



Teaching Literature-in-English in Senior Secondary School in Nigeria: An Overview

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.17247995

Submission Date: 28 Aug. 2025 | Published Date: 02 Oct. 2025

Abstract

This study is an incisive overview of the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English at the Senior Secondary School level in Nigeria. The study therefore examines the curriculum of the subject, its relevance to learner-needs, teachers' approaches to the pedagogical process, performance level of SSCE candidates and other related phenomena. Literature-in-English is essentially literary writing. It concerns the basic genres of literature, which are drama, prose and poetry. The subject is taught at Junior and Senior Secondary School levels in line with the curriculum which clearly states the skills to be learnt in classroom, not just for the WAEC and NECO examinations, but also for the present and future benefits of students during and after school years. As an instrument of language study, literature fosters the transmission of language-related knowledge. For this reason, the study brings to the fore, English studies in Nigeria. The term 'English studies', is a cover-term for the study of both English language and Literature-in-English in Nigeria. The theoretical framework of this study is Collie Slater's Theory. The study concludes that: Literature-in-English is a very significant SSCE subject; poor performances are recorded in WAEC and NECO examinations because of low-rating of the subject, poor teaching methods and lack of literary texts.

Keywords: Literature-in-English, English language, teaching, learning, SSCE, Collie Slater's Theory.

1. Introduction

The curriculum of Literature-in-English provides students with genre-specific knowledge of the subject. A French word, 'genre' means 'kind'. It is etymologically related to 'gender' and 'genus'. As far back as the early nineteenth century the word has been used in English to mean 'a kind of literature'. The classification is based on whether or not a literary text for the SSCE exam is dialogue, narrative or verse. Any written text that can be subjected to literary appreciation can be referred to as 'literature'. Literature-in-English is a career enabler for teaming graduates who aspire to work in different facets of society within and outside Nigeria. It is therefore a major school subject in Nigerian secondary schools. It enhances learners' communication skills in written and spoken discourses. This is crucial considering the vital roles that communication plays in the contemporary world that is globalization-driven. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (2022 p. 162) states that job opportunities for certificate-holders of Literature-in-English: include teaching, creative writing, mass media (broadcasting, journalism, newspaper), film, advertising, copy editing, review and report writing, secretarial works, digital and book publishing, public speaking, editorial assistant and lexicography. There is also the view that in the post-COVID era more job opportunities are open to those who have the required certificates in Literature-in-English. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 160) also 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...' The Literature-in-English classroom affords learners a wide range of opportunities including exploring the elements of literature (theme, setting, characterization, plot, diction, etc.) to evolve components of class discussions. Through such discussions, ideas are 'cross-fertilized' to process deeper meanings of WAEC and NECO literary texts. Themes conveyed by such literary texts are universal; this gives the students avenue to understand human nature, their immediate and larger society. The usefulness of Literature-in-English in post-basic education has necessitated different studies on the teaching and learning of the subject. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 164) states that 'a number of studies have been carried out in an effort to improve the teaching and learning of Literature-in-

English in Nigerian secondary schools. Dahiru (2020) investigated the challenges secondary school teachers in Yobe and Borno states faced in the teaching of Literature-in-English and its impact on university admission requirements. The study found that the subject was not taught in most secondary schools due to socio-cultural factors, unavailability of qualified teachers, and gender issues. Besides, some heads of schools consider literature an irrelevant school subject. These factors led to students' failure, and, by implication, inability to study courses in the university that requires a credit in Literature-in-English. Iehu (1989) also reported that the problem of teaching literature in Nigerian secondary schools include shortage of teachers, high cost of the literature texts, and lack of teaching-learning resources. However, the study only asked the opinion of the teachers and students without really finding out the extent to which students actually have the recommended texts.' This study is therefore an attempt to contribute to the existing body of literature on the teaching and learning of the subject at the Senior Secondary School level of education in Nigeria.

2. The Problem

There are divergent views on reasons for students' failure in SSCE. The most worrisome of such claims is the fact that low-rating of the subject has resulted in the combined teaching of English language and Literature-in-English. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 162) rightly reports that 'studies have shown that lack of learning resources is a major factor that contributes to poor teaching and learning in Nigeria (Nigerian Education in Emergencies Working Group, 2019). Cases of non-availability of qualified teachers, lack of textbooks and school supplies are very common in schools (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015); (UNICEF, 2017). In government interventions to redress the shortage of textbooks, the cross-cutting subjects, especially English and Mathematics are usually prioritized while subjects like Literature-in-English are neglected. Studies on the challenges of teaching Literature-in-English in Nigeria, with emphasis on the availability of teaching-learning resources are sketchy and not elaborate. Such studies include Inchu (1989) and Dahiru (2000).' Since the present situation concerning the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English in Senior Secondary School in Nigeria is not helpful to candidates sitting for WAEC and NECO examinations, there is need for more scholarly efforts towards proffering solutions, and this study is one of such efforts.

3. English Studies in Nigeria

After the colonial rule in Nigeria, English became the country's lingua franca. As an official language in Nigeria, the roles of English were constitutionally specified across domains, for the purpose of nation-building and national cohesion. In the education domain, English operates as the medium of instruction. It is the language for teaching SSCE subjects including Literature-in-English. English studies in Nigeria can be construed in the context of national development. All countries desire national development. In a developing country like Nigeria, quest for national development is crucial. Language planning and policies in Nigeria capture the dynamics for teaching and learning of English and how it can co-exist with Nigerian languages. For example, the National Policy of Education specifies the languages that can be used as medium of instruction at different levels of basic and post-basic education. Language policy is a focused language-related framework.

Attitudinal factors mainly hinder the study of English language and Literature-in-English in formal instructional settings in Nigeria; the heterogeneous structure of Nigeria demands proper planning of English studies in the country for the achievement of the objectives is contained in the curriculum. Language attitudes in multilingual nations like Nigeria, continually receive the attention of sociolinguists. Dada (2010, p. 418) submits that 'the recent 2005 Ethnologic Data listed 521 languages for Nigeria. Of these, 510 are living languages, 2 are second languages without mother tongue speakers, and 9 are extinct. Research submits that Nigerian languages are grouped as major languages, state languages and local languages based on their status as dominant languages, their territorial spread and the population that speak them.' The position of English as a national language in Nigeria accentuates its relevance in intercultural communication, particularly in the era of globalization in which communication can only link nations across the world through a global language like English. Fasold (1984 p. 77) comments on what a national language is:

- a) the emblem of national oneness and identity;
- b) widely used for some everyday purposes;
- c) widely and fluently spoken within the country;
- d) the major candidate for such a role, since there is no equally qualified alternative language within the country;
- e) acceptable as a symbol of authenticity; and
- f) having a link with the glorious past.

4. Collie Slater's Theory

Collie Slater's Theory is germane to this study because it reveals the importance of Literature-in-English to SSCE students, and provides tips for effective teaching and learning of the subject. It also acknowledges the fact that the teaching of English language and Literature-in-English is complementary; the former facilitates the transmission of knowledge on the latter. Collie Slater cited in Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (2011) presents the following tips as reasons why literary texts can be used to teach language at any level of education are:

1. Valuable authentic material;

2. Cultural value;
3. Language enhancement;
4. Personal involvement;
5. Variety and interest;
6. For teaching morals, culture and aesthetic values of a particular group of people; knowing linguistic forms, communicative functions and meaning.

5. Teaching and Learning Literature-in-English in Senior Secondary School in Nigeria

The two levels of secondary school education in Nigeria: Junior Secondary School (JSS 1-3) and Senior Secondary School (SS 1-3) are crucial avenues for exposing students to the fundamentals of Literature-in-English. Literature-in-English is taught at these two levels in line with the curriculum. The poor attention given to the teaching and learning of the subject is worrisome, considering its numerous benefits to learners. This study is an integrative overview of the pedagogical process. It examines the significance of the subject and the challenges that bedevil the success of teaching and learning it at the SSCE level of the Nigerian educational system. The concept, 'English Studies' captures the present-day practice of combining the study of English language with that of Literature-in-English. So long as present-day SSCE results reveal declining performance in Literature-in-English compared to performance in English language, there is need for the use of better methods in the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English. The significance of the subject to learners and the society makes it urgent to address attitudinal and facility-related problems in the pedagogical process. The communication skills and human values learned in the classroom integrate learners productively into the labour force, their immediate society and the larger society. According to Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 52), '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.' The significance of Literature-in-English is the reason why it is also taught and learnt in tertiary institutions in the country, according to the provisions of Nigeria's educational system. Alabere Rabi Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (2017 p. 53) report 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, in the curriculum designed for tertiary institutions, and particularly, Colleges of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies, literature is taught in pre-dipoma and diploma levels.'

In the Literature-in-English classroom, the focus is not simply to make learners have the ability to read a text and tell the story effectively. It is to equip learners with the high-level cognitive ability of being able to appreciate the text; that is, being able to establish their own voice or perspectives about what the text conveys. This is in the form of a critique. In this regard, repeated reading of a text and engaging in group discussions are useful. When learners are able to synthesize a literary text, deeper meanings therein can be worked out. Critical mindedness and analytical potential are vital skills that learners can deploy into the workforce. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 163) submit that 'to enhance literary appreciation, nothing about the text should be taken for granted. Literature-in-English requires close and purposive reading, paying attention to elements such as plots, settings, themes, characterization and diction. Students also need to contribute to the teaching-learning process by participating in classroom discussions, which may be initiated by them or by the teacher. On the part of the teacher, there is a need to make the classroom learner-centered and activity-based. This can be achieved by using different teaching strategies, such as focus group discussion, quizzes, drama and debate – depending on the genre of literature being taught and the learning objectives. Since the duration of the lesson is usually 45 minutes, teachers need to encourage students to read the texts beforehand (at home or before the lessons). This would prepare them to participate actively in class discussions. Without actively engaging the students, the lesson may become boring, and the teacher may become the side voice in the classroom. If that happens, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to make students appreciate literature.' Through what is learnt in literary texts, students' imaginative prowess is awakened and their critical mindedness is enhanced. These skills equip them for further studies and nation-building. Okolie, cited in Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 53) states that 'reading of African novels, gives opportunity to slip imaginatively into circumstances and conditions of life beyond one's immediate milieu. Arguably, Literature-in-English is a very vital secondary school subject. The relevance of the subject is captured by Azikiwe (1998 p. 202) who states that 'literature is language since it deals with all aspects of human lifestyle and cultures. Moreover, it further shows that literature has a wider scope that overshadows all other subjects since it deals with language and communication.' Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 52) note that '... the problem militating against the teaching of English literature ranges from no specific periods on the class time table for Literature-in-English, whereas English periods fill the class time table Mondays to Fridays. Since students do not study literature where they can read English language extensively and learn to communicate effectively, they are incapable of passing external

examinations in both English language and Literature-in-English in WASCE and NECO examinations yearly.' In addition, Azikiwe (ibid) reports McGregor (1971 p. 12) who 'observed that literature refers to language used skillfully about subjects which are important to human beings and expresses hopes, fears, doubts, joy, love, problems and conflicts that human beings experience in their daily lives and activities, written to teach the readers lessons about life.' Azikiwe also states that 'literature is language in action because it exploits the resources of time, people and place, in their oral and written forms. Reading a literature text is reading about people's activities, problems and prospects which directly affects the psyche of the reader, so that he is emotionally transformed into a new individual, capable of initiating a new lifestyle copied from the literary characters.' Given the fact that literature contextualizes language use, the instrumentality of Literature-in-English in the study of English language cannot be denied. According to Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 54), 'from the concept of the relationship between language and literature, Eagles and Krammer (1976, p. 102) opined that language is the medium of literature by giving the connotations and semantics in context usage. Grammatical structures and lexical items are drawn from the inventory of language, and applied in literature expressions, which make meaningful descriptions ... in literary writings. To teach English language without literature ... deprives the students of the basic communicative approach, which states that language is better acquired and used effectively since it is in literature stories, poetry recitation and drama acting and reading that communication can be enhanced, than studying the rules of language in isolated sentence structures, which do not link to real practical situations in their cultural lives.' Alabere Rabiat Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (ibid p. 53) assert that 'the most interesting method of teaching English language is through literature. The place of literature in teaching is to expose learners to different valuable experiences, real and imaginative, building in students the love for extensive and sustained pleasurable reading. But the reverse is the case in recent development in the study of literature in Nigerian educational system ... where literature is not reflected as a separate subject in the junior secondary school curriculum, as it used to be in the past when literature was introduced right from the first year in secondary school as a compulsory subject of study.'

Poor teaching of Literature-in-English account for the high rate of failure in SSCE. Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 55) submit that 'the actual reason why students fail in public examinations like NECO and WASCE in English and literature is the fact that the teaching of literature in English has been neglected and ignored by teachers and students' unwillingness to buy prescribed texts for themselves. See National Bureau of Statistics (2015) for students' performances in SSCE. As a result, literature which should complement English language teaching is not taught effectively ... the recent approaches to language teaching have ignored literature teaching. Moreover, literature approaches are now subsumed under approaches to language learning, so these have negative effects on literature and language teaching and learning. Merging these two important subjects together therefore confuses the teachers of both subjects...' Azikiwe (ibid p. 213) suggests 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 ... intensive reading 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.

Classroom approaches to the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English towards preparing students for WAEC and NECO should be interesting and motivational. The skills to be learnt can only be learnt via learner-centered approach to teaching. Thus, experienced teachers are needed to teach the subject effectively at the Senior Secondary School level in Nigeria. It is believed that Literature is inborn in humans; fundamentally, parents have the age-long culture of transmitting socio-cultural values to children through story telling. Emmanuel Maurice Ekah and Idorenyin T. Ukot (ibid p. 56) assert 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 ... 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) who report 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. Ogunlana (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.' According to Alabere Rabiati Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (ibid p. 54), 'literature is language in use' ... 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 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 that Literature-in-English fosters the learning of writing skills. According to Freeman (1967), writing is '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. Stanley Oriola (2008), cited in Ayodabo and Demola Jolayemi (2008 p. 104) notes 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 are made to learn that writing is writer-audience communication. Students are taught how literature texts convey meaning through effective organization of textual elements. Literary writers do not only explore the conventions of English in writing Literature-in-English texts, but also organize ideas carefully. They also select appropriate linguistic conventions to communicate such ideas. Variables that writers explore in written communication include reader, occasion and purpose.

In the teaching of literature, the teacher should have the following objectives in mind (cf. 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.

Challenges to the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English in SSCE should be addressed to enhance students' performance in external examinations. Alabere Rabiati Ajoke and Apalila bt. Shapii (ibid) state that 'a major way to establish whether or not students are learning and, by extension, attaining the objectives of Literature-in-English in Nigeria is through their yearly Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) results. The SSCE is organized by different examination bodies, notably, the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO). The minimum standard students are expected to attain in SSCE is a 'pass' at credit level. A credit pass (in combination with four other subjects) qualifies students for further studies in any discipline in the humanities that requires Literature-in-English, including English language and literature; language education; mass communication; law; linguistics; theatre arts; and classics.

Meanwhile, the curricula of WAEC and NECO SSCE have been synchronized, meaning that the same literature texts are recommended for both examinations. Out of eight texts, students may read only four (an African drama, a non-African drama, an African prose, and a non-African prose). They also have three years (SS1-3) to study these texts. With this lenient structure and extended time frame, it is expected that students would be adequately prepared for these examinations. However, their level of failure, which has become a yearly occurrence, seems to suggest the opposite. Their performance is not only poor, but also declining annually, especially in WAEC SSCE.' Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 163) reports Cater and Long (1963), cited in Savvidou (2004) who highlight 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 preparing students for the SSCE, learner-centered approach to the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English presupposes the use of adequate and appropriate classroom exercises. Hangyu Zhang (2020 p. 1) submits that 'considerable attention has been paid to a variety of classroom activities in an English speaking class ... However, there has been evidence showing that different situations in classroom activities exert various effects on learners' English speaking proficiency ... This fact indicates that both positive and negative effects can be made according to types and effects of classroom exercises ... communicative activities such as discussion, problem-solving and role play can develop students' English speaking proficiency ... some oral activities in EFL classes such as some drill activities possibly cause the low English speaking proficiency for students...' Classroom exercises are expected to treat the objectives of the lessons, and measure students' progressive performances. Indeed, there are problems in the pedagogical processes due to different factors including learner-differences. Iehu (1989) is instructive in this regard. Students of Literature-in-English have roles to play in the achievement of the objectives of lessons. Practicing and imitating the writings of celebrated literary writers are expected of students preparing for SSCE examinations. William Shakespeare is a great source of inspiration to students of Literature-in-English. Some classroom exercises are group-based, depending on skills being taught and learnt. Outstanding group performance accentuates learners' confidence-level. In an ESL context, exercises for teaching Literature-in-English should be appropriate, putting into consideration the conventions of the language that conveys the texts. Hangyu Zhang (ibid 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...'

The use of tests instrument is helpful in the teaching and learning of SSCE subjects, including Literature-in-English. It plays crucial roles in the progressive assessment of learners before external examinations. For example, 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 teaching objectives of teaching. It caters for the weaknesses of individual students, 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 ... Tests, whether elaborate or not, are administered to find out whether or not the learner has achieved certain teaching objectives. Assessment is broader than test, although the concept is occasionally used to mean test ... 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. Considering the fact

that the curriculum of SSCE states the skills that learners have to acquire for their career needs, the pedagogical process should be able to equip students with such skills. Unfortunately, teacher-inefficiency results in poor delivery of the objectives of teaching. Failure can result if classroom tests and examinations are not qualitative; the questions are inadequate – not quantitative; the questions are not within the scope of the curriculum; there is variation in the standard and quality of the tests, and in the parameter for scoring, thereby rendering the results unreliable; tests are not properly marked; candidates are not monitored. Literary appreciation which is an important component of the SSCE can only be understood by students if adequate time is given on the school timetable for effective teaching of literature-in-English. Poor knowledge of poetry is informed by its abstraction. In this sense, teachers of poetry should use more time and appropriate methods to teach students how to write and appreciate poems.

Through the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English, students learn about other cultures. They become intercultural speakers. The National Policy of Education accommodates learning of elements that promote nation-hood, including patriotism. Literature-in-English equips students with these elements and much more. The subject transforms the psyche students for individual and societal benefits. Indeed, Literature-in-English is an agent of national orientation and national cohesion. In post-basic education in Nigeria, these values are fundamental, as entrenched in the National Policy of Education. The importance of the subject implies that adequate resources should be put in place to foster the teaching and learning of the subject. Eucharia Okwudilichukwu Ugwu (ibid p. 164) notes that ‘... in many Sub-Saharan African countries, including Nigeria, students learn in poor environments bereft of the basic learning materials, especially textbooks ... Non-availability of textbooks and learning resources in most schools is attributed to poor funding of education...¹’ A good Literature-in-English teacher asks germane questions for effective teaching and learning of the subject. The teacher does not only put the peculiar condition of each learner into consideration, but also explores it for effective teaching. In Nigeria, public primary and secondary schools suffer from lack of funding. The poor state of infrastructures and lack of instructional materials are fall-outs of poor funding of education by the government. Unlike public primary and secondary schools, private primary and secondary schools enjoy better funding. Unfortunately, majority of parents cannot afford to send their children to private schools where tuition fees are very high. So long as English is learnt in Nigeria as a second language (ESL), textbooks are crucial for the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Literature is rich in terms of what to teach students about their immediate and remote environments. Literary theories often have thematic concerns which are underpinned by sociocultural, scientific, technological, philosophical, and moral factors. When learner’s further studies, they know more of such theories, particularly in the era of globalization when literary theories convey messages for the global contemporary audience. Literary theories concern literary critics of works of literature and their ideological frameworks. As a subject that teaches students a lot about societal phenomena, Literature-in-English exposes students to globalization-related trends from which they acquire knowledge for their present and future needs².

Literary theories reveal ideological socio-cultural and historical perspectives of literature. Indeed, literary theories are fundamental means of enhancing the quality of literary writings across the basic genres. Globalization refers to modern cross-regional and cross-domain phenomena. Since almost all aspects of life are covered by globalization, literature conveys numerous lessons to SSCE students. Shoba P. (2025 p. 37) submits that ‘virtually, no aspect of life in the twenty-first century has been unaffected by the integration of global markets and the widespread dissemination of information. Rapid advances in communication technology have exponentially increased human connections and transformation, transformed values, undermined societies and revolutionized the labour economy, to name a few effects. Multiple centres of economic and military power will come to define the nature and dynamics of globalization in the 21st century. However, the outcome of the process was soon to overwhelm many countries around the world, as more and more countries were forced to bear the cost of this impact as they witnessed the denationalization of their economies through privatization, transnational corporate control, rising foreign debt, deteriorating terms of trade, uneven distribution of income and wealth, and increasing class polarization ... Thus, neoliberal globalization grew to totally dominate the global economy, beginning in Latin America and spreading to Asia, Eastern Europe and elsewhere.’

The methods deployed for teaching Literature-in-English in the classroom remain front-burner discourse, given the fact that the objectives of the process have to be achieved before students can perform effectively in WAEC and NECO examinations. Although Literature-in-English is a very significant SSCE subject, there is little or no regard for it. Approaches to the teaching of the subject are not satisfactory, and the resultant situation is recurring high rate of failure in external examinations.

Notes

- ¹. See Humphrey Crawford (2014) and UNICEF (ibid) in this regard.
- ². Globalization conveys evolving global phenomena that are often conveyed in literary writings. There is undisputable nexus between literature and society. SSCE literary texts bring to the fore, such connections. Laxmi Rawat Chauhan (2018 p. 171) submits that ‘the most prevalent globalization-related phenomena include transculturation, various forms (from cultural to economic) and eras (from the time of Columbus to the present) of colonialism and imperialism, the violent and uneven interaction between sociocultural and economic systems, the erasure of traditional ways of life, and the spatial and temporal requirements of European modernism...’

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CITATION

Rashida, U. (2025). Teaching Literature-in-English in Senior Secondary School in Nigeria: An Overview. In *Global Journal of Research in Education & Literature* (Vol. 5, Number 5, pp. 38–45).

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17247995>