

## Sample of Level 2 English Editing

Field of research: Literature

Since Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* was published in 1899, it has earned a good reputation for the pursuit of the identity of Western civilization and advances in narrative technique.

However, many people began to view the novel from different perspectives in the late twentieth century, as Postcolonialism and New Historicism became influential. For example, Chinua Achebe argued that Conrad was both anti-imperialist and racist at the same time.

According to Achebe, Conrad depicts Africans as indistinguishable people without their own culture and language. In the same context, Edward Said criticized Conrad's attitude toward the European imperialism, pinpointing the paradox of his work. Said says:

Conrad was both anti-imperialist and imperialist, progressive when it came to rendering fearlessly and pessimistically the self-confirming, self-deluding corruption of overseas domination, deeply reactionary when it came to conceding that Africa or South America could ever have had an independent history of culture, which the imperialists violently disturbed but by which they were ultimately defeated.

As Said points out, Conrad is ambivalent in his attitude toward the European imperialism. In *Heart of Darkness*, for example, the chief narrator is Marlow, an old captain who once went to the Congo searching for Kurtz, the trading agent of a company, at the request of the company. In telling his tale, sometimes Marlow criticizes the cruel activities of the European imperialists in the Congo, the Belgian colony of Belgium, and suggests that Western society is no different from the heart of darkness in the Congo. But at other times he justifies the imperialist viewpoint of Africans, by saying that they are dependent, and inferior to Europeans in intelligence. As a result, Marlow's narrative, sounds ambivalent by criticizing European imperialism in terms of its cruelty, and yet insisting on the European racial superiority at the same time, appears ambivalent. What has caused this ambivalence in Marlow's narrative? How can we interpret this ambivalence?

**Comment [SMc1]:** CHECK: This phrase seems a little problematic as it is not clear which party(ies) is "indistinguishable" from another. A possible rewording would be: "depicts Africans as lacking a distinguishable culture and language". If you mean that different African cultures are not distinguishable from each other then a different wording would be needed.