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DIFFICULTIES IN STUDYING AND TEACHING LITERATURE COURSES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS.

CASE STUDY: EARNEST BAI KOROMA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY – MAKENI COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

This multi-case (two-case) interpretive study investigated the difficulties in studying and teaching the required course of literature in traditional English in tertiary institutions as well as what the students and instructors did when encountering these difficulties. Conducted in the Ernest Bai Koroma University of science and technology College this study had two types of participants; two instructors with different nationalities offering British literature and American literature respectively and the supper-division English majors enrolled in the two classes. The focal student groups from the two classes were volunteers. For cross-validation of the findings, the following data sources were includes: classroom observation for eight weeks, questionnaire (mainly to guide the interviews), semi-structured text-base and in-depth interviews with focal groups and in-depth interviews with the. Along with classroom observation narratives and analytic memos, interview data with these informants were transcript bed and analyzed.

The finding of this study support prior scholarly discussions concerning the fact that students majoring in foreign language lack target language proficiency and target cultural understanding, and thus the ability to understand the assigned literary texts. Although the masterworks used in these course were considered to be difficult, it was fund that both teacher influence and leaner characteristics were even more significant in shaping how difficulties were experienced in studying and teaching literature written in English as a foreign language. Institutional or instructional factors such as curriculum requirements, course requirements, and course objectives were fund directly to influence student's difficulties and success. Further, the finding of this study pointed to the importance of motivation-related issues, as shown in individual interest, aptitude, and motivational orientation, but seldom mentioned in previous scholarly arguments or research data. As a result, instructors encountered difficulties given in their teaching that characteristics of the leaners could not be changed in the short term and those of choice of teaching materials were more or less fixed by the curriculum. Based on these findings, suggestions are made for curriculum designers and instructors teaching foreign literature as well as for future research.

INTRODUCTION

Literature consists an important of the core curriculum in foreign language (FL) learning, and issues surrounding the literature in the FL context have been of interest to many for decades. In Sierra Leone, English has been the major foreign literature, so much so that English departments there provide fertile ground for investigations of FL education in the context of EFL situation. In the following sections, I will begin with a brief statement of the problem in the case of Sierra Leone, followed by a general discussion of issues related to the teaching of foreign literature. Then, I will provide the rationale and significance for my study and conclude with a statement of the research goals and questions that guided this study.

In traditional English departments in Sierra Leone, the Western literature course, the survey course of English literature, and the survey course of American literature by "representative writers" have constituted most of the required core literature curriculum for decades. With additional elective literature course, required literature course occupy a high proportion of credits in comparison to other components in the whole curriculum in English. Several reasons might explain why masterworks presenting authors in chronological order have for years constituted such a major component of the core required readings for university English Majors in Sierra Leone. First, anthologies containing various text selection and learner "socialization" for

example, what is commonly expressed is the intention to initiate learners into the cultures of English-speaking countries through survey course of literature. In addition, some literature teachers in English departments teach to prepare students who would go on to graduate study in literature. Sierra Leone as entrance examinations for university graduates who plan to continue graduate studies of English/Foreign literatures, so those text become a benchmark for instruction and testing. Masterwork are difficult to avoid in the curriculum at present, and an intriguing fact is that, even though they are generally perceived as difficult, there are still plenty of learners who want to continue studying and learning about them. This indicates that some FL learner's tolerance for the many difficulties encountered in survey courses using canonical texts is higher than others'.

However, many students experience extreme frustration and difficulty in these, perhaps in part because the courses do not necessarily take into account their minimal background in literature.

Before entering English departments, students usually have not had much experience reading authentic literature written in English. However, besides taking "approaches to Literature," and "An Introduction to Western Literature" when in the lower-division, in the following years before graduation, English majors are expected to take, in addition to elective literature courses, survey English and American literature courses, in which anthologies such as Norton Anthology of English Literature and Norton anthology of American literature are used as the major texts. "Literature comes as a great shock," as Nash and Yuan (1992/1993), who taught in the English for many years, put it so well. Those anthologies can be difficult for English-speaking novice undergraduate English majors when they are yet to be socialized into cultural literacy, literacy knowledge, and conventions associated with the study of literature. For EFL majors in Sierra Leone, these texts impose an extremely heavy demand culturally, conceptual, and linguistically. With little preparation in the lower-division years, students are expected to be able to read and analyzed the texts and to express opinions based on the literary texts when they are in the upper-division, an expectation that seems far from realistic.

One of the major problems is that the students' previous learning background is completely ignored. Before entering English departments, besides a lack of training in the study of literature written in English, most Sierra Leonean student' exposure to English reading and writing is restricted to the study of lexical and syntactic features of short passages. Chu (1999), while examining senior high school English text-books, reported that text-books focus mainly on

"word and sentence level meaning" with little attention to meaning making or to students' knowledge (p.46); reading is not conducted as an interactive process. Earlier, other scholars (\hung, 1988; Chi & Chern, 1988) pointed out that intensive reading is what students in senior schools experience; extensive reading out that intensive reading is yet to be actualized. In fact, the "Freshman English' course tends to be intensive in nature too. The freshman English class is often an extension of the senior high school English class, with more texts for close reading. Students in Sierra Leone, regardless of their majors, would seem to need to be guided and encourage to have substantial opportunities to read extensively, and yet rarely get such encouragement. Secondly language acquisition researcher Krashen (1993) claimed: "…reading is the only way, the only way we become good readers, develop…. An adequate vocabulary, advance grammar, and the only way we become good spellers" (p. 23; quoted from day & Bam ford, 1998, p. 38).

As a result, Sierra Leonean English majors often lack the proficiency to read literature written in English. In fact, this practice goes against recommendations from Krashen (1985), who clearly stated that foreign-language programs introduce authentic literature before students are competent enough in the target language. It does not take much imagination to understand the difficulties that the learners confront in that literature course. Their lack of understanding of and response to canonical texts in not surprising.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The Findings from this study were expected to shed light on the issues related to the teaching and learning in survey courses of the canonical texts written in English, which in turn, might in from suggestions for future curricular alignment. As indicated by Wahba (1979), the findings of this kind of study can serve as the basis of the objectives and content of foreign literature instructions in English department in Sierra Leone.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided by the following five research questions:

- ➢ What are the difficulties that upper-division English majors experience when they study masterwork of literature in English?
- ➢ What do the students do when encountering these difficulties?

➢ What kinds of successes do the report experiencing when reading literature in English?

➢ What challenges and lecturers do when experiencing these difficulties?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a description of the research design; of the role of the researcher as an instrument; of the research settings, including criteria for the selection of settings and participations, the participants, and literature courses that the students participants were taking; and of the research methods, data collection procedure, data sources, and analysis in detail.

My research methods have been naturalistic in order to explain the complex nature of difficulties in studying and teaching literature courses, with a focus on English literature and American literature courses. This study adopted the case study approach because it can allow the analyst to investigate and understand the phenomenon in depth. As Lincoln and Galba (1985) noted, a qualitative case study can offer the kind of "thick description" described by Geertz (1973) and opportunities to explore multiple "*constructed realities*" (Lincoln & Gauba, 1985, p.84). As Merriam (1998) well put it, through "intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or a bounded system,' case studies aim at "an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved" (p.19). This study focused on studying and teaching British and American literature in the EBKUST Makeni University College as tow bounded systems. This is a multi-case (two-case) interpretive study involving two research sites. As Merriam (1998) noted, multi-site designs and rich descriptions of cases can "maximize diversity in the phenomenon of interest" (pp. 211 – 212). In this study, I looked at studying and teaching masterworks of literature in two different settings/cases so that important findings across case data could be highlighted to provide a holistic view.

Based on Merriam's (1998) illustration of cross-case studies, I aimed "to build a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases" although the cases vary in their details (Yin, 1994, p. 112; quoted in Miriam, 1998, p. 195). Despite various factors involved in the students and teacher participants' studying and teaching of literature in these survey courses, I aimed at finding important similarities and distinctions in the two cases. This research involved two research sites, two instructors with different participant' studying and teaching of literature in these survey courses, I aimed at finding important similarities and distinction in the two cease.

This research involved two research sites, two instructors with different nationalities and linguistic backgrounds teaching American literature and English literature respectively, different texts selected for student participants to study on the tow research sites, and perhaps different criteria for text selection. In addition, in individual differences in personality, gender, age, etc. were allowed to influence the emerge case studies; various types of student participants in each cases provided me representativeness of data.

In order to allow reader to gain an idea of me as the primary instrument of data gathering and interpretation, I need to explain that interest in this project orientation my own experience of difficulties when studying and teaching masterworks of iterative written in English in sierra Leone. Mt previous experience as a student and later, a teacher of masterworks of British and American literature, provided me an insider's view to conduct this study. By this, I mean as an undergraduate English major, I had studied most of the authors that the student participants in my study were also studying. However, possessing this insider's view could have affected my intention to be a detached observer of the classes. I intended to provide a "thick" description of students' and instructors' experiences with a focus on difficulties; yet, I was conscious that my pervious experiences could negatively affect my objectify although I strove to "get [my] *expectations* and *preferences* out into the open," as suggested by Gilliam (2000, p.28; italics added). I would first briefly describe my study of masterworks of literature In English as an undergraduate. Before my university studies, my encounters with literature were restricted to modern Nigerian texts in prose or classical Nigerian poetry. I was required to study texts selected from *Norton Anthologies.* Although more introductory courses – Approached to literature – were offered in the first year to provide concepts about *genres* such as short stories, fiction, and poetry as a preparation for further study of literature struggles cons, intuited and indispensable part of studying these masterworks. I enjoyed British literature (ii) very much although I could not fully understand those poetic texts. Generally, when I was an undergraduate myself, a struggling reader of those texts, I could not fully understand what many of the texts meant because at least in past I still lacked enough command of English. What struck me as more serious came when I began to teach the masterworks myself.

Data collection began around mid-November and ended around the end of January. Data collection for this occurred shortly after the participant's mid-term examination. During the rest of 2016 and immediately after the end of the semester. In order to present a thick description of the participants and to ensure the internal validity of the study, data were collected using the

strategy of triangulation; several methods were included: classroom observations, a questionnaire followed by formal semi-structured interviews with the student participants sand a formal semi-structured interviewed with the professors. In addition, I collected documents, including artifacts such as syllabi, the med-term and final exam questions, most of the hand-outs that had been given out in both classes, and program/department documents pertaining to the course, such as minutes of departmental meetings and online list of required literature courses. Observations and interviews, the major data sources, were supplemented with these other documents (berg, 2001).

My analysis began during data collection when writing a narrative and an analytic memo for each classroom observation, based on field notes and on listening to each audiotape recorded class session. When receiving the tapes, I wrote more detailed notes, and then based on those, I wrote narratives and analytic memos. Narratives recounted what had happened in each class session, and analytic memos provided me the space for continual reflection and questioning of the research process. In order to increase the credibility of the interpretation of the collected data from different courses, member checking with the informants was conducted. A colleague kindly listened to me regularly for peer debriefing/consulting. The results of the questionnaire study were reported by using "numbers [such as frequencies and percentage] that summarize the data." That is, a descriptive analysis was used to report the findings from the questionnaire study (Johnson, 1992 p. 116).

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

This session devoted to describing and discussing the findings of this study from the research site, EBKUST-MU. This chapter will be divided into four parts. The first part describes the research context including the English department, the course requirements, and Lecturer L's American literature class that I observed. The second part will illustrate how Lecturer. L designed his class along with his belief and course objectives, course requirements, and the writers/texts covered. The third will be a presented of the findings from: first, the questionnaire study at EBKUST-MU; second, the differentials that lecturer L encountered and what she did to address those difficulties as all as her achievements in teaching survey course of literature such as American literature; and third, student participants' difficulties in studying survey courses of literature at EBKUST-MU, what they did to deal with those difficulties, and third, the kinds of success that they reported. The final section is an analysis and a summary of the findings at EBKUST-MU.

The English department at EBKUST-MU the then Makeni Teachers' College was established in 1963 when the university was founded, and its general educational goals were the following: (a) to help students experience the strength and beauty of language and literature so that they can discover themselves and the enormous world; (b) to help students properly express themselves and their own culture so that they can immersed themselves in this world: and (c0 to help students better know and control their own future in this multi-cultural world. Thus, in addition to training in language and literature, students were expected to be equipped with other expertise as well. The basic essence of educational goals at EBKUST was devoted to humanistic training not career training.

English and British and American literatures were the major focus of study in this department. In addition, students took other related course such as linguistics, European literature, western cultural history, other foreign language(s), translation, journalism, and mass communication. With the aforementioned training, EBKUST expected its English majors to journey in the ocean of British and American culture as well as other numerous rivers and creeks so that they could acquire both language ability and humanistic cultivation.

Graduates from EBKUST-MU served in various walks of life. Some chose careers or areas of study that were directly related with what they had learned in the undergraduate years; a few of them taught in universities of high school, worked in the arena of mass communication, translation, and educational organizations such as study abroad consultants. Some graduates from this department close other areas such as the traveling industry, hotel management, travel agency, international trade, publishing industry, airlines, etc. which required not only foreign language ability but a broader knowledge base and perspective. In addition, some graduates chose to run their own business, or enter other business world, banks or the public sector, etc. Actually, EBKUST-MU strove to inspire students' interest in various aspects of life and jobs and to encourage students to develop expertise in multiple areas so that they could become a person of considerable knowledge of different cultures.

Curricular requirements in the English departments at EBKUST-MU

According to minutes from departmental meetings, before graduation, English majors at EBKUST-MU are expected to take 54 requirement credits (See table 4.1 below for details) and 20 from electives. Required courses could be divided into the following two areas. The first included foundation courses and general education course, and it totaled 18 credits. The second area was pertinent to "English Department requirements," which totaled 26 credits. Subsumed

under the letter were the following two categories of courses. The first category consisted of courses related with English –language skills in listening, speaking, writing and research offered for the first-, second-, and third-year students as a preparation for their academic and literature study. The second category included required literature courses; students in the lower division took introduction to literature, which initiated them into western fiction, poetry and drama, while those in the upper dision took British literature (i), British literature (ii), and American literature, which introduced important writers, texts, literary traditions and developments from a historical perspective. All the course under the "English department requirements" were usually conducted in an English-only format.

Elective course included literature, linguistics, and other related areas such as English teaching, women's literature, European literature, Sierra Leonean languages', education etc.

Table 4.1 the curricular Requirements at EBKUST-MU.

			Credit hrs.			First year		Second year		Third year		Forth year	
1	Foundations course	Comm. Skills	4	2	2	2	2						
		It	4	2	2	2	2						
		Basic Math's	4	2	2								
		Basic Science	4	2	2								
		Philosophy	2	1	1								
		Logic	2	1	1								
2	General education Course	Prin. Of Education	• Take at least 3 credits from each of the chosen fields. • Take at least a total of 11 credits.										
		Eddo. Psychology											
		Issues In Edu. & Dave.											
		G&C											
		M & E											
3	English departmental requirement	Into. To Ling	2										
		Grammar & Usage	2										
		Lang. In Africa	2										
		Literary Theory	2										
		Oral Literature	2										
		Phonetics & Phon	2										
		Morphology	2										
		Socio Ling.	2										
		Renaissance Drama	2										
		Medieval Poetry	2										

		Romantic Poetry	2
		Into To English Level	2
		British Literature	2
		American Lit.	2
		Language Acquisition.	2
Requirement Credit Hours			34
Current Elective Credit Hours			20
Total credit hours			54

British and American Literature Course on the EBKUST-MU

Before I describe the class se sessions of Lecturer L's American literature course, it should be noted that students enrolled in Lecturer l's American literature class were also taking British literature when my study was conducted. However I only observed directly lecturer L's class, not the other class. I will provide a short description of the major texts covered when I sat in and what the class sessions of Lecturer L's course were like. In class meetings, Lecturer L lectured 85%-90% of the time, but he also asked his students questions from time to time. When asking questions, he usually asked students as a group. As a result, students and opportunities to think about their responses to literature based not only what they read but also on what Lecturer Ls' asked in class. In classroom observations, I noticed that he sometimes queried students individually, but most of the time, he posed questions to the whole class. Some questions were asked to check the students' basic understanding of the text. Other questions were asked to require students. Further involvement with the texts and to stimulate them to think more deeply, e.g. "what methods is author using to persuade his audience/'; "what do you think about …"; "what effect would…."; "what feeling do you get from this?" and "whose side do you support?" etc. that is, when interpreting the texts, she gave her students some "space" for further self-exploration by proving questions as their starting point. As difficult as these questions might have seemed to answer, verbal responses did occur. Even when students were not asked individually, five or six of the students, usually those sitting in the front rows, tended to express their opinions. Their answers might not be on the right track but the welcomed their attempts. As a final note, all of the discussion and lecturing in class was conducted in English.

How lecturer L Designed His American Literature Course

In this sub-section, I will first describe Lecturer Ls' course objectives, his course requirements, and major writers/texts covered when I sat in. in Lecturer L s' American literature class, the objectives and requirements of the course were clearly specified in the syllabus. Efforts were made to integrate not only literature and history but also reading and writing. In addition, lecturer L focused on cultivating her students' independent thing ability. In order to achieve those objectives, course requirements for each student were as follows. First, throughout the semester each students as require to join a discussion group and submit at least two email discussion reports during the semester. Four to five people formed a group and met outside of once a week for one hour, or once every two hours, to discuss the reading before class sessions. The tow email reports counted for 10% of for semester grade. Further, for writing assignments. Students wrote mid-tar take-home essays and handed in an independent interpretive essay on any one (or more than one) of the author covered in this course. Take-home essays were guided by Lecture l's questions, while the interpretive essay required each student to write a 5 to 8-page typed paper on a topic of one's own choosing. No secondary sources were necessary for the writing assignments.

In terms of percentage, the take-home essays counted 25% of the semester grade and the interpretive essay 20%. However, lecturer l was flexible enough to allow his students to reverse the percentage for the tow assignments or if the students liked, the interpretive essay could count for as much as 30% of the grade while the take-home mid-term 15%. In class, he annouved that different arrangements for different students could be made as long the whole class agreed that this was fair. Moreover, students took two types of written exams: first, two quizzes made up of objective-style questions on the main point regarding bot history and literature covered in class and in the readings; and second, a 180-minute final exam. The two quizzes constituted 20% while the final exam 25% of the semester grade. In addition, an optional oral report on historical background was assigned to students who intended to obtain extra credit. Therefore, lecturer L's students were supposed not only to read but also to think and write about what they read while trying to link literature and historical events.

Findings from the study:

In this sub-section, I will present the findings from the questionnaire study, Lecturer L's literature teaching experiences at EBKUST, and students' literature study experiences EBKUST-MU.

The Questionnaire Study:

The response rate from the questionnaire study in Lecturer L's American literature class was almost 100%. Of the 41 students enrolled in this class, the 40 students, who were present when the Questionnaire was administered, all agreed and filled out the questionnaires. The finding are presented based on the following groups of question items: first, the students' domain knowledge of literature (their prior reading experience) and their motivation for literature study; second, what students did to address difficulties; third, students' difficulties and achievements in studying masterworks in English in contrast to students' current knowledge of English and the target culture. Students' responses showed that less than 50% (I am grouping ratings of 4 and 5 together) of the 40 students viewed studying African literature personally rewarding, and the only 10 of them read African literature for enjoyment. Such frequencies of responses reflected their lack of positive experience or interest in/aptitudes towards African literature. Please refer to Table 4.2 below for more information. As for students' study of texts Witten in English, as shown in efforts made to read more unassigned texts and intention to take more non-required literature courses did not indicate very positive results either. Of the 39 responses, 10 indicated doing unsigned readings, while 17 of them responded negatively about this. Among the 39 responses, more than 50% indicated a lack of intention to take more elective courses of literature written in English before graduation. However, students spent a great deal of time on each literature course per week outside of class; the 39 responses to question item 7 showed that more than 50% of them spent 5-6 hours or more than 6 hours per week outside of class (see table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Question items 1-2 with Frequencies of |Students selecting each Alternative

		Not at all True of me			extremely true of me	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Find studying African literature personally rewarding	3	4	15	11	7
2	I read African "literature" (I.e. such texts as poetry, short stories, novels, and biographies)-for enjoyment.	1	10	19	8	2

Table 4.3 Question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of students selecting each alternative

Not at all True of me			extremely true of me	
1	2	3	4	5

	I read unassigned texts (of *any* type) written in English.	7	10	12	10	0
	I will take more elective courses of literature written in English before I graduate.	11	11	8	6	3

	Less than 1 hrs.	1-2 hrs.	3-4 hrs.	5-6 hrs.	more than 6 hrs.
	In addition to class meetings, for each survey course of British or American literature, each week I usually spend/sent	0	5	14	12	9

The second group of questions asked what students did to address difficulties that encountered when they studied British and American literature. Most students used reference materials whereas only 1 person indicated "not at all true of me," as shown in responses to Question 8. Responses to Question 9 were as follows: very few students used visual-audio materials; the internet mainly provided critical comments rather than visual-audio resources; online resources were more frequently used instead of those in the libraries; and English and Africa handbooks, online critical comments, texts were used more frequently rather than Cliff Notes or critical comments from the libraries. In responses to 9k, 10 out of the 35 responses showed that they used other non-human resources in addition to these mentioned above: (a) *spark notes*, (b) Monkey Book notes, (c) exam questions and other materials or notes provided by students senior to them, and (d) history books used in high school for historical background information. For more information, please refer to table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of Students Selecting each Alternative

		Not at all True of me			extremely true of me	
		1	2	3	4	5
A	To help myself study the texts in British or/and American literature courses, I use reference materials from libraries or the internet.	1	9	3	17	10
B	I use handbooks written in English	4	3	11	10	9
C	I read critical commends written in English from the internet.	1	5	4	15	5

D	I read critical commends written in English from the internet.	3	6	4	14	10
E	Use audio-visual materials in the internet.	5	2	5	17	7
F	Look for audio-visual materials such as videos	17	6	7	5	1
G	I read British or/and American literature	4	4	4	16	8
H	I read Cliff notes.	18	7	8	3	0
I	I read critical commends written in English from the libraries.	13	6	7	5	5
J	I read critical commends written in English from the libraries	12	7	6	5	5
	Yes No					
K	I use other resources	10		25		

As for

Students' use of human for help, discussing with classmates or rereading the difficult passages rather than consulting the lecturer were more frequently noted. As responses to question item 10D, most students preferred to use nonhuman resources instead of human sources.

Please see table 4.5 for more information.

Table 4.5 Question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of students selecting each alternative

		Not at all True of me			extremely true of me	
		1	2	3	4	5
A	When I have difficulties in studying a text, I consult the professors.	8	15	5	6	5
B	I discuss with my classmates.	0	1	2	16	20
C	I reread the difficult passage of the text.	0	1	8	15	15
D	I use the resources that I marked in Question 9.	2	2	7	12	16

Question 11 to 16 addressed the kinds of difficulties that students encountered. As clearly shown in students' responses, most students needed to rely on the professors' lecturers to understand the texts, most students found it to get beyond the literal meaning and both the far-away historical background in the texts and poetry as a *genre caused* difficulties for most students. British and American literature courses reasonable, as shown in their responses to Question 16.

Please refer table 4.6 for further illustration of students' difficulties.

Table 4.6 Question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of students selecting each alternative

		Not at all True of me	extremely true of me			
		1	2	3	4	5
A	In the British or/and American literature courses, I need to rely on the professors' lectures to understand the texts.	80	1	7	16	16
B	I can understand the text at the literal level, but I find it difficult for me to study the masterworks written in English independently.	0	16	10	15	9
C	The far-away historical background in the texts makes it difficult for me to study the masterworks written in English independently.	0	7	9	13	9
D	Poetry as a *genre* is especially difficulty for me.	5	4	11	8	12
E	If I had the chance to write my ideas in English about texts read in British or/and American literature courses, I would enjoy that.	6	10	9	5	9
F	The reading load in the British or/and American literature courses is reasonable	1	4	17	13	6

Information indicated In Table 4.5 regarding students' difficulties in studying masterwork is in interesting given the fact that when asked to self-rate their current knowledge of English, most students viewed their knowledge of English grammar, their ability to write papers/essay questions in English, and their ability to read English, positively even though several students gave neutral responses. Interestingly, among the self-ratings of English abilities, not many people considered their vocabulary knowledge of English to be good. This might be a very immediate cause of the difficulties, as a lack of vocabulary knowledge could beget problems in their reading of literary texts. For more information, please refer to Table 4.7 below:
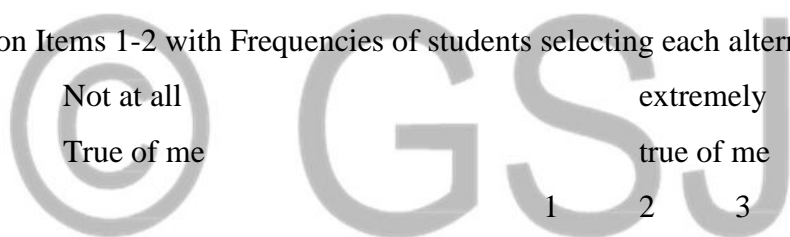
Table 4.6 Question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of students selecting each alternative

		Not at all True of me		extremely true of me		
	Rate your current knowledge of English:					
A	My knowledge of English grammar is	1	5	18	15	1
B	My ability to write papers/essay questions in English	2	4	14	20	1
C	My ability to read English is	0	2	17	20	1

D	My vocabulary knowledge in English is	0	7	21	10	1
E	My ability to speak English is	0	5	18	14	3
F	My listening comprehension in English is	0	3	15	19	3
G	My knowledge of the culture of the countries where English is spoken is	1	5	17	16	1
		1	2	3	4	5

Nevertheless, despite the difficulties that they encountered, most students found studying masterworks of literature written in English personally rewarding and had a sense of achievement doing so (please see Table 4.8 below). In addition, as shown in Table 4.9, most students found the required British/American literature courses helpful for enhancing their English ability, their knowledge of literary devices, their ability to deal with different liberary discourses and their understudying of the countries where English is spoken.

Table 4.6 Question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of students selecting each alternative

	Not at all True of me			extremely true of me	
		1	2	3	4	5

A	In the British or/and American literature courses, I find studying masterworks of literature written in English personally rewarding	0	3	9	11	17
B	Studying masterworks of literature in British or/and American literature courses gives me sense of achievement.	0	5	5	15	15

Table 4.9 Question Items 1-2 with Frequencies of students selecting each alternative

Not at all   extremely

True of me   true of me

	To what degree, are the required British/American literature courses helpful					
A	For my English ability?	0	5	9	16	10
B	For my knowledge of literary devices such as irony, similes, metaphors, symbol, etc.?	1	2	9	14	14

C	For my ability to deal with different literary discourses?	0	1	11	15	13
D	For my understanding of the countries where English is spoken?	0	1	11	15	13
		1	2	3	4	5

Lecture L's Literature Teaching Experience

This sub-section reports the findings regarding Lecturer L's literature teaching experience, centering on the difficulties. The findings were mainly based on data collected form classroom observations and interviews with her. When appropriate, data gathered form his students wall also be used as contrasting or supporting materials that lecturer L's reported include difficulties emanating from Lecturer L's students and difficulties emanating from the teaching materials. Along with each of these I discuss what Lecturer l's achievement in teaching the required literature course.

Difficulties Emanating from Lecturer L's Students and what he did about them.

Two major types of difficulties originated from his students. First as American literature was a required course, in addition to being non-native English speakers, most his students did not have a good command of and were not necessarily interested in literature. Second, his students lacked time to reflect upon what they read.

Challenges stemming from students' lack of English competence or inserting literature & what lecturer L's did to address these. The most important challenges facing Lecturer l's students were their writing and reading problems. When writing in the essay questions of the final exam, some students were unable to answer to the point of fast enough. They either summarized what they had read, or said something "close" to the answer, what really bothered lecturer L's was the fact that some students simply did not read instructions for the close reading questions. This happens maybe because "students don't feel like they have enough time. 180 minutes is not enough time, so you can tell they are really rushed. They simply wrote down anything they could think of. I'm actually very generous about that" (int., Jan. 23, 2003).

To address his non-native English-speaking students' writing problems, he had figured out a very efficient, lenient grading system. When I ram text-based interviews with his students, I noticed that lecturer L's had checked for good points on the papers. When I asked lecturer L's about this grading scheme, he explained: every time they make something like a point, I put a check, Ok? [Laugh]… you kind of cheeked for each one, and then, you kind of make an average for that question for that class. You can do it intuitively, OK? You don't to spread a lot of time on it… if you tell me something that's related, you'll get some credit for it. See! That's what's very

different from a class of native speakers if I teach a class in a country where English is commonly spoken. [Laugh]… (int., Jan. 2003) His students received points so long as they were able to communicate to him something related to his question. Thus even though his students had difficulty writing, he emphasized the importance of writing, maintaining that "writing is very beneficial for improving studding's grasp of literary works" (int.' Jan. 23, 20030. He thus assigned writing tasks for students to help them think more deeply about what they had read even though not all teachers teaching literature included writing in course requirements.

However, his students' writing difficulty presented a challenge a challenge to Lecturer l' and his countermeasure was to a "generous" method for grading. He put his philosophy into practice and he required his students to write regardless of the class size. In addition to his' writing problems, Lecturer l had to deal with their difficulties in reading. He knew well that most students lacked the reading ability to "deal with competing interpretations of the literary texts" in those writing assignments, he thus not ask students to refer to secondary materials. He intended to have them "focus on their thinking" and thus any plagiarism as well as having to read difficult secondary sources. After all, independent thinking was what he asked his students to cultivate. To help ideal with his students difficulty in reading foreign literature, he tried to reduce the required reading and "distill each writer into a few key passages," though this meant that those percentage were not necessary adjacent to each other. How to guide and motivate his non-native English-speaking students to deal with various aspects in a text in English under available class time was challenging to him.

Another challenge related with his students' studying was the following: Lecturer l, found that many of the very best students didn't really need a high grade to go on to their next step in life." Her overall solution to solve his students' reading problems and lack of high motivation was "a combination of relatively light reading assignment and a large place for outside discussion." Although he acknowledged the ex-instance of about 20% to 30% of the students who read the materials second hard relying on his interpretations and others classmates' opinions, he estimated that most students used group discussion for "social and intellectual feedback." Lecturer L did not punish this group because he did not want to put pressure on the other students who conscientiously prepared for and enjoyed the course and benefited from the preparation process. He intended "to create more opportunity for the kids in the upper edge to really excel and get really high grade and really stand out and be excellent." He also created opportunities for students who were willing to achieve more by offering extra points to students who volunteered

to present oral reports. Thus, oral reports were used to encourage students to achieve and get higher grades.

Difficulties Emanating from Teaching Material & What lecture L did about them- This sub-section including three kinds of difficulties related to teaching materials that Lecturer L's reported along with what he did about those challenges. The first stemmed from earlier literature's lack of appeal to the students; the second, from the temptation of exciting themes; and the third, from shrinking credits for literature course in the curriculum.

Challenges stemming from earlier literature's lack of appeal to students & what he did about them. Lecturer L's reported how inaccessible the texts written in earlier era were for his students. In turn, students' difficulties challenged him… there's something not about myself per se. I mean students all get excited abbot those slave-related writings … as compared with earlier writings, e.g. puritan or even earlier 19th century writers like Hawthorne… the writers before the midterm are more difficult in terms of density of their syntax, their vocabulary, and cultural background. And the stories they try to tell are not easy for students to understand. It's not something so elemental as cruelty and desire for freedom 9int.' Jan. 23, 2003).

Weather it was because of syntax, vocabulary, cultural background , or themes, pre-19^{thc} century and even earlier 19th century writings were simply difficult for lecturer L's students. In contrast, slave narratives were about themes that were more gripping and students could understand them better. Lecturer L even told me an interesting story about how a girl student's concept about his teaching had changed because of the assigned readings. This student complained that he could not understand what Lecturer L was talking about "in the first of the semester" and he used this as his reason for why he had failed in the mid-term take-home essays. "At the end of semester, he did very well on the paper and everything," and when Lecturer L talked with him again, he told her, "you have changed. To tell you the truth, you have changed" (int., p.13). Because those earlier writing were in accessible for his students, Lecturer l experienced challenge, too. This story indicated that in accessible assigned readings could negatively affect students study and even their concept of their instructor. Lecturer L acknowledge how challenge earlier writers could be for her students. Part of her solution was to allow slave narratives to shuffle in the timeline even though this course used a roughly chronological order of readings. After the mid-term, three week were intentionally allotted to slave narrative, reading that were far more accessible and more enjoyable that the literature written in the earlier era. Lecturer l was aware that earlier American literature and British literaturepre-18th century British literature were

difficult. Difficulties in British literature before the 18th century were shown in the highly cultivated literary style, the older language, and remote cultural background (int., Jan. 23 2003). His solutions had two parts – language and history. First, a readable reference book providing historical background was used; second, he used the modern English version to replace for the very old, and a "double text" format in which both original and the "ugly supply 20th paraphrased" coexisted for students to students Shakespeare. However, the 18th century British literature had no substitute modern version or "double text".

Challenges stemming from the temptation of exciting themes & what he did about them. Some themes like the slave narratives were appealing to her students. Lecturer l encountered the temptation of providing exciting to her students; for earlier, he could also find something similarly attractive to his students, emotional, sentimental novels. Instance. However, for him, maintaining "a tension between what the students can do and enjoy" and that he thought were "some kind of tradition" tension between what the students can do and enjoy" and what he thought were "some kind of tradition" posed a challenge. In his opinion, those exciting themes could provide only "dumb dumb version" of American-ness. As an expert in cultural studies, history was always on his mind when he taught this course. Lecturer L's thus considered that representing American-ness in a "historically responsible' way was important. His solution to the dilemma that she faced was to include some texts that were less exciting in the syllabus. Earlier less appealing were selected although he knew that they were not very accessible for his students. As he put it, even for him, an American, earlier American literature was foreign. As a foreign-literature course, his survey of American literature was to keep this foreignness alive, and this distance from us was supposed to be part of the learning (int., Jan. 2003) although he acknowledged that this "foreign" essence of American literature for his students existed all the time and was difficult to "sink in" the mind of his students. As earlier literature was included in the syllabus, his students were thus expected to deal with more themes containing this foreignness. To help his students' thinking and learning, she treated the cultural history of the United States as a starting point for his students to understand social history of the world or Sierra Leone… it can be only an abstract issue when talking about foreign literature, frankly. What matters is how much they see that what's important in Sierra Leone is based largely on historical and political factors that are grounded in Sierra Leone. That's more meaningful. I don't really care whether or not they understand the cultural history in the US, really so long as it helps t understand the social history of the world and social history of their own points of origin, which I take to be in Sierra Leone. How "historical and political factors" decided what was important

and less important was what cultural studies was all about. And Lecturer l hoped that his students could apply the concept depicted in the text to examine things that had happened. What lecturer l told me in the interview was in line with what I saw when observing her class: certain cultural concepts under discussion functioned as starting points for his students to ponder. When they had finished, lecturer L's further illustrated this concept, saying "a belief that god wanted the Sierra Leone to expand." Following this illustration were questions to stimulate his students to think, including one question for the reporters: "Abu, how about Sierra Leone does something similar happen?" Abu's parents had immigrated to US and he had come back to Sierra Leone to receive his undergraduate education. Abu could not elaborate much on this issue. Then, Lecturer L's asked the whole class, "How about in Sierra Leone?" As this question elected no specific answers, he recounted the history of Sierra Leone, saying, "My understanding is… and then more and more people from Sierra Leone. Then …" his students did not manage to provide specific answer s. however, I saw their attentive facial expressions and I knew that they were listening and thought-poking that lecturer L illustrated 'manifest Destiny,' thinking/ an ideology that Thoreau criticized and refuted in his writing. He also asked students to reflect on whether this concept has existed in other parts of the world, including Sierra Leone. If literature is for thinking training, then students need to think more about the where they live base on what they read so that know themselves better form their understanding of their local environment.'"

Challenge stemming from shrinking credits for literature in the curriculum & what he did about it. All in all, Lecturer L did not think his students had been given enough background to get a "well-rounded introduction to western civilization and cultural because we don't have European literature" now. Before 1992, when lecturer L's came to EBKUST-MU, "European literature' and "history of western Civilization" were required course, but they were now electives. "Introductory literature courses used to be taught in four semesters," but now only three semesters, he stated. His students tended to lack cultural background such as of the Bible. He stated that literature instructors have encountered in traditional English department is Sierra Leone in recent years that the space for literature in the curriculum has been shrinking. To compensate for his students' lack of background knowledge of western civilization and culture, lecturer L introduced significant historical events through students' oral report in class. In addition, class when appropriate and necessary, Biblical allusions were illustrate clearly.

Literature study Experience in the EBKUST-MU – This section despites students participants'

Literature study experience in the EBKUST –MU-this section depict student participants literature study experience with a focus on the difficulties they encountered sub –sections are devote to the difficulties that various types of student informant encountered to facilitate the description of different students ,sometime the focus will be no an individual while at other times, it will be on several students as a group who similar experiences .the depiction is mainly based on data obtained from six out of the nine volunteer informants .the six students were selected for this presentation because they represented variety in their aptitude for or interest in literature prior knowledge of reading of literature , and their English ability based impression that I obtained from the interviews). This group of student informants were as followsTM1,TF1,and TF2,whowere not interested in literature TF2,who was not very interested in literature and Yet had patience with the texts ,TF3,who was a literature lover sinte childhood ,and TF4, who was good at English and enjoyed analysis, in analyzing date from these students three major categories emerged : difficulties emanating from the curriculum and course requirements .in each cub –section following a discussion of each or each group of these students is what they did to address those difficulties. Two major categories emerged, using human resources and using non-human resources each sub-section then ends with the kinds of successes that student participants reported.

TM1, TF1, and TN2, who were not interested in literature.

 most English majors entered the English department not because of their interest in literature .TM1, TF1, and TM2, were examples of such students .TM1, recalled that he "was so lousy at math "and thus dared not consider opportunities in the business –related fields .he chose to be an English major because among the departments in the humanities, the English department held more job opportunities for him.TF1, specialized in science when in senior high school and had almost become a math major. He became an English major because English seemed to be an area that he enjoyed and he had started listening to English songs since junior high. As forTM2, he decided to be an English major because he "did so well in English'' when in senior high, he entered the English department through boa-song, an alternative way for students who had some special talent in some areas. He and the other 39people became English majors through this method. Thus several major reasons led TM1, TF1 and TM2 to become English majors; first English provided more potential for the job market; second, they were either interested in or good at the English language before the entered the English department. In addition, in the interviews, they all voiced the opinion that they lacked interest in literature or/ and the content of

the texts select in the required British and American literature courses. Thus I am grouping them together.

(Difficulties That TM1, TF1, and TM2 encountered difficult emanating from the text. This is an account of the following three; first, difficulties shown in difficult language and abstract themes or topics in the text; second, difficulties show in genre effects; and third, difficulties shown in unfamiliar culture-related elements in the text;

(1)   Difficulties shown in difficult language or abstract themes or topics. When the language or themes in a text was not accessible to the students, they could not understand what it was about at all. When the texts were beyond student readers; comprehension; they did not experience langer; s [1995] stepping into an envisionment ", a stance in which a reader uses his or her knowledge and experiences, surface feature of the texts, or any other clues to ''form initials ideas '' about what they read [P.16]. Reading profound poetry did not allow the three students to ideas from the text. During the third interview, TM1 voiced his opinion about those ''profound'' poems in American literature and British literature [ii]. A lot of us didn't think it necessary to check up words in Emily dicking's poems but we couldn't figure out what they want to tell us … her poems are too difficult to understand. I mean … their deep meaning is simply too deep for people like us to understand. As for British literature [ii], Keats, Shelley or words worth is simply so profound . . . after checking up the words they used in the poetry, I still couldn't get what they are about . . . [3rdint] whether those poems required TM1 to look up words in the dictionary, they were all equally difficult for him their themes were not accessible to him figuring out ''what they want to tell'' was not easy for ''people like us ,''as he put it.TF1, who was also present when I interviewed TM1 agreed with what TM1 said about those highbrow Romantic authors dealing with abstract topics.

TM2 had a similar problem ,especially with Shelley 's and Keats ' poetry because it was so difficult to make meaning out of reading (3ʳᵈ int.) he actually named Byron, as he was more accessible for them TM1 said," Byron "poems are different: at least, I can accept them and I can see things depicted in them daily life"(3r int.) . He actually named Byron as the only author, who was appealing to him among all the authors covered in his British literature (!!). When the text was more accessible, both TM1 and TF1 reported their experience of Langer "s (1995) being in and moving through an environment they were immersed in the text, world and were caught up in the sense or fell of a poem." TF1 named Bryon's don't guan as an interesting text because'' it's language is easy to understand and fun to read (3ʳᵈ nit). TM1 like especially broom ''s ''she walks in beauty'', he said if he came across come came across some girl like that somewhere, he might write about her with ''such a state of mind Byron ''s'' (3ʳᵈ int.) what TM1 said actually also indicated that he encountered lager's (1995);;step out and rethinking what one knows,'' a

stance in which he used what he understood in the text –worlds' 'to add to his knowledge and experience ''when talking about the texts in British literature (!), TM1 said ,''I don't have much fell for those texts''(3rd int.)That is, he was seldom in the stance of ''being in'' and'' immersed in text world.'' Text worlds." Tf1 also talked to about the difficult language in British literature (1) and he did not think British literature was easier then British literature.**(2) Difficulties shown in genre effects**. Concepts surrounding genre could be very general and not specific. Yet, a very basic level, whether a reader can recognize and appreciate some literary convention in the text, say a poem or a novel is crucial. As swales (1990) stated: "An appreciation of genre is necessary if not sufficient condition for an appreciation of literature (p.37; emphases mine.) Poetry was especially difficult, as TF1 repeatedly expressed clearly. He said I was hopeless when it comes to poetry" (1st nit). Poetry was "so abstract" to her (2nd nit). After the final exam, in the third interview, she told me "poetry often got me confused. Then, I have to rely on a lot of materials-the internet, the lecturers' lectures, etc." TF1 could not appreciate what is in a poem, indicating that poetry as a genre made her unable to step into an environment. Again, Langer's (1995) term seem to apply. Unable to deal with a poem, TF1 was more likely to form her ideas about it from professor's lectures or online information.

TM1 also talked how about genre effect from poetry reduced his understanding about the text. During the third interview, he said, "It happens often in British literature (2), after I look up the meaning of unknown words in a poem. I won't get what the text is all about. As TM1 explained, "the test can be arranged or twisted in a different way, especially in poetry" (3rd nit). To borrow Widdowson's (1983) term, the "deviant language of poetry" made studying poetry for him difficult: The paroled of the poem……is not parole in any straightforward sense (p. 10), and "the word take different value in the unique frame of reference created by the internal pattern of language with the poem" (p. 11). Indeed, the "unique frame of reference" could not be obtained simply by looking up the words in the dictionary. To able to understand a poem, the reader is expected to see how the words in it interplay with each other and to infer from the words in the text. The" internal patterns of the language in the poem" are the key to meaning-making.

This problem did not seem to apply only to cannon literature poetry for TM1. He reported that the "internal patterns of language" with nursery rhymes were difficult for him. In response to my comment the nursery rhymes could be nonsense and just for fun, smilingly, he said, "they are rhymes but can't get it because it is in English…..I can get it how comes this line is connected/related to the net" (3rd nit). Nursery in English seems very" foreign" to him even though they are composed of essays words in simple text. Even when no cultural allusions existed in a poem or nursery rhyme, he could not generate a meaning out of them, as he failed to see how the different words were related to each other. As claimed by swales (1990)." An appreciation of genre" (p, 37) is extremely the basic of studying literature. Yet, it remains to see how long or much training is necessary before a L2 learner is able to appreciate genre, especially poetry as a genre.

(3) *Difficulties shown in a unfamiliar culture-related elements in the text.* Culture related elements such as cultural, historical background, biblical and mythological allusions, symbols and metaphors caused difficulty. TM1, TF1 and TM2 mention especially problems with cultural and historical background. TM1 experience was that when both register and cultural factors

existed in the text, "culture issues should be the dominant factor" (3rd nit). Neither the catcher in the Rye nor Frankenstein were easy for him to understand; as a first year English major he reads those two novels as outside reading for a freshman English course.. of the former, he said, "there are words those young adult speak……you know different culture also create difficulty." As a fourth year student, he said, I don't think it will be easier now. I mean I haven't consciously study the culture presented there. So difficulty will still exist. Problems with cultural-related elements in the text persist a lot longer than the language problems with the text. TM2 still sensed the how his understanding or guesses about the significant of the text could be negatively affected by such eternal factor as element related with foreign culture. He said, "I need to guess and I might not guess a right. I mean there are other things behind a text, eg the author style, the influence from social cultural background, etc." (3rd int). Similarly, TF1, shared the same concerned; lacking foreign cultural background shown in the text decreased his confidence in interpreting the text (3rd nit).

Difficulties emanating from the learner. The following two part will be discuss: difficulties shown in literary understanding and difficulties shown in motivational issues;

(1) **Learner-related difficulties shown in literary understanding.** TM1, TF1 and TM2 reported difficulties in coming to literary understanding, both in reading literary text and writing about them. I will discuss the former first, and then, the latter. When talking about literary text, among the three, only TM1 mentioned his lack of proficiency as a source of problem. On the questionnaire, he indicated that he spent more than six hours per week preparing for each British and American literature survey course and he thought the major difficulty result from the reading load. I spend so much time reading (3rd nit). He also admitted that as a fourth year student, "my language proficiency level doesn't allow me to do this easily!" TM1 acknowledge that the lack of English language proficiency was a major contributing factor for his difficulty in studying literature in English. In addition, he also reported the lack independent reading ability and ability to see the underlying meaning, responses to the literary text in L2, and target culture understanding. His description of how he prepared for survey literature courses indicated in basic ideas could not be obtained easily from the assigned text. As he said, most of his preparation time went to previewing and discussing before class. He describe how he previewed, saying, "Generally,, we read each text assigned…we read it over and check the words that we don't know, and then, we do listen to what the professor has to say." He said, most of the time, most of our discussion was made up of our questions. The time spent on preview did not bring him and his group members understanding of what they have read. TM1 spent time previewing because he was required to do it, but this was not a good investment for his understanding. He and his group members thus relied on the lecturer for the major **so**urce of understanding of the text. TM1 did not think he could "get the text" when he read them; what his professor said was accurate or a standardized version. He could not trust group discussion because some interpretation from the group discussion only came sometimes, and even when that occurred it was so "deep" as what professor could reach. After previewing and discussing with his group members, he did not review because he was not interested in literature. "I Take note in class and I go over

them before the exam…perhaps one week before the exam, he said, (3rd into). Notes taken form the professor lectures in class were very crucial to TM1 when studying literature in English department. Similar situation and dilemmas existed with in what TF1 reported. As he stated, even what's about it, was not easy for me. Group discussion could not solve difficulties in his understanding. He said, "American literature class, our group discussion as for preview; I would say only a few ideas could come up" (1st into). What he said indicated that even group effort produced a very little understanding of the text. He further admitted,…I'm not good in association of ideas…for example, the use of symbol is common, I don't think I can think of them myself (3rd into). She emphasized because "what I read is a foreign literature, something I don't have enough background knowledge" (3rd into). Without cultural background as support, he contended what he thought about the text was "more likely to be wrong." Thus, he has to rely on his lecturers. In summary, he lacked the ability in independent reading and to see the underlying meaning, lacked responses to what he read and he lacked cultural understanding. Similarly, TM2 also expressed that a fourth- year student; he lacked the independent reading and difficulty seeing the underlying meaning of the text. While, talking about L2, learner-related factor and their difficulties reading literature, the revealed as an individual reader, they could seldom interact with the text.

Difficulties emanating for from the curriculum and course requirement.

(2) **Shown in too many required courses at the same time**. As described in the method chapter, at EBKUST-MU all fourth-year English majors had no choice but to take both British and American literature to meet the basic requirement for graduation. TM1, said that literature courses were a "burden" to him (1st int &3rd int). TF1 also said, I got so much pressured; I'm taking two survey literature courses together" (3rd int). Likewise, TM2 stated he had too much to do with both of the courses (3rd int).

(3) **Shown in analysis as a courses focus**. Analysis as a focus caused difficulties for them. TM1 thought it too bad he expected to analyze whatever he read. He considered interest was supposed to be a prerequisite for analyzing a text (3rd int). TF1 expressed, "I can appreciate what is in the text, but when it comes to critical comments, it is hard to come up with a idea."(2nd int); during the third interview, she said the same thing (3rd int). TM2 struggle with the two writing assignment; among the two he failed the first one and the second, he received a grade just little over passing. **(3) Shown in two challenging tasks**. TM1 had difficulties completing the writing assignment for the American literature class, which required him to think for a long time and think from his own perspective as well, because the topics were not discussed in the previous classes. However, he mentioned that when answering questions for British literature (2), the task were simply easier. When answering 20-points questions, he said, "I write a paragraph for it…..it was not thinking training….I can get a higher grade by writing more ideas about what we talked about in class." Actually, TF1 and TM2 also mentioned this difference in writing assignments, which in turn constituted different levels in difficulties. The difference in requirement that they mentioned was that while American literature was page-length or even longer essay writing, British literature was typically short-paragraph writing. TM1, TF1 and TF2 were experiencing some short-term difficulty. In L1 situation, NY strands

(1991) empirical study show that wring was the most notable instructional variable; he concluded that, to promote of understanding. It was important to regularly assign written homework-paragraph-and page length writing short answer exercise (p. 153). In term of long-term goals, the training that three the student received in American literature was supposed to be good; however, the problems was they did not seem to have long-term goal for literature study.

What did he do to address difficulties?

Two categories emerged from data explaining what these three students did to address difficulties they encountered; using non-human resources and using human resources. I will deal with use of non-human resources first. Among the non-human resources two commonly. Test covered in that context used by TM1, TF1 and TM2 were: first, exam question and other materials passed down to them by former students, and second, text translation. Those exam questions was use to prepare for exam, especially for British literature (1). Those questions actually worked for them in that course because several of them reappeared on their own tests. Test in Africa renditions was referred to as the student were unable to read the original text, especially those test assigned to British literature (1). Test covered in that course was beyond their ability to comprehend although they knew rendered text could not be trusted .TF1 remarked, "I don't rely on them. Eventually, what the professor said would be important (3rd int). TM1, TF1 and TM2 reported the use of non-human resources especially for studying British literature (1). As the assigned readings were unreadable, materials offered by student senior to them, e.g. questions etc…and online information were used for survival. Furthermore, online information and analysis written in English were also used to bypass the text included in British literature (1) by TF1 and TM2. Besides difficulty in understanding the original texts, as another reason was that the online material could be located easily, as TF1 told me (3rd int). As for English article in the library, they seldom used them because it was "too time-consuming" Tm1 did not take advantage of online information, perhaps lacking the strategy to use it or lacking the English proficiency to deal with more reading in English, as he indicated earlier. For TM1, locating library material or online information was too much trouble and time consuming. Yet, now, as fourth-year students taking both British literature and American literature, and the use of secondary materials did not really work. They still refer to translation when possible. However, questions given by former students and online information did not work well. Teacher requirement played a part because in both courses, students were required to study net, not something about it.

As for human resources, the most common ones were their lecturers, student senior to them, and classmates. The lecturers were the three students' most important human resource as described earlier, although they did not go to lecturer in person. What lecturers said in class counted for the most in their understanding about the texts. Moreover, student senior to them provided them with materials for reference. Further, their own classmates mainly helped through peer discussions, e.g. regular discussion assigned for American literature or discussion before exam for British literature. The three students seldom used themselves as a

resource to reread the difficult passages even though on the questionnaires, their responses did not tell exactly the same story regarding

This. On the questionnaires, only TF1 indicated "2" signifying "not true of me" in terms of rereading the difficult passages of the text when difficulties occurred; TM2 marked "3" a neutral response, whereas TM1 marked "4" true of me" what TM1 and TM2 told me the interview did not show they reread the difficult passages.

Difficulties emanating from curriculum and courses requirements. The following four will be discussed: difficulties shown in too many required courses at the same time, difficulties shown in analysis as a course focus, difficulties shown in too challenging task, and difficulties shown in concern for the grades.

Difficulties shown in too many courses at the same time. Similar to TM1, TF1, and TM2, TF2 also mentioned the heavy course load. Talking about time constraint for doing the interpretive essay, he said: I can't give up other subjects simply because of American literature, right? I've got English literature, too, and recently, we have been assigned a lot of readings. Got to read otherwise first, when he discuss the texts, I wouldn't be able to understand. Moreover, he asks people in class: I have to prepare for that!" (2nd int.). Every week, there were assigned readings from both English literature, and in both courses ,the professors encourage student to preview, which made TF2 feel pressured from both teachers.

What did he do to confront difficulties?

Here is a presentation of two sub-categories representing what TF2 did to address his difficulties: using non-human resources. In the name of non-human resources, the way that TF2 studied British literature (i) was similar to TM1, TF1, and TM2; they all studied for exams. Similar to them TF2 studied the exam questions given by studies senior to them and text in English translation in order to pass the exams. Thus, they bypass the literary text that was too difficult to comprehend. As a fourth-year student, TF2 had different experience from previous year of British literature (i). Translation was for reference as a reading aid. He could read the original text to a certain extent although he "got stuck" and was unable to read a poem as an "intact" whole by herself. The other non-human, but less used resources, were written in English, such as encyclopedia. In term of his use of human resources, he shared with others student reliance on lecturers" lectures for understanding assigned tet and on student to provide reference materials. He had group discussion with his classmates. As a fourth year student he would exchange ideas with others student and he reported engaging in more thinking about what he was reading this year (3rd int.).

What really made him different from three students, I first described was that him used himself as a resource. Above all, he reread difficult passages frequently and had patience with the tet. He reread the difficult passages even previewing. Actually, he spent so much time on preview that he said he seldom had time to review. Furthermore, he showed strong willingness to improve her abilities to study literature. That is, he considered what she needed to do about her difficulties taking a long-term perspective rather than short-term concerns like "how to pass this course". In order to know about factors that caused her difficulties, he asks me questions about my past literature reading experiences after we finished the 3rd term interview. As I remembered, before we could finish talking, the cafeteria where I interviewed her were supposed to be closed because of shorter opening hours in winter break. On that cold day, we went out, shivering and talking, and in a chilly January air, continued to change our experience in literature study.

1 Learner-related difficulty shown in literary understanding. TF3 reported his lack of English language proficiencies as the most serious obstacle to his study to literature. Although he considered himself to be good at literature in general, literature courses in the English department required him to read test written in English and this was challenging to him, as he was not very confident in her own English reading ability "I have never trusted my ability reading in English…" said he (2nd int). During the interview, he further claimed the difficulties in surveying literature courses for him came from "language problems" of the participant I interview, TF3 was the one who complained the most about her own English ability. He said she encountered average "More than 30 unknown words on the page", a significant obstacle to her reading. However, he did response to what she read. Culture-related   metaphors that would be differently were difficult, but he said he could generate his own interpretation. For example, I ask him how a Dickenson poem containing a "robin" and "daffodils" as important symbols. Lecturer L had just discussed this poem several days just before my third interview with him.

1 Learner-related Difficulties Shown Literary Understanding. In literary understanding, the only two things he mentioned were lack of the ability the underlying meaning of a text, and a lack of target culture understanding. For the former, she cited "Ode to Nightingale" as an example. He said, "when I read it, I thought the author was sad about his life in this world and listening to the birds singing….After the lecturer's interpretation, I was moved and understood the combination of birds singing and his sadness" (3rd int). His Lecturer interpretation brought him in to the text-world so that he understood this poem more deeply. As for his lack of culture understanding, part of hid counter measures was to study the historical background for the literature. He said, "I

always….i take a look at what happened in history first, and then, at an author background. And after that, I study test written by this author" (3rd int). He considered his English reading proficiency to have improve as a student in the upper division and she was thus better prepare for the require English and American literature courses. Lacking prior literature reading experience before university did not caused him difficulties for literature study. Before university, he said that his knowledge of literary devices….was near euro!" and he "didn't have any feel for literary text" (3rdint). However, he considered himself good at analyzing the text, a mental exercise that he enjoyed. His interest and comparison and contrast, what he did in private, and it was also emphasized in an elective literature course that he had taken, "European literature."….I look European literature last year and the lecturer often ask us: "what you think you are reading? What text you have read before that seems to be similar to this?" I guess I thus thought about it often" (1st int). It seems he started with analyzing a single text, but then he looked for more challenge to compared and contrast two texts. During the interview, he said, "perhaps, I've got a mind for analysis: it a matter of aptitude" (3rd int). He approach literary text with this "mind of analysis"…I know some people say they can sense the text strongly, but they can't write about it…….I mean some people can be touch by the text emotionally! But I emphasized things like, "oh, what a good writing technique!" [laugh] "Oh, this text reflects the author time!" I guess I am more rational!....if you want to moved, you're supposed to know how well it I written" (3rd int) her classmates' lack of intellectual analysis even when they may have been involve with a text "emotionally" is exactly what Hassno (1991) to base on an empirical study of L1 reading L1 texts. Student who couldn't write about what they read encounter difficulties when taking literature course.

In addition,TF4 interest in and ability in analysis made very different from TM,TF1,TM2,and TF2, who lacked either ability to critically analyzed the text and organize ideas, Analysis as a focus in literature courses was not a problem for him. He said, "I think am good at analyzing the text" he added,……I look for clues and hints from the text to support my ideas….When I talked with my classmate in group discussion, I'd say what I think and let them know I'm not sure. They don't know what I think is right, but they don't think as much as I do (3rd int). He could analyze the text and effectively communicate with her opinions in both oral and written form. Although his analysis and interpretation might not be workable, he was not hesitant to express what he thought in class, he was one of the students who habitually respond to lecturer L questions. His ability to analysis and English seem the causes. He reported no difficulties in

English writing, he seem to learned academic writing in a smooth way and he received the highest grade from his take-home mid-term essays-96 out of 100.

2 Learner-*Related Difficulties Shown in Motivational Issues*. TF4 only motivational issues were time constraints because he was a double major in English and sociology. He developed his interest in literature in English department: however, he needed 5 or 6 hours per week for preparation only for the American literature course, because lecturer L design the course requirement for his students to "sustained reflection" Under time constraint, for TF4, the amount of time for each literature course depends on lecturers requirements, In the British literature (2) class, because he was not require to preview and review, he only studied just before the exams. The way he studied British literature (2) was similar to how he has studied British literature (1).

What Did he Do When Encountering Difficulties. This category is further divided into use of non-human resources and human resources. In used of non-human resources, TF4 used online information most often for historical background and "materials related to the text" (3rd int)".He describe, things like study guide, study questions, etc. Well, I usually read summaries, and I seldom read analyses and study questions. After reading some summaries, I can read the text myself (3rd int). He said previously he had read information related with historical events or the author background before going to the text. Yet, what he said here indicated that after reading historical background, he usually read summaries before reading the text itself to study the text more smoothly. He try to read the original text himself, and he used translation to bypass the text only when he don't have enough time to do the reading in English.

Material that he used often was online spark notes. He said, I usually read the summary, and I go to the text itself. But [laugh] if don't read the original test and i don't have time to read it any more before the exam, I read the analysis (3rdint). He didn't tell me how often read the analysis without reading the original test though. He referred to secondary materials all the time….When I can't understand the test, I look for secondary sources. With the help from secondary sources, I might be able to get it: otherwise, I'd wait for the lecturer interpretation in class (3rd int). What he said about his strategic use of non-human resources seems to indicate that her English proficiency allowed him to refer to more secondary sources for materials more than his classmates. Actually, he himself rated his ability in reading and writing English is high. He did not think it time consuming to read critical comment in English. I memorize the ideas and oh, how comes is time consuming? He said he only took the part he needed (3rd int). He seem more to be strategic than other students when using these critical opinions and seemed how to use it in

a correct way. As pointed out in TM2, critical comments did not work for British literature (2) exams for him. He received extremely low grade in the mid-term by writing points taken from literary critics. Moreover, TF4 also used short entry comments, preparing for the exam, He said…..i d look at books written in Africa, such book like: A collection of critical comment on English and American literature. In that kind of book, they say what status an author has in literature history…for example, I read a statement like, um, Whitman is a patriotic poet, and then, I reflect on what I've studied about Whitman and think about how come he is a patriotic poet? (3rd int) Those short passages about certain author not only saved him preparation time but also provided him angles to reflect upon as he read text.

In sum, he efficiently used secondary resources. In the beginning, historical background was used, and then a summary when it is available. Then, if could not get what the text is about, he referred to study guides, before classes, he relied on secondary materials and then waited for the lecturer interpretations in class; he did not reread the difficult passages.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This session first presents summary of the research and then make a conclusion and then proffer recommendation based on the findings of the research further policy teaching and materials.

From a learning perspective, masterworks presented difficulties for studying and teaching as well. One possible source of help would be to replace or supplement them by other texts such as texts belonging to young to adult literature. Young adult literature may not necessarily be less difficult to read in terms of target culture knowledge and register exhibited in the text; however, it may present less difficulty because of less complex sentence structures and vocabulary and thus could provide more avenues for students to get entry into the. At least, young adult literature could be a major component of the preparatory literature courses such as Approaches to Literature for the first-year English majors so that students could gain knowledge for various genres as well as be exposed to more extensive reading. In fact, preparatory courses using young adult literature or children's literature might need to start earlier, even in senior high school, for students who intend to be English majors because most the student's information's in may study expressed that they lacked extensive reading experience of literature of any before university. Extensive reading for more literary texts should be a means to accumulating domain knowledge of literature, which might affect the students, study of masterworks of literature even though how much domain knowledge is necessary for such literature courses remains an open question.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, based on data from different data sources including classroom observation, interviews with students and instructor informants, anta also the questionnaire study, my findings support the notion that the study of literature in a foreign language classroom is fraught with difficulty. In addition, the teaching of literature in English as a foreign language is difficult as well.

However, I would caution my audience, as I pointed out in various parts of Chapter 4 and chapter 5, findings from the questionnaire could differ from what the respondents to it **reported** in the face-to face interviews because of various reasons. In addition to all other reasons, different respondents. Fraught with difficulty. In addition, e teaching of literature in English as a foreign language is difficult as well. However, I would caution my audience, as I point out in various parts of chapter 4 and chapter 5, finding from the questionnaire could differ from what the reported in the face to face interviews because of various reasons. In addition to all other reasons, different respondents might perceive the question items differently even though as a researcher I had tried what I could to ensure that items were reliable, as explained in chapter 3. The findings of my study contribute to the expansion of our knowledge about difficulties in studying and teaching literature in English departments in Sierra Leone universities, to a certain extent other EFL or FL content as well. My findings that students lacked the ability to generate a literary response to test that were too difficult for them could be used as a starting point to rectify instructors' expectations that of students and their teaching practices. In addition, my findings that institutional or expectations factors such as their such as curriculum requirements, course requirements, and course objectives directly influence students' difficulties and successes in literature study calls for a need for curriculum makers and literature instructors in English departments seriously to consider their assumptions or objectives so that better decisions can be made for test selection, and course objectives. At the same time, they should attention to student' interests or aptitudes, significant factors in their literature study, as shown in this study. More importantly, they should also make teaching and study of literature in English departments in Sierra Leone successful to avoid the diminished role of literature as experienced by universities and foreign –language institute. As shown in my study, the lecturers assigned a different focus on the role of culture in literature study; their different foci led to different teaching approaches. How much culture information should be included in a literature course should be an open question to be pondered. In the current study, lecturer l made an effort to link literature and

history whereas lecturer M emphasized literature itself. In turn, their different foci and approaches directly affected the kinds of successes that their students reported. For instance, lecture Ls' students showed far more Consciousness about cultural understanding in literature classes. The finding call for a reconsideration of curriculum objectives, especially of the role of culture in literature study. Nevertheless, as sell's (1995) caveat put it well, ''literature is by no means the only manifestation of the target'' (p. 4). Relevant to this is a consideration of what the study and teaching of literature written in English has to offer for the curriculum in the English department in Sierra Leone. In English department the rift between literature and Language skill classes (Bay Petersen, 1990) and that Between literature and linguistics areas (Rau, 1994) has often been described. Rau (1990) even suggested how British and American literature teaching could be converged with linguistics. She discussed how stylistics, pragmatics, and semiotic could be applied to the study of literature and further proposed that a course in which linguistics was used to analyses and appreciate literature be offered for English majors in addition to the required introduction to linguistics and to English and American literature courses. However, what she proposed remains to be actualized in the future. Littman (1999) argued that to pull together the Trinity in a foreign language department, literature, culture, and the target language, practical questions should focus on first, appropriate content, and second, the relationship between content and language instruction. How to form a ''coherent curriculum'' in a foreign language department, as Pitman's (1999) article title suggests, requires curriculum makers to think carefully about those related question's.

RECOMMENDATIONS

 In of the paucity of empirical research regarding difficulties in teaching and studying literature, I would consider the following for future research. First, a study of the policy makers' and also literature instructors' assumption would be helpful to lay the ground for modifications of curriculum and pedagogy. Based on the result of such a study, proper decision about literature courses can be made. Second, a longitudinal study lasting for a longer period of time might contribute to a better understanding of students' difficulties in literature study in an EFL context. I would suggest such LASTS FOR at least two school years when the students take the required British and American literature courses. Third, issues regarding literary understanding remain a topic to be the very few undergraduate students who are more proficient in English can be persuaded to participate in such a study, m

English can be persuaded to participate in such a study might be useful in providing a window on how thunder standing of literary text in a foreign language could evolve if EFL student are more linguistically proficient. Another way to approach foreign literature understanding can involve predate student using learner interviews and thank _around protocols.

The sharing of ideas among professionals is necessary as a future pedagogical effort. Gaff (1992) nag

Illustrated that the "disjunction of the curriculum "(P. 106) and the" insularity of the class room'' (p.107) were taken for granted in literature teaching; different instructors are interpreting and assuming different theories in different classroom .My finding that most students on campus did not have successful contacts with masterworks of literature in English calls for an exchange of ideas among literature instructors. That is, in addition to other things regarding of literature teaching and literary understanding, instructors with different voices and teaching styles should hear from each other so that their students can be further helped. Harper(1988) urged '' a need to develop approaches that systematically prepare an guide student development of the skills necessary for interacting with the literary text and provide opportunities check for the student to express, negotiate, and revise personal interpretations'' (p.407) in foreign literature classes. As shown in my findings, this need still urgent and the word ''systematic" is key. As my findings indicate, most students were not conscious about strategies they could have used to deal with texts; the explicit teaching of strategies or skills would be necessary to, decrease students 'reliance on the instructors' interpretation. Only one student (TF4) seemed to acquire, without explicit instruction, strategies about how to interpret a poem from lecturer L, s lectures. Act, when provided suggestions about how to preview, e.g. visualizing what the text is presented and self –questioning, student knew how to try to experience the text before a class meeting. '' learning to learn'' could be a more significant goal of the foreign literature classroom, and may help rectify the current tendency in the classroom of having an instructor explain just how one meaning is possible.

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