most modern readers. Of course this work of fiction and the non-Nigerian readers have no hope of knowing how realistic is the traditional village culture pictured. Without any other cultural background or context, books like this in the hands of the unthinking reader can perpetuate stereotypes and even do harm. There is too much ignorance of the customs of other people. (Davey:2008). Gender differentiation is seen in Igbo classification of crimes male and female. Through aspects of the Igbo society and traditions wives can be taken as a demonstration of the limited value of women. The portrayal of wives purely as the bearers of children can be taken as women are nothing more than tools of reproduction. The freedom enjoyed by men to beat their wives adds to this idea. Okonkwo's wish that his favorite child, Ezinma were a boy exemplifies the inequality between the genders.

Sudanese students will find that the text tells about the unique life in an African country full of strange scenes and symbols. There is an air of mystery and magic. Chinua Achebe uses an easy language to describe the different scenes and events, from time to time the Igbo folklore stands out to give the story a local color and sound-some Igbo words and names may be hard for the students. Also there are some alien cultural aspects such as the idea of twins who brought bad luck, so mothers who had twins put them into pots and threw them into the Evil Forest.

Analysis of *Treasure Island* by *Robert Louis Stevenson*

a. Background

Treasure Island is a story of pirates who stole a treasure from a ship in the Caribbean. These pirates buried the treasure on an island. The pirates were cruel and violent. They all wanted the treasure. They fought and killed each other. *Treasure Island* is not a true story. Captain Flint and Long John Silver were not real pirates. *Treasure Island* is not a real place. But there were pirates in many parts of the world in the eighteenth century.

b. Setting

The Admiral Benbow Inn, Bristol, The Hispaniola, and Treasure Island where the important landmarks. *Treasure Island* is supposed to be set in the 18th century; the Key setting of *Treasure Island* does not truly belong to any particular period: Jim's ordinary life in the Admiral Benbow Inn and his extraordinary experiences on *Treasure Island* – feel time less. Place is much more important that makes sense given the title of the novel is one of its setting.

c. Plot

Jim Hawkins was a boy of about twelve years old. An old pirate stayed in their inn. The old pirate died and left a sea chest. Jim took the map that showed where the treasure was. Jim showed Dr. Livesey and Squire Trelawney the map of Flit's treasure. It was agreed that Dr. Livesey would be the doctor of the ship and Jim the cabin boy. Although Trelawney had no experience, he hired a ship (the Hispaniola) and a captain called Captain Smollett and Silver hired a crew to sail the ship. Jim accidentally heard Long John Silver talking about a plot to kill Trelawney and his company and that the crew were pirates. Jim passed this information to Dr. Livesey. Jim landed in the Island and happened to be followed by a marooned sailor called Ben Gunn. The pirates fought Dr. Livesey and his company, but they survived with the least losses. Ben Gunn one of the marooned pirates found the treasure and hid it in a cave. Jim told his fellows Ben Gunn's story. When they knew that the treasure was found and kept, the map was useless and they handed it to Long John Silver, who faced trouble. Finally, the treasure was shared. They

traveled and without the other pirates, but left enough supplies for them.(Spark Notes, 2013: int.)

e. Themes

1. Piracy and Crime
2. Adventure
3. Greediness
4. Mercy and Human Feelings
5. Cruelty

g. Evaluation

This story is very interesting to secondary school students. At this age of growth, they like stories of adventure and heroic deeds. They identify with characters. It is a simple story and there is no complication about characters and plot. But the word "rum" is used as the only fun thing the pirates ever do together. This reliance on alcohol also proves to be their undoing. Rum becomes another means of symbolizing the moral weakness and lack of discipline among the pirates.

Analysis of *Jane Eyre* by *Charlotte Bronte*

a. Background

There are three contemporary issues with which the novel engages: political unrest, religious controversy, poor middle class women. The 1830 and 1840s were decades of intense political questioning, industrial revolution becoming source of social unrest, and displacement of farmer surplus pool of labor famines in Ireland. In *Jane Eyre* Charlotte Bronte touches upon these issues indirectly yet powerfully. The issue of political abuse of religion is best approached from the point of view of those who suffer from it, which is how the novel approaches it. The girls of the Lowood School are the helpless victims of a religious institution. It was the economic conditions that put them there. In the figure of *Jane Eyre*, the struggles against political, religious and sexual repression are brought together. (Lit Charts, 2013: int.)

b. Setting

Most of the places name's in *Jane Eyre* are fictitious: they are the names of houses Gateshead Hall, where the Reeds lived, Thornfield Hall and Ferndean Manor, Mr. Rochester's places, and Moor House, where the Rivers lived or schools (Lowood Institute) or little imaginary towns (Mill Cole, Morton) that resemble lots of places in nineteenth century north central England. Each of Jane's setting provides a pair of indoor and outdoor spaces for her to range in: Gateshead and the walk outside, Lowood and the woods/ marshes, Thornfield and its garden and woods, and the moors that stretched between Thornfield and Morton. So Jane was always able to move between the natural world and human civilization. Places where Jane lived represent a certain stage in her life. Her childhood happened at Gateshead. From the name this place was her "gate way" or entrance to the rest of the world. Then she moved on to her education at Lowood until she wanted to get out to seek her fortune. Next comes Young love at Thornfield where she found mystery and temptation. At Moor House and in the little town of Morton she discovered relatives. Finally, Jane experienced mature love of Ferndean when she returned to Rochester.

c. Plot

Being an orphan, Jane was dependent upon her aunt Reed who was the widow of her mother's brother. There was no blood tie between Jane and her aunt. Aunt Reed did not like Jane so she sent her to Mr. Brocklehurst boarding school, for orphans. The daughters of poor clergymen and other girls of the middle class had fallen on hard times. Jane Eyre was humiliated by both Mr. Reed and Brocklehurst by calling her a liar. Jane made two friends: Miss Temple and Helen Burns. As Jane grew older she took the position of a teacher in the school. She found a post as a governess with Mr. Rochester at Thornfield. Her student was a young French girl who may be Rochester's indirect daughter. Jane and Mr. Rochester fell in love and determined to marry despite the inequality of status, but on the day of their marriage the existence of Mr. Rochester's mad wife was discovered by the sudden arrival of her brother. Jane fled and by a stroke of good luck she found her cousins and won good fortune. In the end, Jane fled to reunite with Rochester and they married after the death of his mad wife. (Spark Notes, 2013: int.)

c. Themes

1. Education and learning
 2. Love versus autonomy
 3. Religion
 4. Social classification.
 5. Gender issues
 6. Fire and Ice, emotional isolation and loneliness, oppressive forces.
- (Spark Notes, 2013: int.)

d. Evaluation

Jane Eyre is an attractive simple love romantic story. The students generally find it interesting because it tells about something simple and related to human beings. It has a global air and can happen in many settings with very minor differences. Brontë clearly intended for the book to be a protest against Victorian lifestyle, but students in North Sudan do not know the traditions of the Victorian age in which the story took place especially the problem of the validity of marriage for Christians and the point of view of the society towards orphans. Of course, human feelings are universal. Students love stories that end happily. They like *Jane Eyre*, but the settings and the action do not match the Sudanese context.

Analysis of *Anna And The Fighter* by *Elizabeth Laird*

a. Background

This is a story which tells about an exciting adventure of a young girl. It is a simple story for beginners. It belongs to Heinemann Guided Readers series which is published at five levels with simple stories that can help beginner improve their English. This kind of book necessarily needs to be attractive for those who read it.

b. Setting

Most of the events took place in a train when the father called for his daughter to get ready. She was going to visit her aunt in Naira. Anna was frightened because she was travelling alone for the first time.

Anna And The Fighter tells a story about a girl who lived in a village with her father. She was going alone in a train for the first time to visit her aunt in Naira. Inside the train, Anna met a

strange man called Sam that she thought was a criminal. However , after he helped her , Anna realized that Sam was a famous boxer and they became friends .(Boekverlags, 2013: int.)

d. Themes

1. Adventures sometimes are useful
2. Appearance can be misleading
3. Words and Connotations

e. Evaluation

The story is simple . The words are limited . The style is straight forward . It looks like a film with pictures to help students. It is suitable for Basic school pupils. However, other important factors are still important and need consideration .

Analysis of Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

a. Background

Dickens's Story , Oliver Twist, took place in London in the 1830 (Dickens:2005:5) . During the Industrial Revolution , Great Britain, then, was the largest country in Europe . Many rich people had expensive houses and they had the best food and drink . However, most people lived in poverty . These people lived in small dirty houses and didn't have enough to eat . Most of the people became criminals . The story shocks readers with its images of poverty and crime: it destroys middle class ideas about criminals, making any pretence to ignorance about what poverty entails impossible.

b. Setting

The story of Oliver Twist is a dark tale of corruption, poor living conditions, and the terror of unanticipated violence. The novel took place against a background full of crimes and bad behavior which seemed , inescapable. Even the elements conspire to mark the dismal atmosphere; the weather was often bitterly cold, and rain and fog were frequent. Because criminals were thought to be creatures of the night, a large amount of significant action that took place after dark. Sunlight rarely penetrates their gloomy world .The novel deals mainly with poverty and crime the results of violating the rules and practices of social awareness and compassion. The criminal elements in the novel represent the outcasts of society who moves inside crumbling ruins. These structures represent the tottering institutions that have helped to deform their lives. In Dickens's descriptions, the words "neglect" and "decay" recur insistently. And it has been the neglect of human values that has fostered the spiritual decay that is so clearly reflected in the neighboring surroundings. (Cliffs Notes, 2013: int.)

c. Plot

Oliver was born in a workhouse in England . His mother died just after his birth . Oliver spent the first nine years in a badly run home for orphans . As staying in a work house for adults, other boys bullied him to ask for more . Mr. Bumble , offered five pounds to anyone who took him as apprentice . Oliver ran away to London . On the way, he met a boy who took Oliver to the criminal Fagin who trained orphan boys to steal . After training, Oliver was sent with two boys . Oliver was horrified and ran off . Mr. Brownlow, took Oliver to his home and nursed him . Mr. Brownlow treated him very kindly and tried to integrate him in the house. But Bill Sikes and Nancy, Captured Oliver and returned him to Fagin who sent Oliver to assist Sikes in burglary. Then Oliver was taken by Mrs. Maylie and her niece Rose . But Fagin and

Monks were set on recapturing Oliver . Then it was revealed that Oliver mother's left behind a gold locket . Monks destroyed that locket .Then Nancy met Rose and informed her of Fagin's designs , but a member of Fagin heard the conversation . After that Sikes murdered Nancy then hanged himself . Mr. Brownlow, with whom the Maylies had reunited Oliver confronted Monks and passed the truth which revealed that Monks was Oliver's half brother so Monks had been pursuing Oliver in hopes of ensuring that his half brother was deprived of his share . Mr. Brown low forced Monks to sign Oliver's share to Oliver . It was discovered that Rose was Agnes's sister. Fagin was hung for his crimes.(*Spark Notes, 2013: int.*)

d. Themes

1. Failure of Charity
2. Folly of Individualism
3. Countryside Idealized (*Spark Notes, 2013: int.*)

e. Evaluation

Dickens wrote this book to reflect the social life in the eighteenth century and as a social reformer wrote this story for the sake of orphans . This -of course- requires a lot of work by teachers for students to fully appreciate the story.

Analysis of *The Prisoner Of Zenda* By *Anthony Hope*

a. Background and Setting

The story took place in 1893 , in the country of Ruritania , somewhere in central Europe . *The Prisoner Of Zenda* is a romantic story and it is an adventure . Ruritania is not a real country also there is no town called Zenda ,(Hope:2005:5).

b. Plot

On the eve of the coronation of King Rudolf of Ruritania, his brother , prince Michael, had him drugged. In a desperate attempt not to give Michael the excuse to claim the throne . Colonel Sapt and Fritz Tarlenheim attending the persuade of his identical cousin Rudolf Rassendyll, an English visitor, to impersonate the King at the coronation . The unconscious king was abducted and imprisoned in a castle in the small town of Zenda . There were complicated plots and counter-plots, among them was the schemes of Michael's mistress, Antoinette de Mauban , and those of his dashing but henchman Count Rupert Hentzau . Rassendyll fell in love with Princess Flavia, the King's betrothed, but could not tell her the truth . He determined to rescue the king and leads an attempt to enter the castle of Zenda . The king was rescued and restored to his throne , but the lovers , in duty bound , ought to part forever .

c. Themes

1. Struggle between good and evil
2. Friendship and loyalty
3. Love and honor

d. Evaluation

The story is full of life and events . It has rich imagination and beautiful scenes . It is exciting . The language used is easy and straight forward. Nevertheless, the conflict over ruling the country and the plots particularly against the prince and the alcohol drinking contradicts the Sudanese students' social and religious life .

CONCLUSION

Literature is an important device to improve language teaching and learning. Literature provides interest and motivation to language learning. In North Sudan this is unattainable, because most of the books selected for the students are to a great extent unsuitable. This is due to the learners' individual differences and their attitudes towards these books. The language of some books seems to be difficult to understand. Moreover, there are cultural difficulties which constitute yet another major hindrance to appreciation.

FINDINGS

1. Teaching literature is of great importance to foreign language learning.
2. The selected texts to be taught to Sudanese secondary school students are to a great extent unsuitable to the students with regard to their age, language level, culture, literary background and religion.
3. The themes of the textbooks are not relevant to the students' life.
4. There is a vocabulary and structure gap between what is learnt in the English syllabus and what is learnt in these textbooks.
5. The culture is completely different from the students' culture.
6. There are some harmful culture aspects that do not suit the Sudanese culture.
7. The language of some of these books seems to be old or slang.

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[http\\www.dictionary.reference.com](http://www.dictionary.reference.com)
