

The Use of Literary Texts in EFL Coursebooks: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract

This exploratory study investigates the use of literary texts in English as a foreign language (EFL) coursebooks and examines the extent to which literature is used within the coursebooks, the types of texts used as regards authenticity and recency, the criteria for selecting and adapting the texts and the ways of improving the selection and adaptation process. Multiple articles written on this subject show that the evaluation of EFL coursebooks is a relevant and important research area in the study of language and linguistics. This study gives a survey of the extent to which literary texts are used in EFL coursebooks within institutions of higher learning in Kuwait and worldwide. In this study, 44 popular EFL coursebooks (between 2015 and 2019) within higher education institutes, including those in Kuwait, were analysed. The findings demonstrated that literary texts are not included in many of the coursebooks used nowadays and that the literary texts selected were primarily from an early period (more than a century ago). Furthermore, the results revealed that the coursebooks include a large percentage of inauthentic, ill-adapted works. Consequently, this study recommends incorporating authentic literary texts in EFL coursebooks comprising modern literature.

Keywords: authenticity, curriculum design, EFL coursebooks, language learning, literary text, literature, reading

1. Introduction

There is a misconception that literature clashes with communicative teaching and that as needs change, so do the criteria for selecting teaching materials. However, this concern does not necessarily translate into constricting reading materials to ‘useful’ texts. Therefore, this paper calls for ‘a closer integration of language and literature in the classroom’ (Lazar, 1993, p. 27). It is not a matter of literature replacing other types of texts but rather of it having a unique contribution in a language classroom.

In his epilogue, Carter presented a timeline of the place of literature in a language classroom and commented on the current situation:

Many of the questions first raised 30 or more years ago are still being asked today, in many cases with greater sharpness and relevance to the design of today’s curricula in language and literature. Some of the questions are epistemologically fundamental: What justifications are there for the inclusion of literature in the L1 and L2 English language learning curriculum? (Carter, 2015, p. 318)

The extent to which literature is used in coursebooks, and the way it is exploited, has led many experts in this field to question the justifications behind literature’s present position. For instance, Widdowson’s question of ‘why should this kind of conventional, humdrum, normal, routine life be reckoned to be more stimulating for language learning?’ (Widdowson, 1983, p. 33) is reiterated in many publications. Hall provided a review of recent activity in this field and believed that ‘the plethora or new publications suggests that the level of interest in this field is growing rather than declining’ (Hall, 2015, p. 14). He went on to list professional interest groups, journals, articles, overviews and curriculum statements issued by the Council of Europe in its Common European Framework, amongst other research. In his publication, which compiles many studies in Japan, Teranishi (2015) showed the positive outcomes of using literary texts and included studies that incorporate novels, short stories, poems and extensive reading groups.

However, without a comprehensive investigation to confirm the claim that coursebooks lack authentic literary texts, no case can be made and no definitive solution can be reached. Therefore, this study addresses four primary questions:

- 1) To what extent is literature used in coursebooks nowadays?
- 2) What types of literary texts are used (in terms of authenticity and recency)?
- 3) How are literary texts selected and/or adapted?
- 4) How can the selection and adaptation of a literary text be improved?

Resolving these questions may lead to useful findings that can clarify the current position of literature in English as a second language (ESL)/English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching and reveal, albeit indirectly, the views of coursebook designers. Therefore, the researchers intend to show the place of literature in the coursebooks used nowadays. This study also aims to propose a set of principles, on the basis of the analysis criteria, that can effectively facilitate the selection and adaptation of a literary text.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the literature related to arguments that oppose the use of literary texts as a tool for language learning in general and specifically in a language classroom. It also provides a review of various research findings and insights about the importance of including literature in EFL coursebooks.

2.1 Arguments Against the Use of Literature in EFL Coursebooks

Nowadays, literature is not afforded the same position as other genres. Notably, ‘In the heyday of grammar/translation teaching, no one questioned the position of literature in a foreign-language syllabus’ (Smith, 1984, p. 275). It was assumed that exposure ‘to the best uses of the English language... would in some sense “rub off” on their own performance in the language’ (Short & Candlin, 1986, p. 92). The aim of foreign language teaching was ‘to enable the pupils to read literature’ (Smith, 1984, p. 275), but as goals of language learning changed, so did the approaches and methodologies. The structural approach to language teaching replaced the previous approaches and its ‘emphasis on discrete-point teaching, “correctness” in grammatical form represented a methodology unsuited to literature teaching’ (Long, 1986, p. 43). Finally, since the communicative approach has become prevalent in most situations, the stigma induced on literature should have dissipated. Instead, this stigma has come to play ‘an ever more problematic role in a new pattern of language teaching which aims primarily to impart practical communicative skills’ (Littlewood, 1986, p. 177). In his article, Khatib mentioned this side of the argument and further asserted that ‘so many language teachers conclude that literature has little if anything to serve the needs of our learners in academic settings or specialised fields’ (Khatib, Rezaei, & Derakhshan, 2011, p. 204). Dimitrova-Gyuzeleva (2015), however, clarified some of the reasons behind the exclusion of literary texts from communicative language teaching methodology. Literature has been deemed ‘guilty by association’ to the grammar-translation method—an unjust exclusion that should be objectively re-evaluated.

One of the primary arguments against using literature in EFL classes is that literary language is often perceived as challenging at the syntactic and lexical levels. According to Padurean (2015), scholars indicate that ‘language used in literary works is too complex and difficult and therefore it does not support acquisition of grammar and lexical structures that can be used in their everyday lives’ (p. 195). Similarly, Savvidou (2004) highlights two reasons on why language teachers find literature unsuitable for language classes. First, the creative literary style—as in poetry—may require manipulation of the syntax and lexis, which makes the literary language differ from non-literary language. Second, readers of literary texts require more work to accurately understand the meaning of texts that are separated from their direct social context.

According to Khatib et al. (2011), literary texts are difficult to select and are loaded with examples that show ‘deviation from normal phonetic and phonological systems as well as a change of semantic repertoire of some words’ (p. 204). In the view of various EFL instructors and learners, literature is seen, as stated by Alemi (2011), as ‘a hindrance because the literary language is viewed as incomprehensible’ (p. 177) adding that the prominent objections of teachers and curriculum authors against literary texts is that they find them ‘difficult’, ‘hard to understand’ and ‘not relevant to students lives’ (p. 177).

Another criticism of using literary texts in language classes is that the cultural concepts loaded within the texts may pose additional difficulties. Furthermore, when used as literature, ‘students may dislike having to discuss personal feelings or reactions’ (Lazar, 1993, p. 25). These literary texts are also used as a linguistic resource; ‘with little chance for personal interpretation, this approach could become very mechanical and demotivating’ (Lazar, 1993, p. 25). This argument goes on to claim that adaptation methods are ineffective and that simplifications ‘are poor representations of the original’ (Ur, 1999, p. 201), and un-adapted texts are time-consuming. All these factors contributed to the disappearance of literature from English language coursebooks. However, many findings that favour the inclusion of literature in EFL coursebooks contradict this notion.

2.2 Arguments for the Inclusion of Literature

This section outlines the benefits of using literary materials within EFL coursebooks and the effectiveness of using literary texts in EFL classrooms on learners' language skills, motivation, personality, creativity and thinking skills amongst other skills.

Interactive potential of literary texts. Interaction is not limited to communication between students and each other but can also occur between a reader and the text. Hoey (2001, p. 13) talked of literary texts as a 'site of an interaction' that other texts cannot offer because, as Gough and Wren (2003, p. 179) stated, the 'meaning must emerge in the mind of the reader'. Gollasch (1982, p. 33) called this interaction a 'psycholinguistic guessing game'. Moreover, unlike normal discourse, literature makes what Pettit (1986, p. 245) called 'an unconscious operation on the reader'. Iser (1980, p. 1674), a reader-response critic, took this idea further as he believed that a literary text has two poles: 'the artistic pole is the author's text, and the aesthetic is the realisation accomplished by the reader'. This results in what he called the 'virtual text', produced partly by the reader's filling in of the 'gaps' of the text, which cause an 'invisibility' (Iser, 1980, p. 1675) akin to that which occurs in a conversation. Daskalovska and Dimova (2012) discussed another characteristic that increased the interactive potential of literary texts when they made the distinction between referential versus representational materials, the former being 'the language used in everyday communication [...] while literary texts are representational materials which invite learners to respond and react, to question and evaluate, to interact with the text, to get involved emotionally and creatively and to relate it to their own experience'.

Another major difference between normal discourse and literature, as explained by Widdowson (1983), is that in the former, the reader makes use of familiar schemata and with the latter, 'the discourse is dissociated from any normal social context [...] and therefore requires the reader to create his or her own schematic information by the increased procedural work' (p. 31). He believed that this heightened engagement with the text greatly improved language acquisition.

Autonomy and extensive reading. Learner autonomy is not about total control over the learning situation but rather 'the *capacity* or *ability* to learn independently' (Holec, 1981 cited in Sinclair, 1996, p. 140), which may be developed by promoting extensive reading. Brumfit (1985) stated that reading is 'the most autonomous and individualisable ability in language work' (p. 105), and literature, which is written to be read for pleasure, lends itself to such purposes. In their study, Ciecierski and Bintz (2015) acknowledge the challenges posed by the use of authentic literary texts in the classroom, yet they maintain that their inclusion is worthwhile because as a language teacher, one's aim should be to promote lifelong literacy.

Additionally, research on vocabulary acquisition shows that vocabulary and reading rate are improved when students study literature extensively. Daskalovska and Dimova (2012) cited various studies that show that language skills and vocabulary acquisition as well as motivation are positively affected by extensive reading. In a recent study by Duncan and Paran (2017), both teachers and students saw that reading and vocabulary skills improved through the use of literary texts. Nasu (2015) explained how 'Japanese masters of English read numerous works of English literature, arguing that this enabled them to use sophisticated English, comparable to that of a native speaker' (p. 231).

Pedagogic contributions of narratives, poetry and drama. Poetry/song, plays and narratives individually exhibit unique characteristics. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss each of them separately.

Poetry. Because of the nature of this genre, poetry elicits varying interpretations from different readers and can garner different interpretations from the same reader at different times. In addition, Richard-Amato (1996, p. 169) discussed how poetry can allow a learner's language to 'take on a more native-like quality'. Poetry can also be useful at lower learning levels because of its simplicity. Furthermore, because of its universal status, students 'are aware of the idea of poetry and of its thematic content' (Maley, 1984, p. 94). Poetry also affects motivation because students believe that it is an elevated form of language. Another advantage of using poetry is its structure (primarily rhyme and rhythm), which aids in memory and retention. Most importantly, poetry evokes strong personal responses and promotes emotional involvement owing to its highly symbolic nature.

Narratives. Narratives differ from poetry in that 'students can lose themselves in the characters, plots and situations' (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 189). Unlike EFL texts' 'stereotypic dummies, humanoids mouthing sentence patterns' (Widdowson, 1984, p. 169), literary characters make the reader 'eager to find out what happens as events unfold; he or she feels close to certain characters and shares their emotional responses' (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 6), which allows students to naturally acquire new language. One of the important theories regarding this area is the episode hypothesis, which states that a text is more comprehensible if it is motivated by 'conflict and the logical sequencing that is necessary to good storytelling' (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 284). This theory is related to

memory as ‘humans both acquire and store information in episodic form’ (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 284).

Plays. Another type of narrative that is especially useful in a classroom setting is the play. As Lazar (1993, p. 138) mentioned, plays provide an authentic setting that aids in the acquisition of idioms, phrases and expressions as well as a natural way to practice conversational language. The use of dramatic texts improves classroom dynamics because ‘a strong sense of involvement is fostered’ (Lazar, 1993, p. 138). Moreover, through active participation and ‘by losing themselves in the struggles and conflicts of others, they seem better able to make the target language part of their memory’ (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 173).

Cultural significance. The ‘world’ of a narrative is a created one, yet it can ‘give the foreign reader a feel for the codes and preoccupations that structure a real society’ (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 4). Though cultural content may render texts incomprehensible, many in the field believe that the benefits of increasing learners’ intercultural awareness far outweigh any difficulties it may pose (Littlewood, 1986, p. 180; Ur, 1999, p. 201).

It is important to mention that learners are not meant to ‘give up their own language and culture in favour of English or any other language and culture, but rather to develop bicultural identities with English as the language of aspirational modernity and participation in a wider global community’ (Hall, 2015, p. 18).

Motivation and subject matter. The role of motivation in language learning is regarded as a determining factor in acquisition, and many believe that ‘about 99 percent of teaching is making the learner feel interested’ (Van Lier, 1996, p. 12). With regard to Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 183), reading literature lowers stress because it is written to be read for pleasure. Although reading classic texts may be difficult, it graduates into a motivational exercise when it is perceived as an achievement. Duncan and Paran’s (2017) findings stated that a large majority of teachers and students in their focus groups believed that using literature increased their motivation and felt that it was beneficial to language acquisition.

In relation to this, many believe that as regards the selection of reading material, relevancy is of utmost importance. According to Tevdovska’s (2016) findings, relevant literary texts enhance the interest and engagement of EFL learners. Unlike texts which might be outdated, literature is always relevant. Furthermore, although many fabricated texts do not provide much content, literature potentially offers ‘culture [...] general knowledge [...] moral, educational, political or social problems’ (Ur, 1999, p. 198). If language teaching purely concentrates on *how*, and not *what*, to communicate, then EFL will become ‘a skill-based subject without content’ (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 88). In addition, ‘Benchmark statements of “translingual and transcultural competence” (MLA) or references to intercultural competence in the Common European Framework argue for exactly this kind of development in new users of a language’ (Hall, 2015, p. 18).

Creative and analytical abilities. The ability to promote and foster creativity and critical thinking abilities amongst learners is another important contribution of literature. These abilities, though more prominent in literature, are ‘more common and routine in language use than is sometimes supposed’ (Carter, 1996, p. 12). Literature may encourage affective states such as ‘generally liberal, ethical and humanitarian attitudes [...] respect for the imagination and the intellect [...] respect for literary and cultural tradition’ (Burke & Brumfit, 1986, p. 171) and, most importantly, ‘engaging imaginatively with literature enables learners to shift the focus of their attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign language system’ (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 5). Therefore, incorporating literary texts in ESL is crucial because literature develops many of the 21st-century skills that language learning methodology emphasises, such as creativity and critical thinking.

Authenticity. Communicative methodology argues for the use of authentic (or semi-authentic) texts, and literature ‘is by definition authentic text, and both verbal response and activity response are genuine language activities’ (Long, 1986, p. 58). Authentic texts ‘are intrinsically more interesting or stimulating than artificial or non-authentic texts’ (Peacock, 1997, p. 144). Additionally, Mart (2017) confirmed the positive impact of using authentic literary text materials versus simplified texts on promoting learners’ general language proficiencies, particularly in improving reading skill. The use of literature also creates an authentic setting for language use. Therefore, it can also be said that ‘the fictional world is ironically more vivid, more psychologically real than the picture given by the sober factual encyclopaedia’ (Smith, 1984, p. 287).

In contrast, EFL texts ‘resemble literature in that they represent a non-verifiable reality’ (Widdowson, 1984, p. 164). However, this resemblance does not go further because ‘dialogue operates only as a device for displaying language [...] it is not supposed to be funny, or even remotely entertaining’ (Widdowson, 1984, p. 163). Language, robbed of content and meaning, loses any chance of being interesting or motivational.

3. Methods

This section discusses the analysis procedure and materials used in this study while incorporating the key elements

of the questions that were investigated.

The coursebooks that were investigated are the ones used between 2015 and 2019, regardless of the date of publication, as some older coursebooks may still be popular. Most institutions of higher learning in Kuwait require the use of a coursebook. Therefore, this study will elucidate the current position of literature in English language classrooms in institutions of higher learning in Kuwait.

A total of 44 mainstream English coursebooks used in Kuwaiti colleges and universities were utilised in this study. The sample includes all the popular ESL coursebooks currently being sold as reported by the sales personnel at Jarir Book store, a major coursebook retailer in Kuwait. This particular sample (see Appendix A) was selected to ensure that the scope of this study is relevant to its research questions.

3.1 Data Analysis Procedure

The coursebooks were thoroughly explored, and the reading texts found were categorised according to the research questions. The researchers analysed the texts and recorded the data in Microsoft Excell software. All texts found in the coursebooks were compared to the original literary texts to determine authenticity. Additionally, a large sample was used because the research questions specifically seek answers to the question of ‘to what extent is literature used in coursebooks utilised in institutions of higher learning in Kuwait?’; that is, the extent of the use of literary texts. Moreover, the relative simplicity of the criteria suggested by the research questions facilitated the inclusion of this number of coursebooks.

The primary elements in the question are as follows:

- Whether or not the coursebooks include literature and, if so, whether or not it is authentic. As to the definition of literature, it seems that the ‘one main defining feature is that [literary texts] resist easy classification’ (Carter, 1996, p.12). Some linguists believe that ‘there is no such thing as literary language’ (Brumfit & Carter eds., 1986, p. 6). Another source of difficulty is the literary genre, and whether or not it should be restricted to the classics. Many argue that literariness is ‘identified along a gradient or cline, rather than seen as a yes/no distinction’ (Brumfit & Carter eds., 1986, p. 10). For the purposes of this study, texts are not constrained to literary canons, but do not include sub-literary forms such as songs and TV dramas.
- If they do not include authentic literature, what period do they belong to?

(1) early,

(2) modern/recent (within a century), or

(3) contemporary/current (within a decade)?

- How are literary texts selected and/or adapted?
- How can the selection and adaptation of a literary text be improved?

To explain the controversies regarding the definition of literature and the immediacy of the texts to learners (as regards the ideas and culture reflected), it was also deemed important to consider the recency of the literature chosen.

4. Findings and Discussion

This section summarises and discusses the key findings of this study. Each of the research questions is discussed and answered according to the results of the study. The values obtained are presented in figures to clearly illustrate the representation of each category of the findings.

4.1 Extent of the Use of Literature in Coursebooks

This part of the analysis answers the first research question: to what extent is literature used in coursebooks nowadays, and what types of literary texts are used (in terms of authenticity and immediacy)?

Figure 1 shows the number of coursebooks analysed and the percentage of literary texts found. This is further broken down to show authentic and inauthentic texts.

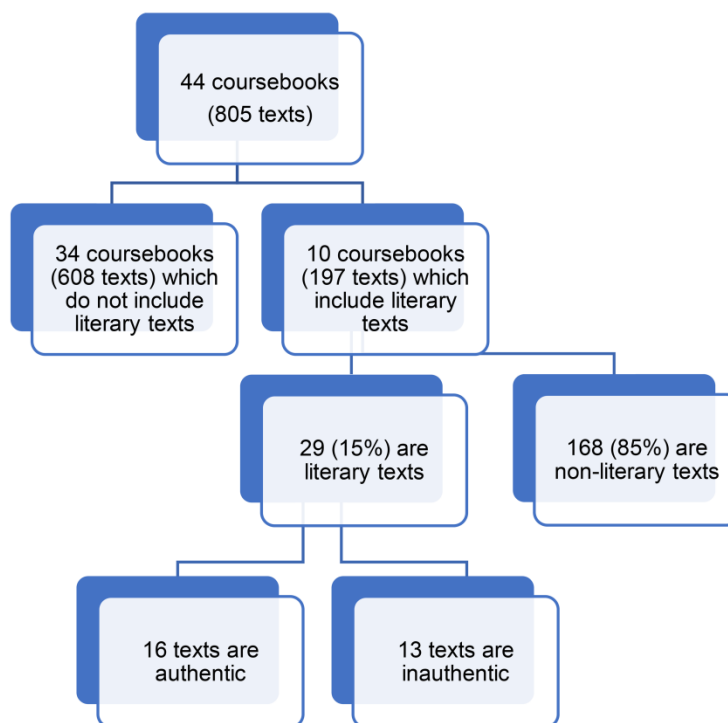


Figure 1. The number of coursebooks analysed and the percentage of literary texts found

Figure 1 demonstrates that 77% of the coursebooks surveyed (34 coursebooks) did not include authentic or simulated literature. These results point to a definite bias and presumably reflect the popular misconception that communicative methodology requires the use of texts that perform a practical function. Only 13% of the coursebooks surveyed (6 coursebooks) included inauthentic literature, whereas only 10% (4 coursebooks) solely included authentic literary texts.

4.2 Recency of the Literary Texts Included

The findings again reflect the hypothesis that even when authentic texts are included, they are usually chosen from early literature. Over 60% of the authentic literature had been removed from its audience for more than a century. This does not imply that using classic literature in EFL classrooms is negatively perceived; on the contrary, it has its own benefits such as increasing motivation and having valuable content. It can also be argued that the timeless themes of classic works can maintain immediacy. Nevertheless, nearly 40% for modern literature (published within a century of the coursebooks) and 0% for current literature (published within a decade) should not be the norm. However, it is important to mention one of the limitations of this study, which was deciding whether recency should be considered according to the date of publication (since many of the coursebooks were not recently published) or according to the date of use. It was decided that the date of use is more relevant as the researchers were more concerned with what students are exposed to than coursebook designers' choice, although both are significant to this study. This issue posed challenges in the course of this study and is, therefore, highlighted as one of the primary limitations.

Most texts come from the early period, whereas none are current literary texts. This has negative implications. The constant insistence on classic texts mostly from the early period may discourage students from reading for pleasure since the image they are given of literature is one of stale, laborious texts. If, in contrast, classic literature is included in a proportional amount along with modern and contemporary literature, individual tastes would be met and this would allow students to familiarise themselves with different genres.

These findings must reflect, albeit indirectly, the views of coursebook designers and provide a more rigid definition that would probably exclude more recent literature that has not reached a classic status but still has many elements of literariness.

4.3 Authentic vs. Inauthentic Literature in Coursebooks

This section explores the extent to which authentic and inauthentic literary texts are used in EFL coursebooks. To

achieve this purpose, the authors formulated the following three questions followed by detailed answers. The questions are as follows:

- A. Do the coursebooks include authentic literature? If so, to what extent?
- B. For authentic literary texts, what genres are used, and how are they incorporated in the coursebooks?
- C. If they include inauthentic literature, how is it adapted?

A. The extent of the inclusion of authentic literature

This part of the analysis examines the authenticity of the texts in more detail than the preliminary analysis, which provided a broader survey. To address this, 29 texts from the 44 coursebooks selected for this study were surveyed, and the findings are presented in Figure 2. Out of 29 texts, only 13 were complete authentic works and three were extracts. This shows that inauthentic literature takes up a large part of the body of the literature in the coursebooks.

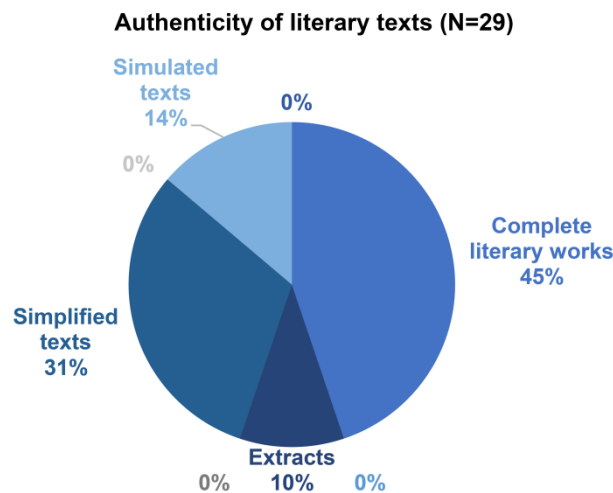


Figure 2. Percentages of the types of literary texts in terms of authenticity. The findings show that there is a larger percentage of adapted texts than complete texts

B. Genres of Authentic Literary Texts and Means of Incorporation

The various genres of authentic literary texts and the types and adaptations of inauthentic texts are presented in the chart below. Figure 3 shows that an extensive number of inauthentic texts are used in the coursebooks that were analysed in the study.

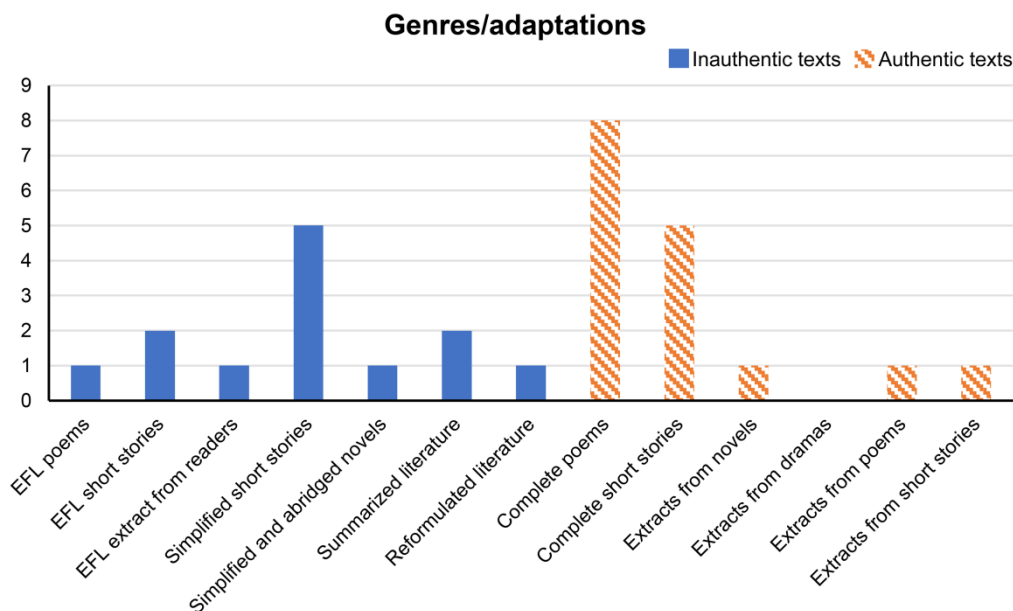


Figure 3. Genres of authentic literary texts and types and adaptations of inauthentic texts

4.4 Poetry

As shown in Figure 3, out of the 29 texts included, 9 were authentic poems (31% of the authentic texts). Poems can easily be interpreted on several planes and can, therefore, be used at all levels. However, this potential is not exploited in the coursebooks.

Given the availability of concise and simple authentic samples, it seems that there is no reason for the use of EFL poems. In addition to this, creating poetry for EFL teaching would rarely look genuine. Moreover, simplifying poetry eliminates some of the key features (sometimes even rhythm and rhyme) that make it poetry. Lazar (1993, p. 98) characterised some of these features: poetry reorganises syntax, invents its own vocabulary, draws creatively on a full range of archaisms and dialects and generates new metaphors.

Furthermore, there are many examples of poems that can aid students' acquisition by making use of literary devices such as repetition, 'word/sound play [...] prosodic elements, redundancy' (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 157).

Moreover, the symbolic nature of poetry is a useful feature that can yield different responses, thereby encouraging discussions. Inauthentic poems hardly ever possess this element because their aim is not to 'represent' anything but merely to 'refer' while contextualising the vocabulary/structures to be learnt.

4.5 Plays

As the results show, there were no plays included in the coursebooks analysed. Surprisingly, it appears that the dramatic genre is not as popular as other literary forms, though it seems more accessible. Dramatic texts have the potential for contextualised role play with an authentic purpose. They can also act as a form of motivation because they are a reprieve from the normal classroom tasks. Through dramatic texts, students can experience a play more profoundly, be personally engaged and benefit from the integration of skills. For instance, a successful performance, which receives positive feedback from the audience (their classmates), can also be another source of motivation for learners. Given all these advantages, it is disappointing that in all the texts analysed, none involved the performing or reading aloud of a dramatic text.

4.6 Extracts of Short Stories and Novels

The percentage of extracts (20%) may point to coursebook designers' bias towards works of classic status regardless of practicality. Although they could be easier to tackle since they are shorter, extracts lose many of their episodic elements, which not only affect authenticity and literary value but also both comprehensibility and memory retention, according to the episode hypothesis. Extraction also implies that students might never get the fulfilment of completing a work of literature. It also eliminates motifs that contribute to the theme of the narrative, and their absence would lead to a misunderstanding of the literary work as a whole. Moreover, extracts

from the middle or end (as is the case with many of the extracts) may eliminate many referents and allusions.

Furthermore, no novels were recommended for extensive reading; only five short stories were read in their entirety. Although this may be attributed to practical considerations of time and length, this is contradicted by some examples in the coursebooks. Some coursebooks incorporate short EFL stories or use extracts carried across several units. This implies that coursebooks can accommodate extensive reading.

C. Adaptation of Inauthentic Literary Texts

To ascertain the inclusion of inauthentic literature in coursebooks, 13 inauthentic texts were classified into seven groups, as shown in Figure 3.

4.7 Simulated Texts

As the findings (Figure 3) show, simulated literature (which constitutes 31% of inauthentic texts and 14% of the literary content of the coursebooks) makes up a large percentage of the inauthentic texts. Unlike the other four categories (summaries, abridged novels, short stories and reformulated texts), simulated literature is completely fabricated. This is demotivating primarily because they do not expose the learner to real language and are mostly unrelated to the real world or the learners' needs; however, we will concentrate on those specific to literature. Besides the flouting of the episode hypothesis and thematic justifications and authorial intentions, simulated literature fails this genre in many other respects. Literature should be a refreshing/disrupting schema that contributes to the notions of defamiliarisation, which coursebook designers may rarely have the ability to produce. Most EFL literary texts are of a preserving/reinforcing schema, because most coursebook designers seek texts that could wholly be transferred to real-life situations, not stimulating ones.

Furthermore, simulated materials generally 'refer', whereas authentic literary texts 'represent'. This will greatly affect the literariness of the simulated text as well as how students perceive and treat literature in general. Since such texts have less of an effect on the students, they would naturally be less inclined to form any opinions worth discussing.

4.8 Simplification

Although 'the problem of length, difficulty and alien content are very real ones' (Ur, 1999, p. 201), if everything is made 'explicit, the students cannot develop their capacity to infer' (Nuttall, 1982, p. 178). Some simplified texts (such as summarised and reformulated literature) have the same damaging effects as simulated texts, whereas others (such as abridged forms of literary works) have considerable potential in the classroom.

Regarding the former, three of the texts analysed were summarised or reformulated texts, which like simulated texts, create false conceptions about literature, turning it from a text written to entertain to one which is informational (simply listing the plot elements of the text). Such informational text cannot be considered as literature because it is not just the story that is important but also how it is told.

As per the findings, 21% of the texts were abridged, simplified versions. A minimally adapted literary text could foster the desired literary response. However, if not well-executed, a literary text may lose most of its advantages (see Figure 4). Coursebook designers would not be able to produce the same effect, neither would they, in many cases, be so inclined; their concern with comprehensibility would ultimately marginalise literariness.

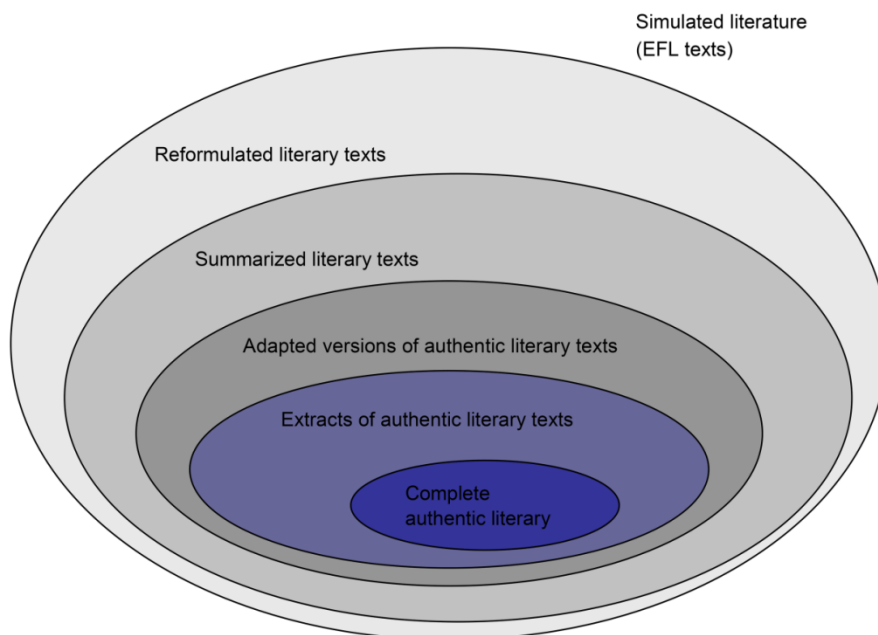


Figure 4. Diagram illustrating different levels of authenticity. The closer a text is to the centre of the diagram, the more favourable it is in terms of authenticity

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study aimed to inspect recent, popular and widely used EFL coursebooks in Kuwait and worldwide. Through the use of arguments backed by recent studies on the need to include literary texts in teaching and learning English language, this study further explored the issue of the materialisation of such needs in recent EFL coursebooks. Several conclusions were drawn. The findings show that literary texts are not included in many of the coursebooks used nowadays. This could point to the fact that coursebook designers' favour some genres/forms to the exclusion of others or that the selection criteria used by curriculum committees in selecting coursebooks do not prioritise the presence of authentic literary texts in language coursebooks. Additionally, whether or not the educational background of an EFL teacher determines the use of certain English coursebooks should as well be considered. One limitation of this study is that it lacks these insights, and obtaining this data in a future study would give a more comprehensive view. The results also demonstrate that the literary texts selected were chiefly from the early period (more than a century ago). Moreover, the coursebooks included a large percentage of inauthentic, ill-adapted works.

Drawing on its findings, this study recommends that it is important to maintain authenticity by including complete authentic texts or selecting coursebooks that have authentic texts. If we refer to Figure 4, it is most favourable to use texts that are as close to the centre of the diagram as possible. However, there are exceptions. For instance, a skilfully adapted text may be more productive than a poorly extracted one. In this study, the surveyed coursebooks were randomly selected. The investigated coursebooks were limited to a specific period of publishing years, i.e., between 2015 and 2019, because of the availability of coursebooks published within that period in the Kuwaiti market. This present exploration has centred on EFL coursebooks, but future studies can hopefully include the perceptions of coursebook curriculum designers, teachers and students regarding the use of literary texts in coursebooks and how they evaluate the presence or the lack of literature during their courses. It would also be useful for future studies to provide a selection of contemporary literature that can be included in EFL coursebooks by considering students' and teachers' views.

Despite the findings of this study on the position of literary texts within recent EFL coursebooks, its limitations need to be contemplated in future research.

For a better understanding on the use of literary texts in EFL classrooms, further research should be conducted to discover whether tasks communicatively use literary texts and how teachers utilise literary texts as a tool for language learning. Similarly, this study suggests drawing a comparison on the way L1 literary texts within coursebooks for non-native speakers of English are used and how English literary texts are used in EFL

coursebooks.

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Appendix A. Coursebooks That Are Used in the Study

| Coursebooks which included literary texts | |
|---|---|
| 1 | New Headway Plus pre-intermediate Oxford (2006) |
| 2 | New Headway Plus intermediate Oxford (2006) |
| 3 | New Headway pre-intermediate Oxford (2007) |
| 4 | New Headway Plus upper intermediate Oxford (2009) |
| 5 | New Headway Plus elementary Oxford (2013) |
| 6 | College Reading 2 Heinle Cengage Learning 2006 |
| 7 | Empower upper intermediate Cambridge university press 2015 |
| 8 | Mosaic Reading 1 McGraw Hill (2014) |
| 9 | Mosaic Reading 1 McGraw Hill (2014) |
| 10 | New language leader Pre-intermediate Pearson (2014) |

| Coursebooks which did not include literary texts | |
|---|---|
| 1 | New Headway Plus beginner Oxford (2013) |
| 2 | Unlock reading and writing skills 1 Cambridge University Press (2014) |
| 3 | Unlock reading and writing skills 2 Cambridge University Press (2014) |
| 4 | Unlock reading and writing skills 3 Cambridge University Press (2014) |
| 5 | Unlock reading and writing skills 4 Cambridge University Press (2014) |
| 6 | English Unlimited 1 Cambridge University Press (2015) |
| 7 | English Unlimited 2 Cambridge University Press (2015) |
| 8 | Read This! 1 Cambridge University Press (2010) |
| 9 | Read This! 2 Cambridge University Press (2010) |
| 10 | Read This! 3 Alice Savage Cambridge University Press (2010) |
| 11 | Interchange Intro Cambridge University Press (2017) |
| 12 | Interchange 1 Cambridge University Press (2017) |
| 13 | Interchange 2 Cambridge University Press (2013) |
| 14 | Interchange 3 Cambridge University Press (2013) |
| 15 | Well Read 1 Oxford university press 2008 |
| 16 | Well Read 2 Oxford university press 2008 |
| 17 | Language Leader Elementary Pearson Longman (2008) |
| 18 | Language Leader Pre-intermediate Pearson Longman (2008) |
| 19 | Language Leader Intermediate Pearson Longman (2008) |
| 20 | Interactions Access Reading and Writing McGraw Hill (2012) |
| 21 | Interactions 1 Reading McGraw Hill (2015) |
| 22 | Interactions 2 Reading McGraw Hill (2015) |
| 23 | Starting skills 1 Garnet Education 2010 |
| 24 | Touchstone 1 Cambridge University Press and Obeikan 2012 |
| 25 | Touchstone 2 Cambridge University Press and Obeikan 2009 |
| 26 | Touchstone 3 Cambridge University Press and Obeikan 2012 |
| 27 | Touchstone 4 Cambridge University Press and Obeikan 2012 |
| 28 | Q: Skills for Success Reading and Writing Intro Oxford University Press (2016) |
| 29 | Q: Skills for Success Reading and Writing 1 Oxford University Press (2016) |
| 30 | Q: Skills for Success Reading and Writing 2 Oxford University Press (2016) |
| 31 | Q: Skills for Success Reading and Writing 3 Colin S. Ward and Margot F. Gramer Oxford University Press (2016) |
| 32 | Q: Skills for Success Reading and Writing 4 Debra Daise and Charl Norloff Oxford University Press (2016) |
| 33 | Pathways 1 National Geographic Learning and Heinle Cenage 2013 |
| 34 | Headway academic skills introductory level Oxford University Press and Oxford (2018) |

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