

## Identity Construction and Negotiation through an EFL Syllabus in Sudan

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### Abstract

This paper investigates the process of national identity construction among basic school pupils in Sudan. The paper adopts the assumption that identity can be constructed and negotiated via language. SPINE 3, a textbook of English as a foreign language taught to Grade 8 has been chosen as a representative of language programs implemented at basic level schools in Sudan and thus the main source of data for the study. Issues such as traditions, customs, good values, religion, clothes, food, literature, historical events, famous people, etc, have been carefully considered in terms of their representation in the textbook. A critical discourse analysis approach has been employed in the process of data analysis. Results show that SPINE 3 promote and help construct a national identity among the pupils. Yet, the identity constructed and negotiated through the textbook is based primarily on the Arabic and Islamic culture which is thought to be the most effective unifying factor of the Sudanese nation. As such, PINE 3 completely ignores and marginalize Sudan's rich linguistic, cultural and ethnic heritage. The paper concludes that paying due respect to the cultural and linguistic diversity of Sudan will help realize political and economic settlement in Sudan.

*Keywords:* national identity, ideology, school textbooks, content analysis