

Original Paper

Pedagogical Functions of Pictures and Classroom Exercises in Teaching English Literature in Basic and Post-Basic Education in Nigeria

Adeoye Adeyinka Olusola PhD¹

¹ Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, Nigeria

Received: December 9, 2024 Accepted: December 22, 2024 Online Published: January 4, 2025

doi:10.22158/fet.v9n1p1

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/fet.v9n1p1>

Abstract

This study examines the pedagogical functions of pictures and classroom exercises in the teaching of English literature at two fundamental levels of Nigeria's educational system: basic education (primary school) and post-basic education (secondary school). In teaching English literature at the level of basic education, children literature is captured. It is the level at which pictorial representations/visual illustrations are brought to the fore not just because of the age-range of the learners, but also because the settings and socio-cultural underpinnings of such pictorial representations/visual illustrations make literature texts easy to mean to the target audience. Knowledge is best transmitted when linguistic and extralinguistic variables are deployed by literary writers to convey message in English literature texts for basic and post-basic education pupils/students; from authorial end, the process is indeed, creative indulgence and literary ingenuity in the three basic genres of literature: drama, prose and poetry. Picture books can be obtained in these three forms, even though they are common in prose texts (storybooks). Apart from facilitating textual interpretation, pictures promote reader-interest and reading culture at pre-basic and post-basic levels of education in Nigeria. At the Junior Secondary School level, pictures are occasionally used in English literature texts, whereas they are commonly used in English literature texts for younger learners (primary school pupils). The theoretical frameworks of this study are: Gokhan Cetinkaya's (2015, p. 118) report and the Critical Theory. The study concludes that: pictures and classroom exercises do not only commune with the objectives of the curriculum of English literature in basic and post-basic education in Nigeria, but are also potent in the transmission of knowledge in terms of the basic skills to be learnt in the curriculum.

Keywords

pictures, exercises, English literature, basic education, post-basic education, Gokhan Cetinkaya's Report, Critical Theory

1. Introduction

The literature of English studies in Nigeria is replete with claims that literature-in English is neglected, as more attention is on English language in the pedagogical process. At the pre-basic level of education, English literature in Nigeria is essentially about 'children literature'. Children literature does not necessarily mean literature for lower age learners as some pupils are above lower age-range. However, such texts align with the actions, expectations, psyche, thoughts, emotions and other features of the 'world of children'. Zainab Zendana Shafii (2015) is instructive on the emergence of children literature in Nigeria:

Many writers of children literature have emerged from Nigeria since the 1960s. Before entering into the historical development of children literature in Nigeria, it is pertinent to go back to the colonial period. Colonialism, to a very large extent, affected the Nigerian society, and is considered one of the factors that contributed to the literary development of literature in Nigeria. During the colonial period, the colonial masters embarked on the importation of European books which in reality, were to help propagate and impose their cultural imperialism and propaganda on the people of Nigeria. To this end, before Nigerian children read books written by Nigerians, they had read the classics of Europe: the famous folktales and fairytales collected and popularized by the German academic, Enid Blyton ... Expectations became high in terms of the creation of qualitative children's books. More attention was paid to the relevant culture content that would help in the nurture, education and entertainment of the Nigerian child. The spirit of independence was pervasive and writers were not left out in the quest for excellence in cultural production. Some books on children literature were produced by writers including Cyprian Ekwensi, who was heavily influenced by the writings of the West. Berth Lindfors stated in his seminal book, *Folklore in Nigerian Literature* that early in his literary career, Ekwensi was not only influenced by Western juvenile books, but also borrowed from the classics, like *Treasure Island* ... Ekwensi also authored other children books like *Drummer Boy* (1966), *The Passport of Mallam Illia* (1965) ... publishing companies further helped in the growth and emergence of children literature in Nigeria. Between (1960) and (1980), book publishing flourished under a number of publishing companies that started different series. The African University Press's Readers' Library Series; Nelson's Rapid Readers; Longman's Library and Macmillan Pacesetters Series, also accelerated the publication of fiction for young people ...

Children literature has witnessed a large and massive improvement during this period. The storybooks came under the following categories: Adventure Series, Folktales Series and Heroes Series. There are also small but active publishing companies that contributed immensely to the growth of children literature.

Considering the significance of English literature or literature-in-English (as it is called in post-basic education in Nigeria) to the target audience, this study is worthy of scholarly attention.

2. Pedagogy, Pictures and Classroom Exercises

Pedagogy refers to teaching and its approaches. Like in language pedagogy where different approaches (such as Communicative Language Learning Approach and Audio Visual Method) facilitate language learning, pictures and classroom exercises facilitate the teaching of English literature in basic and post-basic levels of education in Nigeria. According to M. Sencer Bulut Ozsezer and H. Beyza Canbazoglu (2018, pp. 205-217), ‘there must be connection between illustration and text. If there is no connection between them, it can cause contradiction in the child. Another function of the pictures in the children’s storybooks is to shed light on the written script ... In this context, the pictures are ... colourful, engaging, concrete, entertaining and interpretive; the pictures are correlated to the subjects and texts. The pictures contribute to the development of the children’s sensory perceptions, because they convey emotions and thought that are beyond expression with words.’ To effectively use pictures to convey message in English literature for young readers, page layout is crucial. Sections of pictures in children literature texts should not be cut out as this can distort message to the detriment of the readers. According to M. Sencer Bulut Ozsezer and H. Beyza Canbazoglu (ibid, p. 25), ‘page layout is an important factor in illustrated children books. In children’s publications, it is very important to arrange pictures and texts, to arrange lines and headings, to set the upper and lower margins on the edges of the pages.’

Critical reasoning and achievement levels are enhanced when pictorial representations are appropriate and adequate in children literature. In this regard, literary writers consider theme, setting, characterization and plot in the story. Apart from its cognitive inputs on a child-learner, picture makes the reading of English literature texts fun-filled and entertaining; Radik, S. and Endri, E. (2021) is instructive as far as this claim is concerned.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored by two theoretical frameworks: Gokhan Cetinkaya’s (ibid, p. 118) report and the Critical Theory:

3.1 Gokhan Cetinkaya’s Report

Effective teaching of English literature can be realized. A suitable framework for that is Gokhan Cetinkaya’s (ibid, p. 118) report on participating teachers’ suggestions for implementing the Creative Writing method as presented below:

- i. Reading should be endeared;
- ii. We should make students like writing;
- iii. There should be a separate class for this; there should not be any grading;
- iv. Class hours should be increased;
- v. Materials should be interesting to students;
- vi. In-house training;
- vii. The classroom should be turned into a free thinking platform;
- viii. Awarding;
- ix. The students should be guided so that they can express themselves;
- x. Creative Writing method training at university;
- xi. Overcoming prejudices against writing
- xii. Student-centered classes by making students participate;
- xiii. Bringing famous authors with young students;
- xiv. Preventing the students' family problems;
- xv. Samples regarding the Creative Writing techniques; and
- xvi. Creative thinking.

Gokhan Cetinkaya's (ibid, p. 115) creative writing practices and activities are appropriate classroom exercises for teaching English literature:

story completion, writing stories, tales, plays, essays, poems, diaries; free writing technique; writing about a concept or a proverb, the activities in the teacher's or student's books; composition, picture interpretation; concept pool activity; direct writing method; proverb and idiom box activity; and writing club. Gokhan Cetinkaya (ibid, p. 16) notes that poems encountered in implementing the Creative Writing method (like in methods for teaching English literature – emphasis mine) include; not being willing to write; not wanting to face the burdens of imagination; students not having sufficient vocabulary; students' lack and insufficiency of knowledge; time constraints; students' lack of confidence; lack of resources; not having any problems; not liking handwriting; and difficulties in reaching aims.

3.2 The Critical Theory

The Critical Theory teaches learners the necessity of reflecting on the process, aims, content and style of writing as they interpret the social, philosophical, cognitive and diachronic contexts of already published literary works. This practice helps creative writers to produce novel literature that establishes the link between the past and present. The theory therefore emphasizes contents (as in the use of pictures) and personal efforts (as in self-participation in classroom activities/exercises) in the teaching of English literature.

4. Functions of Pictures and Classroom Exercises in the Teaching of English Literature

4.1 Pictorial Representations

Pictures commune with the child-learner's mind and foster cognition. Through pictures, readers of children literature see the whole of the text rather than part. So long as pictures in children storybooks appeal to the five senses of 'touch', 'sound', 'sight', 'smell' and 'taste', there is no doubt that they are facilitators of the teaching of English literature in primary and junior secondary schools. Pictures provide illustrations that complement the verbal elements in English literature texts, for the explanation of textual messages. Nikolajeva and Scott, cited in Zainab Zendana Shafii (ibid) note that 'the relationship between text and illustration could be symmetrical; that is when illustration correlates with text. In this case, the illustration reflects what is told in the text rather than adding any new meaning or nuances. The second type of relationship is that of augmentation. This is a situation whereby illustration enhances or extends the text or gives a new meaning that has not been expressed in the text. The illustration thus provides critical information that lends meaning to the story as a whole. The text depends on pictures for clarification; illustration enhances, elaborates text, while text carries primary narrative. The third is that of contradiction that is, when illustrations present a meaning contrary to the text ... To an extent, the relationship between the text and illustrations is played out in structural definition and literary vindication of the various characters. The readers get to see the pictorial reactions and actions of the characters viz-a-viz the textual constructions ...' In addition, Sipe, cited in Zainab Zendana Shafii (ibid) assert that '... synergy of words and pictures works in a picture book in any case, whether the visual text expands, amplifies, complements. anticipates, interprets, counterpoints or contradicts visual text. Every reading can reveal new layers of meaning as the reader develops. In English literature texts for young readers such as storybooks, pictures are used skillfully to capture unfolding actions. Tina Harlon (2006) avers that 'the main feature of children is action and optimistic effect.' When reading English literature texts, child-learners explore environmental nuances to interpret actions of intra-text characters. Thus, working out the meanings of such texts is a comprehensive process on the part of the target audience (children readers). As cited in Radik Sahaja and Endri Endri (ibid), 'characters in picture storybooks are often children or adolescents, depending on the intended audience. They reflect the actions, thoughts and emotions of children and adolescents in the narration ... Children books are supposed to be written in a simple form to be easily understandable by children. In other words, children's books need to fulfill a certain level of legibility ... A text can be characterized as legible if each symbol or character is easy to identify.'

4.2 Classroom Exercises

Classroom exercises should be fun-filled, instructive, interest-spurring and task-constitutive. Classroom exercises equip learners with the necessary skills for critical thinking, sound judgments and good textual critiquing at the post-basic education level. Classroom exercises can also function as test instruments in the teaching of English literature. In different ways, test instruments help learners. Acheoah (2014) reports that 'continuous assessment (CA) has classroom function, guidance function

and administrative function.’ To ascertain the progress of the learner, CA is periodically administered in line with the objectives of teaching a subject. It caters for the weaknesses of individual students, it fosters record-keeping and motivational teaching. However, Continuous Assessment must be appropriate and well-managed. Scholars note that it has its disadvantages which include: the large classroom is ineffectively handled, teachers tend to ignore it to concentrate on teaching so as to cover a bulk of curriculum, thus leading to ineffective teaching, there is often variation in the standard and quality of the tests and in the parameters for scoring, thereby rendering the results unreliable. Oguniyi (1984) submits that, ‘Tests whether elaborate or not, are administered to find out whether or not the learner has achieved certain teaching objectives.’ The types of tests known in education include: Discrete Point Test, Integration Test, Placement Test, Achievement Test, Diagnostic Test, Aptitude Test, Predictive Test, Standardized Test, CA Test and Teacher-made Test. A good test instrument must possess validity, reliability and accuracy. Also, it integrates both Discrete Point and Integration Test procedures and captures the goals of teaching. So long as the curriculum of English literature/literature-in-English reflects the skills to be mastered by learners, ineffective approaches to teaching should not continually prevent learners from mastering such skills. For example, exercises or tests that lack basic requirements can result in the failure of students in JSS examinations. Acheoah (ibid) notes that learners can fail if: classroom tests and examinations were not qualitative; the questions were inadequate – not quantitative; the questions were not within the scope of the curriculum; there was variation in the standard and quality of the tests, and in the parameter for scoring, thereby rendering the results unreliable; tests were not properly marked; candidates were not monitored. In using classroom exercises to teach English literature, it is important to give learners adequate time on the school timetable. Some literature texts are more complex than others for one reason or the other, including writers’ style and language. English literature/Literature-in-English is so fundamental that approaches to teaching the subject should successfully avert poor grades or failure in an important subject like English literature/literature-in-English. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (2022, p. 160) submits that ‘literature-in-English is a major school subject that equips students with language and other soft skills needed for entry into the workforce. For students to acquire the skills, effective teaching, which is dependent on the availability of basic teaching learning resources, is essential ... The rate at which students fail literature-in-English, which is getting worse each year, indicates that there is problem in the teaching-learning process...’ Interestingly,

Alabere Rabi Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (2017, p. 53) reports that ‘... the education planners in Nigeria have made the teaching of literature in English a compulsory aspect of English language in our tertiary institutions. Based on this, the curriculum designed for tertiary institutions, and particularly, Colleges of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies, literature is taught in pre-diploma and diploma levels.’ Given the importance of the subject during and after school years, the process of teaching English literature in basic and post-basic education should be made as learner-centered as possible. This is where the use of classroom exercises becomes crucial. Practice should be encouraged in a classroom

where students have different individual abilities. This reduces failure rate. Classroom exercises are objectively structured for effective teaching of English literature. Exercises should also promote language learning. Teaching English literature in basic and post-basic education in Nigeria, presupposes learning the conventions of English. Hangyu Zhang (2020, p. 3) reports that ‘... a system of exercises for teaching a foreign language should be understood as a set of types and kinds of exercises that are related to each other by purpose, material, and method of their implementation ...’ Azikiwe (1998 p. 213) gives thirteen steps for teaching and learning literature in English:

- i. Assign paragraphs or passages from the literary text to be read during the lesson. This should have been given as homework or assignment before the actual class period to the students;
- ii. If reading is to be done in the lower class, the teacher should give the students opportunity to read also.
- iii. New vocabulary and poorly pronounced words should be written on the board for proper pronunciation, spelling, denotative and connotative meanings taught as well.
- iv. Students should be involved in discussions, analysis and description of the reading, while the teacher gives the proper perspective of the author’s vision and focus in the work.
- v. Both the teachers and students should ask and answer questions to elicit further explanations of the subject matter, themes, styles, mood and characters in the literary writing.
- vi. The students in the class should be divided in groups of four and five and assigned specific chapters, passages, events and incidents, so that they may be involved actively during the class lesson and after. This concept will enable them to be interested in the subject and the lesson.
- vii. The teacher should arouse and sustain the interest of the students by relating the lessons to the real life situations, cultures, and environments of the students to show that literature is all about human lives in their environment.
- viii. Students should be guided to extract meanings explicit and implicit from the materials read, through the use of outlines from the textual contents and situations.’
- ix Teachers should give the students guide on how to identify the elements of literature such as plot, theme, background, subject matter, characterization, style, diction, figures of speech and the mood in the literary works at different class lessons.
- x. In order to make the lessons interesting the teacher should make use of instructional materials, visual aids, aural aids and charts.

- xi. Give the students content and essay type questions as class work and assignment, so as to enable them read the text effectively for the purposes of understanding the texts and examinations.
- xii. Students should be taught how to be selective by directing them to simple things that they can write such as short stories, plays and poetry.
- xiii. Teachers should encourage students to do intensive and extensive reading privately at home using prescribed and unprescribed texts. The advantages of intensive reading according to Oyetuiyi (ibid p. 108) gets students invited in the independent study, use of words in English language from the contexts of authors and the denotation meanings thereby enhancing new vocabularies and free expressions.

Effective use of classroom exercises in teaching English literature presupposes that such exercises should reveal the cultural relevance and social significance of the subject. Literature is naturally a human heritage. Historical accounts reveal that humans have been used to the culture of storytelling as passed on from one generation to another. Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (2011 p. 56) state that ‘literature ... is an art which springs from our inborn love of telling stories, arranging words in pleasing patterns, and expressing in words some special cultural aspects of human experiences ... Louise states that literature is a form of art having aesthetic values, which can be enjoyed in itself, and at the same time has social origin and social effects...’ Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 56) also report Alabere Rabiati Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (ibid p. 53) submission that ‘literature is an exercise of the mind and intellect which emanates from man’s desire to narrate stories using words creatively to expose aspects of the experiences of man. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines it as ‘writings whose value is in the beauty of form or emotional effects’ ... The organization of words to give pleasure through them to elevate and transform experience, and functions in society as a continuous symbolic criticism of value. Ogunsina (1976) also sees it as a vehicle of human expression which seeks to investigate man, his behaviour in society, his knowledge of the universe in which he finds himself.’

At the post-basic education level, classroom exercises are used to teach students grammar, vocabulary, continuous writing and summary. Alabere Rabiati Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii’s (ibid p. 54) report that ‘literature is language in use; in other words, it is one of the tools for teaching English in a second language situation. It facilitates the acquisition of grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing. Bright and Macgregor (1981) are also of the view that when there is little reading and writing, there will be little language Using literature to teach language also helps students to achieve several goals in their education. Literature equips students with real life experiences that can be useful for living within and outside the school system and the knowledge of stories from literature can be used to answer essay questions on English language. They are also exposed to several registers in the process of learning different literature texts. In other words, when students are exposed to literary texts, they are able to appreciate and make judgments on important issues ... they acquire self confidence in speaking and

writing ...The teaching of literature is very important at all levels of education. It is imperative that emphases be accorded to it in all schools.' It is worthy of note and emphasis that classroom exercises help young learners acquire writing skill which is a vital component of the curriculum. Writing is so technical that it should be taught and learned through formal instruction. Freeman (1967) defines writing as 'the ability to select the strongest words, the most useful facts since it is the appropriate selection of these facts that engrave the image of a work in the reader's mind.' Skills to be learned in writing depend on the educational level of learners. While some skills are more applicable to basic education learners, there are other skills that are relevant to post-basic level learners. Stanley Oriola (2008), cited in Ayodabo and Demola Jolayemi (2008 p. 104) asserts that if writing is to be properly done, certain skills are necessary:

- (a) Mental: This requires that a writer must be able to think clearly and be logical, sequential and coherent in how he organizes his ideas.
- (b) Psychological: Ideas can only move freely within the various sensitive components of the human system, if a writer is emotionally stable and relaxed.
- (c) Rhetorical: Writing, like every other practice, has its own rules. A writer must know the rules that are fundamental to his craft; or, else, the semantic depth expected of the work of such a writer will be missed so long as the structural order is flouted. This may result in expressions that are linguistically awkward or syntactically odd. A good writing must make a smooth, flow and 'floody' reading.
- (d) Critical: A writer is expected to re-read a work, which he has completed. Beyond this, one should be able to judge or criticize a completed work so as to improve it; thus writing is essentially re-writing. Trask (1995, p. 1) observes that language, which differentiates man from other creatures, is the tool for writing. According to Babatunde (1998), writing is a process (a step-by-step activity) and an interaction. Anko (2004 pp. 254-256) notes that the act of writing consists of stages, with the emphasis now shifted from product-oriented approach to process-oriented approach.

Writing is one of the four language skills: the other three are listening, speaking and reading. While listening and speaking are receptive skills, speaking and writing are productive skills because they involve graphical and conventional communication of ideas. In the literature-in-English classroom, students learn that that writing is writer-audience communication. Students are made to understand how literature texts convey meaning through effective organization of textual elements. Literary writers do not only explore the conventions of English in writing English literature texts, but also organize ideas carefully; they select appropriate linguistic conventions to communicate such ideas. Variables that a writer must manipulate skillfully in written communication include reader, occasion and purpose. In poetry lessons for young learners, students learn the qualities of good writing which are as follows:

- (a) Economy of words: The writer should be able to communicate ideas with brevity;
- (b) Clarity: The writer should ensure that his words are understood;

- (c) Simplicity: The writer should use simple words except for other stylistic or literary purposes.

Teaching English literature in basic and post-basic schools should put into consideration, certain objectives as stated in Alabere Rabiati Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (ibid p. 53):

- 1). To inculcate in students, the love for extensive and continued pleasurable reading through interesting texts for its own sake.
- 2). To introduce new types of experiences through literature.
- 3). To expose readers through varied valuable experiences real or imagined which may contribute to their emotional, social and moral judgment.
- 4). To introduce the learners to well-known characters, books and incidents in literature.
- 5). To develop the ability to think critically leading to adequate judgment.
- 6). Through the study of literature, students acquire human approaches to examining thoughts and actions.
- 7). Literature helps to develop learners in the areas of language skills and vocabulary.

According to Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 163), 'Cater and Long (1963), cited in Savvidou (2004) highlights approaches to the teaching of literature: cultural; language; and personal growth. While the cultural approach exposes learners to other cultures, hinging on the socio-political and historical underpinnings of literary texts, the language approach uses literature as an instrument for learning language. The personal approach portrays literature as being useful in the day-to-day existence of human beings. In consideration of the link between language and literature, Hangyu Zhang's (ibid p. 3) submission is instructive as far as the appropriateness and contents of classroom exercises are concerned. Hangyu Zhang (ibid p. 3) asserts that '... a system of exercises for teaching a foreign language should be understood as a set of types and kinds of exercises that are related to each other by purpose, material, and method of their implementation...'

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study holds the view that classroom exercises and authorial use of pictures in English literature texts for young readers are pedagogical interventions. Authors of English literature texts guide young readers in primary and Junior Secondary Schools in the interpretation of thematic concerns. Hammerberg, cited in Zainab Zandana Shaffi (ibid) submits that 'the function of the author is to guide the reader about a shared or common experience and suggest meaning as the story unfolds.' In terms of the three basic genres of literature, the post-basic curriculum of Literature-in-English provides students with learning objectives. Pictures and exercises are deployed to promote reading culture in young readers in the sense that they are intriguing, participatory and motivational. Suraya Mansure, Radik Sahaja and Endri Endri (ibid, p. 6440) state that 'reading' is a language skill and an important factor in the learning process ... Through reading, students receive information. Reading is also included as a

literacy activity ... Aspects of reading interest in children include a pleasure in the reading activity, an awareness of the benefits of reading, frequency of reading, and the number of books a child has read. Reading is a typical human activity.' Pictures interact with the elements of literature such as language, setting, plot and characterization. This study reveals that readers learn a lot from classroom exercises across the basic genres of literature. For example, in a play text for young readers, a lot is observed by the readers about the genre: the plot is systematically developed; there is beginning, middle and end; the internal structure can be outlined as a classroom activity; there is unity which means that the parts cohere; there is continuity which means that the line of thought is noticeable; and there is progression which means that the plot advances message/theme. Classroom exercises are used to teach young readers creative writing skills. Wallace (1926) outlines four stages of the creative process:

- i. Preparation
- ii. Incubation
- iii. Illumination; and
- iv. Verification

Through the skillful use of classroom exercises, learners are equipped with the necessary skills to be able to criticize and edit themselves (cf. McLoughlin 2008, p. 89). For example, in teaching characterization, teachers make learners understand that:

- i. Each character should be unique;
- ii. Fictional characters are taken from people the writer is familiar with ('writing as an insider' cf. Adèle Ramet 2007);
- iii. A writer can also explore his/her character traits;
- iv. Character-revealing variables include physical description, action, speech, physical location, thought and language.
- v. Human nature can be construed in terms of attributes, feelings, appearance, aversion, ambition and psyche;
- vi. Stereotypes count in the description of human nature.
- vii. The speed of a work of fiction is determined by the way characters set the scene and engage in action and reaction, to reveal place and time, among other functions.
- viii. Characters' nature can be ascertained through age, occupation or situation.
- ix. Description via language should be appropriate and sense-evoking (telling and showing technique).

The literature is replete with the complementary roles of words and pictorial representations in young readers' English literature texts. Meaning as Mental Image – a semantic theory, views the meaning of a word as the mental image such a word conjures in the hearer's mind when it is uttered. Hammerber, cited in Zainab Zendana Shafii (ibid) contends that 'words appear in pictures and over pictures in ways that require a non-literal reading of the printed text, for to only read the words for their meaning would be to escape with no meaning whatsoever.' The foundational levels for teaching English literature in

Nigeria (primary and Junior Secondary School levels) should be strong enough to avert the recurring failure in SSCE. Unlike in the early 1960s and 1980s, when English language and literature-in-English were taught in different periods with sufficient time as scheduled on school timetables, today the two subjects are combined. Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 52) submit that ‘with the integration of English language and literature as one subject and tagged English studies at the junior secondary level, it does not provide the teachers with proper opportunities to teach literature exhaustively, as most teachers are interested in teaching English language, using all the available periods for English studies. What can be deduced from this aspect is that literature and English language are two broad subject areas as such both cannot be combined for effective performance if the lessons are to benefit the students. Undoubtedly, lack of serious study of literature affects students’ communicative competence because they have not been exposed to varieties of styles in language usages, vocabularies, and expressions which is only possible through the study of literature as a separate subject from English language.’ This study concludes that the relationship between pictures and exercises in young readers’ English literature texts is in tandem with the objectives of the curriculum. In addition, pictures and classroom exercises effectively transmit knowledge in terms of the basic skills to be learnt in the curriculum.

References

- Adèle, R. (2007). *Creative Writing* (7th ed.). How To Content.
- Alabere Rabiati Ajoke, & Aspalila bt. Shapii. (2017). Problem and Prospect of Using Literature to Teach Writing in English as a Second Language. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 6(2), 53-57.
- Azikiwe, Uche. (1998). *Language Teaching and Language Learning*. Onitsha, Africana Feb Publishers.
- Emmanuel, M. E., & Idorenyin, T. U. (2011). Challenges and Innovations in the Teaching of English Studies in Junior Secondary Schools in Nigerian Educational System. *Knowledge Review*, 23(3), 52-58.
- Gohkan, C. (2015) Examining Teachers’ Use of Creative Writing Activities. *Anthropologists*, 19(1), 111-121.
- Hangyu, Z. (2020). Effects of Different Classroom Activities on the English Speaking Proficiency of Chinese EFL Students. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*, 8(8), 1-7.
- Harlon, T. (2006). *Characteristics of Children Literature as a Genre*. London; Hopkins University Press.
- McLouglin, N. (2008). Creative and Integrated Model for Teaching Creative Writing. One Approach. In G. Harper, J.

- Ozsezer, M. S., & Canbazoglu, H. B. (2018). Picture in Children Storybooks; Children's Perspective. *International Journal of Educational Methodology*, 4(4), 205-217.
- Radik, S., & Endri, E. (2021). The Effect of Visual Communication in Children Reading Interest. *Library Philosophy and Practice* (e-journal), p. 6440.
- Ugwu, E. O. O. (2022). The Challenges Facing Effective of Literature-in-English in Nigerian Secondary Schools. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 2, 160-178.
- Zedana Zainab, Z. (2015). *Aesthetics of Children Literature in Nigeria; A Study of Selected Books* (p. 1) M.A. Thesis. Zaria; Department of English and Literary Studies, Ahmadu Bello University.