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PROFESSOR ATTA GYAMFI BRITWUM

NUMBER 10

SEPTEMBER 2020



ASEMKA

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PROFESSOR ATTA GYAMFI BRITWUM

**THE BILINGUAL LITERARY JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

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**NUMBER 10
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DEDICATION
PROFESSOR ATTA GYAMFI BRITWUM

Professor Britwum is a man of many parts. He is as much at home with Marxist Economic Theory and Feminist Sociological Thoughts, as he is with French and Francophone Literatures. He is a great teacher and Administrator of international acclaim. The Editors dedicate this special issue of *Asemka* to his honour.

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FORWORD

All the papers in this Volume were presented at a three-day Conference in honour of Professor Atta Gyamfi Britwum who turns eighty years in March 2021. Most of those years he spent at University of Cape Coast, having cut his teeth as a young lecturer in French language and Literature-in-French in 1974. After many years of an illustrious career in teaching, publication and extension, he bowed out at age seventy, but he didn't get the well-deserved rest he was entitled to; he continues to support his Department and the University as a whole. Today, Professor Britwum's name is associated with high standards of professionalism which earned him the nickname 'L'oracle'. Indeed, it is impossible to find another name universally acknowledged as embodying the excellence in French education offered at the Department of French, University of Cape Coast.

The decision to honour Professor Britwum couldn't have been taken at a more appropriate time. It was planned to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of the *Beautiful ones are not yet Born*, Ayi Kwei Armah's first novel. Britwum never grew tired of reading, teaching and examining it. Such was his respect for Armah's craft. So, the three-day Conference was as much a celebration of Armah's contribution to the shaping of the African novel as it was a tribute to Professor Britwum's work as a teacher of literature of immense influence.

One only has to look at the titles of the papers published in this Volume to get an idea of how deep his influence runs at UCC and beyond. Most of the contributors once upon a time sat at the master's feet, but are now scholars in their own right keeping the flame of French scholarship burning bright (George Cooper: "Polished in a high degree, as each froggie ought to be/Now they sit on other logs, teaching other little frogs.") A good number of the papers are on Literature, nonetheless not limited to Armah's works. No Surprise there. Nevertheless, there are Language papers there too. No surprise here either, for the man to whose honour the Volume is dedicated is equally at home in both Language and Literature

Lawrence K. Owusu-Ansah,
Department of English, UCC.
A Disciple

ASEMKA: EDITORIAL

This Special Edition of *ASEMKA*, a bilingual literary journal of the University of Cape Coast, is published in honour of Prof. Atta Gyamfi Britwum, a revered Associate Professor of Francophone African Literature and Civilisation in the Department of French, U.C.C. It contains twenty (20) papers centred on diverse areas of teaching and research in the Humanities and on the theme of the Conference – *Literature and the Humanities in the 21st Century: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* – held in his honour by the Department of French, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, 13th – 15th Mars, 2019. To reflect Prof. Britwum’s area of research interest, the essays are arranged in two sections according to his dominant medium of instruction (French language) and speciality (Literature and Civilisation), followed by those in English language. The first section consists of a set of nine (9) essays in French spanning between themes in Literature and Language. The second section is made up of a set of eleven (11) essays in English which examine issues in literary studies, Language and Didactics, ICT and French Education, Philosophy, and Translation, among others. This special arrangement is however representative of the bilingual nature of the Journal.

First Section

Britwum, A. G.’s paper titled, **“Insuffisances Théoriques Des Damnés De La Terre De Frantz Fanon”**, presents the Fanonian perspective as a complement to the African nationalism that informed anti-colonial struggles. The study posits that African nationalism, populist in nature, for failing to target the capitalist economic base, which defines colonialism, ended up strengthening it. It concludes that Fanon’s anti-colonialist perspective, despite its overt radicalism, is not designed to allow a “bottom-to-top change” in colonial / capitalist society.

Kodah, M. K.’s paper titled, **“Disculpation de Dieu dans le malheur des hommes: Une lecture critique de *Gouverneurs de la rosée* de Jacques Roumain”**, puts into question the responsibility of God in the suffering of men on earth and the capacity of man to make and unmake himself. The study aims at absolving God of the guilt of the miseries of men, and also questioning the atheistic or anti-religion denunciation of this narrative

text since its publication. The study is accomplished through a critical reading and a thoughtful analysis of Jacques Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée* within the analytical structure of literary studies and sociocriticism.

Addo-Danquah, O.'s paper, "**Le récit de pensées : Une analyse comparative de *Vol de nuit* d'Antoine de Saint-Exupéry et *La Condition humaine* d'André Malraux**", drawing inspirations from theorists such as Léon Edel (1961) and later Dorrit Cohn (1981), examines what Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *Vol de nuit* by and André Malraux's *La Condition humaine* respectively can offer on the side of representations of the interior life. The study is posited within the framework of narratological theories.

Kodah, M. K. & Togoh Tchimavor, A. A. in "**Réactions des femmes face au conflit de genre dans *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée* et *Tu t'appelleras Tanga* de Calixthe Beyala**" examine the reactions of women to gender conflict in Calixthe Beyala's *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée* and *Tu t'appelleras Tanga*. The study critically reflects on the various ways women in Beyala's *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée* and *Tu t'appelleras Tanga* react to oppression and exploitation resulting from patriarchal domination. It therefore examines the sources and nature of this conflict, and how women react to it in the two novels. The study points to the fact that, much as conflict emanating from patriarchal oppression and male's domination in human societies is inimical to the rights of women, the methods used by the latter to free themselves from this state of being remain questionable, in that, these methods defy rational thinking and are also a kind of reversal oppression and domination which are equally unacceptable.

Kudi, M. D.'s paper, "**La Littérature francophone face aux médias de télécommunication : Une nouvelle dynamique de la création romanesque, le cas de *L'Énigme de retour* et *Tout bouge autour de moi* de Dany Laferrière**", seeks to examine how pertinent painting, photography, television, telephone etc. are to the production of the contemporary Francophone novel. The study focuses on *L'Énigme de retour* (2009) and *Tout bouge autour de moi* (2011). The analysis is based on the perspective of literary intermediality propounded by Jürgen E. Müller which is characterised by an interaction between telecommunication media and literary text. The study establishes through these selected novels that these media forms are not simply another form of expression in the novel but rather a lens through which the story is narrated.

Gli, M.'s paper titled, "**Les faces du bonheur dans *Vol de nuit* d'Antoine de Saint-Exupéry**", analyses the faces of happiness in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *Vol de Nuit*. The study is conducted through thematic approach. This approach is complemented by Maslow's theory of human needs. The collection of data or the collection of information is purely documentary. The study therefore seeks to establish a link between individual happiness and collective happiness in Saint-Exupéry's selected narrative text.

Krakue, S. P.'s paper, "**Christ haïtien : *Gouverneurs de la rosée et La Bible***", attempts to question Jacques Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée* in order to elucidate the novelist's use of the biblical text in his creative activity. The study demonstrates that Jacques Roumain's narrative text turns out to borrow biblical ideas not only to develop his plot but also to design his main character.

Afari, E. S. K. & Yegblemenawo, C. A. A. in "**Apports de la télé-série à l'amélioration de la compétence d'expression orale du FLE à l'école normale.**" examine the impact of the use of serial movies as teaching aid on oral expression of French language learners in Colleges of Education in Ghana with the aid of smartphones. The study discovers that the use of serial movies in teaching French boosts learners' performance in oral communication. It therefore recommends that serial movies could be used in teaching French language lessons in order to enhance the oral communication competencies among learners.

Bationo, J.-Cl.'s paper titled, "**Didactique de la littérature et littérature didactique : l'exemple de la littérature africaine francophone en classe de langues étrangères au Burkina Faso**", shows not only how to teach literature in language class but also how to use didactic literature to develop social skills among learners to reduce vandalism, school violence, negative stereotypes, misunderstandings of intercultural nature while cultivating social peace and living together in a context of internationalization, globalization and digital revolution. The paper focuses on francophone African Literature and posits that methodological approach used for the didactic transpositions of literary content is based on the new orientation and the redefinition of the objectives of language teaching and on the didactic models of the aesthetic reception of didactics of literature which requires putting the learner in intensive interaction with the text and motivating him/her to express himself/herself on his/her reading experiences.

SECOND SECTION - ENGLISH

Krakue, S. P.'s paper titled, **“Quod erat demonstrandum: A comparative study of narrative technique in Ama Ata Aidoo’s *Changes* and Albert Camus’ *Les justes* (The Just Ones)”**, demonstrates through textual analysis, how in Ama Ata Aidoo’s *Changes* and Albert Camus *Les justes*, the authors resort to a specific form of irony to bring the discussion of issues raised to a conclusion. The technique consists in demonstrating clearly a huge discrepancy between a “fine” idea and its practical usefulness. Both authors successfully use narrative technique. Albert Camus demonstrates the hollowness of the idea of fighting for justice through revolutionary violence and Ama Ata Aidoo similarly demonstrates the fatuousness of the theory of women-emancipation-through-polygamy.

Adjandeh, E. A. analyses selected reports in Ghanaian media in relation to the clergy and identifies how Wole Soyinka’s theme is reflected in these media in her paper titled, **“Analysis of Wole Soyinka’s *Trials of Brother Jero* in Relation to Ghanaian Religious Discourse”**. The study seeks to examine the extent to which themes in Soyinka’s *Trials of brother Jero* play out in religious discourses in Ghana. The global nature of the issues problematized by Wole Soyinka also comes out through this study as the work set in Nigeria is analyzed in relation to the selected articles set in Ghana. The paper relies on a content analysis of *Trials of Brother Jero* and similar themes presented in the selected articles, and makes a few recommendations on how these religious issues could be partially, if not wholly, resolved in Ghana.

Sam, C. A.’s paper, **“Decolonizing the Postcolony: Of Men, Spatial Politics and the New Nation in WA Thiongo’s *Wizard of the Crow*”**, examines how Ngugi Wa Thiongo’s *Wizard of the Crow* blatantly explores Africa’s complicity in a seemingly cyclic colonization in the 21st century and its attendant consequences for the total liberation of Postcolonial Africa. The study examines the correlation between masculine representations, spatial re-organization and futurity as alternative ways in thinking about Africa’s future through Bakhtin’s theory of the carnival and other such concepts as polyphony and the grotesque. The result of the analysis is that the correlation between forms of communities and forms of masculinities is an indication of a vision of hope for Postcolonial Africa.

Kambou, M. K. & Traore, S. A. in **“Manipulation and the popular uprising in Burkina Faso in 2014”**, analyse the different discourses in the build-up to the popular uprising in Burkina Faso on the 30th and 31st October 2014. It attempts to clarify how political and civil society leaders use language and other non-linguistic elements to influence the ordinary citizens' minds and, indirectly, their actions. The analysis is premised on Van Dijk's (2006) Socio-cognitive approach. The paper analyses the cognitive, the social and the discursive dimensions of manipulation in six political speeches (two speeches from Civil Society, two from the ruling party and two from the political opposition). The results suggest that the three groups manipulated their audiences, and finally, the ruling party lost following the resignation of the then Head of State, making way for a Transition government to take over the reins of governance.

De-Souza, A. Y. M.'s paper **“Test-taking Strategies of University of Cape Coast Students of French as a Foreign Language: a Case Study.”** seeks to provide a description of test-taking strategies that may inform teaching and learning of French for better output in tests against the background that Ghanaian students of French as a foreign language deploy strategies that are not adequate enough in answering test items in French. The study examines data gathered right after a French test by level 200 students, using recollective verbalization protocols.

Kambou, M. K. & Soma, L. examine in their paper titled, **“Local Culture and EFL Vocabulary Learning”**, the influence of learners' culture on foreign language vocabulary. The paper seeks to demonstrate that there is a link between culture and lexico-semantic errors committed by learners of English as a foreign language among Dioula speaking students in Burkina Faso. A language test composed of two written activities was used as the data collection instrument. The results revealed that the Dioula speakers' English is influenced by their culture. These results have some pedagogical implications. They, therefore, suggest that we adapt the teaching of EFL vocabulary to learners' culture.

Kabore, A. & Nazortin, C. in **“Critical Analysis of the Place and Importance of Literature in the Teaching / Learning of English and in School Leaving Certificate Examination in Burkina Faso from 1985 to 2018”**, analyse the types of texts given at the “Baccalaureate A” written examination in the last thirty years. In this study, quantitative and qualitative

data are collected. Baccalaureate written English papers are the main focus of our collection. Teachers and supervisors are interviewed. The study is grounded on “Reader-Response Theory” which stresses the interactions between the reader and the text. The results of the study show that the great majority of texts proposed for “Baccalaureate A” examination, in the last thirty years, are non-literary texts.

Malgoubri, I., Sawadogo, M. & Kambou, M. K.’s paper titled, **“Digital Audio-visuals Aids and Listening in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms”**, is an experimental study which investigates the potential of digital audio-visuals to improve the listening skills of EFL learners in secondary schools in Burkina Faso. On the assumption that learners born around the year 2000 are digital natives, the researchers try integrating smartphone-friendly audio-visuals in their EFL classrooms in a four-week experiment involving one Experimental Group and one Control Group. The experiment aims at gauging the effectiveness of those aids operated via students’ smartphones in improving learners’ listening and speaking skills. Independent T-tests were used to compare the groups and Sample Paired T-Tests to make comparisons within groups. The study suggests that, if appropriately used, smartphones are excellent devices for language teachers and learners in this digitizing world.

Osei, R. N. & Inusah, H.’s paper, **“A Critique of the Images of Heaven in the Scriptures of the Abrahamic Religions: An Existentialist Perspective.”** Critically examines the scriptural images of heaven as captured in the Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – from the existentialist perspective. The paper argues that the idea of life beyond this earthly existence for all human beings in a specially prepared location by God for eternal happiness for those who obey His commands on earth called Heaven, as propounded by the Abrahamic Religions, throws up a lot of problems, especially from the existentialist perspective. The study concludes that the scriptures’ constructs of heaven appear self-contradictory and fail to strike a chord with the contemporary image of the ideal society when perused from the existentialist perspective and should, therefore, be discarded.

Negedu, A. K.’s paper **“Lexical Gaps and Ideological Shift in the Translation of Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* as *“Le Monde S’effondre”* in French.”** examines the ideological divergence between the title of the original text and the title of the translation, following an observation

that in translating Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Michel Ligny translates directly Igbo terminologies, realities and beliefs into the French language. The paper concludes that the ideology that the translated title projects to French-readers is totally different from the ideology that the original title projects to English-readers.

Talbert, T., in **“Political Transformation and Development in Africa: Lessons from Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*”**, formulates critical perspectives on the significance of Achebe’s novel for the socio-political and economic transformation and development of the African continent. The paper challenges one of the central assumptions in this story that Africa falls apart as soon as it comes in contact with Europe. It questions aspects of political conservatism exhibited in Okonkwo who is suspicious of fundamental changes to his society. The discussion is based on the jollof rice principle of political hybridisation of development which proposes the amalgamation of Westernised and non-Western ideas and systems, in order to achieve economic development, rather than totally rejecting Westernisation in its entirety. The study uses examples of Western-style democracy and State intervention in Africa to demonstrate the significance of embracing some aspects of Westernisation through political hybridisation.

Critical Analysis of the Place and Importance of Literature in the Teaching / Learning of English and in School Leaving Certificate Examination in Burkina Faso from 1985 to 2018.

André Kabore & Charles Nazortin
Université Norbert Zongo, Burkina Faso

Abstract

The potentials of literary texts are numerous. Literary texts can be used as basis for the teaching of the four traditional skills. They can also be used to develop learners' cultural competence. In Literature classes preparing for "Baccalaureate A" written examination, literary texts are expected to be used frequently with regard to the profile of students in this section. The purpose of this study is to analyse the types of texts given at the "Baccalaureate A" written examination in the last thirty years. In this study, quantitative and qualitative data are collected. Baccalaureate written English papers are the main focus of our collection. Teachers and supervisors are interviewed. The study is grounded on "Reader-Response Theory" which stresses the interactions between the reader and the text. The results of the study show that the great majority of texts proposed for "Baccalaureate A" examination, in the last thirty years, are non-literary texts. The consequence of this reduction in the use of literary texts may explain teachers' gradual lack of motivation to use them in class, or vice-versa, everything that is likely to have a negative impact on the performance of students from this class.

Keywords: enhance; literary text; performance; potentials; skills.

Introduction

Keeping Literature off the syllabus creates discontentment. Teachers do testify that many learners want and love literary texts and are also keen to familiarize with the English patterns of social interactions (Collie and Slater,

1987; Hall, 2005). Queries from pupils to their teachers, like “could you recommend a novel that I might read to improve my English? I need more vocabulary and reading helps a lot” (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 1) show English learners’ love for Literature. In response to this desire for Literature, pedagogues, such as Joanne Collie and Stephen Slater (1987), Geoff Hall (2005), the contributors to *Literature in Language Teaching and Learning* (2006), have devised ways of making Literature a more significant instrument of English teaching programme to help English learners in the mastery of the four basic areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. They have tried to illustrate the relationship between Literature and language learning and to offer practitioners ways to integrate Literature into English classes. They offer highly valuable pieces of advice on adding Literature to language classes and show how learning English can be a pleasurable experience if some degree of literariness is used to flavour the process.

Yet, nowadays, there is much questioning of the relationship between Literature and the study of Language. There is a debate on whether Literature should be taught in the English language teaching classroom in Secondary School and even at University. In the Burkinabe context especially, Kaboré (2017), through a comparative study of three English textbooks used in the Burkinabe education system, has highlighted the decrease in the use of Literature in teaching English language, which led to pupils’ lack of proficiency in written English, owing to the adoption of “functional” didactics by Burkinabe Education policy makers. In fact, in view of helping students achieve communicative competence and relying on modern Linguistics which lays emphasis on the primacy of the spoken language, Burkinabe Department of National Education issued a new Language Policy in 1983, and revised the syllabi of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the first cycle in 2010. Yet, Somé-Guiébré’s study (2018), based specifically on a critical analysis of the syllabi of quatrième (4e) in Burkina Faso education system, and interviewing stakeholders, concludes that despite tremendous efforts invested in the conception of syllabi, these tools hardly help implement communicative language teaching (CLT) in English language classrooms in Burkina Faso. Expectations are then not met despite the change of teaching strategies. As the African saying goes, “The better broth is made in an old pot.” But why do English teachers not resort to Literature in the teaching of English as a foreign language? Is there a reciprocal influence between the types of texts—literary or non-literary—given at the School Leaving Certificate examinations and the teachers’ motivation for Literature as a tool for the acquisition of language? In other words, since it is the teachers who propose examination questions, would the prevalence of non-literary texts proposed in examination papers be the expression of teachers’ disgust for Literature and, alternatively, would this

prevalence discourage lovers of Literature from using the latter for the teaching of English in classes preparing for the School Leaving Certificate Examinations? The present study analyses the texts used for the written tests of “Baccalaureate A” from 1985 to 2018 to determine whether the lack of use of Literature in the teaching of English in classes is caused by the use of non-literary texts in the final examinations and whether the rare literary texts used are expressive of nostalgia for the use of Literature in the teaching/learning of English in view of making recommendations on the use of Literature in the teaching/learning of English as a foreign language.

To successfully carry out this study, Baccalaureate A English written examination papers in Burkina Faso are collected. The period concerned goes from 1985 to 2018. This time sequence is chosen to include the time spent at secondary school and the years the School Leaving Certificate examination is taken and the time spent by teachers. The identification of the place of literary texts in these examinations in the last thirty years is our main focus. The population involved in this study includes 20 teachers and 04 supervisors from Ouagadougou and Koudougou. Questionnaires, interview protocols are used for the collection of data. Teachers and supervisors are identified using a non-probability convenience sampling. Teachers answer questionnaires. Supervisors are interviewed. The texts and questions are examined using the reader-response theory which lays emphasis on communicative performance.

Theoretical Framework

The study is conducted using reader-response theory. Theorists of this criticism, according to Lois Tyson (1999, p. 154), share two beliefs: (1) that the reader’s function in the process of reading, cannot be omitted from the understanding of Literature, and (2) that the reader does not passively consume the meaning provided by an objective literary text. This theory mainly argues that readers, as much as the text, play an active role in a reading experience (Rosenblatt, 1994). It asserts that readers draw on their personal experiences to create meaning in a given text.

This theory focuses then on the way readers receive texts. As Culler (2011) puts it, reader-response criticism can be seen as the description of the reader’s progressive movement through a text, analysing how he/she produces meaning by “making connections, filling in things left unsaid, anticipating and conjecturing and then having their expectations disappointed or confirmed.” (p. 137).

There are many approaches in reader-response criticism: subjective reader-response theory, affective stylistics, transactional reader-response theory, psychological reader-response theory, and social reader-response

theory (Tyson, 1999, p. 157). The first approach will be used in this study because its emphasis on communicative performance makes it a convenient tool for assessing teachers and candidates. It is a theory that is laid down by David Bleich according to whom readers' responses are the text in a double sense: first, in the sense that there is no literary text beyond the meanings created by readers' interpretations; second, in the sense that the text subjected to critical analysis is the written responses of readers and not the literary text per se. Bleich differentiates between what he calls "real objects," namely the printed pages of a literary text, and "symbolic objects", that is, the experience created in the reader's mind from reading the text (Tyson, 1999, p. 164). According to Bleich, the meaning of a text for an individual reader depends on a process of "symbolization" that occurs in the mind of the reader, in which the reader progresses from developing a "response" to an "interpretation" of that text (Bleich, 1978, pp. 34-36). For Bleich, the individual reader's initial response and his or her more developed interpretation are less constrained by the particular features of the text. Bleich places a greater emphasis on the social context, the "interpretive community" (Bleich, 1978, p. 38) in which responses and interpretations are formed, a community which includes the teacher and the students in the classroom.

If teaching Literature is to accommodate students' role in making interpretation, it is supposed to place them as the active readers to interpret and shape the meaning of literary works; it is not teaching them a specific meaning previously decided. Therefore, by applying reader-response theory in this study, the objective is to examine the texts given at the "Baccalaureate A" examinations and the questions to see if they are in the open-form format as required in reader-response criticism and make recommendations accordingly.

Result and Analysis

Our participants are half male and half female and all have attended Literature classes during their University training. 62.5% are aged between 31 and 40 and have less than ten years teaching experience. 25% are over 40 but less than 50 years old and have between 11 and 20 years' experience in the teaching profession. 12% are over 51 years old and has been teaching for more than 21 years. The hobby of 62.5% of them is the reading of literary works. 50% of them said they have not studied English through Literature in Secondary School. All of them study texts in class with their pupils but half of them resort to either literary or non-literary texts without any reason, while the other half combines literary and non-literary texts. Half of them also select their texts according to current issues, while the other half does it either according to learners' profile and interests or combining those interests with

current issues. 62% answered that from their experience, it is literary texts that usually come at the School Leaving Certificate Examinations. 70% expect literary texts to be given at the “Baccalaureate A” written examination. Half of the respondents thinks that literary texts can best develop learners’ performance because they are authentic materials and are more complete in terms of language skills and vocabulary. 37.5% think without giving a reason that any text can be used to best develop learners’ performance in the English language.

The interview with four supervisors of English teachers reveals that the type of texts teachers study during reading-comprehension lessons is non-literary texts. According to them, the reasons are (1) the lack of curricula and the absence of current issues in books; (2) the fact that teachers have not been trained to use literary texts, hence their lack of confidence to do so; (3) the fact that non-literary texts are mostly used at the School Leaving Certificate Examinations. Three out of the four supervisors see a link between “Baccalaureate A” written examination papers and the ones used by teachers in classrooms but they all expect that literary and non-literary texts be given during the School Leaving Certificate examinations because they are all useful for language learning and variety is the spice of life.

The combination of the answers from the teachers and the supervisors predicts and helps understand the avalanche of non-literary texts at the “Baccalaureate A” written examinations. It can be noticed that prior to Kaboré’s article (2017) in which he deplores the minimal use of Literature in English teaching textbooks and raises awareness on the importance of Literature in English learning/teaching in 2017, most of the excerpts for “Baccalaureate A” Examinations were taken from non-fiction books, at the ratio of 59 against 06. From 1988 to 2016, only one literary text was used out of 59 examination papers. Yet, from 1985 to 1987, five literary texts were used out of a total of six examination papers. Figure 1 gives a visual picture of the overall percentage of non-literary texts used in “Baccalaureate A” examinations from 2018 to 1985.

Figure 1 also shows that, an average of 15% of literary texts against 85% of non-fiction texts were used in Burkina Faso School Leaving Certificate examinations in the last thirty years. Conspicuously, the literary texts are concentrated at the beginning, that is, the first two years from 1985 to 1987 with three literary texts. The use of literary texts in recent years can be explained as a positive impact of Kaboré’s 2017 paper whereas the use of literary texts from 1985 downwards may be due to the use of literary-based English texts books like *Anglais en Afrique et à Madagascar* (1972), for the teaching of English as a foreign language. 37.5% of teachers in our sample

who said they studied English through Literature in secondary school may have used this textbook.

The non-fiction texts in turn can be divided in two: excerpts taken from books and formal reports (35%) and the others taken from speeches and newspapers (50%), in addition to the 15% literary texts, as shown in figure 2.

The various texts cover a variety of themes, as can be seen in reading the different excerpts: Apart from the first, as well as the last two titles, the others are about daily common issues which are likely to be developed in the popular media (radio, TV, internet). The implication is that students who follow the daily news in English may be able to understand them successfully thanks to the communicative qualities they might have acquired from communication with native speakers through the different media. However, the issues are most often old, not current, as shown in figure 3.

Figure 3 actually shows the discrepancy that exists between the dates of issue of the texts in comparison to the year of examination. Most of the texts are older than the candidates who sit for the exams. No text given is from the same year. The age gap goes from 60 to 1 year. Apart from two literary texts, at least eight of the non-fiction texts are at least 20 years old. The use of such old and non-literary texts is a matter of debate and discussion.

Discussion

The discussion will be first around the place and importance of Literature in the objectives set up in the secondary school programme for the teaching of the English language. Then, the implementation of these objectives will be discussed. Finally, the questions following the texts given at School Leaving Certificate Examination papers will be examined.

Objectives of the Teaching of English in Secondary School

An undated document of the Ministry of Education enumerates the objectives for using Vocabulary and texts of Civilisation and Literature in the English language teaching programme in Secondary School. It argues that, in addition to reinforcing the English acquired at the first cycle of education, the syllabus of the second cycle aims at “deepening pupils’ knowledge in the cultural domain through the study of any type of documents that is representative of English civilisation and culture” (Ministère, n.d., p. 1) as well as “giving pupils the means for self-development and the desire and possibility for an in-depth study of the English language” (Ministère, n.d., p. 1).

The objectives are clear but the means to achieve them need further explanation. The use of any type of documents certainly includes literary and

non-literary ones. But the debate would be about the “type of documents that is representative of English civilisation and culture.” The second part of the document which is about “vocabulary” and the third part on “Civilisation and Literature” suggest that teachers are free to use literary as well as non-literary materials. They are encouraged to make pupils acquainted with original forms of expressions in English, with materials from newspapers, journals, radio, television, cinema to help them gain a variety of vocabulary. Teachers are also invited, in their choice, “to prefer, in general, contemporary register of everyday communication to any other” (Ministère, n.d., p. 2). Pupils should be encouraged to read newspapers and listen to foreign radios. This part, therefore, lays emphasis on the use of non-literary materials.

The third part of this official document on English language teaching programme in Secondary School strongly recommends teachers to often use authentic texts and materials from all cultural domains: literature, plastic arts, cinema, music, television, radio, technology, etc. (Ministère, n.d., p. 3). It stresses that excerpts from Literature should be taken from the works of modern and contemporary British, American, and African writers. It encourages personal reading and group discussion of plays, short stories, novels, and newspaper articles. Therefore, this part lays emphasis on the use of excerpts from contemporary Literature without excluding the resort to modern non-literary works.

So, in a nutshell, the whole syllabus for the teaching of English recommends the use of literary and non-literary texts equally, provided they are contemporary and understandable to the pupils. There is then a problem when teachers focus only on non-literary texts. Literature should take the pride of place in English language teaching Secondary School.

Place of Literature in the Teaching of English in Secondary School

Literature is integrated in English learning from first to third-year University Education in Burkina Faso, which is not the case everywhere (Butler 2006). All the teachers in our sample acknowledge having attended Literature classes in their training at University. 37.5% of them even studied English through Literature at Secondary School.

At the University Joseph Ki-Zerbo, in the Department of Anglophone Studies, the subjects where there is literature are as follows: ANG 1003 (Introduction to English Literature), the aim of which is to develop language awareness, with Literature being used to introduce concepts and ideas; ANG 1502 (Anglophone Literatures: African, American and British), which is meant to introduce learners to different types of genres, where Literature provides a

variety of registers; ANG 2003 (British Literature from 16th to 18th Centuries), which focuses on specific works from that period, at the same time providing rich input for language analysis. The following courses also concur to the same objective: ANG 2004 (American Literature from its origins to the 19th Century), ANG 2505 (African Literature in English from its origins to the independence), ANG 3005 (British Literature from the 19th to the 20th Centuries), ANG 3006 (20th Century American Literature), and ANG 3007 (Post-independence African Literature in English). The last semester, students have the possibility of choosing four genres (novel, short story, poetry and drama) in African, American or British Literatures to gain an in-depth knowledge of the English Language used in Literature.

It is astonishing then that after so many years of learning English through Literature, the student, once he/she becomes a teacher, cannot use Literature in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, but has to resort to newspaper articles. One of the supervisors contends that the reason is that teachers have not been trained to use literary texts. Another one evokes the influence of the prevalence of non-literary texts at School Leaving Certificate Examinations. Another reason may be the fact that print newspapers (discarded past issues of American cultural Centre or NGO's) or online materials are easily available. Concerning texts in electronic format, "cut and paste" makes the work easier than typing the text from a printed novel, which is often difficult to find in a French speaking country. This may explain the fact that though having learned English through the use of Literature, teachers use non-literary texts in their teaching.

Yet Literature is a crystallisation of ordinary speech and cultural practice in a memorable way. Even though common sense traditionally makes the difference between a stereotype of 'literary' language and ordinary language, viewing literary language as flowery or elevated, unusually figurative and symbolic, and so difficult to understand, unlike the language used and encountered in everyday life, such criticism, however, overlooks the performative aspect of Literature in the reading process. As Michael Riffaterre (1978) puts it, "readers make the literary event" (p. 116), laying emphasis on the role of readers in the performance of literary texts. A literary work's meaning and interpretation are composed by the readers who successfully manage to interpret the literary work based on their responses. The teaching of Literature in the classroom requires from teachers a different teaching method that lays emphasis on communicative performance. Literature, culture, and language should thus be approached as naturally intertwined (Barnett, 1991).

The interview with supervisors reveals that teachers have not been trained to use literary texts in the classrooms. It is a weakness that the Department of Education should address because the teaching of the English

language with literary texts has some requirements. For example, teachers should make it possible that a literary work's interpretation is composed by the students, based on their responses. They should place students as the learners of a discussed literary work, as the core of studying Literature as they are the actors shaping the literary work's meaning. In so doing, teachers are also the ones who encourage students to express their opinions, and eventually help them develop a critical mind. Hence, teaching and studying Literature could become an interactive and collaborative process. The opinion question in all the test papers is very relevant in this sense. Language and Literature are interrelated entities, with teachers as users of Literature rather than as teachers of it.

Another important requirement for the use of Literature in the teaching of English is the choice of texts. As McKay (2001) emphasises it, "students will enjoy reading Literature only if the text is accessible to them. Hence, it is important in selecting literary texts to ensure that the theme of the text is engaging for the students, and that the text itself is not difficult on either a linguistic or conceptual level" (p. 322). Students' needs, age, interest and the ability to read fluently, as well as texts' length, lexis and syntax, should be taken into account in the choice of texts so as to boost the appetite of learners to read literary texts (Hill, 1986; Bibby, 2014). Even other criteria such as learners' cultural and literary background should be taken into consideration in the choice of texts for study (Lazar, 1993). The implementation of these criteria in the selection of a literary text will contribute to sharpen the desire of learners to always enjoy reading Literature. In "Baccalaureate A" examination papers, for example, the examiners have actually adapted the different texts to the students' age and context; hence, the phrase "adapted from" which accompanies most excerpts of School Leaving Certificate examination papers.

Many other reasons have been given for the use of Literature in language class. Showalter (2003) says that though nowadays there is no agreement on the goals of teaching literary texts, in the past, "most educators agreed that teaching Literature was a way of making people better human beings and better citizens" (p. 22). For example, Literature in England in the 1820s aimed at moralizing, civilizing and humanizing people. In the United States too, after the Civil War, the purpose of Literature was to promote moral and spiritual values. During the Negritude movement in Africa, Literature was a means to promote African values. The post-colonial Literature aimed at depicting the wrongs done to Africans and encouraging Africans to take their destiny into their own hands. Showalter (2003) asserts that today Literature is taught for learners' education and life.

Literature also helps recognize subtle and complex differences in language use, giving access to cultural background (Lazar, 1993; McKay, 2001;

Showalter, 2003; Bo and Li, 2007). It enables learners to make the distinction between literal and metaphorical meaning (Showalter, 2003; Liu and Yin, 2007). The use of Literature in language class contributes to developing students' interpretive abilities as regards the literary work, its author and its content, educating the whole person (Lazar, 1993; McKay, 2001; Showalter, 2003; Bo and Li, 2007). Another benefit is that, literary texts are a means of raising students and teachers' cross-cultural awareness. In reading literary texts, students learn about other people's culture and this helps students understand them (Lazar, 1993; McKay, 2001; Showalter, 2003). Literature is a language that is worked out that it becomes interesting material that motivates and encourages learners in language acquisition (Lazar, 1993). It is the reason why it constitutes a source of teaching the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening (McKay, 2001).

All these authors acknowledge the paramount importance of literary texts in the teaching of English as a foreign language in classrooms. They show that Literature can be used for linguistic acquisition, cultural awareness, and the development of learners' creativity, moral values and human qualities. Yet, there is no means of evaluating all these impacts on learners. Examination questions do not cover all these aspects.

Questions on the texts

What is missing in the syllabus is the way the evaluation of the pupils should be done. The type of assessment shows whether the objective of deepening "pupils' knowledge in the cultural domain through the study of any type of document that is representative of English civilisation and culture" (Ministère, n.d., p. 1) has been reached. What is usually evaluated at examinations is the comprehension of texts.

Analysing the "Baccalaureate A" examination papers from 1985 to 2018, we find out that the questions following the texts fall into two kinds: "Guided Commentary" and "Translation". The guided commentary is usually made up of three questions of comprehension of the text and one opinion question. Except the examination papers of the normal sessions of 1989, 2000 and 2004 and the resit sessions of 1986, 1990, 2003 and 2006 where the questions are directed to the writer— "According to the writer / the author"— all the other years, the comprehension questions are about the text, hence the use of different wordings of the following formulations of questions: "In / According to / Basing on / On the basis of / Referring to / Relying on... the text,..." But even though there is a difference between the writer and the text, this difference may have not been perceived by the

committee that prepared the questions. In other words, “according to the writer” is understood as being equivalent to “according to the text.”

One important remark is in most of the examination questions from 1985 to 2000 there are more questions directed to the reader in addition to the opinion question that is found in all papers. Whereas the examination questions from 2001 to 2018 are focused on the text, the questions of previous years are targeted on the reader with questions like “according to you”, “do you think”, “do you agree”, “do you share this point of view.” Such questions respond to the demands of reader-response theory.

In reader-response criticism, the questions should be opinion-orientated, in the sense of “according to you / in your opinion”, as there are as many understandings as there are readers, in this theory. As Culler (1997) puts it, in reader-response criticism, “the work is not something objective... but is the experience of the reader” (p. 123). Individual answers should be valued in terms of overall consistency and coherence to candidates’ own ideas instead of “objectivity” or conformity to the writer’s intention. In this way, Literature could be of better profit in the examinations than any other texts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study confirms our hypothesis that the great majority of texts proposed for “Baccalaureate A” examinations, in the last two decades, are non-literary texts. The consequence of this reduction in the use of literary texts is that it may explain teachers’ gradual lack of motivation to use Literature in class, which is likely to have a negative impact on the performance of students from this class. This paper, therefore, calls for an integration of literary and linguistic studies in a full awareness of the historical tensions between what has often been perceived as two distinct fields, ‘Language’ and ‘Literature’. It also requires that teachers be trained first, to select literary texts as classroom teaching material, and second to use them in such a way as to let “readers make the literary event” (Riffaterre, 1978, p. 116), encouraging students to express their opinions so that teaching and learning Literature could become an interactive and collaborative process in which teachers rather appear as users of Literature instead of teachers of it.

Notes

1. All translations are ours. The original versions are: «d’élargir l’information des élèves dans le domaine culturel, par l’étude de documents de toute nature, représentatifs de la civilisation et de la culture anglaise» «de donner aux élèves les moyens d’un

développement autonome ultérieur, le désir et la possibilité de poursuivre et d'approfondir l'étude d'anglais »

2. The original French version is : «préférer, en general, le registre contemporain de la communication courante à tout autre »

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Figure 1
Percentage of Literary and non-Fiction Papers Used in School Leaving Certificate Examinations in Burkina Faso between 1985 and 2018

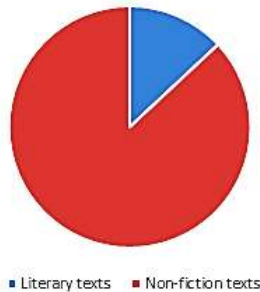


Figure 2
Percentage of Non-Fiction Papers Used in Burkina Faso School Leaving Certificate Examination from 1985 to 2018

