The Politics of Feminism in the Eyes of Postcolonial Studies

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Abstract

Women struggle to find themselves in postcolonial societies. They release their voices in the face of patriarchal systems, oppression, and gender discrimination. Women's empowerment leads to more modern, equal, and well-governed societies. Numerous researchers have addressed this issue in depth. However, comparing Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Conditions and Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things is never done before. The current paper investigates double oppression and hybridity in Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Conditions and Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things. Postcolonial and feminist criticism are applied. In addition, this paper shows how women in postcolonial society fight their battles in different fields of life against patriarchal systems, systematic oppression, and even their own families. In Nervous Conditions, the writer depicts the dilemma of African women like Tambu and Nyasha under the impact of patriarchal society and family traditions as well as the colonialism represented by the British authorities in the state of Zimbabwe. While in God of Small Things, women also face different kinds of abuse by family and the patriarchal society. Many characters are oppressed by their fathers, brothers, and patriarchal society, such as Ammu and Mammachi.

Keywords: *Feminism, Postcolonialism, Double oppression, Hybridity*

## 1.	Introduction

A middle ground can be seen between feminism and post-colonialism when it comes to showing the voice of the oppressed. Imperialism and patriarchy include control of their subjects. The imperialist system imposes control and submission on the colonised; the same applies to the patriarchal system as it imposes control and submission over women. Feminism refuses the patriarchal system's control over women in form and substance; the same is valid for post-colonial proportions, where it refuses the domination of one group at the expense of another (Ashcroft, el, .2007, p.93).

Nervous Conditions by Tsitsi Dangarembga describes the hardship colonised Rhodesia women suffered. The patriarchal system has prohibited women from achieving emancipation and being more than just submissive, industrious spouses. Women who depart from this cultural standard in these societies are often ostracised. An illustration of this is how

the community regards the various genders. Due to their impending marriage, women guide to learn how to do homework as early as possible. In contrast to women, males do not have this responsibility since they are expected to be educated and provide for their families.

Arundhati Roy significantly impacts the evolution of feminist works by including new subjects and emphasising concerns affecting women. She was born in 1961 in Meghalaya, India. She got awarded the Booker Prize for the same novel in 1997. In a male-dominated culture, *The God of Small Things* accurately depicts the predicament of Indian women, their enormous suffering, persecution, and unfair humiliation. It depicts the women's continuous quest for a sense of self-worth in a community that is entirely hostile. Several trials and tribulations characterise a typical Indian woman's social structure. It is evident in many female characters, including Ammu, Mammachi, and Rahel.

2. Double oppression

The colonial system in the novel *nervous conditions* leads the male characters to deal with women terribly. At the beginning of the novel, the patriarchal background can note since Tambu begins to justify her situation because of the demise of Nhamo "I was not sorry when my brother died. Nor am I apologising for my callousness, as you may define it, my lack of feeling" (Dangarembga, 1988, p.1). The main reason for Tambo continuing her education is the death of Nhamo, as the opportunity appears to leave the patriarchal community and get the education she desires. Tambu has been physically and verbally abused by other male characters, especially her brother Nhamo and her father, John. Nhamo, being the only son in the family, receives many benefits, unlike the rest of his sisters, due to their gender. This leads to Nhamo's sense of superiority, as he distinguishes himself from his sisters to create an oppressive mentality towards Tambo. Frantz Fanon states, "[i]f this suppressed fury fails to find an outlet, it turns in a vacuum and devastates the oppressed creatures themselves" (1961, p.17). Tambu recognises that education is her departure from the patriarchal system that has dominated her for a long time.

There are significant differences between the rights of women and men in the novel; for example, Nahmo can keep the family name because he has an education, but Tambu has to wait for a groom according to tradition, which deprives her of many opportunities, the most important of which is to get an education. Husbands take advantage of their wives by taking their monthly dues, as shown in this quote "[t]hat they surrender their salaries at the end of each month" (Dangarembga, 1988, p.5). Husbands obsess over controlling their wives for fear of liberating them even though they live in the modern era. Tambo feels sorry for Maiguru when she learns that she is not getting her dues as a result of her husband's exploitation of her, as this quote explains, "I felt sorry for Maiguru because she could not use the money she earned for her own purposes and had been prevented by marriage from doing the things she wanted to do" (Dangarembga, 1988, p.103). Tambus' uncle Babamukuru is the dominant and the head of the family. He is considered to adhere to parental authority, where dominance is the most essential factor in the failure of women to obtain their independence. In addition, Tambu's mother, Mainini, as it seems, has been influenced by the patriarchal

community, as she says: "[t]his business of womanhood is a heavy burden" (Dangarembga, 1988, p.16).

According to Ann Smith women attempt to combat the oppression to which they are exposed in various ways and to varying degrees of success. (2000, p.246) The extent to which women are affected and accustomed to the social criteria dominated by the male community, especially mature ladies, as is the case with Mainini. Therefore, women could not fight against the patriarchy; they could not do much but rather surrender. They are abandoning themselves as it seems routine for them to endure the oppression of the male community, unlike the younger generation of women, who are always suspicious of patriarchy, like Nyasha and Tambu. Jeremiah Tambo's father is fiercely opposed to studying his daughter, as he supports the idea of not educating her because she will marry, and this does not help him, saying: "Have you ever heard of a woman that remains in her father's house? ... She will meet a young man and I will have lost everything" (Dangarembga, 1988, p.30). If Tambo succeeds in her studies and earns money from that in the future, it will not be in the father's interest but rather in the interest of the husband and his family. The great contradiction can be seen in patriarchal societies, as Jeremiah sends his son for education. Still, at the same time, he does not accept the education of his daughters, but they must wait for their future husbands. "The victimisation, I saw, was universal. It did not depend on poverty, on lack of education or on tradition" (Dangarembga, 1988, p.118). In the previous quote, Tambu realises that what is happening is not only with her but that the matter is global too, where males desire to control women and their choice. In addition, there is no relation between a person's economic or educational standing with what the male society does or wants. In their pursuit of self-actualisation and fulfilment, women were hindered by the British colonial regime's oppressions and ideals as well as by Shona culture, which according to Searle, is what Dangarembga's attempt depicts in her novel. (2007, p.56)

In *The God of Small Things*, the abuse started at the novel's beginning is women's subjugation. Ladies are depicted in the novel as pre-condemns for abuse by a patriarchal society, even though they are innocent. Women are oppressed by their fathers, husbands, and society, including women who follow norms. The oppression practices by the patriarchal society due to custom are passed on from generation to generation. Due to inherited customs, women tend to obey to avoid trouble. Pappachi maintains guy is superior to a woman because he remains without extending a helping hand to his wife, as shown in this quote: "Though Mammachi had conical corneas and was already practically blind, Pappachi would not help her with the pickle-making, because he did not consider pickle-making a suitable job for a high-ranking ex-Government official" (Roy, 1997, p.47). Although Mammachi's eyes do not enable her to see well, Pappachi, with his masculine mentality, does not even think of helping her. Pappachi thinks his value comes from his job; thus, his wife's job is unsuitable as he thinks. Pappachi has a state of denial where he does not recognise the success of his wife Mammachi in her work. On the contrary, he considers her factory to be poorly ranked. His pride prevents him from admitting her wonderful work and determination to his wife. Pappachi, despite his retirement, does nothing but sit at home; his actions reflect the patriarchal society that glitters the man's image and blurs the woman's identity and position.

In Vienna, Mammachi trains to play the violin, which made Pappachi prevent her from doing that because he hears the praise of the trainer to her during training: "[t]he lessons were abruptly discontinued when Mammachi's teacher, Launsky-Tieffenthal, made the mistake of telling Pappachi that his wife was exceptionally talented…" (Roy, 1997, p.50) Although Mammachi is successful and talented, she is well aware that she is oppressed, as her life path depends on the male community and what it determines. Therefore, it can be evident why Mammachi does not fight against patriarchal society. She realises the difficulty of changing standards or the impossibility of change within her. Her position remains summed up in submission.

Another character is the victim of the patriarchal community, Ammu, where her mistake is to be a female. Ammu's persecution begins with her father, who does not let the girl attend university: "Pappachi insisted that a college education was an unnecessary expense for a girl" (Roy, 1997, p.38). Pappachi believes not allowing his daughter to go to university was in her best interest, killing her ambition. It is possible to know why Pappachi did not agree to let his daughter join the university, which is miserliness, as he thinks the girl will marry one day and leave the house. He does not see an interest in teaching her, which will not benefit him. Ammu understands patriarchy when she realises the caring difference between her and her brother Chako. Ammu suffers from neglect, as she does not feel she is present or important to her family. "Her eighteenth birthday came and went. Unnoticed, or at least unremarked upon by her parents", once she reached eighteen, no one noticed that, as it is the most important age stage for a girl when she becomes an adult (Roy, 1997, p.38). Ammu's life has been doomed since birth due to society's male domination. Ammu lives a completely undesired life where she is forced to obey men. As a result of her family's mistreatment of her, Ammu searches for a window of freedom in hopes of changing her bitter reality, where she marries but soon divorces: "she thought that anything, anyone at all, would be better than returning to Ayemenem" (Roy, 1997, p.39). This woman ran away from her family, but also, upon her marriage, she was not free of abuse, as the patriarchal society was still the cause of her misery. Ammu married a Hindu man who constantly ordered her to obey him even though her religion is Christianity. Her husband is beating her because she refuses to stay with her husband's employer. After all, he believes he has the right to treat her as he wants, reflecting the true face of male society. Although she lives in a patriarchal society, Amuu refuses to obey, refusing to obey her father and her husband. Her brother Chacko says, "what is yours is mine and what is mine is also mine" (Roy, 1997, p.57). One gender that controls the community, for example, is the pickle factory. The different treatment and fulfilment of the desires of Ammu and her brother by the father summarise the persecution that women are subjected to."[he] can't help having a Man's Needs" men are given more freedom to empty their sexual energy, as Chacko has many relationships with the female workers in the factory (Roy, 1997, p.168). Despite this, the matter is completely different for a woman, who is not entitled to have relationships. Ammu is punished because of her relationship with one of the workers, which is considered a sin. Ammu fights against patriarchy and against history to change the fate of women. She does not believe that societal norms should determine a man's fate, as she strives for equality between women and men. Ammu wants equality with her

brother and recognition as an independent woman. Despite her hardships, she wishes for her people to adopt a more egalitarian mindset.

3.   Hybridity

Bhabha considers that "in-between space allows for much diversity and flexibility in identity" (1994, p.211). He argues that individuals with several identities are distinguishable by possessing more features than those with a single identity. Women in post-colonial societies face two cultures where they have to construct their identities in light of these two cultures. In *Nervous Conditions*, Nyasha believes that attendance from European colonists is regular for the indigenous population and a justification that will facilitate this light-skin to raid the nations and change the population's identity without any challenges. Nyasha is determined to evolve, as her mother advises her never to stop at a certain point, but it is not the same with others:

People like me [Tambudzai] thought she was odd and rather

superior in intangible ways. Peripheral adults like her teachers

thought she was a genius and encouraged this aspect of her.

But her mother and father were worried about her development (Dangarembga,1988, p.98).

Nyasha faces an internal struggle because of the criteria she must follow from both societies, making her feel somewhat inconsistent. As for her father and Tambo, they do not think her development will benefit her. Nyasha's life in England has repercussions on her conflict with her identity, as cultural crossbreeding has affected her since she was young. Tambo cannot understand hybridity, as she believes Nyasha is African and not half British. As a result of the English and their language followers, the African identity becomes threatened and polluted as the Europeans dominate it. Nyasha's ability to learn about her African heritage comes through her known Tambu. Nyasha sees Tambo as the portal that helps her find herself. At the same time, Nyasha tries to clarify the complex obstacles she faces in England to change Tambu's view of things. Nyasha is thinking here about her current situation and the inevitable adaptation after leaving England: "It's not England anymore and I ought to adjust. But when you've seen different things you want to be sure you're adjusting to the right thing" (Dangarembga,1988, p.119). The mixture identity is a vital process in her life, as it has become an essential feature of her personality. A new culture has emerged mixed with the European and African cultures, as Nyasha feels that she does not belong to both cultures: "I'm not one of them but I'm not one of you" (Dangarembga,1988, p.205). This woman realises that there is no way she can be fully accepted by one of the two cultures. Nyasha sends a message to Tambo informing her that Africans are unhappy with her English and African languages as well: "They do not like my language, my English, because it is authentic and my Shona, because it is not!" (Dangarembga,1988, p.200). She feels not belong anywhere, which causes her frustration and sadness over her identity.

The concept of hybridity in *The God of Small Things* clarifies this novel extraordinarily. Both Estha and Rahel are affected by the other external culture. These children are affected by a foreign culture. Their identity blends into two cultures: affiliated with the indigenous population and foreign. Mol's tragic death portray in the novel clearly with the funeral. Estha and Rahel feel remorse for allowing Mol to come with them on their insecure journey that caused her death.

Nevertheless, Mol's death is unimportant to the government, and her family has not been compensated because she did not die at the "zebra crossing." "zebra crossing" can show the hybridity in most of the novel (Roy, 1997, p.6). Velutha and Ammu come from various castes. Therefore, they relate to hybrid cultures. Both Ammu and Velutha are guilty of loving each other, as they do not care about both cultures' norms. Each of them blends with the other as they represent a charming harmony: "He folded his fear into a perfect rose. He held it out in the palm of his hand. She took it from him and put it in her hair . . . It was a little cold. A little wet. A little quiet" (Roy, 1997, p.10). Identity crisis is revealed through the imaginary atmosphere in the novel, which shows the chaos in India, specifically in identity. Hybridity occurs in India on specific grounds, such as religion, sect, region, etc. The Indian government is the beneficiary of these divisions for political ambitions, as all that is dispersed identity allows for manipulating individuals more quickly. Parents prefer that their children learn English and insist on this. Indigenous people in India view Mol as an English white girl, not a hybrid: "It was about nine in the morning when Mammachi and Baby Kochamma got news of a white child's body …" (Roy, 1997, p.115). Mol is constantly related to light skin; her original side is never from the Indian people mentioned. Although she does not feel welcome, she exchanges a goodwill greetings, communicates with others, and distributes gifts to get to know them.

4.   Conclusions

The patriarchal society and colonists have repressed women in both novels. Women's oppression is a form of maltreatment that starts with them early on and continues for their whole life. Both novels portray women as pre-condemned for patriarchal society's maltreatment, even if they are innocent. Those, particularly women who adhere to social norms, are subjugated by their families, spouses, and society. Because of tradition, patriarchal society's oppressive actions are passed down from generation to generation. In both novels, whether *The God of Small Things* or *Nervous Conditions*, persecution of women is evident by the community and the occupier. Tambu and Ammu are banned from education due to the ignorance of the patriarchal society. Women's dreams in both novels are simple, centred on education and autonomy forbidden by the patriarchal society. The other thing that Tambu and Ammu have in common is that they do not accept bowing to oppressive societal habits despite their enormous suffering psychologically and physically due to their unlimited courage.

In postcolonial societies, women must develop their identities based on the two cultures they must navigate. In *Nervous Conditions*, British colonisers use every method to impose their identity on the indigenous people, whether by permission or coercion. The

colonialists' standard justification is that they want to improve the indigenous population's cultural and social status, but the reality is quite different. As a result of their lack of acceptance, the formation of hybrid tribes rejects both cultures. For instance, in the case of Nyasha, when the local people do not acknowledge her other British half identity. Individuals struggled to fit in with others. Even though some explored multiple paths, the majority's mentality is dominated by the single dominant culture. While in *The God of Small Things* novel, people who carry hybrid identities have struggled due to the lack of acceptance of the other from both parties. Individuals suffered in integrating into other societies. Although some of them sought many ways, the mentality of the prevailing single culture remains that dominates the majority. For Example, the locals always describe Mol as having light skin, although she is of Indian origin due to her living in Britain.

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IDENTITY, DISPLACEMENT, AND ALIENATION IN JEAN RHYS'S *WIDE SARGASSO SEA* AND *VOYAGE IN THE DARK*

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Abstract

After the abolition of colonialism, new literatures from the former colonies emerged, which challenged and questioned the identity of the colonized imposed by the colonizer, and also the identity of the colonial powers. Literature of this kind or namely the postcolonial literature thus aims to subvert the imperial literatures which are in the "centre" to make the voice of the colonized heard from the "periphery". In this regard, both Wide Sargasso Sea and Voyage in the Dark analysed in this paper are striking examples of the postcolonial literature in deconstructing the colonial image and in focusing on the subject of identity. The purpose of this paper is to analyse how the issue of identity is approached in Jean Rhys's postcolonial texts Wide Sargasso Sea and Voyage in the Dark through the study of female characters' - Antoinette and Anna-race, displacement, exile, alienation, and othering by focusing on Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity.

Keywords: Jean Rhys, Postcolonial novel, Alienation, Identity

1.   Introduction

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which is often regarded as a postcolonial rewriting of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre,* Jean Rhys tells the story from a different perspective- that is Bertha Mason's, the Creole madwoman in Brontë's novel. Rhys in her interview with Elizabeth Vreeland in 1979 upon the question of the idea of writing such a novel, said:

> When I read Jane Eyre as a child, I thought, why should she think Creole women are lunatics and all that? What a shame to make Rochester's first wife, Bertha, the awful madwoman, and I immediately thought I'd write the story as it might really have been. She seemed such a poor ghost. I thought I'd try to write her a life. (Vreeland, 1979, p.7).

The novel which is set in Jamaica, six years after the Emancipation Act of 1833 is divided into three parts in which the narrator shifts from Antoinette Cosway (Bertha Mason) to Mr Rochester, then to Grace Pool, and finally to Antoinette again. The first part narrated by Antoinette mainly tells the story of her childhood spent on the plantation of Coulibri estate. After her father's death, the family, Antoinette, her mother, Annette, and her sick brother Pierre are psychologically and economically devastated by the Emancipation act, and they live on the family plantation. The family is ostracized because of being former slave owners and is treated harshly by the local people.

2.   Discussion

Wide Sargasso Sea, mainly focuses on the issues of identity, race, ethnicity, othering, displacement, and alienation. Identity holds great significance both as an issue highly dealt with in postcolonial studies and as a theoretical concept. It is also a very much argued fact of contemporary political life. Paul Gilroy (1997) asserts that there is an interaction between our subjective experience of the world we live in and the cultural and historical environment in which this subjectivity is formed. Most importantly, this interaction is provided by "identity". Gilroy (1997) says that the popularity of the concept stems from the different meanings it embodies. Sharing an identity means to be "bonded on the most fundamental levels: "national, 'racial', ethnic, regional, local" (p. 301). However, as a result of colonialism complications emerge when a powerful entity seeks to impose its shared beliefs or identity on a weaker one. Therefore, not only sharing the sameness but also having differences becomes determinant in the establishment of identity. At this point, it can be argued that identity is not fixed, but fluid and changing and even "hybrid". The term "hybridity" which is associated with Homi Bhabha (1994) is "a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority – its rules of recognition" (p. 162). In *Wide Sargasso Sea* this problematic issue concerning identity is very explicit since the beginning. After the Emancipation Act was passed "the old slaves came to form the landless rural proletariat while the white Creoles occupied the other cultural pole of the elite" (Mardorossian, 1999, p. 88) making the white community confront the black community. Antoinette's interaction with the black students in her school is very striking in this respect: "I never looked at any strange negro. They hated us. They called us white cockroaches. Let sleeping dogs lie. One day a little girl followed me singing, 'Go away white cockroach, go away, go away'" (Rhys, 2000, p. 20). Although being a Creole herself, Antoinette feels that she is an outsider because she does not represent the majority.

Later in the second part of the book, when Antoinette talks about the ambiguity of her racial status to Mr Rochester she mentions the same song: "It was a song about a white cockroach. That's me. That's what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white niggers. So between you I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all" (Rhys, 2000, p. 85). Although she wants to be one of them, as a "white nigger", Antoinette feels isolated from both black and white people: "Plenty white people in Jamaica. Real white people, they got gold money. They didn't look at us, nobody see them come near us. Old-time white people nothing but white niggers now, and black nigger better than white nigger" (Rhys, 2000, p.21). While the blacks were othered in the colonial period, now the whites become the "other". "Rhys's paradoxically fixed identity as an in-between, as a mediator between two cultures, has been evoked as a justification for her or her critics' exclusive focus on the opposition between the white Creole ex-elite and the English colonizers in *Wide Sargasso Sea*" (Mardorossian, 1999, p. 86). Coming from a similar background as her character Antoinette, Rhys herself experienced the fragmentation of the society in the West Indies. She knew what it was like to be a Creole both in Dominica, her hometown and in England. England which was once the motherland, caused her to be aware of the fact that being Creole was neither accepted within the black community- the colonized- nor by the white community- the colonizer. This conflict can be clearly seen when Coulibri estate is set on fire. Antoinette

running away from the house sees Tia and her mother and runs towards them only to see the stone in Tia's hand. "I looked at her and saw her face crumple up as she began to cry. We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking glass" (Rhys, 2000, p. 38). The two children, Antoinette and Tia, acknowledge both their separation and also similarity with "blood" and "tears". The effects of the stone which Tia is holding, "produce the tears and the blood that are integral to the doubled image in the 'looking-glass'" (Harrison, 1988, p.166).

Throughout the novel, Tia serves as an image of what Antoinette is not and would like to be: a black woman, not a white Creole who is accepted by neither white nor black communities. Antoinette will never have a racial identity to call her own unlike Tia and with the burning of Coulibri, she has lost the only place to which she felt that she belonged. Here, Coulibri, the plantation house also has a symbolic meaning as it was a place that incarnated slavery and oppression for the black community. This ambiguity with Antoinette's identity is further mentioned by the black servant Christophine when she tries to explain it to Mr Rochester. She cannot find the right words to explain Antoinette: "She is not *béké* [1] like you, but she is *béké*, and not like us either" (Rhys, 2000, p. 128). Here, Antoinette is struggling with a hybrid form of identity which results from the experience of an individual of a colonial origin living in the West Indies and is forced to live in the motherland, and from the changes occurring in her personality due to the interaction with the colonizer. The state of living in-between and having multiple identities leads to a form of hybridity, a contradictory state of mind where there is no longer a specific place or home, but mixed feelings over the fact that nothing is stable anymore or is the way we expect things to be. According to Bhabha (1994), hybridity is the name of "the displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative. Hybridity represents that ambivalent 'turn' of the discriminated subject into the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification - a disturbing questioning of the images and presences of authority" (p. 162).

Antoinette who is torn between two different identities finds herself belonging to nowhere. "Realising the dimension of her loss, Antoinette becomes a displaced person in her own country, entirely dependent on a dowry supplied by her English stepfather and at the mercy of an arranged marriage with an Englishman who has been sent to the West Indies to seek his fortune" (Howells, 1991, p. 111). As the representative of the colonial power, the first thing he exploits or he tries to Anglicize is his wife, Antoinette. His first attempt is to name her "Bertha" trying to give her a new identity:

> 'Don't laugh like that, Bertha'.
> 'My name is not Bertha; why do you call me Bertha?'
> 'Because it is a name I'm particularly fond of. I think of you as Bertha'. (Rhys, 2000, p. 111).

Rochester's calling Antoinette another name is his way of taking control over her entire identity, just like having legal control over her fortune when he married her. Antoinette's response to Mr Rochester is not the same when he calls her Bertha for the second time, she says "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name. I

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[1]   Béké or beke is a Creole term to describe a descendant of the early European, usually French, settlers in the French Antilles.(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%A9k%C3%A9)

know that's obeah[2] too" (Rhys, 2000, p. 121). Naming which can be considered a designating act holds great significance in terms of identity, as also put forward by Harrison "naming of self is an accession to self through distancing of language...naming of others is a means of appropriating their qualities for one's own purposes" (1988, p. 185). The importance of names is also stressed by Antoinette: "Names matter, like when he wouldn't call me Antoinette, and I saw Antoinette drifting out of the window with her scents, her pretty clothes and her looking glass" (Rhys, 2000, p. 147). Once again, Antoinette feels alienated after her name, which is one of the elements she forms her identity, is taken away from her.

It is also remarkable that there is a distinction between being a white person born in England and being a white person born in the West Indies. Although they are all colonizers their attitudes towards the colonized differ greatly. The unnamed Englishman, who is supposed to be Mr Rochester, being a representative of the colonial power despises everything about the land and the people for he accuses them of the situation he is in - to be married to a madwoman and to be forced to live in an unknown and uncivilized land. His hatred stems from his inability to understand and find comfort in nature as Antoinette and the other West Indian people do. He says:

> I was tired of these people. I disliked their laughter and their tears, their flattery and envy, conceit and deceit. And I hated the place.
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> I hated the mountains and the hills, the rivers and the rain. I hated the sunsets of whatever colour, I hated its beauty and its magic and the secret I would never know. I hated its indifference and the cruelty which was part of its loveliness. Above all I hated her. For she belonged to the magic and the loveliness. She had left me thirsty and all my life would be thirst and longing for what I had lost before I found it. (Rhys, 2000, p. 141).

Furthermore, Mr Rochester "associates the wilderness of his surroundings with excess and danger, because he constantly contrasts it with England's landscape" (Mardorossian, 1999, p. 82). He is astonished by the strangeness of the land and feels alienated: "Too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flowers too red, the mountains too high, the hills too near" (Rhys, 2000, p. 59). Mr Mason, Antoinette's stepfather of British origin, just like Mr Rochester doesn't have positive ideas about the environment and the black community and he complains about them saying they are "too damn lazy to be dangerous" (Rhys, 2000, p. 28). However, Antoinette's ideas are more of an optimistic kind: "I wish I could tell him that out here is not at all like English people think it is" (Rhys, 2000, p. 29). Like her character, Antoinette, Jean Rhys is very positive about blackness and black people. In her interview with Elizabeth Vreeland, she says:

> I was a bit wary of the black people. I've tried to write about how I gradually became even a bit envious. They were so strong. They could walk great distances, it seemed to me, without getting tired, and carry those heavy loads on their heads. They went to the dances every night. They wore turbans. They had lovely dresses with a belt to tuck the trains through that were lined with paper and rustled when they moved (Vreeland, 1979).

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[2] obia, also spelled Obeah, in west African folklore, a gigantic animal that steals into villages and kidnaps girls on the behalf of witches. In certain cultures of the Caribbean, the term denotes forms of sorcery and witchcraft, usually overpowering and extremely evil. (https://www.britannica.com/art/obia)

Throughout the novel, Antoinette being regarded as neither white nor black tries hard to establish her own identity which is shattered by the hostility of Mr Rochester towards the end of the novel. She begins to feel lost and helpless growing more dependent on her husband. In one of her conversations with Christophine, she says: "He does not love me, I think he hates me. He always sleeps in his dressing-room now and the servants know. If I get angry he is scornful and silent, sometimes he does not speak to me for hours and I cannot endure it anymore, I cannot. What shall I do?" (Rhys, 2000, p. 90). There is a significant point to be stressed here: Antoinette's identity is not only related to what she thinks of herself but is mainly and directly related to "places". The most important of these places are the Coulibri plantation and her honeymoon house. After the burning of Coulibri she is greatly influenced and with her husband's hostility and betrayal in their honeymoon house the place also loses its meaning:

> But I love this place and you have made it into a place I hate. I used to think that if everything else went out of my life I would still have this, and now you have spoilt it. It's just somewhere else where I have been unhappy, and all the other things are nothing to what has happened here. I hate it now like I hate you (Rhys, 2000, p. 121).

Antoinette's alienation deepens after Rochester takes her to England which results from her unrequited love for Rochester, her inability to communicate with him, and the feeling of displacement that has permeated her life. According to Ashcroft, Griffits and Tiffin (1995) place and displacement are crucial features of postcolonial discourse. They emphasize the fact that the place doesn't always need to be a physical landscape. In postcolonial societies, it is rather a complex interaction of language, history, and environment. "Place is thus the concomitant of difference, the continual reminder of the separation, and yet of the hybrid interpenetration of the colonizer and colonized" (Ashcroft, Griffits and Tiffin, 1995, p. 345). In the last part of the novel with the help of multi-narratives, different perspectives about Antoinette's alienation are unfolded. The change in the narrative offers a more objective view and deeper understanding of Antoinette's condition.

Antoinette's alienation firstly shows itself as disbelief. Alienated from her surrounding environment even she doesn't believe that she is in England and sees it as a cardboard place: "As I walk along the passages I wish I could see what is behind the cardboard. They tell me I am in England but I don't believe them. We lost our way to England. When? Where? I don't remember, but we lost it" (Rhys, 2000, p. 148). She again denies that she is in England when her brother visits her in the attic speaking to Grace Poole: "When we went to England,' I said. 'You fool' she said, 'this is England.' 'I don't believe it,' I said, 'and I never will believe it.'" (Rhys, 2000, p. 150).

The most significant image to portray Antoinette's alienation is the "mirror" in which she sees herself as the "other":

> There is no looking-glass here and I don't know what I am like now. I remember watching myself brush my hair and how my eyes looked back at me. The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tried to kiss her. But the glass was between us – hard, cold, and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away. What am I doing in this place and who am I? (Rhys, 2000, p. 147).

Spivak (2011) focuses on the significance of the mirror image and interprets it as the other self of Antoinette like the image she sees in the mirror later on in Thornfield Hall. According to

Spivak (2011), Rhys makes Antoinette see her *self* as her Other, Brontë's Bertha. She further adds "No perspective critical of imperialism can turn the Other into a self, because the project of imperialism has always already historically refracted what might have been the absolutely Other into a domesticated Other that consolidates the imperialist self" (Spivak, 2011, p. 250-253). The image in the glass is a symbol of hope, hope that is absent in situations where Antoinette is stripped of her identity. As Harrison (1988) puts forward, Antoinette cannot "see" herself in *his* place, in Rochester's England. Harrison further emphasizes the fact that "what Antoinette wants to see – with some pathos- is 'herself'" (p.173). Rochester notices the significance of the mirror for Antoinette's view of her *self* and has malicious plans about destroying Antoinette's identity: "She'll not laugh in the sun again. She'll not dress up and smile at herself in that damnable looking glass" (Rhys, 2000, 136). He mentions taking away the mirror, a tool that provides some sense of identity. Antoinette can never fully identify with herself or with England, and her struggle as a white Creole in post-emancipation Jamaica prevented a natural connection to the Caribbean. Antoinette's last attempt to recover her own identity and reject the sense of alienation is Tia. She sees Tia, her childhood friend, and jumps to her death. Here, Tia reminds Antoinette of her origin, her lost identity, and the pressure of alienation. At the end of the novel, Antoinette repels her oppressor, Rochester, by setting fire to his house just like the black community set fire to their house.

Voyage in the Dark (1982) is another novel in which Rhys deals with similar issues such as identity, displacement, and alienation. "Rhys first called the novel *Two Tunes*, signifying the double rhythms of the West Indies and England which are insistently repeated in counterpoint to each other within Anna Morgan's consciousness as a white West Indian immigrant" (Howells, 1991, p. 68). The novel consists of four parts and is narrated from the first-person point of view of the protagonist, an 18-year-old girl named Anna Morgan. She is born on a Caribbean Island but moves to London after her father dies. She tries hard to adapt to life in England but throughout the novel, she continuously compares England with her homeland which she finds warmer and more colourful. This comparison deepens her alienation and no matter how she tries she cannot go beyond being an outsider, the other. She works as a chorus girl on various tours and one day she and Maudie, her roommate and friend from the chorus, meet two men while they are walking in the street. Anna begins seeing one of the men named Walter. They begin to have an affair which is mainly based on money as Walter is a rich man.

Through several flashbacks in the novel, Anna tells Walter about her childhood experiences with her black nurse Francine and compares England with her homeland. Furthermore, her encounter with her stepmother, Hester, and the letter from her uncle also cause her to travel to the past. Anna remembers her house, and how Hester criticized her language and found it like a "nigger's talk" (Rhys, 1982, p. 65). When her relationship with Walter ends Anna is driven into much deeper isolation and alienation. Later in the novel, Anna has several boyfriends and learns that she is pregnant but she doesn't know who the father is. After having an abortion, she becomes very ill. A doctor comes and sees Anna saying "She'll be all right…Ready to start all over again in no time" which causes Anna to think of starting all over again[3] (Rhys, 1982, p.187).

Like Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Anna experiences the alienation of a white Creole woman under colonial rule. Bearing traces of Jean Rhys's life story, the protagonist of the novel Anna is stuck between being Creole and being English which is portrayed with flashbacks to her childhood days in the Caribbean. Her first impression of England is rather far from

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[3] In Rhys's version, Anna dies as a result of her dangerous abortion. However, the editor of the book insisted that the ending be more optimistic for readers to accept it. (Savory, 2011, p. 90).

optimistic: "The colours were different, the smells different, the feeling things gave you right down inside yourself was different. Not just the difference between heat, cold; light, darkness; purple, grey. But a difference in the way I was frightened and the way I was happy. I didn't like England at first. I couldn't get used to the cold" (Rhys, 1982, p. 7). Harrison (1988) says that England, "their" world, "his" world present itself to Anna antagonistically and counters her own world [the Caribbean] successfully by trivializing her (p. 108). Howells (1991) confirms this by asserting that the reason for Anna's failure to adapt to her new environment is that she is operating out of a different symbolic order, and all that she learned through her immigrant experience is the full extent of her loss (p.70).

Shortly after indicating her first remarks on England, she dreams of herself being at home, on Market Street. The difference in her mood when she thinks of her homeland is much more colourful and cheerful: "It was funny, but that was what I thought about more than anything else - the smell of the streets and the smells of frangipani and lime juice and cinnamon and cloves, and sweets made of ginger and syrup…and the smell of the sea-breeze and the different smell of the land breeze" (Rhys, 1982, p. 7-8). As also indicated by Ledent (2011), after coming from a sunny and colourful island, the Caribbean, England strikes as a grim, grey, and foggy place for the newcomers (p. 502). This cold and dark atmosphere is prevalent throughout the novel as Anna continuously talks about the feeling of cold and dark when she talks about England where there are "dark houses frowning down" whereas the "Caribbean is always associated with bright and life-evoking colours like yellow, green or red" (Ledent, 2011, p.503).

The feeling of nostalgia that is prevalent throughout the novel contrasts with the present and the comparison between past/present, cold/heat, real/unreal and Creole/ English indicates Anna's displacement and thus alienation. The importance of place/displacement in determining one's identity is explicit in the novel, however, apart from that, there is also the role of racial identities. Savory (2011) states "throughout Rhys's texts, more intensely in some than other but always significantly, colour functions as a symbolic code" (p. 85). What Savory (2011) emphasizes is that since Rhys herself has a complex identity, her use of colour both as skin colour and painterly is idiosyncratic (p. 86). For example, in one of Anna's flashbacks or memories she says:

> I wanted to be black, I always wanted to be black. I was happy because Francine was there, and I watched her hand waving the fan backwards and forwards and the beads of sweat that rolled from underneath her handkerchief. Being black is warm and gay, being white is cold and sad. (Rhys, 1982, p. 31).

Ledent (2011) says that the multiple alienation Anna experiences as a colonial immigrant, adolescent, and woman is more explicit in her relationship with others. There is a profound wish to be loved and to belong taking the form of yearning for a different identity. Here, the desire for Blackness, according to Ledent (2011) is Anna's way of "distancing herself from her self-righteous stepmother Hester and the English values she stands for" (p. 507). Anna's stepmother Hester, who is the representative of the colonial power like Mr Rochester in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, despises Anna's sympathy for blackness. Hester says that when she was a child she tried to teach Anna "to talk like a lady and behave like a lady and not like a nigger" (Rhys, 1982, p. 65). Hester complains: "Impossible to get you away from the servants. That awful sing-song voice you had! Exactly like a nigger you talked and still do. Exactly like that dreadful girl Francine." (Rhys, 1982, p. 65). Hester tries to impose the ideology of racial superiority on Anna: it is inferior to be a nigger. Anna disapproves of Hester's supremacist ideology which

causes her to feel more alienated from her family and also from England. Caught between being white and black (just like Antoinette), she says "But I knew that of course she [meaning Francine] disliked me because I was white: and that I would never be able to explain to her that I hated being white. Being white and getting like Hester, and all the things you get old and sad and everything. I kept thinking: 'No...No...No' And I knew that day that I'd started to grow old and nothing could stop it.'" (Rhys, 1982, p. 72).

Anna, as a mixture of the English and the Dominican cultures, finds it impossible to feel like she belongs to either of the two races and instead remains suspended in the void separating them. She is, in all, unable to belong to either; she is exiled in a gap between being black and being white. Edward Said (2000) defines exile as a terrible experience which is "the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted" (p. 173). However, there is also the enabling, liberating aspect of the exile's position:

> Seeing "the entire world as a foreign land" makes possible originality of vision. Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to…an awareness that…is contrapuntal. For an exile, habits of life, expression or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus, both the new and the old environments are vivid, and actual, occurring together contrapuntally (Said, 2000, p. 186).

Both the sense of exile and hybridity form the building blocks for Anna's sense of *self* and her identity. However, just like Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea* Anna's quest for her *self* continues throughout the novel. In this regard, mirrors, which are used to define the alienation of Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, are also used as an image for the search for identity in *Voyage in the Dark*. For instance, when Anna and her boyfriend are alone in the bedroom after having a nice dinner, Walter makes a move toward her upon which she gets very frustrated and shuts herself in the room. She walks up to the looking-glass on the wall and stares at herself: "It was as if I were looking at somebody else" (Rhys, 1982, p. 23) she says suggesting her questioning of self and alienation. Later, she makes a remark about the looking glass in Walter's room saying "I don't like your looking-glass…Have you ever noticed how different some looking-glasses make you look?" (Rhys, 2000, p. 37-38). The mirror here acts as an indication of her fear and alienation.

3.   **Conclusion**

To conclude, *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Voyage in the Dark* are novels in which issues of Creole identities and race relations, themes of displacement, and alienation are dealt with. Rhys's novels focus on the conflicts of imperialism and cultural subordination through fragmented and displaced characters such as Antoinette and Anna who are denied an identity and a place in the society. The very foundation for the hybridity Anna and Antoinette are experiencing lies in the colonial history between Europe and the Caribbean. Rhys in these novels focuses also on the sense of alienation by underlining the idea of timelessness. The past is always overlapped with the present; past and present repeat each other, making the heroines feel trapped in the sequence of time. There is also a great concern with subjectivity, especially in relation to the concept of identity. Jean Rhys points out that society constructs the subject's identity and the individual

reflects the identity which the society contributed to create. Therefore, in both *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Voyage in the Dark* it can be seen that there is no fixed identity, and a hybrid identity is formed as a result of the individual's interaction with the colonizer.

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The Notion of No-Longer-Victim Diaspora in Unigwe's *Better Never Than Late*

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Abstract

Much of mobility scholarship sees diasporic communities as mere victims, displaced, marginalized and vulnerable. Yet today the experiences of diasporas are becoming enriching and creative, and the diasporic subjects are so prosperous that it is legitimate to designate some as no-longer-victim diasporas. This idea is brought to the reader quite expressively by Nigerian-born writer Chika Unigwe. Her major works depict the life of the African community in Flanders, Belgium. Her fictional characters are struck by adversities in their exile, but they remain determined to go on. Drawing on Cohen's notion of "transcending the victim tradition", I elucidate in this article how what I call 'the idea of no-longer-victim diasporas' is thematized by Unigwe's short story collection Better Never Than Late (2019). The act of transcending of diaspora – overcoming the victim stage – is, to a large degree, hinted at through the notion of 'longing for homeland', a strategy migrant subjects embrace to find meaning to their current state, which eventually helps them remain resilient in the face of adversities, adapt to the host culture, shape up and start anew.

Key words: No-longer-victim diaspora, Longing for homeland, African Literature, Immigration

1. Introduction

The African diaspora in Europe has to endure a double sense of alienation. Unlike other migrant subjects, Africans are double-alienated, firstly typically because they are foreigners, and secondly because of their colour (Bryce-Laporte, 1972). This double susceptibility is a thorn in their flesh, and the socioeconomic uncertainty surrounding them becomes characteristic of their daily life, and it is ever fuelled by ideas of 'perhaps', 'what if,' 'it is likely' – the typical existential questions/concerns that have overworked philosophers, let alone vulnerable people. But the irony remains that the burden of this pain cannot be countered by a return to their home countries – usually ones that are socioeconomically insecure and politically unsettled. Alternatives to this unhappy, and often unwanted, return involve strategies that migrant subjects embrace for the purpose of surviving in exile and adapting to the culture of the host country. In this process, many African migrants become preoccupied with questions about two distinct identities, that of the past homeland and that of the new home. Uncertain of their current life – and sometimes frustrated by the difficulties to fit in the new culture, migrants develop a kind of longing for their homeland, which becomes a crying question, an attempt to bring in an imagined life in order to create an ideal place first in search of the self and second in the process of home making. Once they are beleaguered by estrangement and alienation, migrants' reactions collapse into images of an abstract, idealized place of origin – or what Avtar Brah (1996) describes as "a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination" (p. 192). In many instances, the migrant subjects evoke a privileged space of belonging (naturally the country of origin), where they feel psychologically safe, emotionally comfortable and subjectively reassured by living in the past, the identification of its events and the real or hypothetical

intimacy with its people, which initially alienates them from the host culture and throws them into a state of seclusion. The state of the conflict of belonging and not belonging at a time (being here and there, being present and absent) and the insecurity surrounding life in the exile lead to what Edward Said (1994) calls a "marginal" state (p. 46), giving way to another layer of uncertainty, of ambivalence. Finding themselves forsaken in the margin of the host culture, migrant subjects embrace a position that Arnold van Gennep (1960) terms the "liminal" stage (p. 21) – a middle way state between two geographical or socio-cultural milieus. This stage, coupled with migrants' efforts to make sense of their current life, results in either their acceptance of the host country, in which case they try as much as they can to integrate themselves in the host community, or their dissociation from that community, in which case they inhabit their memories of the past, relinquished and estranged from the present.

In any case, however, the movement through memory does not necessarily mean that people have the desire to break with their current place; rather it is the in-between world, the transitional stage or the "realm of the beyond", to use Homi Bhabha's words (1994, p. 1). It is as though the migrants are "in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 1). On the one hand, those who insist on affixing their identities to their places of origin – those who fail to get over this stage of liminality – continue to experience "a state or process which is betwixt-and-between the normal day-to-day cultural and social states and processes" (Turner, 1979, p. 465); that is to say, between their past experience in their country of origin and the new spaces in the host culture. On the other hand, for those who succeed in elbowing their way in exile and do not "succumb to a morose despair" (Weaver, 2003, p. 448) – no matter whether they maintain their connections with the past or break with it, the experience is more likely to elicit a mental space that could nurture creativity and prosperity. Engendered by memories, the creation of such spaces oftentimes starts in the form of longing for the homeland, which might later develop into, or rather transcend, a stage of "new beginnings" (Lauzon, 2017, p. 70), where diaspora subjects thrive and integrate into the host countries (Cohen, 1996), and thus progressing from passivity into positivity (Sheffer, 2002), from inaction into action, from victimhood to creativity.

The foregoing discussion is a stark departure from what we know from traditional diasporic approaches, which have often looked at diaspora communities as victims (see, e.g., Cohen, 1996), with suffering characterizing their experience and the desire for returning to their home of origin being one of the basic criteria for defining them (Safran, 1991). For African diaspora subjects, this meant clinging tightly to African identity- with the efforts by some individuals toward emancipation often taken to mean a compromise of such an identity. Today however – because the experiences of diasporas are becoming "enriching and creative" (Cohen, 1996, p. 513), and they are relatively prosperous and successful – it is quite possible to have these two notions (African identity and emancipation) dwelling together in the same pot. In some postcolonial accounts, therefore, the phenomenon of diaspora is no longer seen as an "expression of victimization and deprivation, but rather as a form of emancipation and empowerment" (Lan, 2011, p. 57). Drawing on Cohen's notion of "transcending the victim tradition" (1996, p. 513), I elucidate in this article how what I call 'the idea of no-longer-victim diasporas' is brought to the reader quite expressively by Nigerian-born Igbo writer Chika Unigwe in her short story collection *Better Never Than Late* (2019).

Although the notion of diaspora traditionally suggests estrangement and dormancy, an examination of *Better Never Than Late* can reveal some developments in the energies of

subjects toward emancipation, deliverance and assimilation. One premise in this article is that diaspora subjects should "better be seen as depending not so much on displacement but on connectivity" (Tsagarousianou, 2004, p. 52), whereby they connect and identify with the host community. This identification (overcoming the victim stage and coming out of age) is, to a large degree, hinted at through the notion of 'longing for homeland' in *Better Never Than Late*. The present discussion will engage issues of the extent to which Unigwe's collection goes beyond the notion of 'victim diaspora'. It is an account of the ways by which the narrative presents migrants' longing for homeland as a strategy for finding meaning to their current state and how this eventually helps migrants remain resilient in the face of adversities, shape up and start anew. Knowing that their stay is not a temporary experience – where taking pain is justified by hope of return to the homeland – Unigwe's characters have to accept the fact that their life in exile might take far longer than they had planned – as their migratory process is one of linearity (Chambers, 1994), in which case they need to devise strategies for surviving. The emancipative longing, this article argues, turns what starts as an internal conflict into a strategy for deliverance and new beginnings.

2. The Notion of Home and Longing in *Better Never Than Late*

Longing and its nexus to human spaces is a recurring theme in exilic literature, since, as Paul White (1995) points out, "literature contains some of the most effective explorations of identity issues" (p. 2), thus becoming a seedbed that defines and redefines the notions of identity and home, as well as the perception of the self. The premise is that migrant writers have acquired an agency that allows them to look at the world around with a bird's-eye critical view, raising questions of migrants' integration into the host society, but also taking into account the heavy brunt of the colonial legacy, which still expresses itself socially, politically and culturally on the subjects (Spivak, 2010). In his description of the inner state of writers in the exile, Edward Said (1994) points out that such authors often experience "a median state, neither completely at one with the new setting nor fully disencumbered of the old" (p. 49). What permeates a migrant's writing, according to Said, is a sense of ambivalence, one that is beleaguered "with half-involvements and half detachments, nostalgic and sentimental on one level, an adept mimic or a secret outcast on another" (ibid). It follows that the resulting works often engage questions pertaining to reconstruction of mental spaces that are hybrid in nature – with the spatial element taking on the guise of being here (the exile) and there (the homeland).

It is this form of tentative liminality, or in-betweenness, that Chika Unigwe's characters are stuck in. Unigwe was born in Enugu, Nigeria in 1974, making her one of what some critics call 'The Third Generation of Nigerian Writers'. At the age of 21, after earning a college degree in business from the University of Nigeria in Nsukka, she moved to Belgium in 1995 to join her husband in the Flemish town of Turnhout, Antwerp. Writing from her own experience, and also from the stories she personally heard – and imagining stories yet to be told, Unigwe depicts the life of the African communities in the land of Flanders, the newcomers as well as the old hacks. She tells stories of fictional characters who are struck hard by adversities in their exile and going through several trials, but they remain determined to go on.

Unigwe's texts are an examination of the notion of home and its implications for exiles. Reflecting on her first months in Belgium, Unigwe wrote, "When I left Nigeria for Belgium, I made my husband's home my own. But homesickness lodged like a stone inside… It was like a huge stone weighing me down. I had nightmares of this stone pulverising me" (Unigwe, 2013). Her short story collection *Better Never Than Late* is an observation of the changes of the life of Nigerian migrants in Belgium, their destinies, their disappointments, their life

concerns and their aborted hopes; it is an artistic adventure that involves immersion in the human soul and addresses life issues such as love, hate, pain, death, sex, the vicissitudes of days and the burden of existence. Yet it is also a literary representation of African diasporic characters and how they perceive of the notion of the homeland. A close reading of her text suggests different questions, but there is one that insists throughout the volume: To what extent should a person be willing to relinquish an identity, sustained by nostalgia and on occasion wistful or idealized recollections, of a lost homeland, for the sake of integration and the creation of a new hybrid identity? Put differently: Should people leave their country of origin and seek another life in exile?

An ostensibly outright answer is provided in the title of the collection – a rephrased proverb – which suggests that staying in the homeland is much better than leaving it. Yet, it is not that simple – as telling an African national who is experiencing poverty, misfortunes, destitution and political oppression that Europe is but a day dream or a "mirage" – as Elisabeth Bekers (2016, p. 256) puts it, is just like telling a drowning man that clutching at a straw will do him no good. After all, it is the "push" factors (such as wars, poverty, unrest in countries of origin) rather than the "pull" forces (such as more security, better jobs, safer life in destination countries) that stand behind the mobility of Unigwe's protagonists (Bastida-Rodríguez and Bekers 2021, p. 388). As the discussion will show, the warning presented in the title of the collection seems like a message Unigwe is addressing to Nigerians, and other Africans at large, who are in their homeland, rather than to migrants who have already started the exilic experience. For the latter category, thus, the message is not a call to relinquish exile and return to homeland; rather it is an invitation to adapt and assimilate in the host culture.

With this being the case, another set of questions emerges. How can migrants play the game right from the moment they set out for Europe? How can migrants identify with the host country? These are questions of migrants' adaptation, for, as many of the stories in *Never Better Than Late* reveal, there is inner conflict that speaks to questions of coping and assimilation. Unigwe uses memory to address these questions. Often, she casts migrant characters whose search for an identity takes them back to their home countries, and in their delusion, they create perfect, unreal homelands, the kind hinted at by Salman Rushdie's *Imaginary Homelands* (1992). In constructing their homeland in exile, the characters "create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands" (Rushdie, 1992, p. 10), with the vision of the characters becoming "fragmentary" (p. 10) and the mirrors "broken" (p. 11). Unigwe's *Better Never Than Late* bursts this notion of deceitful imagination, and paradoxically, it does this through the act of longing for the homeland. Although such longing appears frequently in the conversations of the characters in the collection as well as in their internal thoughts, Unigwe makes their longing one of instrumentality, a functional faculty and a driving force for change and adaptation. In this sense, longing is summoned when all means are exhausted, as memory remains the only strategy for dealing with a fragmented reality, and healing the rift of a soul burdened with loss and estranged from its present milieu.

3. Discussion

In analyzing the role of a character in a fictional text, James Phelan (1996) suggests zooming on three dimensions of a fictional narrative. First, there is the "mimetic" aspect, in which the character is read as a life-like person. Second, there is the "thematic" aspect, in which a character "functions in one way or another to advance the narrative's thematic concerns" (p. 216). Third, a critic may choose to focus on the "synthetic" component, thereby bringing to the

analysis specifically a character who "plays a specific role in the construction of narrative as made object" (p. 216).

The depiction of migrants' day-to-day life by Unigwe allows an understanding of a character across Phelan's three components. This is especially relevant through Unigwe's telling of the story of Prosperous. This character changes internally in the course of the narrative from passivity to vigor, from despondency to determination, from despair to peace of mind. Synthetically, the collection follows the life experience of Prosperous, an Igbo Nigerian migrant in Belgium, who used to lead a successful life in Nigeria, and now she lives in the margin of the Belgian culture, deserted, deprived and literally impaired. Prosperous lives in the past, and is consumed by nostalgia. She plays a pivotal role in the construction of the text, as she appears in eight short stories of the ten-story collection, with more than 180 references in such a short collection (around 150 pages), a presence that makes the reader conclude with some certainty that Prosperous is the one the author casts as the protagonist. It is at her house that migrants gather from time to time to socialize and tell their stories. She is the one whom the author keeps visiting, even in the stories that ostensibly have no relation to her and also stories set in places that are thousands of miles away from Turnhout, her place of residence. She is the one with an entire story, "Becoming Prosperous", devoted exclusively to her and bears her name. Finally, at the mimetic level, the way Prosperous develops in the narrative is crucial for the themes in the collection. If the assumption that the collection is a call for integration is true, then the name Prosperous is quite indicative, as it suggests accomplishment and success.

Prosperous is uprooted from her original social milieu. She lives in Belgium but she is estranged, living in the margins of Belgian culture. She sacrificed her comfortable life in Nigeria for love (for her husband); yet in exile, with the husband devastated by a poor job– leaving him too disaffected to show love to her – she seems to have lost this asset, too, so "if anyone asked her now if that sacrifice had been worth it, she would say no" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 42). Undoubtedly, Prosperous' experience is harrowing – one that has knocked her severely down. She always recalls the misfortunes she and her husband had to encounter when they first arrived in Belgium: "We should never have left. We should have been better off in Nigeria" (ibid, p. 33). Rocked by alienation and helplessness, she almost apologetically compares her past– when "nothing seemed impossible" (ibid, p. 31), when she would have people "waiting on her hand and foot" (ibid, p. 37), to the present, now working during the day "as a cleaner" (ibid, p. 33) in Belgian houses and then spending the rest of the day in preparing food and drinks to her husband, Agu, and his friends.

Prosperous believes that the significant part of her real life is the one in which she had lived happily with her parents, where she obtained her college degree, had a full-time job in Nigeria, where she also got married to and lived with Agu, the man she loved. Beyond that, she believes her life is not quite real, or at least it is meaningless, in the beyond (Bhabha, 1994), in which nothing is certain (Lash & Urry, 1994). Her thought is one arising of a liminality stage, a place outside her normal, real life. Such constructions are sparked by an internal conflict resulting from the rejection of, or failure to engage in, the present life, a feeling of alienation and unreality, a strong indication of the tension between the self and its existing state.

This gives way to longing for homeland, which is not always a state she experiences because of her physical rupture with the past; it might rather signal a crisis of identity that can be resolved only by returning to the past to define the present and find the safe space (seen as

home) the self identifies with. Yet this is somehow related to the dynamics of integration- how easy or how difficult the process is. Belonging to a certain place thus becomes an issue that is "intrinsically linked with the way in which the processes of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances. It relates to the complex political and personal struggles over the social regulation of belonging (Brah, 1996, p. 194), which, if successful, produce sites of hope and new beginnings. This is very significant for the state-of-the-art discussion, since migrant subjects, as Tsagarousianou (2004) reasons, should not look back to recover the identity of their homeland, but rather look ahead to find an answer to questions of what essentially makes a home.

In the process of home-making, and with efforts to understand the different landscapes, Prosperous's longing for home at times becomes her comfort, and her yearning cannot help but draw contrasts and allow the past to intrude upon the present. For her, thus, Nigeria of the past becomes a cognitive representation, "a mental construction built from the incomplete odds and ends of memory that survive from the past" (McLeod, 2000, p. 211). The idea of home being a cognitive space entails that home is not only the physical space, but also, and more importantly, the mental construct, and as Collins (2009) would put it, home as a cognitive space "becomes a site of exploration of self, and of the relationship between self and others" (p. 143). The conflict between Prosperous and her husband compels her to evoke memories from her past days in Nigeria to reason about her misfortunes in Belgium. As she negotiates her current experience of estrangement, much of what she experiences is a sense of not being in the present place. She dismisses her husband's contentment with his pitiful, low rewarding, "menial job" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 42). Oftentimes, she visits their past – she, an employee at a bank, and he, a thriving businessman. This evoking of the past opens up for a space that is chosen by the memory as a perfect one, while in reality it is only ephemeral. Her inability to connect with that fantasized homeland, and her belief that the past life is much better than her present life, makes her thought collapses into alienation. Her propensity to idealise leaves her increasingly alienated not only from time and the passage of time but also from reality, creating this unsettling dialectic between imagination and reality.

However, this sense of alienation would prove to be only internal, triggered by her own inadequacy. She is estranged because her capabilities are regarded as inferior. When she tries to integrate into the society of the majority, she is held back by her inadequate energies, and she does nothing to prove that she is worth of assimilation. This disaffection continues to plague her until she reminisces over her past, which grants her some guidance and a sense of the place to which she belongs – her homeland. Rapport and Dawson (1998) remind us of a paradox that results from a situation where displacement and alienation lead to a sense of belonging. In the face of distress and helplessness, Prosperous employs her own strategy of longing for her homeland, a meaning-making one. Recollecting memory would mitigate her internal conflict, as conjuring up the past allows her to move about freely in places that were once hers. She appropriates the past to confront present contingencies, the lost stability. This internal deliberation of in-between spaces collapses into a "Third Space of enunciation" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 37), in which the concept of identity involves questions of what was and what is. As it turns out in the narrative, harping on about the past and holding on to the memories of beautiful, comfortable old days only restrict people's ability to move forward. One should be careful in dealing with the problems the memory raises, because human memory tends to be "selective" (Markovit, 2001, p. 513). It may evoke an event and exaggerate its graces and totally deny another painful event. Prosperous makes herself believe that the

memories she has of Nigeria are not fantasies. However, her imaginative, mental constructions of an ideal homeland are inflated later in the narrative.

Taking the reader back to Nigeria in the short story "Better never than late" (which is also the title of the collection), Unigwe does not seem to be in full agreement with those who are drifted away by their ideal conceptualization of their homeland. Migrants' act of fantasizing the homeland is neutralized through the story of Ijeoma, a poor young maid based in Nigeria. Ijeoma has to go through an episode of physical torture on grounds constructed on superstitions. Convicted of sorcery– of tying up "Kambi's luck" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 56), the maid is violently punished, not only by Kambi, the mistress, and her cousin, Ada (representing the secular traditions of the community), but also by the pastor (representing the religious tradition in that area of the world), who violently flogs the poor girl, mercilessly inflicting terrible physical pain on her.

This ghastly image, to which Unigwe takes the readers, could be read as a warning of romanticizing the homeland, and simultaneously considering the opportunities that present themselves for migrants. Against this violence and disorder, Unigwe brings to the forefront of the narrative a scene of Prosperous' mundane life in the kitchen, which is very symbolic. Prosperous does not like the ingredients she is using to prepare the moin-moin dish, believing that the powdered yam- the Belgian version of the whole yam she used to have back in Nigeria- is but "a combination of chemicals not fit for human consumption" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 35) that she does not want to have. Yet, looking again at the meal she prepared, she finally gathers her "courage to taste the soup she oversalted", and she finds it "not bad" (ibid, p. 36). The nuance created by symbolism relates artfully the idea that migrants need only to take the first step of coping with and adapting to the new life in the exile, which will be a "not bad" experience when they are psychologically prepared to adapt. It is only after this episode of revelation that Prosperous starts pushing her thoughts of Nigeria away and decides to go on. From that moment on, her homeland breaks into indistinct recollections that are dwindling as time wears on. Now, "she cannot even recall with certainty, for instance, the exact color of her office desk" back home (ibid, p. 36), and things need to run their course, and now her "new life has superimposed itself on the old so that any clear memory of the former is impossible" (ibid, p. 35). She has traded in idealized recollections and the utopian imaginary –imagination impervious to loss, transformation, and desecration, so Nigeria is now a static image existing outside of time.

As Prosperous starts suppressing her memories of the homeland, she simultaneously starts conceiving of home as a cognitive state, as would Rapport and Dawson (1998) put it, that is not tied to a particular physical place, but rather as a state in which people can know themselves better, or have a clearer picture of the self. To return home does not necessarily mean that people find themselves once again in the place that they have for long left behind. With many people choosing mobilities for different purposes, identity formation can derive from and is bound by new places of residence (Chambers, 1994; Strathern, 1981). What Prosperous is experiencing prompts the question why a new form of identification has been developed in her. Given the socioeconomic uncertainties surrounding her life, and the constricted attachment to her place of origin, as well as her negotiation with the self of potential new opportunities, she feels good about herself. Prosperous's mental tension between the two spaces is itself an act of identity formation. The old home in Nigeria is brought metaphorically by memory to connect with the present home so as to provide grounds for possibilities of adopting a new identity. It is in recognizing the differences between the past and the present that Prosperous came to see

her future identity as Belgian. Her memories have become functional, and her recollection of Nigeria's successful Prosperous is but a catalyst for change to the better. As she contemplates her scepticism about her ability to learn Dutch (a prerequisite for finding a decent job and leading a successful life in the provincial town of Turnhout), and the resulting indecisiveness, she rebuffs herself, reckoning that "[t]he Prosperous of Nigeria would be ashamed of her. That other Prosperous would have mastered the language, made something of herself" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 38). This apotheosis serves as a driver for action: "It's decided. Tomorrow, she will register for Dutch lessons" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 44), which will open to her a wide range of jobs. She has taken the decision to shed her old skin and begin a new life, and become prosperous.

4. Conclusion

What is particularly interesting in Unigwe's narrative is transparency in depicting both the real and the illusive images of the homeland. In an interview with Elisabeth Bekers (2015), Unigwe said: "Distance helps you see better. In my case, distance has certainly made me less sentimental about home even as I miss it. Home is not ideal. I can see its flaws. I have become an objective observer" (p. 30). This realistic view is a denial of the idealization of homeland, or creating an "imaginary homeland", to use Salman Rushdie's phrase.

Migrants' longing for the homeland is a sense of captivation, bringing with it sentimentalities of a warm house, a crowded street, a noisy balcony, a room in which all the members of the family gather to tell stories, the caring grandmother's hand, the pleasant tales of the grandfather, the salutation of a good neighbour, the smell of coffee in a quiet evening gathering, the taste of delicious fruit – a life full of blessing. These are some images migrants recollect from the past in order to understand their present life. The migrants' mind realizes – even from behind the walls of its unconsciousness – that it is temporally and spatially displaced, and that perhaps the only way to understand self lies in a phantom window that the mind is trying to open into the past.

The way out of the internal conflict of being here and there at a time is to fashion methods to adapt in the host country. One way of doing this is through remembrance. Recalling memories of the past and yearning for the homeland are presented by Unigwe's short story collection *Better Never Than Late* as approaches that the migrant community espouses to find meanings, delineate individual identity and reconcile with the self, which results in identification with the host country and with the people around, as well as reconstruction of life and liberation from delusions and self-deception. This instrumental longing – in the sense that it has a purpose rather than an expression of helplessness – is captured most notably in Unigwe's casting of the character of Prosperous. The manner in which this character develops in the narrative suggests that Unigwe is encouraging migrants to adapt and make the most of it. In the end, Prosperous does not remain stuck in the past, and through memory, she transposes her past and turns her nostalgia into a sentience of two separate worlds. The first is the one she cannot return to empty-handed, for "[w]hat would be the point of going back to Nigeria with nothing but the clothes on your back?" (Unigwe, 2019, p. 33). This is but an experience that will put returnees under constant pressure, and mocking, from their native community. The second is the real one, in which the migrants have to challenge hardship and come alive. That is the case of Prosperous's coming-out-of age. As time passes, Prosperous's images of an ideal homeland become delusive, escapist, which grants her a sense of the place she now inhabits. So, while visiting her past is a kind of longing for the homeland, it is also a harbinger of a new beginning.

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Hayden White's Theory of History as Narrative in the Light of New Historicism

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Abstract: The article aims to shed light on Hayden White's thoughts and notions in terms of the usage of historical narrative. The article touches on White's assumptions that history is like narrative, or history resembles literature and fiction when it comes to the techniques used in constituting it. Hayden White presents several strategies, which he believes that historians use in their writing of historical texts. First, he concentrates on the rhetorical aspect of history writing which is considered a poetic act. This prefigurative act consists of four tropes of figurative language, which are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony. Second, Hayden argues, historians use in their texts certain modes such as romance, tragedy, comedy, and satire to determine the type of the texts; these modes are called explanation by formal argument. Third, and lastly, White concentrates on the type of closure of the historical narratives that the historians use, this mode is called explanation by ideological implication where historians show the influence of the period that was imposed on them.

Keywords: Hayden White, History, Narrative, New Historicism, Metahistory

1. Introduction

New historicism as a new literary criticism theory is a reaction against the ideas and principles of old historicism. The main principle of new historicism is to study literary texts with links to their outside contexts. There are significant figures who represented this new criticism, such as Stephen Greenblatt who is considered the founder of this movement's principles, another important figure is Hayden White who is the person in question in this paper. Hayden White sees and looks at history from a different viewpoint, as a historicist who presents controversial and new ideas on the study of history and the process of writing history. Most of his theories concentrate on his assumptions that history is like narrative, or history resembles literature and fiction when it comes to the techniques used in constituting it.

White's theory of narrative history values the imaginative side of historical texts or discourses, and at the same time, this theory assumes that literature is another perspective of reality (White, 1973). For White, literature is a different order of presenting reality. Hayden White starts his theory by presenting several strategies, which he believes that historians use in their writing of historical texts. First, he concentrates on the rhetorical aspect of history writing which is considered a poetic act. This prefigurative act consists of four tropes of figurative language, which are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony. Second, Hayden argues, historians use in their texts certain modes such as romance, tragedy, comedy, and satire to determine the type of the texts; these modes are called explanation by formal argument. Third, and lastly, White concentrates on the type of closure of the historical narratives that the historians use, this mode is called explanation by ideological implication where historians show the influence of the period that was imposed on them. Therefore, this paper aims at discussing the theory of historical narrative or so to speak, the history is narrative by Hayden White from his main work, *Metahistory*.

2. NEW HISTORICISM:

New historicism is a critical and post-structuralism method, which was first used by the American critic Stephen Greenblatt. The movement started at the beginning of the 1980s, at that time, Greenblatt edited a selection of Renaissance essays titled " *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*". His work is one of the most important works that made new historicism appear as a new specific critical movement. Greenblatt's concept of self–fashioning explains how cultures and texts can interact. It is "used to describe the process of constructing one's identity and public persona according to a set of socially acceptable standards" (Greenblatt, 1980). Greenblatt sees that before new historicism, literary texts were analyzed with close reading, formal, and linguistic details. Nevertheless, he adds that the subordinate literary topics should be analyzed instead of the primary ones and the less noticeable ones. Greenblatt asserts on some points, he considers that the creative source of a literary text is not only the author who wrote it. However, he says that literary works can not be separated from the power of their times, and no literary work of art exists without its social energy. Moreover, he states that every literary work is of a purpose and aim, which has to be fulfilled. Greenblatt insists that literary critics should clarify the author's purpose in writing his/her work, and the condition and situation that the work imposes on the author. He also underlines the importance of showing the relationship that the critics should denote between literary texts and cultures.

New historicism seeks to find meaning in the text within the context of the dominating ideas and social assumptions of the historical period in which the text is found. As Bressler (2003) says, new historicists attempt to understand literature from a historical perspective, because they think that, the new criticism could not provide that Moreover, new historicism as a new theory rejected the old historicism, which considered any text as an autonomous entity (182). While new historicism deals with the text as a reality in the period that was produced. Old historicism views history as an accurate account of what has happened, historians can write objectively about any given historical period. New historicism refuses the views and methods of old historicism. According to new historicism, history is subjective, and the writers of history can be affected by their biases and prejudices and as a result, that can affect the interpretation of the past. New historicism argues that history can not provide us with the truth. Wilson and Dutton (1992) suggest that history is formed or written from political reality and that is what makes it true (13).

As stated before, new historicism disagrees with old historicism in terms of looking at history. While old historicism observes history as an autonomous thing, new historicism states that history is a discourse of seeing and considering the world. It also claims that literature has to be read in relation to history, culture, society, and other factors, which aid to determine the meaning of a text. Therefore, new historicists attempt to interpret literature as a cultural product and its text as a cultural product too. New historicism is "based on a parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts usually of the same historical period"(Barry,2009,172). Giles Gunn (1998) suggests New historicism also pays attention to the ideological factors of literary text (37). Therefore, new historicism should analyze the ideologies that the literary texts contain and they have to consider texts in their socio-cultural context. New historicism gives importance to the relationship between society and a literary text. That is why new historicists think that all literary texts are social documents and they reflect the historical environment. A text is not interpreted completely unless it is not related to several discourses, thus, this text is a reflection of the views of the author, customs, society, and social practices.

Therefore, to understand new historicism much more, Muller (2013) determines the main perspectives of its principles. New historicists examine the historical works or texts from historical and cultural conditions of production, meanings, and effects. Texts can be agents and makers of history, History is textual, literature is history, and history is literature. Historians are authors who use literature and literary strategies to tell events. New historicists

contextualize literature within other cultural texts. New Historicism pays attention to the contextualization of literary production and consumption, and to the ideologies that govern these acts as well (3-4).

The final thought about new historicism is the importance of language, Bressler (2005) underlines its significance that language forms the culture and this culture in turn shapes the use of language (133). According to new historicism, language consists of discourses, writings, literature, and other social relations among people who may impose their ideas or acts on others through the use of language. New historicism sees history like literature, as a narrative discourse. History and literature are identical, they are both narrative discourses that react to the historical situations, authors, readers, and culture. Literature is representative of a culture. The new historicist Hayden White supports this idea, and he suggests that our knowledge of the past is determined by particular narrative structures, he says that to talk about the past, we tell stories:

> histories ought never to be read as unambiguous signs of the events they report, but rather as symbolic structures, extended metaphors, that 'liken' the events reported in them to some form with which we have already become familiar in our literary culture. . . . By the very constitution of a set of events in such a way as to make a comprehensible story out of them, the historian charges those events with the symbolic significance of a comprehensible plot structure. (White, 1978, 91–2)

As stated above, White studies and identifies the strategies and tools of critical analysis in the view of new historicism of history and literary texts. He takes into consideration the figures of speech and tropes, critical knowledge of the rhetorical elements of language, and so on. These strategies and tools are proper for a critical study of history and literary studies as well.

3. Hayden White's Theory of History as a Narrative:

Hayden White is an influential figure in the literary movement of new historicism. He is an American history professor, born in July 1928. He is known for his theory of narrative interpretation of history. Most of his ideas and theories are about the study and analysis of works of history by considering the structure of writing history. White's academic works are all in the field of proving his theory of narrative and history. He wrote many important works, but the most distinguished one is *'Metahistory'*, which contains most of his considerations of the historical narrative. He also wrote many books to establish the relation between narrative discourse and historical representation. Such as *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural*

Criticism (1978), *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (1987), *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effects* (2000), and *Fiction of Narrative: Essays on History, Literature and Theory 1957-2007* (2010).

White argues that all historians when they wrote or constituted their works used the same strategies and materials that are employed in writing other literary forms, literature or fiction. For White, history is fiction-like literature, written in the form of narrative discourse. Therefore, White defines the principles and elements that a historical work to be written in the structure of narrative discourse. In Metahistory, White defines the historical work as:

> A verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of explaining what they were by representing them". (White, 1973, 2)

Here, from his definition, White tries to present the essence of his theory of historical narrative. He suggests that narrative is a part of any historical work and vice versa, they are integral because of the way that the data and process of history are represented in the form of narrative. White in his historical narrative gives a great role to language, believing that it can provide any historical work the wanted interpretation. White argues that all historians use several types of strategies to have explanatory effects on the historical works, such as explanations by formal argument, emplotment, ideological implication, and tropology

. Thus, White uses five concepts that distinguish the relation between narrative and historical work. These concepts or elements in his point of view make a historical work a kind of narrative. He looks at the historical works in terms of chronicle, story, mode of emplotment, mode of argument, and mode of ideological implication (White, 1973, 5).

According to Hayden White, as he suggests, all stories are fiction even the stories of history. Therefore, White by studying history starts from the point that constitutes it. White touches on chronicle, story, and plot in the process of writing a historical work. Chronicle is the essential element of any historical account due to its ability to make a basic structure to a historical narrative (Kumar, 2014). For white, a chronicle is an arrangement of events in their temporal order (1973, 5). Chronicles begin and end, yet they have no beginnings and endings, and at the same time, the events in the chronicles can exist as elements of a series, but they are not the elements of a story whose events are more coherent. (Frederick,1992). White argues that historians by commencing to write from a chronicle, which has the potential to become a story, follow the structure of a narrative, White points out:

> Then the chronicle is organized into a story by further arrangement of the events into the components of a 'spectacle' or process of happening, which is thought to possess a discernible beginning, middle, and end. This transformation of chronicle into story is effected by the characterization of some events in the chronicle in terms of inaugural motifs, of others in terms of terminating motifs, and of yet others in terms of transitional motifs. (White 1973, 5)

Therefore, white explains the process in which a historian transforms a chronicle into a story. Stories usually arrange their events in a certain order, which is a beginning, middle, and end. The event in a story is transformed into an inaugurating event according to its occurrence at a certain time and place, and to its importance as well. As White states in his *Metahistory*, "A transitional motif, on the other hand, signals to the reader to hold his expectations about the significance of the events contained in it in abeyance until some terminating motif has been provided…" (1973, 5-6). Stories can provide a traceable way that helps readers understand what took place, in addition, these stories connect events and explain their purpose. What White wants to say is that the chronicle is open-ended having no definite inaugurations and ends and without culmination, yet the story consists of a form with inaugural, transitional, and a terminating motif. (1973, 6). White clarifies; that the death of a king may be a beginning and an end or a transitional event in different stories. Looking at the death in the view of a chronicle, it just represents an element in a series. However, it does not function as a story element. The historian first arranges this event in a chronicle according to its significance along with other events, then the historian represents the coherence of a whole set of events with a beginning, middle, and end. This arrangement of events from a chronicle into a story is the construction of a narrative (6-7).

After discussing the chronicle and the story. and how to transform a chronicle into a story. White points to the work of constructing a plot by a historian or a novelist. For white, historians construct plots by depending on historically unprocessed data and arranged events in the form of a chronicle, while novelists are independent to create and invent their plots to fit their narratives (1973,p.7). Both historians and novelists have to construct plots in their works, and what helps them in constructing are chronicles and stories through arrangements of events in a particular order. White moves from how to form a story out of a chronicle to how meaning is given or provided to historical work. White argues that the use of emplotment by historians helps to bring an explanation of their historical works.

White defines the explanation by emplotment as "Providing the 'meaning' of a story by identifying the kind of story that has been told is called explanation by emplotment" (7). White classifies the story into four different modes of emplotment; romance, comedy, tragedy, and satire. White borrows this classification from Northrop Frye's terminology and classification

of the plot structures in the works of fiction from his work entitled *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957). Hayden White states when a historian chooses to write his/her plot in the structure of a romance or tragedy or any kind of the four, the historian explains it in one way. "Emplotment is the way by which a sequence of events fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind" (ibid, 7). Thus, historians have the complete freedom to choose the mode in which their stories will be written. White sheds the light on the importance of these four plot structures. He says also many stories of the historical works are narratives because they are written in one of these categories. Therefore, there is absolutely a relation between the literary elements and the historical narrative according to White.

White observes romance as, "The Romance is fundamentally a drama of self-identification symbolized by the hero's transcendence of the world of experience, his victory over it, and his final liberation from it…" (8). White sets an example from the Holy Grail legends and the story of the resurrection of Christ; as a result, he divides the romance into a secular form and a religious one. White says what is important about romance is how the historical work is constructed and how to bring a particular explanation to the narrative of the historian. White continues to explain tragedy and comedy, for him both of them provide a partial redemption. The tragedy is a representation of the hero's struggle to reach certain reconciliations that existed in social and natural worlds and to show the unchangeable circumstances that men fail to avoid (Kumar,1992). White comments on tragedy: "the reconciliations that occur at the end of Tragedy are much more somber; they are more in the nature of resignations of men to the conditions under which they must labor in the world" (9). It represents the forces of conflict between men and the environment and depicts the revelation of the nature of those forces. Tragedy does not provide a kind of reconciliation but gives a kind of consciousness to the spectators of the contest.

As far as comedy, White says, "In Comedy, hope is held out for the temporary triumph of man over his world by the prospect of occasional reconciliations of the forces at play in the social and natural worlds" (9). The reconciliations in comedy may be represented and realized through humorous amusement. This is implicated in white's words "The reconciliations which occur at the end of Comedy are reconciliations of men with men" (9). In the final explanation of emplotment, which is satire, white states that the type of visions of the world is represented in the satire is essentially toned with irony, which in turn is shown through the bleak possibilities, gloomy circumstances, and dark forces that work against the destiny of man. Further, the satire makes reality appear to be exactly the opposite of the romance. White

observes "man is ultimately a captive of the world rather than its master "Satirical mode of representation signals a conviction that the world has grown old". Satire 'paints its gray on gray' in the awareness of its own inadequacy as an image of reality" (White, 1978, p.10).

Hayden White in his theory of the historical narrative elaborates on another level of conceptualization, which is the explanation by formal argument. According to White, the historians after applying their historical works to a particular plot- structure; resort to the formal argument. White expresses the formal argument:

> The important point is that, insofar as a historian offers explanations by which the configurations of events in his narrative are explained in something like a nomological-deductive argument, such explanation must be distinguished from explanatory affect gained by his emplotment of his story as a story of a particular kind. This is not because one might not treat emplotment as a kind if explanation by nomological- deductive means. (1973, 12)

As stated above, the formal argument exists generally with emplotments and aims to establish a persuasive explanation through logical deductions and considering the general principles of the case that the narrative desires to realize. Namely, this argument explains what happens in the story by principles, which work as putative laws of the historical explanation. (White, 11). White suggests that historians use these nomological – deductive arguments to provide explanations for their stories. According to White formal arguments contribute to the explanation of historical narrative because this formal argument takes the meaning from several thoughts of the nature of historical reality and these thoughts are established and formed by some ideal philosophical systems or world views supposed by philosophes. White says that he borrows his formulation of the world view or hypothesis from Stephen C Pepper's *World Hypothesis; A Study in Evidence (1942).* Pepper defines his hypothesis as " In the most rudimentary common-sense view a hypothesis is identified with a guess or a hunch, and is considered good if it turns out right, bad if it does not" and a world hypothesis is a model of the universe of observations and inferences" (1942,97). Pepper's theory consists of six hypotheses, White takes four of them, which are Formist, Organicist, Mechanistic, and Contextuslist. White thinks that these hypotheses are the principle to establish valid reasons within the historical fields in the process of the emplotments (Kumar, 2014).

Formist as a hypothesis as Pepper suggests (1942) each world view is based on a root metaphor for reality and the root metaphor of it is similarity (151). That is, there is a similarity and analogy between the events of the world. Acceding to White, Formist is:

> "The Formist theory of truth aims at the identification of the unique characteristics of objects inhabiting the historical field…When the historian has established the uniqueness of the particular objects in the field or the variety of the types of phenomena which the field manifests, he has provided a Formist explanation of the field as such". (1972, pp.13-14)

White wants to integrate the Formist theory of the world into his theory of the historical narrative to give a kind of explanation. Thus, in order to complete the Formist explanation of the historical field, the practicalities of objects from the historical fields must be identified. The historical explanation rejects the similarities that affirm the objects in the field, so Formism as White asserts is dispersive (Kumar,2014). Formist explanation deals with numerous phenomena but it lacks conceptual precision. Moreover, White elaborates on the theory of organicisim of truth, which its main essence is to take the organic development as a root metaphor, and the organicist thinks that each event in the world is a more or less concealed organic process. White says:

> The Organicist attempts to depict the particulars discerned in the historical fields as components of synthetic process. At the heart of the Organicist strategy is a metaphysical commitment to the paradigm of the microcosmic-macrocosmic relationship; and the Organicist historian will tend to be governed by the desire to see individual entities as components of processes which aggregate into wholes that are greater than, or qualitatively different from, the sum of their parts. (15)

Here, White looks at the nature of the organist theory, which is an integrative one, which allows historians to structure their narrative from diverse events that are arranged in an integrated entity. The integrated narratives are of more importance than individual entities. In this theory, the important thing is the whole. In addition, the historian prefers this theory to pay attention to the integrative process other than describing isolated events. The Organist theory is considered free, creative, and unconstrained by casual law (Frederick, 1992). Furthermore, the theory of mechanist of truth assumes that the world or universe is like a machine consisting of parts that can be apprehended in isolation from the whole. White says:

> The Mechanistic theory of explanation turns upon the search for the causal laws that determine the outcomes of processes discovered in the historical field (1972,p.17).

Hence, the object or things that are in the historical field are related to each other as parts, and the laws, which rule it, define the relation between the objects. White also affirms that the mechanistic theory of truth looks at the writing of history as a process of observing and carrying out the laws, which have an interaction with the individual events of the historical field, in addition. This theory governs the course of history instead of taking the peculiarities and similarities of events into consideration (Frederik, 1992).

White presents the last form of explanation by an argument that is Contextualist. According to this theory of truth, the context is what matters and it is the importance of all things. The context is the historical event or act, and the context is not seen as a dead description of an event that happened. The ongoing act in context is the root metaphor of contextualism (Kumar, 2014). White suggests:

> The informing presupposition of Contextualism is that events can be explained by being set within the 'context' of its occurrence. (1972, pp.17-18)

White sees the theory of contextualism as a representation of the meaning and importance of the events that existed in the historical field. He adds the explanation of the process of the occurrence of a historical event is always taken into consideration, he also underlines the functional interrelation between the events of the historical field and their occurrence in a prescribed time. Therefore, this theory asserts the link of an event and relates it to another context to provide an explanation by placing it in several contexts. Contextualism aims to achieve an integration between an event and its period.

White presents his last conceptualization of the explanation of the historical works. White's last theory is the theory of the explanation by the ideological implication. White suggests that historians express their ideological positions upon constructing their historical narratives. Therefore, he explains his theory of ideological implication as:

> The ideological dimensions of a historical account reflect the ethical elements in the historian's assumptions of a particular position on the question of the nature of historical knowledge and the implications that can be drawn from the study of the past events for the understanding of the present ones. (White, 1973, p.22)

White believes that ethical inclination is an important factor in historical knowledge and any historical work is affected by the historian's position. For White, ideology is not just a direct or indirect association with political power or a social class or group in the society, on the other hand, it is what makes historians have a stance while writing or constructing a narrative from past events. Therefore, White affirms that ideology is very important and has a great influence in forming historical works. White in his theory, determine four ideologies, which are conservatism, liberalism, radicalism, and anarchism.

The four ideologies are measured according to the degree of their representation in the social change that they approve of. White in his theory chooses to consider the analogies of Karl Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia (1936) theory in terms of pace and social change. White starts with conservatism by noting, "Conservatives tend to view social change through the analogy of plantlike gradualizations" (1973, 24). That is, conservatism prefers the natural rhythm of change in the social structure without any evident change in the structural relationships. Yet conservatism allows some parts of the whole to go through inevitable changes (Kumar, 2014). This ideology sees the social change seriously. At the same time, conservatism is socially more congruent. Then, White turns to the ideology of liberalism which is also as congruent as conservatism but in a lesser manner. Liberalism tends to be more vigorous and optimistic on the issue of change in the social order. White observes:

> In the both ideologies, the fundamental structure of the society is conceived to be sound, and some change is seen inevitable, but change itself is regarded as being most effective when particular parts, rather than structural relationships, of the totality are changed. (White 1978, 24)

For White, when it comes to liberalism in terms of pace and change. It tends to favor social rhythm that can be realized through parliamentary debates, enhanced educational processes, and other kinds of contests. Liberalism shows the ability to go through the process of change through selected means and it refrains from adopting any radical means to bring social changes. The following two ideologies are radicalism and anarchism. According to White, they are somehow identical and have the same views on social change. They believe in radical means of social transformation. White asserts:

> Radicals and Anarchists, however, believe in the necessity of structural transformations, the former in the interest of constituting society on new bases, the latter in the interest of abolishing society' and substituting for it a 'community' of individuals held together by a shared sense of common 'humanity. (White 1978, 24)

Radicalism tends to be interested in the reconstruction of structural relationships. Moreover, it believes that it is necessary for society and that utopia in society is imminent. Radicalism sees the social change to reestablish society on brand new bases. However, Anarchism favors abolishing society to have an entirely new community of individuals who possesses common humanity. According to its views, all governments are corrupted, so anarchists seek to destruct and replace them with a new standard of the community. For anarchism, utopia is in the distant past, before the rise of the corrupted civilization. Anarchism, unlike radicalism, shows less interest in power and means of bringing changes to the social order.

The final point to mention about Hayden White's the historical narrative and how writing history and literature follow the same techniques is the use of tropes in the texts of history as Hayden supposes:

> The theory of tropes provides us with a basis for classifying deep structural forms of the historical imagination in a given period of its evolution {…..}They are especially useful for understanding the operations by which the contents of experience which resist description in unambiguous prose representations can be prefiguratively grasped and prepared for conscious understanding". (White, 1973, 31-34)

Here, Hayden white asserts the importance of tropes in writing history, where the use of tropes are components and elements in the poetic and figurative language. He also determines four tropes to study, which are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony and for him, they are important to be devices used by historians while constructing their historical texts. Moreover, they are related to the modes of emplotment, argument, and ideological implication. For White, all historical narratives are metaphorical, yet they are different in the types of reductions or integration. White assumes that the historical field, which is formed by

certain events, developments, and structures, is in the minds of historians. According to him, historians resort to several tools to make a connection between the data they have and the period, in which they are. So, they use rhetorical elements in their texts. White sees that the metaphorical imagination (metaphor) makes connections by considering likenesses and the equation of the historical narrative with the events that it describes; the metonymic, by considering a part represents or stands in for any other part of a whole; the synecdochic, by considering the part represents the whole. The ironic mind is skeptical about whether making connections is possible at all.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, new historicism as a literary theory of criticism presents new interpretations of the literary texts and works, in particular literature. Literature is seen in the light of new historicism as a product of many social and cultural circumstances and forces. Literature also is a version of history. New historicism gives an explanation and understanding of the literary works concerning the time in which they are written. Hayden White, as a figure belonging to this movement, wanted to read history as a narrative. He presents his theory of historical narrative and believes that historians use or used the same strategies used in writing a literary work. He explains and argues that the historians from the beginning of writing their texts follow the construction of a narrative. Starting from a chronicle, turning it into a story, and then choosing the figurative language tropes, the emplotments, and finally the ideological implications.

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The Daisy Doomed to Perish: A Platonic Interpretation of Daisy's Destiny

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Abstract

This paper draws on Plato's allegory of cave, to analyze Daisy's doomed fate in Henry James's Daisy Miller. In this paper, Europeanized Americans and irresolute Winterbourne represent two kinds of humans and capricious Daisy represents light itself in Plato's allegory of cave. Daisy's death reveals a shackled Europe with its stiff values. Her death also reveals a dilemma of some people, who dare not challenge the traditional values and pursue an authentic identity.

Keywords: Allegory of Cave, Daisy, Europeanized Americans, Winterbourne, Plato.

1. Introduction

The international theme, especially reflected in the conflicts between Europe and America, has always been the typical feature of Henry James's works, which laid the foundation of his reputation. As Richard Salmon argues, "James's reputation was built on his invention of an 'international theme' of transcultural conflict" (2008: 460). In analyzing Henry James's international theme, Priscilla Roberts points out that "Henry James's handing of theme international theme can be correlated to the alterations in the international position of America itself" (2012: 89). James's *Daisy Miller* precisely relates to the international theme in which Daisy's death is seen as a crucial point of the novella (Mendelsohn, 1964: 63). Certainly, critics hold different viewpoints on her death. For instance, Hocks asserts that Daisy's death "reveals the pervasive evil of the world" (1980: 173). Whereas in Lukacs's article, he argues that Daisy's death "results from her own ignorance, stupidity, and vanity" (1988: 212). Sarah Marsh asserts that "Daisy may use her malaria to remove herself permanently from the society whose conventional gender ideals she wishes to escape" (2012: 237). Contrary to Lukacs's views, this article attributes Daisy's death to Europe's influences, to argue that Daisy's death is occasioned by others, not herself, and is fated.

In Plato's *the Republic*, an allegory of cave is told through conversations. Initially, some human beings living in some sort of underground cave are postulated. Then, Plato depicts two kinds of human beings: a majority and a minority. The majority stick together and refuse to accept the new. Residing in the darkness inside the cave, they believe that the shadows they saw are the truth, while the second kind of human beings, a person, steps into the light. At first, this person finds that the light is painful, but he finds the truth. However, when the person attempts to set the first kind free, the first kind will kill him. The two kinds of people can be found in *Daisy Miller*. First, Richard A. Hocks's essay mentions that *Daisy Miller* reveals the antagonism between Daisy and the Europeanized 'gang' abroad" and Daisy is "a sacrificial victim of some amorphous 'societal' set of 'female expectations,' of traditional 'role models'" (1980: 164-165). Therefore, the antagonism in Plato's allegory of cave can be related to the antagonism in *Daisy Miller*. In Hocks's essay, the Americans who attempt to normalize Daisy's behaviors are regarded as a Europeanized gang, which indicates the Americans are Europeanized and are greatly influenced by European values. Thus, considering the antagonism between the darkness inside the cave and the light outside the cave in Plato's allegory of cave, this paper regards these Europeanized Americans as the human beings living in the underground cave. Second, Winterbourne, who was born in America but has lived in Geneva for a long time, can be regarded as the second kind of human beings. Winterbourne's aunt says, "You have lived too long out of the country. You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent" (James, 2005: 21). This proves that Winterbourne has also been deeply influenced by European values, just like the influences of darkness inside a cave on the second kind of human beings in Plato's allegory of cave. However, compared to the first kind, Winterbourne has the courage to step into the light. Therefore, Winterbourne should be regarded as the second kind of people living in the underground cave. Another important figure is Daisy Miller. Daisy was born in America, and she has her unique temperament, which conflicts the European values. In the novella, Daisy resembles the light in Plato's allegory of cave, which contradicts with the darkness inside the cave.

Hence, this paper regards the Europeanized Americans as the human beings living in the underground cave; irresolute Winterbourne as the second kind of human beings who steps into the light outside the cave; capricious Daisy as light itself. This paper focuses on the widely discussed topic, Daisy's death, and its cause, and it will be developed from the following three perspectives based on Plato's allegory of cave: First, the Europeanized

Americans are the human beings living in the underground cave and they are accountable for Daisy's death. Second, Winterbourne's irresolution represents his fear of the darkness inside the cave as well as the light outside the cave. His fear fails to protect Daisy from Europe's harm. Third, Daisy can be regarded as the light itself, which conflicts with the Europeanized Americans who live in the cave but attracts Winterbourne to embrace. Her death reveals the mightiness of the darkness inside the cave. In other words, her death is fated.

2.   The Human Beings "Living in the Underground Cave"

This section discusses the first central argument: the Europeanized Americans are the human beings living in the underground cave and they are accountable for Daisy's death. Prior to this part, the "cave", where the Europeanized Americans are living in, should be discussed. In *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, a cave is a place providing privacy or seclusion from others[1]. The definition shows that a cave has a fixed boundary, and it cannot be broken from inside or outside. In this way, the internal of the cave is separated from the outside world. In Plato's view, the cave itself forms a certain world of itself, and people in the cave hold similar ideas and behave similarly, because if "anyone who tries to set them free, they could get they hands on him and kill him" (Plato, 2000: 223).

Similarly, the characteristics of the Europeanized Americans in *Daisy Miller* are identical to the human beings in Plato's allegory of cave. The Europeanized Americans in *Daisy Miller* are precisely living in a cave-like environment, which at first reflects themselves in Winterbourne's awareness of social norms: "In Geneva, as he had been perfectly aware, a young man was not at liberty to speak to a young unmarried lady except under certain rarely occurring conditions" (James, 2005: 8). Winterbourne's awareness shows that people's behaviors are restricted by social norms. Generally, there are three kinds of representatives of the Europe values, in which Miss Featherstone is a pure representation of the European values. Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walkers are the Europeanized Americans "who live in the underground cave".

Miss Featherstone, who is an English lady and represents European values, appears as the first figure who lives in the cave-like Europe and follows the rules. Her following the rules is reflected indirectly in the conversation between Daisy and Winterbourne. When Daisy and Winterbourne are talking about Randolph's education, hither the divergence between the American values and the European values reveals:

> There was an English lady we met in the cars — I think her name was Miss Featherstone; perhaps you know her. She wanted to know why I didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instruction,' she called it. I guess he could give me more instruction than I could give him. He's very smart'. (James, 2005: 12)

This excerpt shows that there is a difference between Miss Featherstone and Daisy. On Randolph's lesson, Daisy thinks that Randolph could give her more instruction than she could give him because Randolph is smart. However, in Miss Featherstone's opinion, giving Randolph lessons means giving him "instruction". The word "instruction" literally means "the act or practice of teaching"[2]. If one does not know something, then he needs instruction. Therefore, Daisy, an American, believes that Randolph knows more than her because Randolph is smart. In other words, Daisy realizes Randolph's personality and advantages. Besides, the quotation mark of instruction demonstrates Daisy's disapproval of Miss Featherstone and Daisy's words also show that the elder is not necessarily wit. Conversely, Miss Featherstone, an European, believes that Randolph knows a little and he should be instructed, Miss Featherstone finds no personality or advantage in Randolph. In this case, the European values, reflected in Miss Featherstone's words, attempt to exert their influence on Daisy, because of Miss Featherstone's asking why Daisy "didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instruction'" (James, 2005: 12).

Similar to Miss Featherstone, Winterbourne's aunt, Mrs. Costello, also believes that people should follow the rules. Regarding the Millers, she believes that the family is "very common", and "they are the sort of Americans that one does one's duty by not — not accepting" (James, 2005: 19). When Winterbourne tries to present Daisy to her, Mrs. Costello refuses and believes that Daisy is "a dreadful girl" (James, 2005: 21). Later, when Mrs. Costello knows Daisy alone goes to the Castle of Chillon with Winterbourne, she "sniffed a little at her smelling-bottle, exclaiming that this is the young person Winterbourne wanted her to know" (James, 2005: 38) and the Millers "are hopelessly vulgar" (James, 2005: 39). In fact, Mrs. Costello is an American. However, confronting her compatriots, she neither defends them from being slandered nor makes acquaintance with her compatriots. Although Winterbourne attempts to present Daisy's innocence to her, she refuses to see Daisy. Mrs.

Costello is a Europeanized American. Thus, she can be regarded as a representation of European values. Mrs. Costello's influence on Daisy is not direct. She exerts her influence on Winterbourne and to a great extent causes Winterbourne's unstable and irresolute sentiments toward Daisy.

The third one who sticks to the old traditions and represents the European values is Mrs. Walkers. Identical to Mrs. Costello, Mrs. Walkers is also a Europeanized American, because "she was one of those American ladies who, while residing abroad, make a point, in their own phrase, of studying European society" (James, 2005: 57). When Daisy is going to Pincio with Mr. Giovanelli, Mrs. Walkers tries to stop Daisy moderately by saying, "I don't think it's safe, my dear" (James, 2005: 43) and "don't walk off to the Pincio at this hour to meet a beautiful Italian" (James, 2005: 46). Realizing her vain efforts, she takes a carriage to stop Daisy from being with two gentlemen, because "it is really too dreadful" (James, 2005: 51). In Mrs. Walkers's view, Daisy is ruining herself by strolling with two gentlemen and she is crazy. Mrs. Walkers's final waterloo made her no choice but to make a clear line with Daisy. This is reflected at the party: Mrs. Costello turns her back to Daisy. Mrs. Walkers's attempt in changing Daisy's behaviors failed. Then, she turns to Winterbourne, asking him to cease the relations with Daisy. Therefore, her influence on Daisy changed from directness to indirectness. In this way, the European values exert their indirect influence on Daisy.

In Plato's allegory of cave, people have lived in the underground cave since their childhood, and "they have to stay where they are and straightly look ahead because their legs and necks are chained and the chains prevent them from turning around" (Plato, 2000: 220). For Miss Featherstone, her chains are traditional rules. What she sees is superficial, which is the elder knows more than the younger. This renders her to know nothing about the truth of Randolph's personality and intelligence. Therefore, she wonders why Daisy "didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instruction'" (James, 2005: 12). Conversely, Daisy focuses more on Randolph's intelligence, the internal characteristic of Randolph. Therefore, she believes that Randolph is smarter than her. The sharp contrast between Miss Featherstone and Daisy shows that the Europeans and the Americans have different ways of thinking.

Mrs. Costello has also lived in Europe for a long period of time, and she deems that the Millers "are hopelessly vulgar" (James, 2005: 39). She is also greatly influenced by European values and only believes what she sees. Therefore, the improper behaviors of the Millers are her only impression of the family. Thus, she refuses to make acquaintance with Daisy. Like

the first kind of people in Plato's allegory of cave, Mrs. Costello has two distinctive features: First, she believes what she sees. This is the surface of the truth. Second, she refuses to accept new ideas or namely the truth. Therefore, when Winterbourne tries to present Daisy's innocence, she still follows her own way of thinking, although she has no acquaintance with Daisy. Mrs. Walkers shares the same views with Miss Featherstone and Mrs. Costello. She believes that following the rules is the only way to show Daisy's dignity.

Miss Featherstone, Mrs. Costello, and Mrs. Walkers, all exert their influences on Daisy, directly and indirectly. Miss Featherstone, in the name of education, questions Daisy about why she does not give Randolph instruction. Her real purpose is to preach the European values that the elder should educate the younger and people should follow the rules and traditions. In Miss Featherstone's view, one's personality is completely ignored.

In Plato's allegory of cave, "a fire is lighted behind the humans, and they can only see the shadows of some objects and these people would take the shadows for truth" (Plato, 2000: 220). In the allegory, the first kind of human beings refuses to accept the truth and sees the shadows as the truth. When the person, who steps into the light, tries to tell them the truth, they kill him. Therefore, the truth refers to the light outside the cave. The Europeanized Americans in *Daisy Miller* refuse to accept Daisy's unique behaviors and disposition, which resembles the refusal of the light outside the cave. They have lived in an atmosphere of darkness for a long time, so the Europeanized Americans regard what they see as the truth. When Winterbourne tries to set them free, to tell them about the true nature of Daisy, they refuse to admit it and say "You have lived too long out of the country. You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent" (James, 2005: 21). Their constant sermon causes Winterbourne's vacillation between admiring Daisy and resenting Daisy. In their cave, light cannot survive. Therefore, Daisy's death can be regarded as the disappearance of light in the darkness, occasioned by the Europeanized Americans' excessive doctrines and so-called orthodoxies.

3. Winterbourne's Instability

However, the cave in Plato's *The Republic* is not completely seclusive. It has "an entrance long enough and as wide as the cave itself", and "opens to the light" (Plato, 2000: 220). Therefore, human beings living in the cave can access the outside world if they want to, which is to say that the Europeanized Americans have their chance to step into the light

outside the cave. In *Daisy Miller*, Winterbourne can be seen as the one who steps into the light. For one thing, he realizes the extraordinary glare of the light outside the cave which attracts him much. For another, the glare of the light makes his eyes painful. So, he finds "shadows the easiest things to look at" (Plato, 2000: 221-222). At last, Winterbourne sees the truth. "He'd be able to look at the sun by itself, in its own place, and see it as it really was" (Plato, 2000: 222). Therefore, Winterbourne is in a state of instability, lingering between darkness and light, just like the one who steps into the light in the allegory of cave. Similar to the one who steps into the light in Plato's allegory of cave, Winterbourne's sentiments toward Daisy are unstable. At first, he is attracted by Daisy's elegance. Then, he becomes doubtful about Daisy's behaviors. At last, after Daisy's death, Winterbourne finally realizes the truth.

In general, James's description when the two are in the Castle of Chillon shows Winterbourne's perplexed sentiments for Daisy: "She seemed to him, in all this, an extraordinary mixture of innocence and crudity" (James, 2005: 37). The first glimpse of Daisy demonstrates Winterbourne's admiration: "As soon as Winterbourne saw Daisy advancing, he cheerfully said, 'American girls are the best girls'" (James, 2005: 7). However, considering others' words, Winterbourne "was inclined to think Miss Daisy Miller was a flirt — a pretty American flirt" (James, 2005: 14). When their first contact ends, Winterbourne "stood looking after her; and as she moved away, drawing her muslin furbelows over the gravel, said to himself that she had the *tournure* of a princess" (James, 2005: 18). Therefore, Winterbourne's sentiments for Daisy are in a state of instability.

Later, on their way to the Castle of Chillon, Daisy chooses to go in a steamboat, where she can meet lots of people. However, the people in the steamboat "are all looking at her very hard" (James, 2005: 34), because Daisy begins to chatter as soon as she joins Winterbourne. This is not proper to the Europeans, which makes Winterbourne disappointed, because:

> Daisy Miller was extremely animated, she was in charming spirits; but she was apparently not at all excited; she was not fluttered; she avoided neither his eyes nor those of anyone else; she blushed neither when she looked at him nor when she saw that people were looking at her (James, 2005: 34).

Winterbourne has lived in Europe for a long time, and he is greatly influenced by European values. Therefore, Daisy's capricious disposition makes Winterbourne feel disappointed. To him, Daisy is no longer a girl of dignity, but a girl of disgrace. However, then "Winterbourne began to think he had been wrong to feel disappointed in the temper in which the young lady had embarked" (James, 2005: 37). The ambiguity arises in Winterbourne's unstable sentiments for Daisy: is he intoxicated with Daisy or not?

In his aunt's letters, Winterbourne knows that Daisy "is also very intimate with some third-rate Italians, with whom she rackets about in a way that makes much talk" in Rome (James, 2005: 38). After his conversations with Mrs. Costello, Winterbourne meditated and said, "They are very ignorant — very innocent only. Depend upon it they are not bad" (James, 2005: 39). At any rate, Winterbourne's sentiments for Daisy changed again. Mysteriously, when Mrs. Walkers persuades Winterbourne to cease his relations with Daisy, Winterbourne declined, because he likes her very much: "'I'm afraid I can't do that,' said Winterbourne. 'I like her extremely'" (James, 2005: 55). He also said that Daisy is "a very nice girl, but he wishes Daisy would flirt with him, and him only" (James, 2005: 60). After Daisy's death, Winterbourne leaves Rome immediately. When talking about Daisy with his aunt, he says, "she sent me a message before her death which I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem" (James, 2005: 78). Winterbourne finally realizes his misunderstanding of Daisy, which "is the real horror for him (Newberry, 1982: 232).

Ron Childress believes that "fear, one of the most pervasive influences on behavior, must almost by necessity play some part in a fictional study of the human condition" (1986: 24). Winterbourne's vacillation can be regarded as a fear of the darkness inside the cave and a fear of the light outside the cave. On the one hand, Winterbourne does not dare to challenge European traditions. He loiters between darkness and light. Therefore, his sentiments for Daisy consistently change. On the other hand, he does not dare to be completely exposed to light. This can be seen in his change of attitude when others talk about the "improper" behaviors of Daisy. In Plato's allegory of cave, the one, who steps into the light outside the cave, "came back to down into the cave and took up his old seat, his eyes were swamped by darkness" (Plato, 2000: 222). The darkness stops him from seeing the truth. Therefore, when Winterbourne was inside the cave, surrounded by the European doctrines, his sentiments toward Daisy changed and Daisy becomes undignified to him.

The one who steps into the light finally works out that "it was the sun which caused the seasons and the years and governed everything in the visible realm, and which is responsible for everything they used to see" (Plato, 2000: 222). In *Daisy Miller*, Winterbourne said to his aunt, "you were right in that remark that you made last summer. I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts" (James, 2005: 78). This indicates Winterbourne's realization of the true nature of Daisy. However, everything is too late for him. It is his cowardice that causes Daisy's death. It is his vacillation that fails to protect Daisy from the darkness of the cave-like Europe. Winterbourne's pursuit of Daisy resembles the pursuit of light but it was greatly restricted by European values. His aunt's words influenced his view of Daisy, which reflects his cowardice. But on the other hand, he has the courage to pursue Daisy to Rome. The courage indicates his pursuit of light. His pursuit makes Daisy surprised because Daisy thought that European men will not chase after her. Therefore, compared with the other human beings living inside the cave, Winterbourne is special. At the end of the story, Winterbourne returned to Geneva, which seems to avoid remembering Daisy, but his coming back to Vevey indeed reveals his contact with Daisy. Therefore, Winterbourne's return to Geneva implies his complex feelings for Daisy.

In conclusion, Winterbourne is paradoxical. On the one hand, he fears the grave influence of European values. His hesitation reflects his long-period residence in Europe, which deeply affects his judgment. On the other hand, he attempts to pursue light-like Daisy, which resembles the one in Plato's allegory of cave who pursues the light outside the cave. His so-called inexperiencedness gave him chance to contemplate. Compared with those living in the cave-like Europe, Winterbourne has his advantage, which is his self-awareness: Having the ability to judge the world.

4. Daisy: An Image of Light and Authenticity of Self

The European values reflected in the doctrines of the Europeanized Americans formed a solid fortress around Winterbourne and Daisy. Winterbourne's vacillation reveals that he is greatly influenced by European values. He even tells Daisy that "when you deal with natives you must go by the custom of the place" (James, 2005: 60). However, he is also greatly attracted by Daisy. His incapacity to break the shackles of European values fails to prevent Daisy from being hurt. Contrarily, to some extent, he becomes the one who hurts Daisy. The failure of his protection resembles the disappearance of light in Plato's allegory of cave. Daisy conflicts with the European values reflected through the Europeanized Americans but attracts

Winterbourne. Consequently, Daisy can be regarded as the light itself in Plato's allegory of cave.

For Daisy, she is not a native of Europe. Therefore, her coming to Europe is equivalent to the light's entering the cave. She wants to be free which is intolerable to the old system of Europe, just like the darkness inside the cave cannot tolerate the light brought by outsiders. Daisy refuses to change her behaviors according to European values. It seems that the European values lost their power on Daisy. Although they attempt to normalize Daisy's behaviors, Daisy expresses her own feelings authentically. As Daisy says, "I don't see why I should change my habits for them" (James, 2005: 59). Therefore, on the one hand, Daisy can be regarded as an image of light. On the other hand, Daisy can be regarded as the representation of self-authenticity.

First, as the aforementioned, the European values dominate everything in the European continent, which enables the European values to form a sense of seclusion. The darkness was born in the cave-like continent, because of which, the Millers found the continent hard to accustom. For instance, Randolph says "I haven't got any teeth to hurt. They have all come out. I have only got seven teeth" (James, 2005: 6). For him, teeth problems are caused by Europe, because "it's this old Europe. It's the climate that makes them come out. In America, they didn't come out. It's these hotels" (James, 2005: 6). Mrs. Miller got the dyspepsia. She thought that "it's this climate; it's less bracing than Schenectady[3], especially in the winter season" (James, 2005: 41). For Daisy, her unaccustomedness is death. Obviously, the Millers are not accustomed to Europe, which resembles the unaccustomedness of the light outside the cave in Plato's allegory of cave. The light cannot survive in the darkness inside a cave. Therefore, many problems arise. When Daisy tries to chat with Winterbourne, others "look at her very hard" (James, 2005: 33). When Daisy wants to go out for a walk with a friend, people say "she is very crazy!" (James, 2005: 51). And finally, the Europeans and the Europeanized Americans, "these shrewd people had quite made up their minds that she was going too far. They ceased to invite her" to their parties (James, 2005: 67). It can be seen that Daisy and the European values conflict with each other. Given the rigid traditions of Europe, Daisy can be regarded as the image of light.

Second, from Daisy's point of view, she should not and cannot endure the Europeanized Americans' doctrine. Lisa Johnson believes that Daisy's "story of enculturation and personal defiance, on the surface a cautionary tale for wayward girls, contains what Patrocinio

Schweickart calls an 'authentic kernel' or 'utopian moment' (2001: 41). Therefore, her behaviors are the representation of her self-authenticity. Her incompatibility with Europe reflects her personality, like the conflict between the darkness inside the cave and the light outside the cave. Daisy is a "'stylish' young girl", with "a sound of high-pitched voices at all times" (James, 2005: 3). Her personality is in sharp contrast to the classical, luxurious, and mature European traditions. When Winterbourne first meets Daisy, "she talked to Winterbourne as if she had known him a long time" (James, 2005: 12). She tells Winterbourne that she had "a great deal of gentlemen's society" (James, 2005: 14), which seems to be normal for her. However, Winterbourne "had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion; never, at least, save in cases where to say such things seemed a kind of demonstrative evidence of a certain laxity of deportment" (James, 2005: 14). Therefore, Daisy expresses her feelings freely without considering European values.

However, her expression of feelings causes much trouble for her. For instance, when Winterbourne attempts to present Daisy to his aunt, Daisy's expression of feelings becomes vulgar and Daisy is "bad enough to dislike, at any rate; and for this short life that is quite enough" (James, 2005: 39). When Daisy just wants to take a walk with a friend, she is told that "it is really too dreadful" and "girl must not do this sort of thing" (James, 2005: 51). Besides, "her behavior was not representative — was regarded by her compatriots as abnormal" (James, 2005: 68). For Daisy, the greatest trouble is that she was trying to tell Winterbourne that she was not engaged. But Winterbourne said that "'well, what do you believe now?' 'I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not!'" (James, 2005: 75). At this moment, Daisy feels life becomes trivial. Consequently, when Winterbourne bids her take pills, Daisy says, "'I don't care', in a little strange tone, 'whether I have Roman fever or not!' (James, 2005: 75). Under this circumstance, Winterbourne causes Daisy's disappointment. For Daisy, others' misunderstanding is of no importance. Winterbourne's understanding plays an important role in her life. When she finds Winterbourne's misunderstanding, her life becomes worthless. Therefore, her expression of authenticity sustains her life as well as her admiration for Winterbourne. His misunderstanding is the last straw to her death.

Apparently, light cannot survive inside the cave. Thus, Daisy eventually died in the cave-like Europe. In the cave-like continent, Daisy, the image of light, may evoke some people's consciousness. As in Winterbourne's words: "'She sent me a message before her death which

I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem'" (James, 2005: 78). Fortunately, Winterbourne realizes that he is living in a cave-like continent: "'you were right in that remark that you made last summer. I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts'" (James, 2005: 78). At this moment, Winterbourne realizes his failure of protecting Daisy.

April daisies are blossoming. Daisy, a flower of spring and summer, perishes. Her death reveals the mightiness of the darkness inside the cave. In other words, her death is fated.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, Daisy is different from those who resist the light, and those who hesitate. She does not intend to break all the shackles brought by European values. She just wants to be free and what she thinks is that "they understood nothing else!" (James, 2005: 60). However, the people with European values, especially Europeanized compatriots, determine to "normalize" her behaviors. Therefore, conflicts emerge. In all these conflicts and rebukes, Daisy cares nothing. She just cares about Winterbourne. However, Winterbourne continuously changes, which at last causes her loss of faith, and eventually dies. Therefore, Daisy faces the cave-like continent, a fortress. Her struggle for the expression of self-authenticity is doomed to lose and Winterbourne does not become supportive during the whole process. In fact, "Winterbourne is presented as the captive of women, not their protective gallant" (Deakin, 1983: 19). Therefore, the people with European values, especially Europeanized Americans, are responsible for Daisy's death and Winterbourne's unstable sentiments, namely hesitation, catalyze Daisy's death. As M.J. Hooper argues, "Winterbourne's failure is to allow Daisy to be not a type but a person, a human being" (1991: 34).

For one thing, the novella reveals the difficulty of expressing one's personality in the cave-like Europe. For another, it also reveals that some people, like the Europeanized Americans, insist on the traditions and are reluctant to break the rules and pursue an authentic self.

Notes:

1. "Cave." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cave. Accessed 27 May. 2022.

2. "Instruction." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/instruction. Accessed 15 Jun. 2022.

3. An American city.

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An Evaluation of Teacher-Student Interaction During Online Lessons

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Abstract

The current evaluation study aims to describe the interaction between teachers and their students during online EFL lessons at tertiary level and examine the relationship between such interaction and student engagement. To this end, 5 EFL teacher-student pairs were chosen through purposeful sampling as well as snowballing method, and by employing a qualitative approach, they were interviewed twice. First interview was aimed to obtain the accounts of the participating teachers and students' experiences, and the second interview was aimed to corroborate the findings with the participants. The results suggest that (i) the interaction between the teachers and students during online lessons were limited due mostly to technological challenges and lack of knowledge regarding the instructional use of technology, and (ii) the participants perceived this low-level interaction as one of the possible factors affecting student engagement negatively.

Keywords: teacher-student interaction, online instruction, student engagement

1.   Introduction

In 2019, a novel virus, later called COVID19, caused a global pandemic plunging the world into a state of political and socio-economic turmoil. In an attempt to prevent the spread of the virus, a variety of measures were put in place by the governments across the world; however, in a short span of time, the virus started circulating in every single corner of the globe. As a response to the increasing number of people who were being hospitalised and losing their lives, some radical steps had to be taken to slow down this gloomy trend. One of such steps was the closure of schools and the mandatory switch to online education.

In general, online education is, in this case *used to be*, considered as an alternative to traditional education (Abou et al., 2014). However, it became a necessity to be able to sustain education at schools and universities during the pandemic. With the mandatory switch to online education, many components of a typical lesson carried out in a traditional classroom setting changed, as well. One of these changes was the interaction between teachers and their students. Teacher-student interaction is often accepted as one of the crucial elements contributing the quality of lessons and helping students both academically and socially (Pianta et al., 2008). Positive interaction between teachers and their students, therefore, is usually attributed to higher student achievement (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; McCormick et al., 2013) as well as greater emotional involvement, engagement, and content with learning environment (Klem & Connell, 2004). However, in a lesson conducted online, teachers and

students are not able to interact in the same way they do face to face, which could deprive them of the benefits of such interactions.

In a context where the schools have been closed since early 2020s, and the traditional face-to-face education has been mandatorily moved to online platforms, the current evaluation study aims to describe how teachers and students interact during tertiary level EFL lessons and examine the relationship between such interaction and student engagement.

2.   Literature Review

2.1 Online Education

Online education can be identified as an educational process that is carried out over the internet using various online platforms including blogs, forums and videotelephony proprietary software programs. In general, online education is a form of distance education that allows students who live in remote locations or who cannot attend face-to-face education for various reasons such as full-time employment. However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became indispensably common for almost every student as of early 2020.

Students can experience online education either through asynchronous or synchronous lessons. The former allows students to decide when to participate in learning process. Such lessons offer a variety of tools for students to engage including emails or discussion boards. The latter, in contrast, include lessons being presented via live, typically video and sometimes audio only, conferences, granting opportunity for instantaneous feedback (Hrastinski, 2008).

Online education offers many benefits by both handling the problems regarding the geographical distance and for many other reasons that could hamper physical attendance to lessons (Singh & Thurman, 2019; Watts, 2016). Since it does not require physical attendance, participation rates can be expected to be high when especially considering the opportunity it provides for full-time employed adult learners (Fedynich, 2014). Thanks to online education, people can both study and work simultaneously. On top of these benefits, students also do not have to spend any time or money by commuting to the physical learning environment. They can join the lessons whenever and wherever suits their everyday lives.

On the other hand, online education has also some shortcomings depending mostly on participants' technological skills as well as their opportunities to access to the required equipment. Although lack of technological skills is usually viewed as a disadvantage especially for young learners (Wedenoja, 2020), there are many adults who find it challenging to utilise technology for their learning. As opposed to such challenges that make learning a difficult experience, online education gives rise to a situation that makes the process unethically easier: plagiarism. It is a term that is used to describe a situation in which a person takes the intellectual property of another person and presents it as his/her own (Bowyer & Hall, 2001). Due to the various software that allows an easy copy-paste action, the level of plagiarism is on the increase. Lastly, online education falls short of allowing the extra-curricular activities that a traditional on-campus education typically offers (Resnick et al., 1997). Such activities are of great importance in that they help students develop socially in every step of their age groups and prepare themselves for future life including their career. Students who only participate in online education may not have the chance to benefit from such benefits.

2.2 Teacher-Student Interaction & Student Engagement

All human beings are fundamentally inclined to have connections with others. This desire to socially bond with each other is one of the most powerful motivational forces for

humans (Baumeister & Lery, 1995). People often participate in activities that are normally not appealing to them just because they want to experience togetherness with others (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The same force exists in educational context, as well. When the needs of students, particularly their need of being connected to others, are satisfied, it has been reported that they become more adept and willing to meet the cognitive and affective demands of learning process (Martin & Dowson, 2009).

One of the most prominent ways of feeling connected for a student in an educational context is the relationship s/he has with his/her teacher. Past research suggests that positive relationship between teachers and students yields many desirable results in terms of students' learning through engagement (Wubbels et al., 2016). Also, many studies reports that positive teacher-students relationship has a positive impact on students' academic achievement (Valiente et al., 2008), which stimulates positive attitudes towards learning (Roorda, Koomen, & Spilt, 2011). Such a relationship creates a safe and comfortable learning environment for the students.

Establishing a positive relationship between teachers and their students depends on the interaction between them. Teacher-student interaction is the most basic and natural type of relationship in an education setting. Bernstein and Noam (2013) suggest that such interaction is pivotal for student improvement as it offers students a variety of learning opportunities. In addition, Rutter and Maughan (2002) reports that in a learning environment, interaction between teachers and their students is a key factor for students to engage in the lessons and develop themselves academically, socially, and emotionally. However, online education may fall short of satisfying teachers and their students' need to interact with each other, which could impede students' development in the aforementioned areas.

3.   Methodology

3.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the current evaluation study is (i) to describe the nature of teacher-student interaction during tertiary level EFL lessons conducted online and (ii) to examine the relationship between such interaction and student engagement.

Informed by the literature, the current study aims to answer the following questions:

i. How do teachers and students interact during tertiary level EFL lessons conducted online?

ii. What is the perceived relationship between such interaction and student engagement?

3.2 Significance of the Evaluation

The results of this evaluation study are significant to understand the nature of teacher-student interaction during online lessons. Such interactions are among key factors affecting students' development during their learning process by increasing student engagement and leading to a higher academic performance (Downer et al. 2010; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Thus, both teachers and curriculum designers in tertiary level EFL contexts can take into consideration the findings of this evaluation study and design their programs in a way that allows teacher-student interaction more during online lessons.

3.3 Evaluation Design

The current evaluation draws on social constructivism, which underlines the constructed knowledge by means of individual values and personal experiences (Creswell, 1998). To further this approach, the study was developed from a qualitative perspective, which is required to understand the complex nature of relationships and to obtain a rich account of the experiences of individuals (Bell 2002; Benson 2011). By problematising the experiences of its participants, the study evaluates the interaction between the participating teachers and their students and examines the relationship between this interaction and student engagement through participants' reported accounts.

3.3.1 Participants & Settings

The teacher-participants of the study were 5 EFL teachers all of whom had been teaching EFL at different universities at the time of the evaluation, and the student-participants were B1 level students all of whom had been in their English preparatory year at different universities at the time of the evaluation. In the end, there was a teacher-student pair from each university, and they were all given pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Through purposeful sampling, first, one teacher was chosen based on researcher's own decision. By this choice, the researcher made sure that the participant had experienced the mandatory shift to online teaching and was relevant to the focus of the study. Then, via snowballing method, the other participants were recruited through referrals of the existing participants again carefully making sure they also experienced the same phenomenon. In the end, there were 5 teacher-student pair from various private and state universities as participants.

The first teacher-student pair was from a state university. They had 20-hour EFL lessons a week lasting 8 weeks in total. The lessons were being conducted on Zoom platform. The second teacher-student pair was from a state university. They had 22-hour EFL lessons a week lasting 7 weeks in total. The lessons were being conducted on Microsoft Teams platform. The third teacher-student pair was also from a state university. They had 18-hour EFL lessons a week lasting 8 weeks. The lessons were being conducted on Microsoft Teams platform. The fourth teacher-student pair was from a private university. They had 20-hour EFL lessons a week lasting 7 weeks. The lessons were being conducted on Zoom platform. The fifth and last teacher-student pair was also from a private university. They had 18-hour EFL lessons a week lasting 8 weeks. The lessons were being conducted on Zoom platform. In addition to weekly lessons, all participating students had access to asynchronous EFL content through a Moodle based platform that their institutions provided.

The participating teacher-student pairs, their universities, number of weekly lesson-hours and the online platforms they used are illustrated in the table below (Figure 1).

Teachers	Students	University	Weekly Hour	Online Platform
T1	S1	A (State)	20-hour	Zoom

T2	S2	B (State)	22-hour	Microsoft Teams
T3	S3	C (State)	18-hour	Microsoft Teams
T4	S4	D (Private)	20-hour	Zoom
T5	S5	E (Private)	18-hour	Zoom

Figure 1: Information of participants and settings.

3.3.2 Data Collection & Analysis

The data were collected through semi-structured online interviews with each individual separately following the oral and written consent of every participant. The participants were free to speak either in their native language or in English. In cases where the participants preferred speaking in their native language, the researcher later translated the interview transcript into English. The interviews were voice-recorded while the researcher was also jotting down some notes to be later analysed along with the transcripts.

Following the interview, the recordings were first transcribed and translated into English where necessary. At this stage, and also during the following stages, pseudonyms for participants and the universities were used to ensure privacy. Then, following multiple readings of the transcripts, the researcher identified common themes and patterns regarding the teacher-student interaction and its relationship with student engagement. From these identified themes and patterns along with the field notes taken during the interviews, the researcher developed some interpretive meanings leading to an exhaustive description of the nature of teacher-student interaction and student engagement during online EFL lessons. Before finalising the study, the researcher met with the participants once more for member checking purposes to share and corroborate the findings obtained from the first interview to make sure the ideas, emotions, and experiences of the participants were reflected correctly and appropriately.

4.   Results & Discussion

4.1 The Inevitable Comparison

Although the participants were never asked to compare their current experiences with the past when they used to have face-to-face education, it is not surprising that they all nonetheless did. When the teachers were asked about the nature of interaction they had with the students and whether they had any challenges keeping the students engaged, all five of them referred to their past experiences. T2 said: "Before the pandemic, uh, you know, when we were in the classroom, I… I didn't have any problems with my students. I used to ask questions, err, some guiding questions, and they would answer it. That's how easy, uh, to, you know, interact with them and keep them engaged." T4 also referred to face-to-face

education as easier times by saying: "Everything was perfect. Well… Maybe not perfect (laughing) but you know it was something, uh, I could handle easily. I created fun activities in the past to keep everyone, err, engaged, but now I cannot use the same activities online. It doesn't work like that."

Students frequently referred to their past experiences, as well, but since it was their first year at tertiary level, they mentioned their lessons, specifically English lessons, in high school. S3 said: "Before the pandemic, when I was in high school, as you know, we used to go to everyday. We used to see all our teachers and friends face-to-face. Back then I liked English lessons more because it was fun. Now all I do is sitting and staring at the screen." (Translated).

When the participants compared their lessons during the pandemic and pre-pandemic, they all had a wave of nostalgia for the face-to-face education even though it had just been a year and a half since the schools were closed. The most common words uttered were easy and fun. Normally, as Watts (2016) explained, online education is the one that is referred as more convenient as students do not need to travel and be present in the classroom. However, it appears that when the teachers and the students are forced to switch to online, they felt they were taken out of their comfort zone; hence, they had some emotional reaction.

4.2 Technology-Related Issues

When the teachers were asked about how they interacted with their students online, the most common answer was that using technology was challenging for them for various reasons, which also makes it difficult to establish a rapport and interact with the students. T1 and T5 stated that the computer their institutions provided were too old and slow to handle a videotelephony proprietary software on top of other applications such as an Internet browser and a word processor. That is why, it had been difficult for them to have a stable videoconference, which often forced them to switch to audio-only during the lessons. T5 said: "When you, err, you don't even see your students' faces, how can you, err, how can you possibly interact with them properly?" In addition, T2 reported that she had never been good with technology, so she had been having many issues despite the two consecutive training sessions she attended. She said: "I don't like technology (laughing), and, err, I only used it in my classroom, you know, when it was necessary. You know… while doing a PowerPoint presentation or watching a video. Now everything, err, everything I do is based on, err, on technology. You know, it just takes too much time to deal with the problems. Sometimes students also have problems, but I, err, cannot help them. Among all this chaos, our interaction is just, you know, err, all about solving technology problems." T3 and T4 also reported that it had been challenging to interact with the student, yet their reasons were different. T3 said: "When you, err, have a lesson, you normally, err, you need to share your screen, you know, so the students can follow the lesson, but when you do that, err, you suddenly lose the videos of the students and, err, all you see, you know, is the content that you share. And, the students, err, also cannot see you or other students. When I ask a question, I don't see who is answering. Sometimes we all talk at the same time (laughing). Err, turn taking, you know, is difficult, really difficult because, err, so interacting with students is challenging."

When students were asked the same question, they also complain about the use of technology and how it negatively affected their interaction with their teachers during the lessons. S1 reported that her computer broke down a couple of months ago, so she had been trying to join live lessons using her mobile phone. She said: "I follow the lesson from the small screen of my phone. With one hand I hold the phone, with the other I try to take notes. I never turn on my video, and I rarely speak. It was already difficult with a computer. Now with a phone, I lost my interest." (Translated). S2 and S3 reported that they did not have a stable cable or WIFI connection for a videoconference, so they had been using their cellular data via their mobile phones. Because of this reason, they preferred not to turn on their cameras in order to lower the cost of their data plans. S3 said: "We often have power cuts where I live, so I often lose my connection during the lessons. Also, the Internet speed isn't normally fast enough, anyway. That's why, I started using my phone's cellular data to connect to the Internet over my laptop, but it's become very expensive, so I never turn on my camera, and I turn off video-feeds of my teacher and friends." (Translated).

Switching to fully online surely necessitated a lot of adapting in terms of getting used to technology. Although technology has been an indispensable part of the classrooms for quite a while, most teachers never had to deliver their lessons over the Internet before. This unvoluntary, sudden and rather pushy shift to online caught many teachers off guard without any time for preparation or adaptation. With all the technology-related problems, there do not seem to be any time left for any meaningful interaction during the lessons. In addition, access to technology is another problem. Depending on the geographical location individuals reside, the required internet speed for a stable videoconference may not be available. Also, depending on the data plan, the cost of cellular data could easily skyrocket especially if there are multiple internet users in the same household. Such issues and concerns may prevent students from turning on their video-feeds, which inevitable lowers the level of their interaction with their teachers.

4.3 Not Feeling Accountable

Three teachers reported they were worried that most of their students did not feel accountable for their own learning. T3 said: "I think my students… well... most of them… (laughing) don't, err, feel, you know, responsible anymore. They don't do their homework. Sometimes, err, they don't come, err, attend the lessons. When I ask a question, they don't turn on their microphones. They just pretend they are not there (laughing). Of course, there are students who regularly participate in the lessons, but I don't feel, err, how can I say, err, I don't feel connected to, err, most of them."

Two students also reported that they did not take the lessons as seriously as they would have if they had been in a physical classroom. Therefore, they did not feel it was necessary to interact with their teachers. S4 said: "I usually join the live sessions. It's like watching a video. I turn off my camera and microphone. I just listen to my teacher going over some pages. Then, I lose my interest and start checking my social media accounts. I wouldn't do that if I were in a real classroom, though." (Translated).

It seems that when they are not in a physical classroom environment, students who have never experienced online education tend to feel less responsible. Live lessons may feel like a random video that could easily be dismissed. If students do not feel any responsibility

for their own learning, it is only natural that they do not interacting with their teachers, and they do not engage with the lessons.

5.   Conclusions

In learning process, communication plays an important role. It is through communication that the education is implemented (Assilkhanova et al., 2014), and the knowledge is shared (Suciu, 2014). As Steenbeek et al. (2012) suggest, teacher-student interaction occurs as a result of past interactions and provides a basis for the upcoming interactions. Therefore, it has been put forward that it should be of utmost priority to enhance the quality of teacher-student interaction (Barber & Mourshed 2007). However, due to the sudden switch to the online education, the teachers and the students participating in the current study did not have the chance to meet face-to-face at all. For this reason, as it could be inferred from the interviews, they could not establish a close rapport with each other, and it is highly possible that this was the case for many teachers and students elsewhere.

The most commonly referred hindrance to an enhanced interaction between the teachers and the students seems to be the initial emotional discomfort of being forced to change the way education had taken place for a long time. With this sudden and a rather pushy change came the problems pertaining to technology use. Although there were some efforts to familiarise the teachers with the online platforms and tools to help carry out their lessons, many teachers seem to have had challenging times adapting to the new way of teaching. The mismatch between the traditional materials used and the digital platforms also made things even more challenging. Additionally, it is clear from the interviews that the students tended not to participate in the lessons. The participants claimed that the online lessons were uninteresting and not interactive. While the teachers were wobbling over the new platforms, it is possible that the students, who were already disappointed for not being in a campus environment, could not maintain their interest in the lessons. Although it is not possible to conclude a direct causal relationship, it can still be inferred from the interviews that the participants perceived the low-level teacher-student interaction as one of the factors that had a negative effect on student engagement.

Considering the results, the current study has important implications for all individuals involved in the education system. The immediate action; however, can actually be taken by teachers, curriculum designers, and program managers. Although the findings painted a rather gloomy picture, they should not mask the benefits of online education and the integration of technology into lessons. Instead, it should be noted that the reason why the teachers and the students who participated in this study had so many problems is due part to the forced and unexpected change and due part to being inexperienced with online education tools and platforms. If the current situation is to continue, it is of utmost priority that first the teachers should be well-trained as to how to conduct an interactive lesson over the internet, and second the curriculum and the materials should be changed or adapted to allow teachers and students interact in a more meaningful way, which as the current study suggests, is perceived to be affecting student engagement, as well.

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An Aristophanic Reading of Ludvig Holberg's *Erasmus Montanus* and Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People and Ghosts*

Abstract

The Scandinavian playwright Ludvig Holberg contributed to the debate of socio-political discussions with his entertaining comedies. Over a century later, Henrik Ibsen with his contemporary dramas also counteracts the way social order is established in certain communities. Both Scandinavian playwrights utilize similar comical techniques to critically question and oppose entrenched ideologies. Though their means to achieve what they intend are somewhat different, both seek to disclose how grand ideas can be brought down using seemingly low Aristophanic methods such as irony, satire, and imitation. Their common purpose in producing such works is to break out of fixed categories while fusing different fields to create even newer ones. Thus, both seek to disintegrate dominating structures to explore other ways of being and ruling. Present research aims to disentangle Holberg's and Ibsen's methods of intertwining Aristophanic Old Comedy as well as the Italian theatrical form of Commedia dell'arte. The analysis will therefore shed light on how social patterns of idealism, moralism, and criticism are manifested in Holberg's Erasmus Montanus and Ibsen's Ghosts and An Enemy of the People.

Keywords: *Ludvig Holberg, Henrik Ibsen, Comedy, Social criticism, Aristophanes, Commedia dell'arte, problem plays.*

Öz

İskandinav oyun yazarı Ludvig Holberg, eğlenceli komedileriyle sosyo-politik tartışmalarına katkıda bulunmuştur. Yıllar sonra Henrik Ibsen dramalarıyla aynı zamanda belirli topluluklarda sosyal düzenin kurulma biçimine karşı çıkıyor. Her iki İskandinav oyun yazarı da köklü ideolojileri eleştirel bir şekilde sorgulamak ve karşı çıkmak için benzer teknikler kullanmaktadır. Amaçladıklarına ulaşma yolları biraz farklı olsa da ikisi de ironi, hiciv ve taklit gibi görünüşte düşük Aristofanik yöntemlerle büyük fikirlerin nasıl yıkılabileceğini açıklamaya çalışmıştır. Bu tür eserler üretmekteki ortak amaçları, farklı alanları birleştirerek yenilerine yol açmak için sabit düşüncelerden kurtulmaktır. Bu nedenle, her ikisi de baskın sosyal düzenlerini yıkarak farklı bakış açıları sunmaktadır. Bu araştırma Holberg ve Ibsen'in Aristofanik Antik Yunan Komedya biçimi ile İtalyan Commedia dell'arte yöntemlerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Son olarak Holberg'in Erasmus Montanus ve Ibsen'in Hayaletler ve Bir Halk Düşmanı oyunlarındaki idealizm, ahlakçılık ve sosyal eleştiri temaların nasıl ortaya çıktığı açıklanacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Ludvig Holberg, Henrik Ibsen, Komedi, Sosyal eleştiri, Aristophanes, Commedia dell'arte, Problem oyunları.*

1. Introduction

The Scandinavian playwright Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754) contributed to new ways of perceiving individual and social relations with his comedies during the 18th century. His comedies not only reflected societal and contemporary issues but also included a transformative effect in the sense of altering, shifting, and shaking already established thought patterns (Brickman 3-4). What makes Holberg even more distinctive, apart from his socially/culturally critical themes in his comedies, is that his underlying and highly charged messages can to present day be recognized.

However, the paper at hand will limit the scope of these themes to the time in which the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) lived in order to detect how both remarkable playwrights manage to present societal issues by way of class, irony, and comedy. Indeed, Ibsen was said to admire Holberg's comedies and was influenced by his approach to handling certain themes (Andersson 159). Both Scandinavian writers have several features in common, among them, the ability to reshuffle ideas from previous and contemporary literary trends (Brickman 7); that is, both Ibsen and Holberg mastered recreating as well as deconstructing their works in a Bakhtinian-like fashion, turning ideas upside-down while presenting to their readers an everchanging stage with multiple doors left open. It would be wrong to state then, that both can be pinned down to a particular tradition, movement, or practice as they seem to generate literary tendencies without having to belong under any of them. If anything, perhaps, Holberg and Ibsen can be linked to the line "on the contrary"; a phrasing Ibsen associated his writings with and which essentially means the art of generating an idea just to oppose it again (Bentley 565).

It is the aim of this study to present Greek and Italian literary trends at the time of Holberg and Ibsen to delve into intertextual research of their comedies/dramas. Within the general framework, it is thus significant for this study to comment on Aristophanic comedy, *commedia dell'arte,* and Holberg's perception of comedy to shed light on both playwrights' methodologies of interweaving such thematic elements. On a particular level, the characters from Holberg's *Erasmus Montanus* (1723) and Ibsen's third and fourth plays in his cycle of twelve dramas, namely, *Ghosts* (1881), and *An Enemy of the People* (1882) will be analyzed comparatively. This paper will therefore be divided into three sections in which the first part presents a brief summary of Aristophanic satire while the latter parts will introduce a comparative study of Holberg's and Ibsen's plays. The recurring leitmotifs of class, irony, and comedy will function as the leading thread with other features such as criticism and didactic moralism tied into the analysis section. A comparative study of Holberg and Ibsen would be incomplete without a discussion not only on where they are thematically similar/different but also to see for what purpose the playwrights construct comedy. As a counterargument to this question, Ibsen's characters from his drama *Hedda Gabler* (1890) will also be briefly evaluated in the last section.

As a result, this research will attempt to answer the following questions: How are Ludvig Holberg and Henrik Ibsen similar/different in their approach of portraying class, irony, and comedy? What are the underlying social messages that both playwrights aim to communicate? In what ways is comedy used as a disguise to generate severe criticism of social customs? Can the audience expect to laugh at the comical scenes? If yes, at the expense of what and/or who? Above questions will lay the foundation for a comparative Holberg-Ibsen research. However, due to the limited scope of the study, only one of Holberg's comedies, i.e., *Erasmus Montanus*, will be put into an intertextual context with Ibsen's two contemporary dramas. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to decipher the meaning behind Holberg's and Ibsen's comical scenes, for indeed, they seem to be permeated with social criticism. According to Payne, both Scandinavians embarked on a journey (literally and metaphorically) "finding the air of Norway too sultry to breathe" and therefore felt the need to clear out entrenched and extant ideologies in their respective ways (Part I, 261).

2. Aristophanic Satire and Comedy

The origin of the word "satire" is believed to stem from the Latin "satura, medley or stew" (Condren 380). Although it is plausible to say that the word itself derives from the Romans, the idea behind it is argued to be Greek. Apart from its purpose of ridiculing wrongdoings and exposing impostors, satire also serves to punish lofty and idealized shared beliefs (379). Satire also refers to the satyr plays and it was an ancient Greek genre that conjoined both comedy and tragedy while acting out tales of mythical stories (Britannica.com). The human body was depicted with animal parts as well, for example with "the ears and tails of horses" (Britannica.com). This combination of human traits with the animal body can indeed be linked to Aristophanes' use of lofty speeches being interrupted by basely animalistic features. Although no animal parts are visible on the human body in Aristophanic comedy, readers still witness animal-like intrusions whose purpose is to make them critically question pedantic attitudes.

As Aristophanic type of satire is a prominent theme in both Holberg's and Ibsen's plays, it is crucial to first understand the high intellectual comedy of the Greeks for then to enter the chosen plays from the aspect of Old Comedy. Aristophanes sought to write his texts to satirize and mock established systems and/or individuals in order to "deflate with humor anything or anyone with elevated pretensions or an excessive aura of seriousness" (Rosen 254). He usually satirized by way of contrasts between bodily gestures and spoken words. Moreover, the Greek playwright, who is considered "the father of comedy", seeks to bring down anyone who thinks highly of themselves through exaggerated bodily intrusions (Hall and Wrigley 1). He dramatizes the bodily depictions of individuals whom he deliberately uses to generate "grotesque satire" (Grene 99). His play *The Clouds*, for example, is an epitome of physical satire in which Socrates is strongly ridiculed via caricatured and exaggerated images. Indeed, Aristophanes upends the lofty and superior attitude Socrates is associated with by portraying him in a degrading position thus showing him in such a way that he is "subject to the physical realm in its coarsest forms despite his attempts to spend his time contemplating more elevated

subjects" (Scott and Welton 57). Aristophanes' portrayal of grotesque bodily interventions in grave situations has a subversive effect where the audience witnesses the absurdity of how simple and uncontrolled gestures can be the cause of critical interruptions of one's intended performances. Stressing this absurdity, Aristophanes aims at pointing out the "incongruity between human pretension and human reality", while representing how there is a serious mismatch in what one says and does (57).

To exemplify further, this incongruity is also illustrated in Plato's *Symposium* where Aristophanes' hiccupping prevents him from speaking which is why he eventually asks Eryximachus, the physician, to either cure him or speak in his stead (Plato 18). One could argue whether Plato mocks Aristophanes in a similar way as the comic playwright did with his portrayal of Socrates. Or there is also the possibility of Plato contributing to another layer of irony and satire when he subjects Aristophanes to uncontrollable hiccups right at the moment of his speech. Whatever the interpretation may be, Plato's inclusion of the hiccupping scene creates an effect of intensifying what Aristophanes highlights; namely the unmasking of hypocrisy and discrepancy in one's speech and actions. If the paradox was not clear in Aristophanes' *The Clouds*, then it obviously is now with Plato adding an extra dimension of irony/satire in his version of "low comedy".

3. Comparative Reading of Holberg and Ibsen

Before comparing Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* to Holberg's *Erasmus Montanus*, it is significant to first analyze the former in terms of Aristophanic comedy so as to draw parallel lines between both playwrights.

In contrast to Dr. Stockmann's passionate speeches about the contaminated bath water, speeches that in fact go beyond the actual topic to criticize the ruling of society, his actions seem comical. In one particular scene, Dr. Stockmann, who is very eager to reveal the polluted water in the town's contaminated bath, mocks Mayor Stockmann's behaviour, taking his hat and stick while roaming around in the pressroom and parodying him. This playacting, which is also highly postmodern, serves the purpose of ridiculing conventionalized way of thinking as the hat and the walking cane symbolize finalized, traditional rules not subject to change. The audience is thus invited to see the corrupt family structure by witnessing the pretence-reality conflict in the mayor's pressroom. Despite Dr. Stockmann being right in his arguments of bath pollution, his approach is not suitable and as a result, he appears to be a detached and absurd figure whom people begin to despise within the small community in his hometown.

Dr. Stockmann's parody of his brother to some extent reveals the problematic aspects in society, for instance, the undemocratic way of elitist ruling without feeling the need to include other people's opinions. This leitmotif of the hat and the stick is a symbol of old habits and stands in contrast to hatless people, whose hair can be said to get in touch with air, rather than stuffed within the hat; hence, hatless individuals are represented to be *open* to fresh ideas and able to speak up their minds without feeling attached to customs. Yet, the paradox with Dr. Stockmann manifests itself in the last act when he denies the opportunity of free speech for the bourgeois, as he regards the common burgher to be "a pack of goats", a herd without a shepherd

(354). This statement echoes Nietzsche's outlook on the middle class in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in which he discloses his fears of having "no shepherd and one herd" in the near apocalyptic future (10). Ibsen deliberately draws parallels to how the elitists were regarding the middle class in his time, and therefore seems to bring in Dr. Stockmann so that he can satirize the way mediocrity was ridiculed. Meta-irony is thus present when Dr. Stockmann parodies his brother's governance when he in fact is an equally corrupt potential leader due to his belief that "minority is always right" (Ibsen 356). This layer of irony is strengthened even more with Ibsen's attempt at ridiculing elitist way of thinking about the middle class.

Ibsen, in the final act of *An Enemy of the People*, carries Dr. Stockmann to a Socratic trial. During his long speech, Dr. Stockmann is interrupted by a drunkard and this scene is Ibsen's implicit reference to the Aristophanic pretence-reality contradiction. Social criticism in the form of the drunkard's hiccups seems to play an essential role. During Dr. Stockmann's arguments on how one group of people should have the right to "admonish and approve, to prescribe and to govern", the hiccups of the drunk intensify and interrupts his speech (358). At last, in the process of voting, the story reaches its climax when the drunk exclaims "let's have a blue one! And - let's have a white one, too!", which shows Ibsen's way of parodying the Stockmann brothers as the one does not seem to be any better than the other (363).

Aristophanic comedy is therefore presented to show how Dr. Stockmann's speech does not fit into the reality of life as the seemingly absurd bodily eruptions sabotage the lofty speeches. His version of the truth seems to be the only one, and whoever rejects it is deemed to be "the most insidious enemy of truth and freedom" (Ibsen 355). Just as Peter Stockmann's rigid bodily movements, his orthodox name and attire reflect his standardized views on society, Dr. Stockmann's narrowminded ideas are also ironically symbolized with, for instance, the umbrella he swings at Hovstad and Aslaksen (just like his brother's cane). These are some of the minute gestural details that Ibsen leaves for his readers to ponder upon. Thus, the external factors have essential underlying meanings, for it is in these incongruities between words vs. actions/setting that one is able to "expose the rulers of society as impostors, since they have forgotten in the process of defending their vested interests [...] that the law of life is change, succession, regeneration" (Fjelde 278).

Apart from Aristophanic comedy, Ibsen was also influenced by Holberg's interpretation of comedy which is also evident in his dramas. Both Aristophanes and Holberg are similar in their way of depicting polarities to ultimately create an effect of equilibrium. Although it sounds paradoxical to seek balance between extremities, Aristophanes aimed at juxtaposing "our pretension" and "absurd origins" because,

> by bringing together these opposites, our pretensions are shattered and we achieve a kind of healing clarity. Here Aristophanes brings together the secret human desire for mastery with a beginning that shows that this desire is associated with a monstrosity. He thereby suggests that human beginnings were at one and the same both grand and ridiculous or that the first

humans were grotesque and laughable in proportion to their hubris, in a way that contradicted their pretensions. By associating human beings with such origins, he serves to undercut human pretension now to counteract any tendency toward hubris humans still may retain. (Scott and Welton 66)

As shown in the passage above, extremities can both connect and contradict two opposing ideas, and hence create room for counteraction to develop. Most significantly, the extremities can reveal the hypocrisy of a certain ruler in such a way that, in Horace's words, they can instruct and delight the audience (Horace 132). This didactic-extremist aspect is a dominant theme in Holberg's *Erasmus Montanus* (1723).

In his satirical play, Holberg presents Rasmus Berg, a young academic who, after his studies in Copenhagen, returns to his hometown, formulating himself mostly in lofty expressions which nobody seems to understand. Rasmus has even changed his name to the Latin version, namely Erasmus Montanus, and appears to be all-knowing and arrogant towards his surroundings. Just like Dr. Stockmann, he claims that his version of knowledge is the only truth. His overly pedantic tone resembles both Eryximachus's and Dr. Stockmann's speeches and like these speakers, Erasmus is also turned into a caricatured, grotesque figure who, though possessing scientific knowledge, fails to act with common sense. Holberg was familiar with the learning structures in the academic world and being a well-read university professor, he was able to criticize the way curriculum was established before and during his time (Brickman 5). He argued against "intellectual overburdening" whilst distinguishing between useful and useless knowledge (9).

According to Holberg, knowledge would be useless if it could not be applied in society and be functional in one's everyday life (9). In contrast to useless knowledge, be it academic or otherwise, useful knowledge "must begin with ethics and end with theology" while concentrating particularly on the faculty of reason, "a kind of *ars critica*" (9). Holberg was a strong critic of the educational and social systems in the Dano-Norwegian culture and widens his critique to include other European countries when he claims that "there is no country in Europe, perhaps, in which there are so many learned and so many ignorant members of the clerical profession" (10). Moreover, he does not limit knowledge within the framework of academic studies but also argues for knowledge gained from different life experiences. Having travelled to several European countries, Holberg was able to return to Scandinavia with the different literary styles he had acquired from e.g., French, Italian and German cultures (4). The Danish critic Georg Brandes rightly expresses Holberg's encounter with the yet uncultivated North after his return:

From the dawn of the 18th century then casting its light over Europe, he came home to find the long night of the 16th century... he felt that he stood in and Augean stable of pedantry and superstition which needed to be cleansed. (Payne, Part 1 260)

Thus, Holberg was able to present a mix of literary genres which is also manifested in *Erasmus Montanus*. Turning now to the comedy, Erasmus is not able to apply his learned academic knowledge pragmatically, and his insistence on the scientific truth of the world simply angers the townspeople around him even more. His use of airy Latin expressions creates the very first conflict of having difficulty in communicating, firstly with his family and then the townspeople whom he later encounters. The reader is forewarned how events will unfold to a critical point just by reading Erasmus' conversation with his brother Jacob:

> JACOB. What does that word quidditas mean? Wasn't that it?
> MONTANUS. I know well enough what it means.
> JACOB. Perhaps Mossur knows it himself, but can't explain it to others. What little I know, I know in such a way that all men can grasp it when I say it to them. (Holberg 31)

Erasmus becomes Holberg's representation of one form of extremity which eventually clashes with its opposite; society's insistence on being ignorant. However, before commenting on Holberg's exaggerated way of representing societal issues, it is worth interpreting Jacob's behavior in relation to his brother. Jacob seems to be the voice of Holberg in the way he acts because he indeed represents both/and by being a pragmatic person. He belongs to neither of the extremities and even verbalizes this pragmatic reason when he at one point says to Erasmus: "I may be a rascal, but I earn with my hands the money for my parents that you spend" (11). At the end of the day, Jacob is the preferred pragmatist who brings food to the table. Though he does not have insight into the scientific world, he nevertheless can make use of his gained experiences and hence earn a living for himself and his family. Unlike Jacob, Erasmus is deemed to be "a wise man in the heavens, but a fool on earth" (8). The lieutenant, who will be analyzed in the subsequent paragraphs, is another example of a pragmatist person.

Following Aristophanic comedy, Holberg uses polarities to show comic hyperbole so as to promote understanding of human behavior. In *Erasmus Montanus*, the main character is the archetype of arrogance and pedantry and can therefore be likened to Dr. Stockmann's attitude toward his surroundings. Both Erasmus and Stockmann claim to possess scientific knowledge yet cannot communicate with their fellowmen without enraging them. Hence, both can be seen in the light of Old Comedy; Erasmus resembling Aristotle with his syllogisms and Dr. Stockmann who tries to imitate Socrates. However, the allusion to mythological figures is twisted and turned upside down in both Holberg's and Ibsen's plays. Instead of appearing as philosophical thinkers who want to intellectually and morally "instruct" their peers, both are turned into caricatures because they fail to find what Holberg defines to be the "middle-way" in between the polarities.

For Holberg, it is crucial to seek this grey zone of both/and instead of the extremes of either/or (Haakonssen and Olden-Jørgensen 193). However, hubris and megalomania take control of both Dr. Stockmann and Erasmus who eventually become social outcasts, failing to adhere to the common beliefs of existing social norms. Ibsen depicts the downfall of his

antihero by portraying Dr. Stockmann as an idealist while Holberg uses hyperbolic parodying in his comedy to create the desired effect. Both playwrights deal with Aristophanic polarities, though the former is more intricate and minimalistic in his style and the latter more burlesque. Despite their stylistic differences, Holberg and Ibsen address paradoxes to create a sort of counterbalance through which change and development can occur.

Conflicts are therefore essential for both playwrights as they propose fresh ideas that might lead to different outcomes. In both plays, specialized knowledge is criticized, however, the opposite extreme of this, i.e., ignorance or deception is questioned as well. In the case of *An Enemy of the People*, everybody around Dr. Stockmann is portrayed to be living a lie for the sake of financial profit and reputation. *Erasmus Montanus* presents all except the protagonist to believe in falsehood due to their religious beliefs. They refuse to accept that the world might be round and not "flat as a pancake" (Holberg 22). Herein lies Holberg's critique of class and religion as well and the ultimate irony is that Erasmus, the man of knowledge, is forced to be governed by the mass even when he is telling scientific truths, just like Dr. Stockmann does. As he is not able to convey his knowledge appropriately, he, therefore, ends up unwillingly accepting society's "truth" to make peace with the townspeople. Dr. Stockmann refuses to do so at the end of Ibsen's drama, but Erasmus realizes that he cannot live without society.

Holberg has argued that the nature of mankind is to waver between extreme conditions. In one of his epigrams, he briefly outlines this concept in simple language that everybody could understand while using religion to further his point:

(...) when the Devil gets sick, a saint he wants to be: which is, to go from one extreme to another. This is seen in the heat of Reformation, disbelief turns into superstition, hot-temper into cowardice, courage into fear, chattering into ridiculous silence. (Mühlmann)[1]

Hence, Holberg uses his comedies to indicate that people should opt for a middle path rather than thinking and acting in extreme ways. As mentioned above, his exaggerating style contributed to what he intended to achieve. Showing Erasmus to be the extreme version of arrogance and the rest of the community to be ridiculously ignorant, Holberg succeeds in promoting his message in *Erasmus Montanus*. One should always prefer to be pragmatic in all areas of life (Rossel 67). This constant fluctuation between oppositions, not staying at either of the polarities, would eventually make a person "susceptible to impressions and modifications" (67). Holberg even implemented this maxim into his lifestyle believing that it should indeed be the goal of each individual to have this "constant retreat to the *via media*" (67)[2]. Like Ibsen,

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[1] My translation from Danish: "(...) naar Fanden bliver syg, vil han være Munk: hvilket er, at gaae fra een Yderlighed fil en anden. Man haver seet ved saadan hidsig Reformation, Vantroe forvandles til Overtroe, Hidsighed til Feighed, Dristighed til Frygt, Sladderagtighed til latterlig Taushed." (Mühlmann)
[2] Via media, essentially meaning the middle road, is a philosophical concept deriving from the ancient Greek world and is said to be a learning promoted by Aristotle to seek wisdom through moderation (Chiaradonna et al. 183).

Holberg reshuffled past and present ideas, and though he was more definite in his didactic approach than Ibsen, both playwrights make it clear to their audiences that society must constantly alternate between dualisms. Ultimately, it is within this fluctuation that society can improve itself without requiring a "radical or revolutionary change", which Holberg strongly argued against (Mitchell 324).

Being a rationalist and a representative for the Enlightenment period, Holberg thus encouraged *via media* through his comedies and it is also the middle path that Erasmus ends up in when he finally has to give in to the ignorant ideas of his townspeople. However, these opposite ideas are Holberg's way of "listening to both sides of an argument" (324). Aristophanic pretense-reality is also visible especially in act four where Erasmus is being beaten by the lieutenant for his attitude and preaching of his knowledge. The lieutenant, literally and metaphorically, beats common sense into Erasmus and positions him onto the middle path. This act can be seen in the light of Aristophanic bodily sabotage of lofty speeches. Erasmus' studies in syllogisms are regarded as useless when compared to reality of life, where he cannot even defend himself in a situation that could easily have developed into a matter of life and death. Once again, low comedy is at work; contradictions function to unmask, mock and counteract hubris/pretension with ridiculous and absurd bodily images, just like with the hiccup scene in *An Enemy of the People*. It is highly ironic that the silly bodily representations work to downgrade and minimize highly intellectual ideas which were at their peaks during their time. Yet, it is this kind of powerful irony that Holberg and Ibsen strive to achieve in their own ways to represent the discrepancy of pretense-reality.

At the end of *Erasmus Montanus*, the protagonist admits that he has not been a pragmatic person in life and wishes that he had never studied. However, the middle road is emphasized again when the lieutenant says "if you are bound to pursue your studies [...] you go about them in some other fashion" (Holberg 37). Unlike Dr. Stockmann, Erasmus is willing to change and pursue the grey zone of both/and. Though there is critique of ignorance, religion and class, Holberg especially underlines what happens when these confront the other extreme of hubris and pedantry. As a result, one might say that there is the birth of counterargument which leads to counterbalance, change, constant regeneration. This essential subject matter was rather under-developed in Ibsen's first play in the cycle of dramas, i.e., *Pillars of Society*. However, it is gradually established in Ibsen's later dramas together with the theme of class/social hierarchy.

As shown, Dr. Stockmann and Erasmus are alike in many ways also regarding their underestimation of the middle class. Erasmus belittles the mob and deems them ill-equipped to have insight into the scholastic world and thus of society. In a dialogue he has with the deacon, Erasmus does not hesitate to leave his fiancée for the sake of standing his ground, and even strips the burgher of having any sense of understanding of such matters: "the common man, vulgus, will speak ill of it; but my commilitiones, my comrades, will praise me to the skies for my constancy" (Holberg 26). In like fashion, Dr. Stockmann wishes a revolutionary change

claiming that the mass, the majority "has the might – unhappily – but lacks the *right*" (Ibsen 356). Yet ironically, Erasmus is, at last, being instructed and placed on *via media* by the common man, the lieutenant:

> the first rule of philosophy is, Know thyself; and the further one advances, the lower opinion one should have of himself, and the more one should realize what there remains to be learned. (Holberg 37)

In this respect, Holberg is more explicit in his didactic approach which he delivers by way of comedy. Erasmus can therefore be considered a better masquerader than Dr. Stockmann. Despite knowing that the earth is not flat, Erasmus is willing to mask his belief to coexist with the townspeople. At the end of the play, he can appear in different personalities, constantly wavering between roles and avoid being categorized into a fixed extremity. To achieve this level of fluidity and adaptation, education is not the only required factor, as proven in the case of Erasmus, but also life experience which Holberg accentuates.

In contrast to Erasmus, Dr. Stockmann refuses to listen to the counterarguments of the mass and finally chooses to isolate himself while retreating "into a mythical existence by identifying himself with Prometheus" (Sohi 194). It becomes crucial for both Holberg and Ibsen to intertwine the Italian theatre form of *commedia dell'arte* in their plays as a way of revealing the true impostor and social order in a given society. Like a chameleon, the clown in *commedia dell'arte* is the one who has the ability to masquerade him/herself for the purpose of acclimatization. While the joker is considered to be the insignificant character in a given play, s/he through farce indicates another dimension that goes beyond pure entertainment. Indeed, behind the overly exaggerated performance, the clowns contribute to the exploitation of social corruption by way of simulating ideas and patterns of behavior (Fischer-Lichte 136).

The fool in the play is often represented by the common man, yet in a highly ironic way, the same fool contributes to twisting the social norms, turning the master-servant relationship upside down and eventually transforming society on a stage that reminds the reader of a proscenium arch. Fischer-Lichte further defines the stage in which *commedia dell'arte* is displayed as "an extraordinary realm of in-between [...] independent of any social relations and in ever new variations" (136). Social order in this type of theatre is constantly subject to change and modification and eventually, a new order is established after the chaos of the previous collapse. During the play, clowns appear not to be the actual "fools" then, only the spectators regard them in that way if they are unable to disentangle the underlying social criticism which in fact is their social reality. By the end of the play and within this tumult of everchanging relations, both actor and spectator should be able to achieve validation of self-identity (136).

In *Erasmus Montanus*, for instance, the protagonist appears to be the fool/clown, even when he is telling scientific truths to the mass. His exaggerated arrogance turns him into this grotesque figure and it becomes difficult not to laugh at his conduct. What makes Erasmus

different from Dr. Stockmann is his change of behavior at the end of the play where he at last masquerades himself with a different persona. Dr. Stockmann on the other hand, with his frantic efforts in persuading the mass, does not adapt to his surroundings nor does he allow the mass to argue against him. The similarity between Holberg and Ibsen's plays is quite clear. But where Holberg is more straightforward with his masquerading character, Ibsen saves Dr. Stockmann's dialectic change for his following dramas.

It is quintessential in *commedia dell'arte* not to identify the mask one is wearing and "what is behind the mask" (Velle 126). As such, rather than trying to figure out the true identity of the person wearing the mask, it is more crucial to observe the simulation of social order and the overturning of the master-servant relationship which the clown enacts on the stage of *commedia dell'arte*. Holberg sought to demonstrate his *ars critica* by introducing comical characters who would confront other examples of extremities. As a result of the conflict between two opposites, there would then be room for transformation which eventually could de-intensify the tension, thus making it possible to establish a new form of order.

Although Erasmus does not succeed in camouflaging himself to begin with, he, in the role of the clown, shakes the foundations of social beliefs, relationships, and exposes the ignorance of the townspeople through the collapse of social order. He then contributes to the reestablishment of a changed order by disguising himself in another persona. However, nothing is the same now as there has been a transformation of all characters in the play. In fact, both actors and audience can now reflect on this adjustment, for they should, according to Holberg, be able to evaluate society and themselves after the entertainment is over (Payne, Part II, 389).

With *Erasmus Montanus*, Holberg endeavored to bring enlightenment "to minds shut in and darkened", but this should happen with moderation not extremism (389). Likewise, Ibsen, who was greatly inspired by Holberg's satirical portrayals in his comedies, also applies similar techniques to convey social criticism – albeit in his own realistic, minimalistic and dialectic way (Mangang 1).

3.1 Irony and Aristophanic comedy in Ibsen's *Ghosts*

Ghosts also features Aristophanic elements of pretence-reality and to some extent even resembles *Erasmus Montanus* in terms of ignorance stemming from extreme religiosity. Just as religious beliefs are overturned in Holberg's comedy, so is it also in *Ghosts* in the form of pastor Manders, who throughout the play tries to convince Mrs. Alving and her son to live as dutiful and moral citizens in the name of law and religion (Ibsen 227). Like the townspeople in *Erasmus Montanus* whose knowledge of the world is driven by superstition and religion, Manders is also unable to stand up for his own beliefs independent of social ideas. Moreover, Manders' preaching during the story is ironically contradicted when he at the end does not object to Engstrand's suggestion of taking *his* blame for burning down the orphanage. After having argued for how to dedicate one's life entirely within the limits of duty, even if this meant sacrificing one's happiness in life, Manders and Engstrand decide to travel together

which is Ibsen's way of showing how the apparently "good" pastor partners up with the symbol of devil himself in the body of Engstrand.

Ibsen borrows this particular scene from Goethe's *Faust* to show the hypocrisy of Manders as an untrustworthy authoritative figure in society. Engstrand with his deformed leg symbolizes Mephistopheles, thus he is portrayed to be the immoral character in the play. Manders, however, is supposed to be the righteous one, yet Ibsen reverses the social ideas of a religious person and degrades his lofty position to the level of the most condemned figure in the eyes of a believing society, namely the devil. The description of seemingly opposite characters, who, after agreeing, cover up a serious deed together, serves Ibsen's purpose of ridiculing institutionalized knowledge. Pastor Manders' attempt to persuade Mrs. Alving to another lifestyle does not correspond to the way he acts at the end of the drama. Not only is Manders unable to stand for his own beliefs free from social ideas, but he also fails to stick to the ideals he has chosen to hide behind. The irony behind his name is also remarkable; it seems that Ibsen has put together the Dano-Norwegian expression "mande sig op", which means "to gather the courage" and to "man up" into one word: "Manders" (ordbogen.com). However, Manders acts just the opposite of what his name signifies for there appears to be an inconsistency in his supposed beliefs and actions. Manders' rigid bodily movements mirror his traditional ideas but Ibsen has incorporated Aristophanic satire in this play as well. Right after Manders says "Good-bye Mrs. Alving. And may the spirit of law and order soon dwell again in this house" the reader can sense his enthusiasm with the little dance he does just before leaving with the diabolical Engstrand (264). The extremities and contrasts of good and evil are evidently apparent to the extent that it provokes conflictual reactions.

The reader is left in surprise when Ibsen portrays the pastor leaving with the embodiment of Satan. But the intertextuality also presents two polarities in conflict with one another. Manders' bodily gestures play a significant role in showing oppositions for it serves the purpose of exposing that his pretence is in contrast with reality. Now that his hypocrisy is revealed to the reader, one can understand that even the morally good pastor, a symbol of a powerful institution and a character who is supposed to be most reliable in society, is brought down on such an absurd basis as silly bodily gestures.

Aristophanes' low comedy is thus also traced in *Ghosts* and the criticism of authority is analogous to *Erasmus Montanus*. Particularly, the scenes where the townspeople insist on the earth being flat and every argument against this belief is considered to go against the social norm. Erasmus' community does not accept to even consider the possibility of the earth being round. Although Erasmus is similar to Dr. Stockmann, the community is also like him in their way of behaving. They echo Dr. Stockmann's unshakeable attitude of steadfastness, believing that what they stand for is the unquestionable truth. Hence, Holberg places criticism on the institutionalized form of knowledge, be it ignorance or excessive knowledge, which in *Erasmus Montanus* appears through the shapes of religion, superstition and useless knowledge. In this

way, neither of the extremities are presented as likable, but only valid when counterbalanced through which order is recreated.

3.2 Counterargument against comical representations

Even though the first play, *Pillars of Society,* is still at its infancy stage when it comes to counterarguments, *An Enemy of the People* has clearer signs of such elements; in the subsequent speech Dr. Stockmann makes, the bodily interventions as signs of counterarguments are more clearly established. In *Hedda Gabler*, however, the reader is able to witness a counterargument against the comical representations in the drama; two historians, Løvborg and Tesman, are presented, where the former is depicted as eloquent while the latter comical. Hedda makes fun of Tesman's way of acting as well as his overly involved attitude in the study of "domestic handicrafts of Brabant in Middle Ages" (702). His exaggerated bodily gestures seem laughable for he is depicted to be a character who cares *too* much about embroidery and therefore of patch - and archival works. Hedda indirectly mocking him is obvious in her enactments, for instance, when she imitates his thrilled exclamations. Tesman's excitement about his slippers is also ridiculed and may seem too trivial a matter like the attention he gives for his hat and overcoat (753).

Løvborg's manuscript, on the other hand, is taken seriously and depicted as if it contained life itself. When it is torn into pieces, Mrs. Elvsted even says to Løvborg that "for the rest of my life it will seem to me as if you'd killed a little child" (760). Løvborg thus represents the Dionysian spirit who is above social rules, symbolizing vitality and regeneration. Is it then possible to argue that Aristophanic comedy applies to Tesman? For indeed his bodily gestures degrade his spoken and written words. Ibsen leaves this question for the reader to consider as with most of his challenging scenes that require a critical and observing approach. The following answer to the posed question is only one way of evaluating whether Aristophanic comedy applies to Tesman.

One can laugh at him but there is another aspect which Ibsen seems to raise regarding comical characters. They add important messages that demand serious considerations. Tesman's work is relevant for him and as a result people could respect it in line with other "significant" works of the time. Furthermore, he strives to write on local history rather than working on the master-narrative as Løvborg did. The supposedly "silly" man can therefore overturn the existing approach to history and introduce a new one by doing what seems to be simply "mediocre". However, it could be argued that Tesman's methodology is ahead of his time and thus valuable; it contains postmodern elements due to his intertextual style. Comedy therefore functions to negate old patterns of perceiving scholarly approaches while introducing the unconventional burgher as possessing an intellectual mind with significant perspectives. The academic understanding of history is challenged by the "goofy" Tesman whose first subject was to work with the cultural history of the seemingly insignificant craftwork of the Brabant tribe.

Laughing at the expense of comical characters therefore seems dubious here, for now the caricatured character has an important message to deliver, which is a new approach of perceiving society, history and culture. Behind his mask, there lurks a seriousness relevant not only for Tesman but for Ibsen's audience as well. Hence, like the intricate details in the embroidery of the Brabant culture, Ibsen also shows his readers the tiny detail with the two historians which he has interwoven by use of comical characters. It becomes crucial then to carefully interpret such signs before jumping to conclusions. Aristophanic low comedy is upended in *Hedda Gabler*, for the lofty person (Løvborg) is not simultaneously comical, as has been the case with the previous examples, but a highly respected individual.

Ibsen thus succeeds in showing that he does not belong to any literary style or convention, not even to Aristophanic comedy. Once more, he counteracts his modified ideas which he had utilized from other writers, showing that he works independent of any school of thought. Ibsen's methodology could therefore be seen as *his* way of counteracting, arguing and opposing sets of ideas to achieve synthesis, yet at the same time leaving the impression that an absolute synthesis is never possible. This is also what distinguishes Ibsen from Holberg because the former always seems to "be on the verge of interpretive synthesis", but right before reaching a sense of harmony, he would topple his previous ideas to introduce new ones (Rosengarten 463). While Holberg is more straightforward with his social criticism; his comedies are clearly spelled out for the audience in such a way that there is no doubt as to what he aims at.

The reader can also laugh at Erasmus' behaviour for like Tesman and Dr. Stockmann, he is not taken seriously. The crucial point is, however, at what or whose expense the audience is laughing at and whether there is a social message which can be drawn from underneath comical portrayals. It may be difficult to distinguish the seriousness of a presented issue when it is disguised in comedy. Yet, it would be deplorable if one were to overlook the particular signs which can lead to a deeper level of consciousness regarding one's social reality.

Erasmus' exaggerated approach where he arrogantly tries to instruct the townspeople overshadows his actual purpose. Tragically, he ends up being miserable, and having been tormented by the mass, he is forced to give in to the dominant belief, as Kierkegaard also once stated about this comedy: "I cry whenever I see or read *Erasmus Montanus*; he is right and suffers under the tyranny of the mass" (Undheim).[3] The townspeople in Erasmus' case may appear ignorant. However, like Tesman, they introduce a new approach to coexist in life, namely through *via media*. Even if the lieutenant's last speech resembles the rhetorical speeches in Ibsen's plays, his stance in society is also parallel to Tesman's, who represents the nobility of mind in the body of the "simple" burgher. Indeed, both sides have their flaws; Erasmus without proper knowledge of how to be a pragmatic man possessing useful knowledge, and the townspeople who insist on being ignorant. It would also be impossible to expect a flawless human being in search of dialectic "synthesis".

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[3] My translation from Danish: "Jeg græder, naar jeg seer eller læser *Erasmus Montanus*; han har Ret og ligger under for Massen." (Undheim)

While Erasmus seems to repeat the grand scale of approach to knowledge, the lieutenant, especially, offers a local and moderate way of adapting to one's social environment where, according to him, "a learned man ought particularly to be distinguished from others in that he is more temperate, modest, and considerate, in his speech than the uneducated" (Holberg 37). The lieutenant here implies that, Holberg, who is supposed to act rationally as he is an educated man, should be able to know how to communicate and apply his learned knowledge. The situation of the townspeople, on the other hand, can be understood to some extent for they do not have the burden of knowledge carrying on their backs. As a result, their behaviour may be excused for, although their lack of searching for knowledge is indefensible. But Erasmus' stance can be criticized even harsher because his duty is to convey what he knows properly. Failing to do this, he symbolizes a tragic person, utterly detached and alienated from society. Consequently, his way of communicating backfires on him, and after the final confrontation, he realizes what he needs to do. Hence, what seemed to be Erasmus' useful knowledge, is corrected with the lieutenant's interference, who is the epitome of being a person *via media*.[4] The existing social hierarchy is thus shaken to its core in Holberg's play when ironically the learned man is unable to fulfil his civic duty while the "unlearned" instructs him to the middle path. One should therefore be able to reflect on what/who is being laughed at and *why* to attain a broad understanding of social reality, which both Holberg and Ibsen strived to achieve. The individual should not merely gain an idea about social constructs by scratching the surface of the handled issues in the plays. On the contrary, it should be a part of one's experience to ponder what truly lies behind the surface of pretension and comical farce.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, comparative research on Holberg-Ibsen has been conducted to unravel how comedy works to challenge socio-cultural and political constructs. Both Scandinavian playwrights use similar comical techniques, though with literary variations, while going against the grain of the elitist approach to drama/comedy. Holberg and Ibsen seek to address not only the aristocracy but also the bourgeoisie on the stage of *commedia dell'arte*. Both succeed in breaking down the fourth wall to include the audience in their process of introspection and critical insights. For them, comedy can mirror societal relations which in most cases manifest themselves in extremities. Holberg's and Ibsen's reworked concept of *via media* is therefore a way to express how ideas and relations can be modified when they are in conflict with one another. Instead of being led by ideals and ideologies, Holberg and Ibsen promoted practicality in life whilst being in a constant state of change.

During this everchanging process, the literary themes of irony, satire, and hyperbole are needed to reproduce ideas for the sake of regeneration. At least, this is what Holberg and Ibsen asserted with their plays as both endeavoured to unveil and upend the existing social order(s).

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[4] The Lieutenant has studied "old Latin authors, and [...] natural law and moral problems" (Holberg 34). He expresses that studying is a continuous life process and is able to pragmatically apply his knowledge in social contexts.

Rejecting the idea of the absolute, both playwrights sought to oppose the practice of reflecting entirely in black-and-white terms, hence demonstrating that a *both/and* perspective enables the rise of counterargument. The thematic elements in their plays are not only limited to their era but can be considered timeless, which makes Holberg and Ibsen remarkable reformists in terms of rendering social issues by means of dramatic literature.

This research has attempted to interpret their multi-layered plays in combination with different comical features such as Aristophanes' low comedy and *commedia dell'arte* while displaying how both experiment with the idea of incongruity and oppositions. However, there is no final answer to the question of what the best form of ruling or being is, and what kind of perspective one should have on life. Rather, Holberg and Ibsen leave it open for the audience to draw his/her conclusions based on their experiences of the plays. Even the idea of conclusion is complex for what seems to be the ending can in fact be regarded as the rebirth of "something new" (Bentley 565).

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Rethinking the Relationship of Ethics and Interculturality: A Dialogue with Levinas and Butler

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Abstract

This paper aims to open the conceptualizations of difference, the other and the self as the key terms in the epistemology of interculturality into questioning in a dialogue with the ethical frameworks of Levinas and Butler. In this sense, the paper attempts to contribute to reformulating the idea of self and other within the scholarship of interculturality. Objecting to the Kantian ethics based on the reason and consciousness of the self with reference to its relation to the other, the paper adopts Levinas's notion of 'absolute otherness' which proposes encountering the Other in his unique and absolute difference beyond the consciousness of the self and without reducing it to the sameness of the self. The possibility of an ethical obligation on a global scale is also argued in the paper with particular reference to Butler's concepts of precariousness and vulnerability. Drawing on the idea of ethical obligation based on affect by Butler who built on the notion of otherness in Levinasian ethics, the paper endeavors to add a layer of affect to the discussion of ethics and interculturality in the proposed ethical framework.

Keywordss: Interculturality, Ethical Obligation, Levinas, Butler, the *Other*

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1. Introduction

> *The Other faces me and puts me*
> *in question and obliges me.*
> (**Levinas**, *Totality and Infinity*)

Current critical scholarship on interculturality and intercultural communication, which moves beyond unproblematized and simplistic categorizations and definitions towards more nuanced explanations of otherness, challenges us to rethink what the notions of *self* and *other* -as well as the *intercultural encounters* of the *self* and *other*- mean and how they might be re-conceptualized in all their complexities within the theories of interculturality. This attempt becomes more urgent in our time in which voluntary and/or reluctant encounters with *the other* occur more frequently than ever in the contexts of globalization, transnational mobilities, political conflicts etc. Such an endeavor of thinking over the relationship between *self* and *other* also requires to negotiate how *difference* should be positioned in the epistemology of interculturality. Drawing attention to a similar concern, Ferri asks if difference is the "gap between self and other that needs to be bridged through intercultural awareness and the exercise of tolerance" or it "connotes uniqueness, immanence and embodiment in the relation *self/other*" (2018a, p. 8). Indeed, the two questions pose a dilemma between "a dialogue for the reconciliation of differences" and "the dialogue interrupted irreconcilable differences" (Ferri, 2018a, p. 48); and between universalism and relativism.

Resonating with an understanding of difference which "connotes uniqueness, immanence and embodiment in the relation *self/other*", this paper intends (i) to engage with *difference* and the relationship between *self* and *other* by employing an ethical standpoint, and (ii) to offer that ethics – in the sense of a philosophical inquiry – needs to be incorporated into the epistemology of interculturality for a more elaborate account of *self-other* relation and positioning *difference* by going beyond the reductionist dualistic categorizations of self and other; and beyond the perception of difference as a negative oppositional construct (Warren, 2008, p. 295). The paper aims to contribute to the discussions of interculturality by advocating the necessity of the integration of a particular ethical perspective informed by Emanuel Levinas (1969, 1998), specifically by his theorization of *Other;* and by Judith Butler (2004, 2012) who builds on Levinas's ethical framework and seeks for the possibilities of a global ethical understanding with political implications by highlighting the concepts of precariousness and vulnerability. In

this respect, the paper serves as an attempt for an alternative understanding of *self* and *other* in intercultural communication, which exceeds reason, intentionality, consent and autonomy; and in which an ethical relation between *self* and *other* emerges through their corporeality and embodiment (Butler, 2012; Ferri, 2018b).

2. Approaching Interculturality within a New Framework of Ethics

There has been a shift in the understanding of interculturality from a mode of abstract competence and a set of skills to be acquired for a successful integration towards a more critical and a non-essentialist position (Holliday, 2011) in the last two decades. The former approaches have been intensely criticized for disregarding the power asymmetries and inequalities in their formulation of cultural difference and interculturality (see Dervin, 201; Ferri, 2014). Later critical approaches to interculturality and intercultural communication successfully discuss the complexities of such power asymmetries in the society and of ideology as a broader concept. Still, as underlined by MacDonald and O'Regan, intercultural communication discourse persists with the idea and the desire of transforming the intercultural consciousness; of leading to a permanent change in the mindset of the intercultural speaker to a more complete consciousness with the ultimate aim of a harmonious dialogue and an implied wholeness (2013, p. 1006-1007). This idea of wholeness is also pinned down in the thought of Derrida as the tendency of Western philosophy to completeness and fulfillment, which is called by Derrida as *metaphysics of presence*. In his thought of *metaphysics of presence*, a binary oppositions system includes an original signified which is identified as the truth with full presence and the other term is identified with reference to the loss of presence as the negative other (as cited in Ferri, 2018b, p. 50). In MacDonald and O'Regan's understanding, such an implied desire for a fuller intercultural consciousness and oneness is a disguised form of a desire to erase the difference between self and the other (p.1007). The strong claim of transformation of the mind is expected to result in an ideal of completeness, which reveals the drive "towards universal consciousness" in which difference is finally erased and "resolved in favor of a rationally ordered 'transcultural' totality" (p. 1008). MacDonald and O'Regan calls this desire for a universal consciousness as an aporia in the discourse of interculturality since presupposing oneness undermines the very premise of the ontology of interculturality, which is the "irreducible relation to the other" (p. 1008).

Critical intercultural research goes beyond the notion of intercultural competence to achieve the transformation of the consciousness and engages with intercultural responsibility (Guilherme et. al, 2010; Ferri, 2014, 2018a). Therefore, it mostly employs an "interventionist" position appealing to transcendental ideals of "social justice and emancipation" with an egalitarian agenda (MacDonald and O'Regan, 2013, p.1010). This endeavor of reaching social justice as a result of a transformed consciousness and the idea of responsibility bring an ethical layer to the discourse of interculturality as Ferri notes (2014, p. 12). The most prominent characteristics of such an understanding of ethics give particular emphasis to transcendental ideals of truth (i.e. an abstract universal common good) which can be reached through reason, a higher moral status, autonomous subject and self-mastery of the common morality (Morrison, 2018; Ferri, 2014; MacDonald and O'Regan, 2013). This type of Kantian ethics which represents the modernization project in the West relies heavily on the instrumental reason and abstract categories of moral imperatives. For this very reason, this "critical-transformational" approach in interculturality research has its own critiques and limits. MacDonald and O'Regan draw on a second aporia arising from the transcendental truth claims made in the critical interculturality discourse. They question what makes those moral truth claims "truer than others" and warn that such truth claims might easily construct an intercultural meta-narrative which has been criticized and rejected in the postmodern tradition by Lyotard (1979). In *the Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard refuses the idea of meta-narratives which is defined as totalizing and unifying accounts of the past; and which appeal to absolute, universal truths/values (Lyotard, 1979). MacDonald and O'Regan underline that the current critical approaches to interculturality and intercultural communication are "grounded in an implicit appeal to transcendental signified" and suggest that the unproblematically assumed universal notions such as democracy, harmony, respect, tolerance and equality need to be problematized within the discussions of interculturality (p. 1009).

In an ethical perspective which overemphasize the above-mentioned transcendental signified, a number of questions remain unasked and unanswered. How should difference and the relation between self and other be conceptualized when a particular focus on universal moral categories sustains? Is difference something to be overcome to achieve the universal uniformity? In an attempt to answer such questions, a number of scholars in and outside the field of intercultural communication have argued how ethics might function to integrate plurality and particularity with the concept of interculturality. For instance, Yin points to the

need for a "new form of ethics embracing rights and responsibilities (Alexander etal., 2014, p. 56). Suggesting an epistemological shift in the way we think the concepts of similarity and difference, she reminds the possibility of reconstructing "ethically sound" philosophies for a better world based on commonalities in diversity. In her view, Western individualistic ethics based on right-consciousness create a paradoxical conflict between liberty and equality. Therefore, she underscores that a duty or responsibility-based ethics needs to be established with an examination of non-Western cultural and philosophical traditions:

> Only with this new form of ethics can we speak of listening to the voices of
> marginalized cultures in their own cultural uniqueness as our moral obligations
> (p.61).

More nuanced engagements with ethics and interculturality are observable in the works of MacDonald and O'Regan (2013) and Ferri (2014, 2016, 2018b). Carefully examining the paradoxes of the ethical approaches within Western modernity tradition in their article *The Ethics of Intercultural Communication*, MacDonald and O'Regan criticize an unsaid but implied movement towards a universal consciousness and argue that such a tendency traps interculturality in the framework of *totality* and *metaphysics of presence*. To escape the binary thinking and dualities of Western ethical perspective, they engage in a dialogue with Derrida and Levinas to propose a different ethical ground for intercultural theory and praxis (2013, p. 1005). By drawing on Levinas and Derrida, the authors object to Hegel and his idea of oneness and universal consciousness; rather, they argue in favor of an "irreducible distance and separation between the self and the other" (p. 1005). Their conceptualization aims to construct an *ethics of responsibility* based on immanence and entailing the very presence and acts of the other rather than pointing to a Kantian transcendental moral signified. Following a similar path, Ferri also draw from the philosophical inquiry, Levinasian ethics in particular. Since she believes that an ethical approach to interculturality necessitates exceeding the disciplinary boundaries, she adopts an interdisciplinary perspective in which philosophical investigation is of utmost importance for "epistemological assumptions" and "ethical implications" of the concept of *interculturality* and intercultural dialogue (2016, p. 98). Ferri carefully distinguishes Levinasian ethics from Kantian ethnics, the former of which emerged in the context of Western Enlightenment and modernity, and the latter of which emerged within the framework of postmodern thought. By comparing and contrasting the two traditions, Ferri examines the formulation of other in Levinas's philosophy as an embodied and corporeal subject and aims

to move ethical understanding in intercultural communication from autonomy to heteronomy, from accusativity to subjectivity, from intentionality to non-intentionality, from consciousness to face (2014, 2016, 2018b). Another noteworthy study problematizing the relation between ethics and interculturality is Ucok-Sayrak's investigation of identity and otherness through the ethical framework of Levinas and his concept of absolute otherness (2016). Ucok-Sayrak's study deserves attention since she offers an illustration of *attending to the other* in the way that it was proposed in Levinasian ethics in an intercultural communication class. Her study reveals that a pedagogical implementation of Levinasian ethics and a discussion of his conceptualization of self-other relation in the intercultural communication class help students shift their perspectives from "the identity of the self that is for itself" to the "responsibility of one-for-the-other" (p. 137).

To pursue the goal of linking the theories of interculturality with an ethical framework, one should attentively revisit multiple theoretical strands, move beyond the disciplinary boundaries and point to new possible directions and integrations. With such an endeavor in mind, this paper attempts to integrate Levinasian ethics based on the other's face and Butler's ethics grounded on precariousness and vulnerability. Positioned in a postmodern standpoint and in line with Derrida, Levinas and Butler's understanding of philosophy on ethics, the paper discusses whether it is possible to think of an alternative critical and ethical engagement in the scholarship of interculturality, which will problematize the narrow conceptualization of ethics as a given abstract morality becoming accessible through the reason of the autonomous subject. In this respect, the paper shares MacDonald & O'Regan's and Ferri's concerns about the universalist discourse surrounding interculturality and follows their traces in the discussion of ethics and interculturality. By doing so, it will hopefully contribute to the discussions of ethics and interculturality by taking the affective dimension of ethics into consideration. The stance embraced in this paper places particular emphasis on the idea that the epistemology of interculturality should look closer at the negative, chaotic and even violent territory embedded in the intercultural praxis. Therefore, inspired by Butler's revisiting of Levinas, a further goal of the study is to question the possibility of a political ethics of affect which might pave the way for a global ethical understanding, the essential constituents of which are particularities, embodied subjects, face of the other, the *self*-called by the other and the very encounter of self and other.

3. Levinas: Absolute Otherness and Face

The most distinctive aspect of Levinas's ethical framework which later influenced Derrida and Butler is his radical critique of the Western philosophical tradition dominated by the autonomous moral self. In this tradition, an ethical understanding is initiated by the motivation of the self who is a rational being and act according to the moral categorical imperatives (Murray, 2000; Ferri, 2018b). In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas argues that this tendency is flawed since the other in this perspective is reduced to its perception by the self and defined according to the sameness:

> Western philosophy has most often been an ontology: a reduction of the other to the same by interposition of a middle and neutral term that ensures the comprehension of being (1969, p. 43)

This traditional, self-oriented ontology prioritizes "being before the existent", "ontology before metaphysics", "freedom before justice" and "a movement within the self before obligation to the other" (1969, p. 47). Within the ontology of sameness, any endeavor to know and relate to the other ends up with defining the other on the basis of the terms of the sameness and reducing the other to the very same, which -at the end- results in the totality (p. 47). Levinas rightly points to a binary ontological trap in which the self and other are oppositely positioned and in which the way of resolving this opposition or conflict between self and other becomes transforming the other into the same. Suggesting a reversal and subversion of the terms in the Western philosophy, Levinas's ethics crucially departs from the Western philosophical tradition by his displacing the autonomous self; redefining the other as the one who has priority over the self by its presence and building an ethical relationship of responsibility emanating from the other's call. For Levinas, the Other is the absolute other which is irreducible to the sameness; therefore, he speaks in favor of an ethics taking the irreducible Other into account. Irreducible Other cannot be defined, known or understood with the terms of the sameness. This uniqueness of the Other is called *absolute Otherness* by Levinas (1969):

> The metaphysical other is other with an alterity that is not formal; is not the simple reverse of identity and is not formed out of resistance to the same, but is prior to every initiative, to all imperialism of the same… The ***absolutely*** Other is the Other. He and I do not form a number… Over him I have no power. (emphasis mine) (1969, p. 38-39)

By claiming that the Other is absolutely, genuinely and infinitely other in its alterity, Levinas underlines that the absolute otherness independently exists prior to and beyond the self's actions and perceptions. Keeping this separate and absolute presence of the Other in mind, we can comment that a transformational attempt to turn the other into our sameness and the claims of a universal consciousness is far from realistic. If the Other "overflows every idea I have of him" as Levinas states (as cited in Ucok- Sayrak, p.127), the autonomy of the self gets displaced and questioned; in the relation between self and other, the focus shifts from the self's consciousness towards the Other's existence beyond the self's will and intentionality. In other words, ethics is placed beyond the terms of the self:

> Levinas dispenses with these preoccupations regarding ontology and defines ethics in terms of responsibility to the singular other through a radical move from the Kantian ideal of autonomy to the notion of passivity of the self exposed to the other. This displacement of the traditional concerns of metaphysical thought translates into a movement of positive desire towards alterity- the 'otherness' of the other. (Ferri, 2018b, p. 57).

However, one needs to note that Levinas does not try to ignore the existence of the self by conceptualizing the self within its passivity and by disrupting the predominance of the consciousness and willfulness of the self. On the contrary, he indeed makes room for the possibility of an ethical relation between self and the other in which self is obliged to act beyond its intentions, agency, willfulness or preferences by giving priority to the metaphysical Other's presence. The Other, with its existence and irreducibility to an object of the self's consciousness, disrupts the self and the limited boundaries of the self's consciousness. The self and its egoism are no longer relevant to its relation with the other. At this exact point, a relation, where the self upon the call of the Other can negotiate and co-construct meanings, becomes possible since the self is also constructed in and through its relation to the other. In contrast to the traditional Kantian ethics, however, this possibility of ethical relation does not emanate from a universal moral imperative reached through reason. It rather emerges from the Other. The ethical relation of self to the Other involves passivity and receptivity. The Other imposes an ethical demand on the self with its corporeality and *face*. This type of relationship in which the call of the Other with its face initiate the ethical relation is what is called an *ethical relation of responsibility* (MacDonald and O'Regan, 2013, p. 1015).

The concept of face holds a key role in the ethical framework of Levinas to fully understand the ethics of responsibility. How does the Other start an ethical call to the self? The Other imposes the obligation of responsibility on the self towards the Other by its corporeal and embodied presence, in other words by its *face*. The ethical relationship between the self and the other is inherent in the materiality of the Other. In an interview with Richard Kearney, Levinas expands his understanding of face:

> The approach to the face is the most basic mode of responsibility ... The face is not in front of me but above me; it is the other before death, looking through and exposing death… The face says to me: you shall not kill… To expose myself to the vulnerability of the face is to put my ontological right to existence into question. In ethics, the other's right to exist has primacy over my own, a primacy epitomized in the ethical edict: you shall not kill, you shall not jeopardize the life of the other. (in Kearney, 1986 / 2004, p. 75)

For Levinas, "the whole human body is.. more or less face" (as cited in Ferri, 2016, p. 102). The notion of face does not have to be exclusively a human face as noted by Butler, but it "communicates what is human, what is precarious, what is injurable" (2004, p. xvɪɪɪ). The responsibility towards the other occurs through the encounter with this immanent vulnerable corporeality of the Other *here and now*. The material presence of the Other functions as a reminder of the responsibility towards the Other to the self. In Levinas's own terms, "the Other faces me and puts me in question and obliges me" (1969, p. 207); therefore, the self becomes obliged to respond to this ethical call of non-violence which prioritize the existence. Put it another way, self finds itself responsible for the Other beyond its own consciousness and perception, which make every subject in the world responsible to each other even though they do not know and will not know each other.

One might immediately realize that the notion of the face here adds a layer of affect and sentiment to the discussion of ethics. Upon the call of the Other, the self negotiates itself in its relation to the Other as a sentient being rather than constructing itself within the limits and terms of its own reason. A second realization which have significant implications for intercultural communication is that his idea of ethical relation is a mode of "intersubjectivity" (Bergo, 1999, p. 1), in which two parties, in their own singularities and independent existences, construct and negotiate their own subjectivities in their ethical encounter. The discussion of

abstract common good, hence, is removed from the discourse of ethics. The third implication is that by giving the Other primacy over the self, Levinas theorize an absolute and binding ethics which is unconditional yet not reciprocal since reciprocity implies a bargain and change of position depending on the Other's behavior (Butler, 2012, p. 140). This implication gives us a perspective critically to revisit the reciprocal self-other relationship predominating the discourse of interculturality and offer instead a framework of ethics in which "we are bound to those we do not know and even those we did not choose… and that these obligations are precontractual" (Butler, 2012, p. 140).

4. Butler: Towards a Political Ethics of Affect on a Global Scale

In a dialogue with Levinas and his ethical perspective, Butler adopts an ethical understanding with an attentive discussion of the body, its precariousness and vulnerability (2004, 2012). Butler's engagement with ethical sphere is of vital importance since she opens a path where she challenges us to rethink the political and the ethical together with her discussion of the precariousness of the body. Similar to Levinas, Butler's understanding of what the ethical sphere encompasses contrasts with the ethics of modernity. Positioned in phenomenological and post-structural thought, Butler's ethics based on the effects of singularity, precariousness, grief and loss allows her to seek the possibilities of global ethical obligations with reference to current politics of war and violence. As opposed to scholars such as Mouffe who strictly argues that ethics need to be kept separate from politics and rejects "the political... within the moral register" (2005, p. 5); Butler asks if "any of us have the capacity or inclination to respond ethically to suffering at a distance and what makes that ethical encounter possible, when it does take place" (2012, p. 134). Morrison explains that the objections of Mouffe to integrate an ethical perspective in politics results from her narrow conceptualization of ethics in which she defines ethics in a reductionist and limited way as "a dogmatic adherence to non-negotiable system of common moral norms" (Morrison, 2018, p. 530, 539). However, Butler's perspective is far from framing ethics as a sum of normative moral codes. She, on the contrary, builds her ethics on the concept of the "unconditional" as Levinas and Derrida do. For her, the ethical is comprised of an unconditional obligation to respond to the Other. And this type of ethical obligation exceeds the national, linguistic and territorial boundaries. Therefore, she problematizes the ethical position taken on the basis of the condition of *proximity* or *nearness*. To her, the idea that the ethical relation becomes binding only when one knows or has the possibility of knowing the other is very flawed:

They valorize nearness as a condition for encountering and knowing the other and so tend to figure ethical relations as binding upon those whose face we can see, whose name we can know and pronounce, those we can already recognize, whose form and face are familiar… And yet, it seems to me that something different is happening when one part of the globe rises in moral outrage against actions and events that happen in another part of the globe, a form of moral outrage that does not depend upon a shared language or a common life grounded in physical proximity. (2012, p. 134-135).

Her idea of unconditional ethics rejects any type of presumptions and conditions and requires one's responsiveness and answerability to uncalculated and spontaneous demands. The idea of responsiveness and draws on the fact that "ethical responsibility presupposes ethical responsiveness" (as cited in Ucok-Sayrak, 2016, p. 130). To be able to speak of a global ethical obligation, she asks a number of provoking questions: Does one carry the responsibility for something happening very far from him/her? Does one have to take responsibility when s/he does not suffer from something? (2012, p. 136). To address such questions, she refers to Levinasian ethics and recalls that the self is obliged by the Other whom the self never preferred to encounter or know. Reminding that it is almost impossible to see the face of someone (the other) whom we do not know or do not choose to see by means of the media, Butler states that ethical obligations cannot be reduced to "neither consent nor communitarianism" (p. 138). If we cannot reduce ethical obligation to such dynamics, how do we need to reformulate the ethical obligation to ethical demands? The answer to this question is embedded in Levinasian ethics and his formulation of the ethical relation which start upon the call of the face of Other with its presence. In other words, one needs to leave the *possessive I* and the *egological* perspective.

Butler adds to Levinasian ethical perspective by building upon the concept of precariousness. For Butler, we are precarious and vulnerable bodies "exposed and attached to others" (as cited in Ucok-Sayrak, p. 129). Her conceptualization of the body points to bodily life as a site where ethical claims can emerge from. For her, precariousness and vulnerability might transform the understanding of the other and the political arena where "certain human lives are more vulnerable than others, and thus certain human lives are more grievable than others" (Butler, 2004, p. 30). In this sense, precarity is inescapably political. This brings us to a further question: Is there a possibility in precarity to formulate and ethical obligation that

might transform the political? Butler positively responds to this question. She draws our attention to the very possibility of a struggle in favor of "a conception of ethical obligation that is grounded in precarity" (2012, p. 148). The primary condition for understanding cohabitation is to understand that a generalized precarity of ethically obligates us to "sustain life on egalitarian terms" (p. 148). For Butler, precarity and vulnerability are significant resources for opening to an ethical relation:

> We struggle in, from, and against precarity. Thus, it is not from pervasive love for humanity or a pure desire for peace that we strive to live together. We live together because we have no choice, and though we sometimes rail against that unchosen condition, we remain obligated to struggle to affirm the ultimate value of that unchosen social world, an affirmation that is not quite a choice, a struggle that makes itself known and felt precisely when we exercise freedom in a way that is necessarily committed to the equal value of lives. (2012, p. 150)

In Butler's view, the ethical obligation that she underscores all along might emerge even when the cohabitation is not voluntary. Indeed, what she tries to manage in her ethical sphere is to achieve a mode of cohabitation which originates from the ethical obligation that she conceptualizes. For achieving such cohabitation, one needs to comprehend that the things happen "here", happen "there" as well. Therefore, here and there are reversible. Grasping this reversibility might lead us to better understand the shifting global connections.

5.   In Lieu of Conclusion

This paper has attempted to highlight that it is possible to engage in an alternative reformulation of the relation of the self and the other within a Levinasian ethical framework. In his book *Interculturality in Education: A Theoretical and Methodological Toolbox,* Dervin touches upon the need for the Intercultural Competence (IC) discourse to deal with the "discomfort, to appreciate entering risky territory, and to accept that some degree of 'pain' is involved in dealing with intercultural encounters" (2016, p. 83). The main concern of this paper has been to problematize this *risky territory* and question if an ethical framework might function to realistically comprehend the nature of the interculturality which is far from the ideal in our time. In today's world which is surrounded by new forms of domination and inequality caused by power asymmetries, political agendas and ideologies, the question of how difference

need to be conceptualized and practiced remains to be problematic. For this very reason, Butler asks why some lives matter more and are worth grieving while others are ungrievable, unspeakable and unhearable. As Dervin notes, the IC discourse has the desire for "interculturally correct" situations (p. 83). As explained in the first section of the paper, this desire results in a transformational agenda where the Other is approached as someone to be turned into the sameness of the self in favor of an imagined and interculturally correct scenario in the form of a universal completeness. The critically alone does not suffice all the time to discuss difference and the Other.

Therefore, the paper tries to incorporate a layer of 'ethics of affect' to the discussions of interculturality rather than employing an ethical perspective emerging from the reason and consciousness of the self. However, one should note that adopting this understanding of the ethical does not come without its difficulties. As Ferri underlines, "the discovery of the self as a sentient being" might imply a trauma for the self (2016, p. 115). Or, as Butler writes, it is not an easy task to both "feel vulnerable to destruction by the other" and yet "feel responsible for the other" at the same time (2012, p. 141). Such paradoxical feelings are commonly observed in the settings of intercultural communication. However, it is important to remind that paradox constitutes the very spot from where the potential of ethical relation rises. This relation is never a virtue of the self. Echoing Levinas, it should be highlighted once more that we are established and defined by that very relation. Such an interdependency of the self and other is what leads to the ethical obligation for cohabitation on a global scale.

Disclosure Statement

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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Authorial Stance in Academic Writing by EFL Arab Postgraduates

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Abstract

Several studies have focused on the use of stance, particularly in linguistic-based writing research. However, adopting an assertive stance toward the research being reviewed or reported is considered a challenging task for second language writers. Therefore, this study aims at exploring the use of stance in the introductory chapters of EFL Arab postgraduates' theses employing SFL approach at UniSZA. Data were collected qualitatively based on 22 introductory chapters of doctoral and master theses. The writers' stance was analysed using the SFL approach, whereas the interviews were analysed manually. The findings showed frequent and different use of finite modal operators, less and different use of adjuncts expressing modalisation and other purposes, and less frequent use of comment adjuncts and subjective, rather than the objective orientation of the soft and hard domains. The findings revealed that many participants showed unfamiliarity with the use of modality markers and appropriate social and linguistic conventions. The study concluded that authorial stance is very important to be explicitly taught to postgraduate students to enrich the quality of academic writing. This study provides significant resources for academic writing instructors, supervisors, and academic writers.

Keywords: academic writing, authorial stance, SFL, EFL Arab students, qualitative

1. Introduction

Stance can be seen as an attitudinal dimension and contains structures that indicate the ways writers introduce themselves and convey their judgments, opinions, and commitments. It is the way that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their engagement (Hyland, 2005b, 2018). A great focus has been on the authorial stance in academic writing, particularly in linguistics-based writing research (Gray & Biber, 2012; Hyland, 2012; Liu, 2013; Hamoy, 2014; Akinci, 2016). Besides, many categories have been employed to reflect stances like appraisal (Martin & White, 2005), evaluation (Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Cheung, 2017), metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005c; Vande Kopple, 1985), evidentiality (Chafe & Nichols, 1986; Rhee, 2016), and positioning (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999; Chiluwa, 2017). Consequently, stance has been shown as an essential concept that deserves to be tackled seriously

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(e.g., Hood, 2004; Hyland, 2004; Gross & Chesley, 2012; Ağçam, 2015). Varied studies have been conducted on the authorial stance (Chang & Scheppegrell, 2011; Gray & Biber, 2012; Hyland, 2012; Hyland & Guinda, 2012; Liu, 2013; Hamoy, 2014; Chang, 2015; Akinci, 2016; Jomaa & Bidin, 2017; Hyland & Jiang, 2018; Jomaa & Alia, 2019; Alia, Jomaa & Yunus, 2020). These studies have explored the authorial stance adopting several taxonomies by Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen (1993), Thompson and Tribble (2001), Hyland (1999), and Hyland (2005a). However, adopting an assertive stance toward research being reviewed or reported is considered a challenging task for second language writers (Hood, 2010; Chang & Schleppegrell 2011; Gray & Biber, 2012). In addition, a common reason for second language writers to write less successfully is ascribed to their lack of linguistic and discursive resources (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Gray & Biber, 2012). Besides, studies on the perspectives of postgraduate students have not been investigated widely excluding Jomaa and Bidin (2017) who combined the functional analysis of the authorial stance in academic writing under SFL and exploring the perspectives of participants about the authorial stance under New Rhetoric Studies. Therefore, this study explores the use of metadiscourse markers by EFL Arab postgraduates utilizing the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach.

2. Literature review

Adopting an authorial stance forms a central issue to the interaction between writers and readers, and argues for the significance of his or her research. Writers should adopt interactional and evaluative positions in presenting informational content. Since the level of personality in a text is crucial to maintain successful interaction with readers and establish a convincing argument, writers annotate their claims explicitly or implicitly to correspond with the context and the audience's mentalities. The preliminary characterization of academic stance, thus, brings to light some of the rhetorical knowledge needed for effective argument in various disciplines. Writers need to engage with the readers' expectations and convince the readers to accept their views (Swain, 2007). Thus, academic literacy practices entail complex power relations in which negotiating identities in writing is often considered challenging for novice writers (Chang, 2010; Cheung, 2017; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Tardy, 2012; Hood, 2010; Ağçam, 2015; Hyland & Sancho Guinda, 2012). In one of the studies, Hamoy (2014) showed that the participants were incapable to form a voice consistent with the Western academic writing, and he suggested some changes to the existing ESL pedagogical practices to better prepare academic studies at the university level. Besides, a study conducted by Akinci (2016), aiming at the disciplinary differences and academic level of the writer, found that participants made use of several expressions of stance. Polarity, as explained in (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), "is the opposition between positive (It is. Do that!) and negative (It isn't. Don't do that!)" (p. 172). Modality, on the other hand, can be explained as the speaker's judgment, or request of the judgment of the listener, on the status of what is being said (It could be. Couldn't it be?). Polarity and Modality are realized through the Mood element, either through the Finite element (It is/ It isn't; It is/ It must be) or through a separate mood Adjunct (It is/ It is not; It is/ It certainly is). Interpersonal judgments, or assessments, however, extend beyond the 'core' grammatical system of modality to include assessments of temporality and intensity realized like modality through mood Adjuncts (e.g. It is/ It already is/ It almost is). There are also other

types of assessments beyond the mood itself that relate either to the proposition being exchanged (e.g. Fortunately it is: 'it is, which is fortunate') or to the act of exchanging it (e.g. Frankly it is: 'I'm telling you frankly it is')(Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). MOOD and RESIDUE. MOOD involves the 'Subject' and the "Finite', whereas the RESIDUE consists of a 'Predicator', a 'Complement', and an 'Adjunct'

As stated by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), polarity is a choice between yes and no, but there are intermediate degrees that reveal that these are not the only possibilities. These degrees can be described as different sorts of indeterminacy that fall in the middle like 'sometimes' or 'maybe'. These intermediate levels, between the positive and negative poles, are known collectively as MODALITY. What the modality system does is to construe the region of uncertainty that lies between 'yes' and 'no'. Novice students consider adopting a stance, enacting a stance and voice towards authoritative texts, and evaluating knowledge highly challenging (Cheung, 2017; Hyland, 2009). Hyland (2009), for example, reveals that the experience of facing the challenge of enacting stance and voice in academic writing is authentic, especially in some non-native English cultures. This often leads to confusion among students, which is reflected in novice writers' writing. These challenges implicate varying expectations on how identity and authority should be negotiated. The lack of exposure to meaning-making resources for expressing stance forms another difficulty (Wharton, 2012).

Dreyfus et al. (2016) also state that academic literacy support usually concentrates on lower levels of lexical and grammatical features, such as format, vocabulary, and tense use. Thus, this leads to detaching language use from its functions in the context. Such detachment often results in obscurity in how rhetorical demands of the tasks can be achieved in academic writing, especially the complex nature of showing stance and voice. These conceptions show the importance of stance in academic writing, which is interactive and dialogic between the writer, the reader, and other intertextual voices and a reflection of the authoritative identity. Effective management of interpersonal meaning for expressing stance and voice is one of the keys to achieving success in academic writing (e.g. Lee, 2015; Swain, 2010; Thomas, 2014). Tardy (2012) adds that stance and voice are not simply the property of the author, but they are parts of all texts and created by the social contexts that the author works within. These viewpoints show that academic writing instruction demands more interest in the discursive manifestation of stance.

In the investigation of stance devices across two parameters: disciplinary differences and academic level of writers, Akinci (2016) conducted her study based on a corpus of 39 academic research articles. This comparative study, following Hyland's (2005b) framework, investigated whether four categories of stance features (hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions) show any likenesses or contrasts across the disciplines of Civil Engineering and Applied Linguistics and student and expert writing. The findings revealed cross-disciplinary differences in terms of the recurrence of stance markers. More specifically, Applied Linguistics research articles contained more stance markers than those in Civil Engineering with an extensive discrepancy, particularly

in utilizing self-mentions. However, comparing the hard and soft domains needs to be tackled more widely by including more disciplines.

Another study was conducted by Akbas (2014) which investigated how postgraduate academic writers from specific contexts express their academic stance and voice by employing a set of linguistic devices. The findings stressed the significance of the language factor in displaying commitment detachment across groups. In addition, the Turkish L1 writers and the Turkish writers of English seemed to express less personal academic prose compared with the native writers. This appeared to reflect a cultural distinction. In terms of the authorial roles determined in relation to the accompanying verbs, the postgraduates are inclined to occur in their discourse mostly as research conductors, secondly by discourse creator and participant, then opinion holders. The rhetorical role of signifying the membership of the postgraduates to a community was the least frequent role taken by them in their discussion chapters.

Another notable study was conducted by Aull and Lancaster (2014) utilizing corpus methods to inspect linguistic devices of stance in more than 4,000 argumentative essays composed by first-year university students in comparison with the writing of higher-level undergraduate students and published academics. In spite of differences in students' educational settings, the results displayed linguistic stance markers shared across the first-year works, with larger differences rising between first-year writers and advanced writers. The specific aspects of the stance that indicate a developmental trajectory are approximative hedges/ boosters, code glosses, and adversative/ contrast connectors.

In the Malaysian context, a study was conducted by Lo, Othman and Lim (2020) to address the disciplinary metadiscourse gap. This recent study, quantitatively and with a corpus-based approach, explored, described, and compared how eight Malaysian first-year ESL doctoral students across four research areas in education employed the disciplinary metadiscourse. The study focused on the frequency of three dimensions of academic discourse in their writing, which are textual, engagement, and evaluative. The results of this analysis showed that, among the three dimensions in written work, the engagement was the lowest, reinforcing the argument that first-year ESL doctoral students are less experienced at using textual metadiscourse, and frequency of all three dimensions of academic discourse in their writing differed across time between first written drafts and the final written drafts. Consequently, it can be implied that teaching and learning disciplinary metadiscourse should include an explicit explanation, demonstration, and practice of its use in the academic writing process. Similarly, Jomaa and Bidin (2017) conducted a study to explore the perspectives of students on citing information challenges. Participants showed that they face challenges in adopting a stance towards the information cited. The researchers conducted discourse-based interviews after analysing students' literature review chapters. However, this study was limited to students from one discipline which is Information Technology. Comparing the hard and soft domains, however, needs to include more disciplines such as IT, Economics, linguistics, etc.

Another recent study by Alia, Jomaa, and Yunus (2020) was conducted to explore the use of metadiscourse in the abstracts of 100 journal articles published in ten scopus-indexed journals listed as the top free access journals based on the Scientific Journal Ranking (SJR) website. Five journals belong to the hard domain, whereas the other five journals belong to the soft domain. The Systemic Functional Linguistics approach (SFL) was adopted to analyse the frequency and wordings of modality within the 100 abstracts. Data were analysed manually qualitatively and quantitatively in order to highlight the possible similarities and differences between the abstracts of the hard domain and the soft one. The findings showed that the writers of both sets of abstracts employed finite modal operators, verbs, mood adjuncts, and comment adjuncts in expressing modality. These metadiscourse markers expressed different types, value, and orientation regarding modalization and modulation. Consequently, these findings could be employed pedagogically to equip novice writers with the linguistic skills that basically contribute to their academic success in writing academic genres.

In recent years, much attention has been paid to expressing stance and voice in academic written texts (Gray & Biber, 2012; Hyland, 2012; Hamoy, 2014; Akinci, 2016**;** Liu, 2013). Managing stance and voice, however, is often considered challenging for novice writers (Chang, 2010; Cheung, 2017; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Tardy, 2012; Hood, 2010; Hyland & Sancho Guinda, 2012**)**. The challenge mainly results from factors such as cultural differences, lack of exposure to interpersonal meaning-making resources, and resistance to the teaching voice. Though metadiscourse analysis has received much attention in various contexts, few studies have focused on disciplinary metadiscourse (Lo, Othman & Lim, 2020), particularly the modality used in dissertations under the Systemic Functional Linguistic approach (Jomaa & Alia, 2019). Moreover, university students (Donahue, 2004; Morton & Storch, 2018) particularly EFL postgraduates (Jomaa & Bidin, 2017) seem to have difficulties in academic writing, especially the Arab postgraduates at UniSZA (Almatarneh, Rashid & Yunus, 2018), in adopting a stance and projecting their voice due to having insufficient guidelines on using evaluative expressions and/or being unaware of using metadiscourse markers. Therefore, this study explores the use of metadiscourse markers by EFL Arab postgraduates utilizing the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach.

3.Research methodology

The current study employed a qualitative approach to enable the researcher to understand the authorial stance as shown and experienced by the participants when writing their Ph.D. and MA theses in English. In order to answer the research questions, a need arises for a research design. Creswell (2009) refers to research design as "*the plan or proposal to conduct research, involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods*" (p. 5). The current study followed the qualitative method as the research is categorized by the way it is designed to gather and analyze data in order to reach the intended results. Qualitative research has the tendency to be more exploratory in nature; it aims at providing insights into how individuals, groups, or organizations understand aspects of their worlds. Furthermore, Burns and Grove (2001) indicate

that a good research design supports researchers to plan and implement the study in a way that helps them address the research objectives.

3.1 Sampling

The sampling of the current study consisted of participants chosen purposefully to get rich information about this research (see Table 1). Therefore, twenty-two Arab postgraduate students who are conducting their studies at UniSZA from different colleges participated in this study. The participants come from different Arab countries; Syria, Yemen, Egypt and mostly from Jordan. The participants' first language is Arabic. The introductory chapters of 22 Arab Ph.D. and Master students' theses, who are studying at UniSZA and had already defended their proposals, were analysed.

Table 1 displays the profiles of Arab Ph.D. and Master students.

Table 3. 1 Participants' profiles

Student	Nationality	Major	MA/PhD	Pages	Words	Gender
S1	Egypt	Islamic Education	MA	17	4040	Male
S2	Egypt	Islamic Education	MA	19	3925	Male
S3	Jordan	Chemistry	MA	4	938	Male
S4	Syria	IT	PhD	13	3085	Male
S5	Syria	Linguistics	MA	8	1901	Male
S6	Syria	Linguistics	MA	7	1974	Male
S7	Yemen	IT	PhD	14	2550	Male
S8	Jordan	Economics	PhD	21	4776	Male
S9	Jordan	Design	MA	14	3038	Male
S10	Jordan	Design	MA	11	2845	Male
S11	Syria	Applied Linguistics	PhD	18	4110	Male
S12	Syria	Applied Linguistics	PhD	20	4169	Male
S13	Jordan	Literature	PhD	28	5895	Male
S14	Jordan	Economics	MA	8	1894	Male
S15	Jordan	Economics	MA	12	2545	Male
S16	Jordan	Applied Linguistics	PhD	20	4166	Male
S17	Jordan	Economics	PhD	14	2496	Male
S18	Syria	Pharmacy	MA	7	1755	Male
S19	Syria	Applied Linguistics	MA	6	1443	Male
S20	Egypt	Pharmacy	MA	6	1511	Female
S21	Syria	Maths	MA	7	1681	Male
S22	Jordan	Maths	PhD	11	2700	Male

3.2 Data collection

A step in the process of qualitative research is gaining data that address the research questions posed. In qualitative research, researchers usually pose general, broad questions to participants and allow them to share their opinions comfortably (Creswell, 2012). Researchers can collect various types of information and may add new forms of data during the study to answer their questions. In the current study, the document analysis technique was used to collect data. It is considered a valuable source of information in qualitative studies. As Creswell states, documents involve "public and private records that qualitative researchers obtain about a site or participants in a study, and they can include newspapers, minutes of meetings, personal journals, and letters." (p. 223). By employing these techniques, the researcher can get useful information that allows him or her to understand the phenomenon under exploration. Moreover, such methods help the researcher gain documents that represent a good source for text (word) data for a qualitative study. The introductory chapters of 22 participants were analysed to detect authors' stance using modality under Systemic Functional Linguistics. Under modality, both modalisation and modulation were detected to reveal certainty, usuality, obligation, and inclination.

3.3 Data analysis

The researchers utilised two strategies for organizing and analyzing the data which are the manual analysis strategy, and the office word process. The analysis of data began after the first document was collected. The researcher read the introductory chapters of the participants three times and highlighted modality markers used by participants. The markers then were included in a table designed by the researcher following Halliday and Mathiessen's modality framework. The researcher read the documents and coded the items manually to assure including the items that reflect modality only.
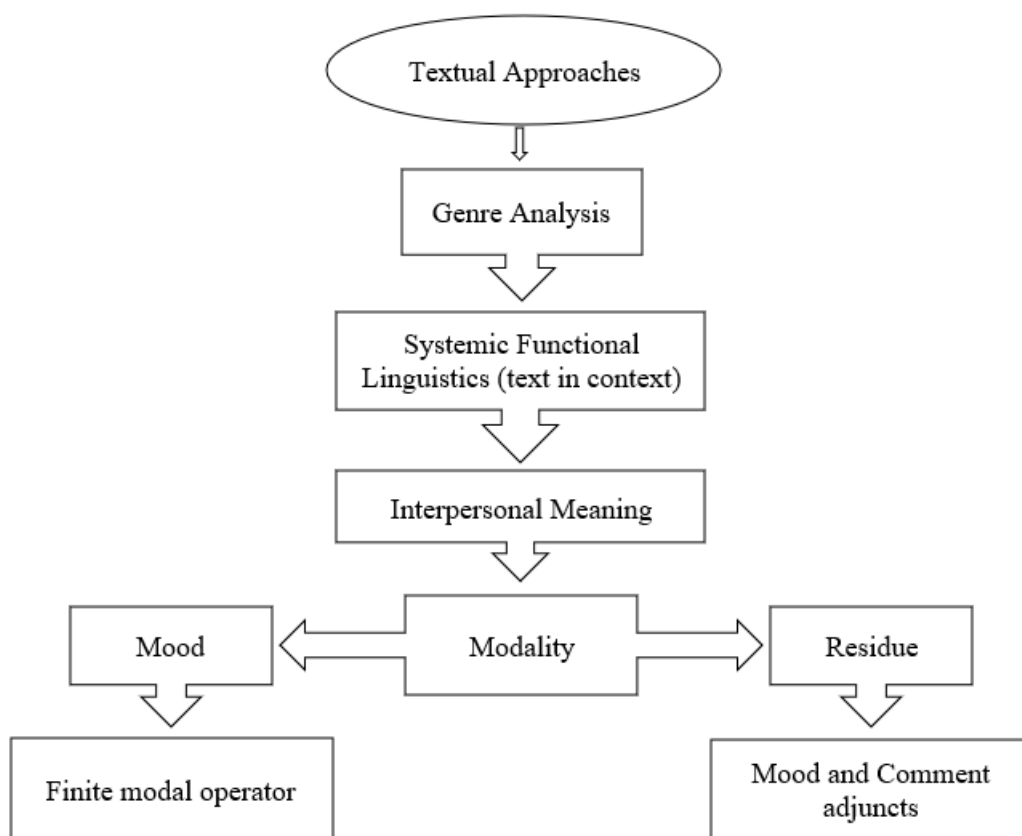
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Text is the production of people's speaking or writing, and text is what the audience draw in and interpret. The term 'text' denotes any instance of language, in any medium, that can be understood by a person who knows the language; it is preferable to describe a text as language functioning in context. Hence, language is a resource for making meaning and text is a process of producing meaning in context (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Providing a thick and rich description of the settings, participants and themes could be considered a procedure for establishing credibility in this study. To utilize this technique for establishing credibility, the researchers employed a constructivist perspective to contextualize the people or sites studied by using thick descriptions in writing and providing all the possible details.

4. FINDINGS

The results can be summarised in Table 2 showing the components of the clauses that included modality markers, constituents used to express modality and their frequencies, and the value of modalisation and modulation. The number of the modality markers equals the number of the

clauses analysed. Table 4.1 shows the findings of the markers expressing modality based on 22 introductory chapters produced by the 22 participants.

Table 2. Stance markers by EFL postgraduates

Clause components: MOOD and RESIDUE				
Finite modal operators	Mood adjuncts for modalisation	Mood adjuncts	Comment adjuncts	Verbs and Adjectives
modalisation (71.78% /379) and modulation (28.22% /149)	usuality (81.9% /86) and probability (18.1% /19)	presumption (8.3% /27), time (20.4% /66), degree (45.7% /148) and intensity (25.6% /83)	146	Few
Value: high, median and low				

The findings related to the analysis of the chapters of EFL Arab postgraduates are introduced which include mainly MOOD and RESIDUE. MOOD involves the 'Subject' and the "Finite', whereas the RESIDUE consists of a 'Predicator', a 'Complement', and an 'Adjunct'. The constituents found to express modality are finite modal operators, mood adjuncts for modalisation, various mood adjuncts other than modalisation, comment adjuncts, and few verbs and adjectives. The value of modalisation and modulation ranged from high, through median to low. Table 3. presents sentences extracted from students' introductory chapters showing the components of the clause.

Table 3. Examples of the components of the clause

		Example 1	Example 2
Mood	Subject	Drama	Building owners
	Finite	may	Should
Residue		remind us of certain acts …	put more effort into caring …
		(S1/ Egy/ IE /Pg.7/ Pr.1/ L.9)	*(S10/ Jor/ ID/ Pg.4/ Pr.6/L.2)*

The examples in Table 3. show that the components of the participants' clauses are mainly two, mood and residue. The two components of the mood are the subject and the finite.

4.1. Mood Component of the Clause

The MOOD component of the clause consists of two constituents which are the 'Subject' and the 'Finite', as in the following examples in Table 4.

Table 4. The Mood Component Examples

Mood	Subject	**Example 3** **In addition, the increased functions and total system transparency approach**	**Example 4** **Readers of Kafka's biography**
	Finite	**will**	**May**
Residue		**make it easier for top management to control processes**	**notice two simple facts**
		(S17/ Jor/ M/ Pg.5/ Pr.2/ L.4.5)	*(S13/ Jor/ Lit/ Pg.6/ Pr.2/ L.1)*

The second essential constituent of the MOOD in full declarative clauses is the 'Finite', which is the verbal type element. The functional role of the 'Finite' is to make the proposition definite and arguable. In other words, the 'Finite' is used to express modalisation (probability/certainty) and modulation (obligation/inclination). The next example demonstrates the 'Finite' as a constituent in the clause.

Table 5. shows the number and frequencies of using the 'Finite' to express modality in the documents collected.

Table 5. The Use of 'Finite' Modal Operators by EFL Arab Postgraduates

Modality	Finite	
	F	**%**
Modalization (probability and usuality)	379	71.78%
Modulation (obligation and inclination)	149	28.22%
Total	528	

The first chapter of students' theses and dissertations showed different occurrences of the use of finite modal operators to express modalisation and modulation (71.78%) and (28.22%), respectively.

Figure 2. below demonstrates the use of finite modal operators in numbers in each work. The highest occurrences of the finite modal operator were recorded in the chapters of S 2, S 13, S 8 and S 16, and they were as follows: 62, 61, 60 and 45, respectively. The other chapters showed different numbers ranging from 2 to 30. These results can be ascribed to many reasons. First, the participants got different levels of familiarity with the employment of the finite modal operators as a modality marker. Secondly, these conclusions may reveal the influence of tenor that is represented by the authors of each domain, the soft and the hard (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Martin, 1993; Eggins, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Jomaa & Alia, 2019). Thus, the

highest occurrences belong to the participants who belong to the soft domain rather than the hard domain as shown in the next figure, which presents the use of finite modal operator to show stance in each participant's introductory chapter. This can be ascribed to the authors' tendency to make their discussion arguable.

Morton and Storch (2018) revealed the same result. In other words, their findings showed that students in the social sciences and humanities used more 'self-mentions' compared to students from the hard sciences due to the epistemological differences of the disciplines. The participants in the current study expressed many concerns about stance-taking. They reflected a lack of adequate knowledge in the implications of using the finite modal operators (Bartley & Hidalgo-Tenorio, 2016) which can express modality (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

The following examples show the use of the finite modal operator in some students' chapters.

(5) Specialists in the educational realm **can** benefit from this Islamic worldview about moral values and ethics. (S1/ Egy/ IE/ Pg.23/ Pr.3/ L.2)

(6) No matter how tactful a student is, getting a teacher to change his or her style **may not** work. (S2/ Egy/ IE/ Pg.19/ Pr.2/ L.1)

(7) It **might be** necessary for oil companies to eliminate selective aromatic portion from diesel fuels to reduce aromatic discharges. (S3/ Jor/ Che/ Pg. 6/ Pr. 3/ L.2).

Figure 4.1 presents the occurrence of the finite modal operator in the first chapter of the participants by frequency.
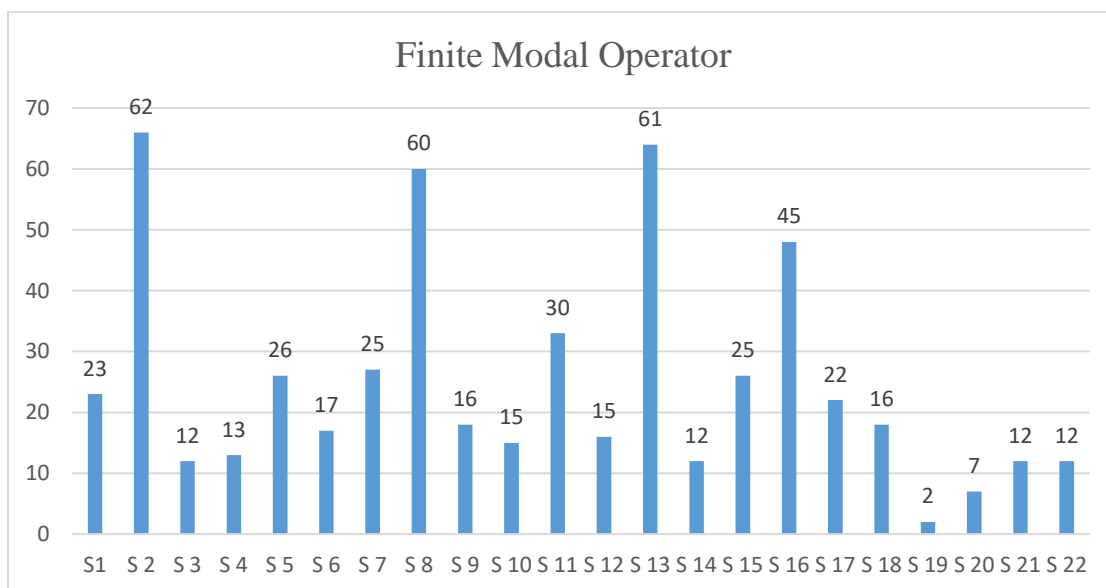
Figure 2. Finite modal operators by EFL Arab postgraduates

The highest occurrences of the use of the finite modal operators were found in the chapters of participants who belong to the soft domain. The participants who belong to the hard domain, on the other hand, occupied the lowest percentages in the use of the finite modal operator S20 (7), S21 (12), S22 (12), S3 (12), and S4 (13), except for S19 (2) who belong to the soft domain, Applied linguistics. That may be ascribed to his unfamiliarity with the importance of the use of modal operators to express stance and the hard domain community's preference to depend on facts more than arguments (Jomaa & Alia, 2019). Figure 2 also shows that some participants who belong to the humanities and social sciences employed finite modal operators less than what some of those in the hard sciences did. That can be ascribed to their unfamiliarity with the implications of the finite modal operator and its importance in showing stance.

4.1.1 Identifying the 'Finite' Constituent
Identifying the 'Finite' constituent is based on the sequence. In other words, when there is a group of verbal elements, the 'Finite' constituent is the first part of the verbal group, as in example (8).

(8) Face detection and feature extraction **should** manage several well-known difficulties. (S4/ Syr/ IT/ Pg. 11/ Pr. 1/ L. 5)

In some examples, there is no explicit 'Finite' constituent in the clause. Rather, the 'Finite' is fused with the predicator, as in example (9).

(9) This problem **stands out** in the clarity of the level of detection features and establishing an effective face model. (S4/ IT/ Pg. 13/ Pr. 2/ L. 2)

In example (9), the sentence has no explicit 'Finite' constituent. Rather, the 'Finite' is fused with the Predicator '*stands out*'. Hence, the 'Finite' constituent is of two kinds; ***Temporal Finite Verbal Operators*** anchor the proposition by reference to time. These give tense to the finite, including the past, present or future. Examples (11-13) demonstrate the use of 'Finite' as a '*Temporal Finite Verbal Operator':*

(11) A number of studies **reported** the increase in library use. (S9/ Jor/ ID/ Pg. 15/ Pr. 2/ L. 5)

(12) After that, it **delves** into the problem statement. (S19/ Syr/ AL/ Pg. 1/ Pr. 1/ L. 3)

(13) Once this attribute meets the primary pragmatic needs of students, they **will** then look to see if the space also meets their ascending needs of varied learning and social activities. (S9/ Jor/ ID/ Pg.6/ Pr. 1/ L.1)

In examples (11) and (12), the 'finite verbal operator' in '***reported***' refers to the simple past and the 'finite verbal operator' in '**delves**' refers to the simple present. However, in example (13), the 'finite verbal operator' represented by '*will*' refers to the future tense explicitly.

The other kind of Finite is called '***Finite Modal Operators***'. These kinds of 'Finite' make the proposition arguable by allowing the writer to adopt a stance and project his/her voice. To put it differently, the writer can express his/her attitude through either modalisation involving probability and/or usuality or modulation involving obligation and/or inclination. This stance can range from high, through median to low (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Examples (14) and (15) demonstrate such use of the 'Finite Modal Operators' to express modalisation (probability and certainty).

(14) The mantra 'prevention is better than cure' **can** help to prevent damaging situations from becoming worse. (S10/ Jor/ ID/ Pg. 16/ Pr. 6/ L. 1)

(15) Readers of Kafka's biography **may** notice two simple facts. (S13/ Jor/ Lit/ Pg. 34/ Pr. 2/ L. 1)

(16) This **will** increase the motivation level of language learners and successfully bring about a rich language learning environment. (S16/ Jor/ AL/ Pg. 44/ Pr. 2/ L. 12)

In examples (14) and (15), the Finites '*can'* and '*may*' reveal a low stance of probability. Similarly, the Finite Modal Operator '*will'* in example (16) expresses a median stance of probability. Consequently, three degrees of probability were found between positive and negative clauses, including median and low, as in Figure 4.2.
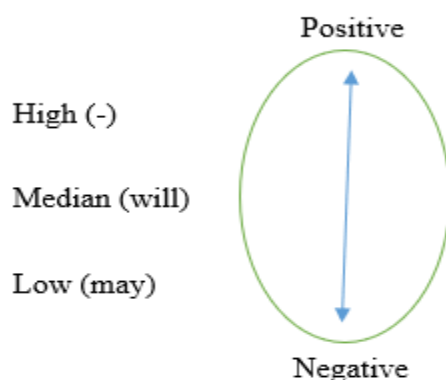

Figure 3. Finite modal operators to express degrees of probability

Expressing probability is not the only purpose of the use of the Finite Modal Operators, but they are also employed to express Modulation with different rates of stance ranging from high through median to low. Modulation included expressing either obligation and/or inclination, as in examples (17) and (18).

(17) It **must** be organized, managed and disseminated effectively to achieve quality. (S17/ Jor/ Mg/ Pg. 23/ Pr. 3/ L. 1)

(18) Building owners **should** put more effort into caring for their buildings. (S10/ Jor/ ID/ Pg. 16/ Pr. 6/ L. 2).
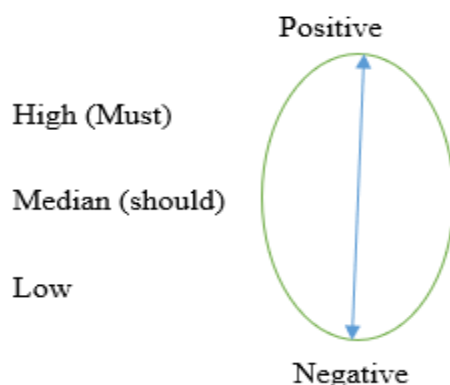
Figure 4. Finite modal operators to express degrees of obligation

In example (17), the Finite Modal Operator '*must*' is used to express a high stance of obligation. Similarly, the Finite Modal Operator '*should*' in example (18) expresses a median stance of obligation, as displayed in Figure 4.3.

These Finite Modal Operators are also used to express inclination, as in example (19).

(19) The research **will** try to develop answers for the following questions.

Finite constituents can carry another semantic feature which is *polarity*. This polarity makes the proposition either positive or negative, as in example (20).

(20) It is because they are poor that they **cannot** afford to be without it. (S7/ Ye/ IT/ Pg. 5/Pr. 1/L 3)

However, in non-finite clauses, there is no 'finite' constituent. This includes perfective and imperfective clauses as in example (21).

(21) The hotel industry being a service oriented industry involves people dealing with people. (S8/ Jor/ Eco/ Pg.4/ Pr.1/ L7)

To, conclude, 'finite' constituents were either explicitly used or Implicitly fused with the predictor. These 'finite' constituents significantly indicate the tense, make the proposition arguable, and

imply polarity. This meets with Halliday & Matthiessen's SFL framework (2014), Jomaa and Alia's findings (2019) and Alia, Jomaa and Yunus's findings (2020).

4.1.2 Residue Component of the Clause

The second component of the clause is RESIDUE, which is less essential to clause arguability. Similar to MOOD, the RESIDUE includes more than one constituent, including a 'Predicator', a 'Complement', and an 'Adjunct'. As a lexical part of the verbal group, the predicator conveys the lexical meaning and specifies the type of the processes that are involved in the clause, as demonstrated in examples (22) and (23).

(22) This specific field **started** to gain more interests in the early days of World War II. (S22/ Jor/ Math/ Pg. 15/ Pr. 1/ L. 4)

(23) One of the major problems **resides** in their inability to write cohesively and speak the language appropriately. (S16/ Jor/ AL/ Pg. 14/ Pr. 3/ L. 8)

In both examples (22) and (23), when analyzing the clause based on the constituents used, the predicator '**started**' is divided into two parts; half a part is in the MOOD component of the clause, whereas the other part is in the RESIDUE component of the clause, as in table 4.5.

Table 6. Example of the intermingled finite and predicator

Subject	Task performance	Mood
Finite		
Predicator	involves	
Complement	activities like producing manufactured goods or proving a service	Residue

(S8/ Jor/ Eco/ Pg. 7/ Pr. 1/ L. 8)

The 'Complement' constituent that follows the predicator is the second constituent of the RESIDUE, as in example (25).

(25) I detailed *the statement of the problem*. (S11/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 2/ Pr. 1/ L. 2)

The main function of the 'Complement' is for enhancing the clarification of the communicated information. 'Adjunct' is another constituent of the RESIDUE that is either adverbial or prepositional rather than a nominal constituent and adds additional information that is not essential to the clause.

(26) Currently, it has a total of 29,000 students from all over the country and abroad.

In example (26), the sentence includes two adjuncts, 'currently' and 'from all over the country', the former is an adverbial constituent and the latter is a prepositional one.

Adjuncts that add information to the interpersonal meaning encompass two types: **Mood Adjuncts** and **Comment Adjuncts**, and both of them fall under the Modal Adjunct category. The two types of Modal Adjuncts were employed in the theses and dissertations of Arab students. **Mood Adjunct** is considered as a constituent of the MOOD component of the clause, thus revealing a meaning that is related closely to the Finite Modal Operators. In other words, Mood Adjuncts were used to express modalisation (probability and usuality). For more clarification, in example (27), the Mood Adjunct '*always*' expresses a high degree of the usuality of the action, whereas example (28) includes the Mood Adjunct '*likely*' to reveal a median stance of probability.

(27) For these details, writing has **always** been a necessary characteristic of the syllabus of English whether as EFL. (S11/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 9/ Pr. 2/ L. 5)

(28) It suggests that when employees have high job satisfaction, they remain with the organization and are **likely** to provide better performance in the organization. (S8/ Jor/ Eco/ Pg. 4/ Pr. 1/L. 4)

Figure 4.4 demonstrates the number of Mood Adjuncts used in Modalisation to reveal either probability or usuality. (105) Mood Adjuncts expressing modalisation were used in the theses and dissertations of the participants. (83) of them were used in the soft domain works, whereas (23) were used in the hard domain.
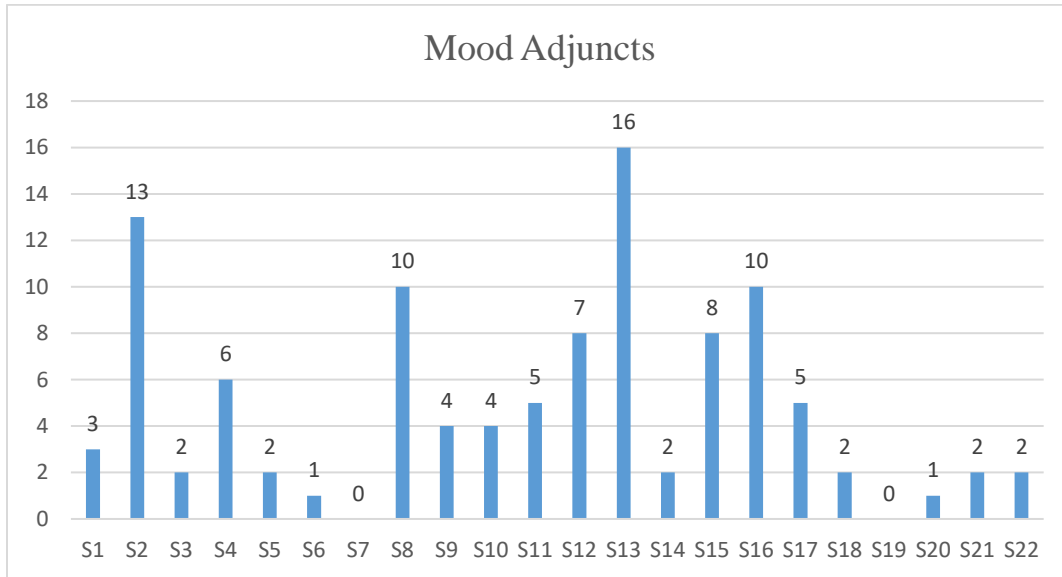
Figure 5. Mood Adjuncts expressing Probability and Usuality

The majority of these Mood Adjuncts expressing modalisation were used to reveal usuality (86), whereas (19) were employed to express probability. The high use of usuality markers can be due to the focus on the importance of mood adjuncts in teaching English tenses.
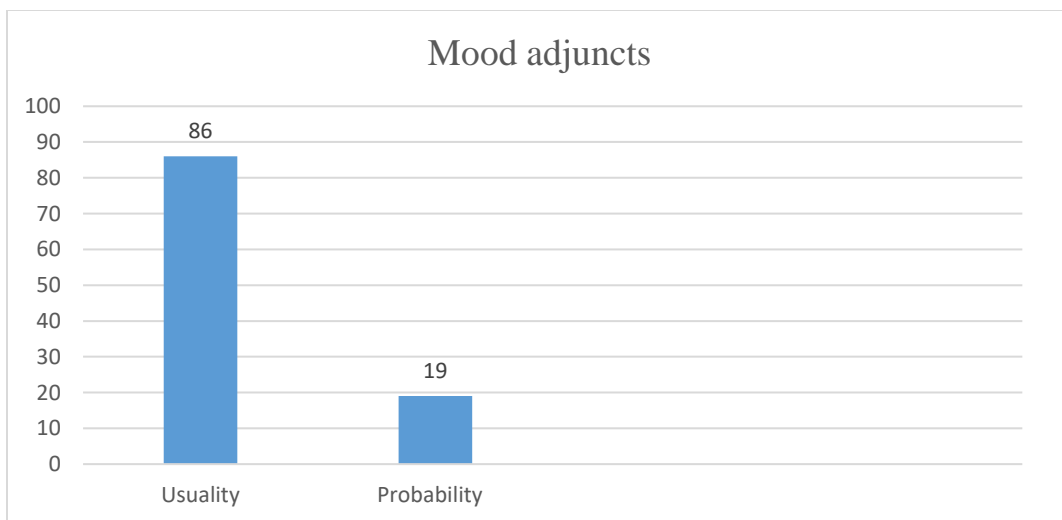

Figure 6. Mood Adjuncts Expressing Probability and Usuality

The stance of revealing probability by means of the Mood Adjuncts was of different degrees ranging from high through median to low, as in the following examples.

(29) By trying to marry Freida, **probably** a fictional portrait of Felice, George is, in a way trying to assert his manhood. (S13/ Jor/ Lit/ Pg. 10/ Pr. 2/ L. 6)

(30) Kafka is **undoubtedly** one of the most important writers in the 20th century and his literature has been a constant subject to literary endeavors and investigations. (S13/ Jor/ Lit/ Pg. 28/ Pr. 2/ L. 1)

The Mood Adjunct '*probably*', was employed to and express a median stance of probability, and the Mood Adjunct 'undoubtedly' revealed a high stance of probability. Similarly, Mood Adjuncts were also used to reveal the stance of frequency and usuality. This stance has different grades, ranging from high through median to low, as in examples (31), (32), and (33), respectively.

(31) For these details, writing has **always** been a necessary characteristic of the syllabus of English whether as EFL. (S11/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 9/ Pr. 2/ L. 5)

(32) Terengganu traditional house are **usually** being builted by cengal wood …. (S10/ Jor/ ID/ Pg. 10/ Pr. 1/ L. 4)

(33) In some cases they would fail and **sometimes** lose the properties of global convergence. (S21/ SYR/ Maths/ Pg. 4/ Pr. 2/ L. 2)

Figure 4.7 illustrates the Mood Adjuncts of probability and frequency and their different degrees used in the students' theses and dissertations.
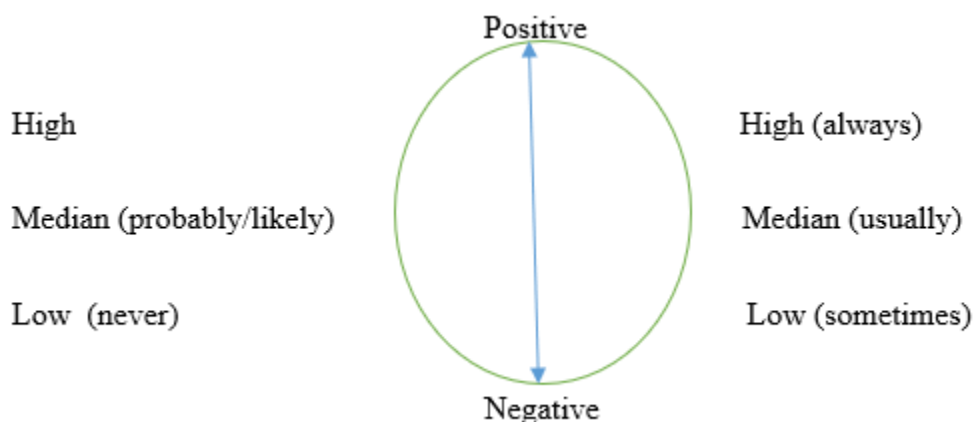
Figure 7. Mood Adjuncts of Probability and Frequency

Mood Adjuncts were also used to express other aspects of stance. These included expressing **PRESUMPTION** through using the Mood Adjunct '**clearly'**, as in example (34).

(34) Linear programming science developed **clearly** after 1950. (S21/ SYR/ Maths/ Pg. 2/ Pr. 3/ L. 5)

Another type of Mood Adjunct was used to express **TIME** by means of using the adverbial '*still*', as in example (35).

(35) In the same time, oral insulin administration which may solve these problems is **still** until today considered as a challenge. (S20/ Egy/ Ph/ Pg.4/ Pr. 3/ L. 4)

Mood Adjuncts can express **DEGREE** by using the adverbial '*fully'* as in example (36).

(36) As well as, despite the difficulties in reaching teachers, the researcher did not cover certain regions in Aleppo Governorate due to some **fully** demolished regions and some war zones. (S19/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 7/ Pr. 1/ L. 1)

Other Mood Adjuncts can also express **INTENSITY** by using the adverbials '*only*' in example (37).

(37) Also, the current study is confined **only** to the correlation between writing and speaking performance generated by 150 EFL male and female students …. (S16/ Jor/ AL/ Pg. 19/ Pr. 2/ L. 1)

Table 7. demonstrates the number of Mood Adjuncts; (429) Mood Adjuncts were used. A total number of 313 (73 %) Mood Adjuncts were used in the chapters of the participants who belong to the soft domain, whereas 116 (27%) Mood Adjuncts were employed in the chapters belonging to the hard domain.

Table 7. Mood adjuncts used by EFL Arab postgraduates

Student	Probability and usuality	Presumption	Time	Degree	Intensity
S1	3	3	1	5	4
S2	13	4	1	8	9
S3	2	1	1	6	-
S4	6	-	3	3	2
S5	2	2	1	5	2
S6	1	-	-	1	2
S7	-	-	4	3	1
S8	10	1	3	16	2
S9	4	3	1	8	1
S10	4	2	2	9	2
S11	5	-	17	15	2
S12	7	-	4	10	8
S13	16	5	1	16	17
S14	2	-	2	-	1
S15	8	-	2	4	6
S16	10	1	10	6	6
S17	5	1	3	6	3
S18	2	-	1	4	2
S19	0	-	2	6	7
S20	1	-	1	4	1
S21	2	1	2	4	2
S22	2	3	4	9	3
Total	105	27	66	148	83

Table 7 reveals that the students are mostly familiar with employing adjuncts expressing degree (148) then modalisation (105). However, they used adjuncts expressing presumption (27), time (66), and intensity (83) insufficiently.

Figure 8 demonstrates the number of Mood Adjuncts used in the chapters collected from each thesis or dissertation in the soft and hard domains.
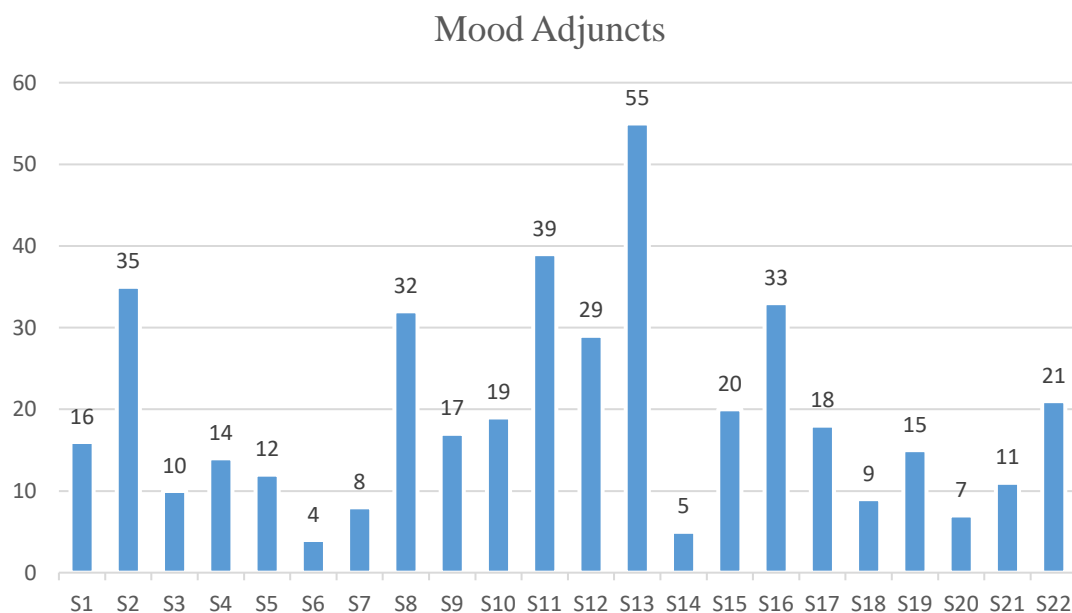
Mood Adjuncts

Figure 8. The use of mood adjuncts by EFL Arab postgraduates

The highest use of mood adjuncts was in S13 (Lit 55), followed by S11, S2 and S8, AL, IE and AL 39, 35 and 32 respectively), S12, S16 and S8 in AL, AL and Eco, 35, 33 and 32 respectively. The least use was recorded in the chapters of S6 (4) in AL, S 14 (5) in Eco, S18 (7) in Ph, S19 (8) in AL, S20 (8) in Ph and S7 (8) in IT. These findings probably demonstrate the effect of tenor that is represented by EFL postgraduates. Participants who belong to the academic community of the soft domain tended to use a higher frequency of mood adjuncts since the soft domain depends on the strength of the arguments. On the other hand, those who belong to the academic community of the hard domain employed mood adjuncts with a lower frequency since the hard domain rests on facts rather than arguments. As a result, mood adjuncts were used with a lower percentage. These findings are in line with Halliday and Matthiessen's SFL framework (2014) and Jomaa and Alia's (2019) findings (2019).

Comment Adjunct is another type of Adjunct that can add to the interpersonal meanings of the writers. These types of Adjuncts express the writer's stance about the whole clause, thus occurring in an initial position or directly after the 'Subject'. These adjuncts express different types of meanings. For example, some Comment Adjuncts express **ASSERTION** by using the adverbials '*importantly*' in the following example.

(38) Most **importantl**y, all aspects of curriculum design such as needs analysis, syllabus design, and course evaluation, were absent. (S12/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 10/ Pr. 1/ L. 9)

Some Comment Adjuncts express **HOW DESIRABLE** something is through using the adverbial '*unfortunately*', as in example (39).

(39) **Unfortunately**, teachers' feedback in both types of writing approaches, namely conventional and innovative, suffers. (S19/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 2/ Pr. 1/ L. 3)

Some Comment Adjuncts reveal the **VALIDITY** of something by using the adverbials '*generally*' in example (40).

(40) Generally, teachers of higher education in Saudi Arabia are highly interested in their English as foreign language students' language…. (S11/ SYR/ AL/ Pg. 16/ Pr. 2/ L. 5)

The total number of comment adjuncts used in the data collected was (146). Figure 9 shows the percentage of using Comment Adjuncts in the introductory chapters of each domain.
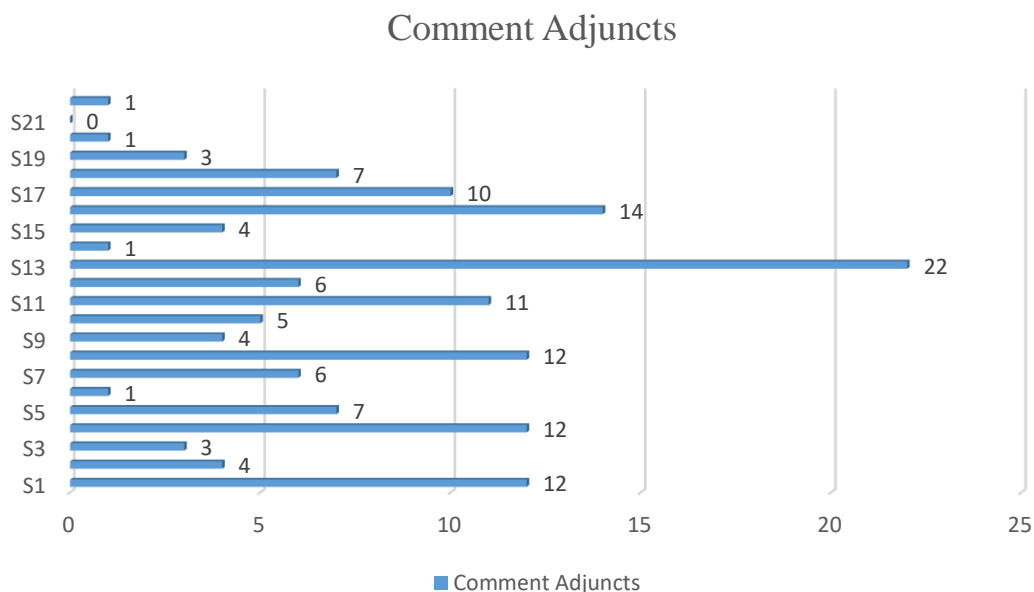

Figure 9. The Use of Comment Adjuncts

Figure 9. shows great differences in the use of comment adjuncts by EFL Arab pos. The highest occurrence was recorded in S13 (22), followed by S16, S1, S4, S8, S11, and S17, (14), (12), (12), (12), (11), and (10) respectively. The least employment occurred in S21 (0), S22 (1), S20 (1), S14 (1) and S6 (1). The use of the mood adjuncts in other chapters ranged from (3) to (7). These findings may reflect that some participants are to some extent familiar with the use of these adjuncts, and they may also reflect the role of the tenor that is represented by EFL postgraduates. Participants who belong to the academic community of the soft domain utilized a higher frequency of comment adjuncts (39/ 73.3%) since the soft domain depends on the strength of the arguments. On the other hand, those who belong to the academic community of the hard domain employed comment adjuncts with a lower frequency (39/ 26.7%) since the hard domain rests on facts rather than arguments. Consequently, comment adjuncts were used with a lower percentage.

Few verbs were used in students' writings to express obligation and inclination as shown in examples (41) and (42) respectively.

(41) While formal institutions **require** more serious involvement from individuals, third places evoke playful moods, …. (S9/ Jor/ ID/ Pg. 4/ Pr. 1/ L.3)

(42) To meet the objective, this research **aims to** compare the barriers and obstacles of implementing BSC from literature and practical perspective. (S14/ Jor/ Eco/ Pg. 5/ Pr. 4/ L. 2)

Hyland and Tse (2004) and Hyland (2005a) point out that metadiscourses that involve adverbs, such as hedges and boosters, and stance adverbs (Çakır, 2016) are used to reveal the writer's stance and establish his/her membership to a certain academic community. Like Jomaa and Alia's (2019) findings, the findings of the present study show the high density of comment adjuncts and mood adjuncts (Çakır, 2016) in the soft domain compared with the low number in hard domain which might reflect the effect of tenor on the interpersonal meanings (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Martin, 1993; Eggins, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The soft domain writers tend to use more modality markers since their fields, unlike the hard domain', depend largely on arguments rather than facts as in the hard domain. The second one could be that the hard domain writers may not have good competence related to the modality markers. The findings also imply that some of the participants, who belong to the soft domain and are thus supposed to employ a good deal of modality markers, used very few markers.

Figure 10. shows the total number of modality occurrences in the introductory chapters of EFL Arab postgraduates' theses and dissertations. Generally, both domains show a higher percentage in the objective orientation compared with the subjective one, (66.9%) for the soft domain and (79%) for the hard domain. However, the writers in the soft domain show more subjectivity in their use of modality than those in the hard domain. The percentage of the former was (20.3%) whereas the latter was (15.9%). This could be because of the fact that, unlike the soft domain, the

hard domain depends on facts more than arguments and personal opinions. Consequently, the participants in the soft domain were less objective than those in the hard domain.
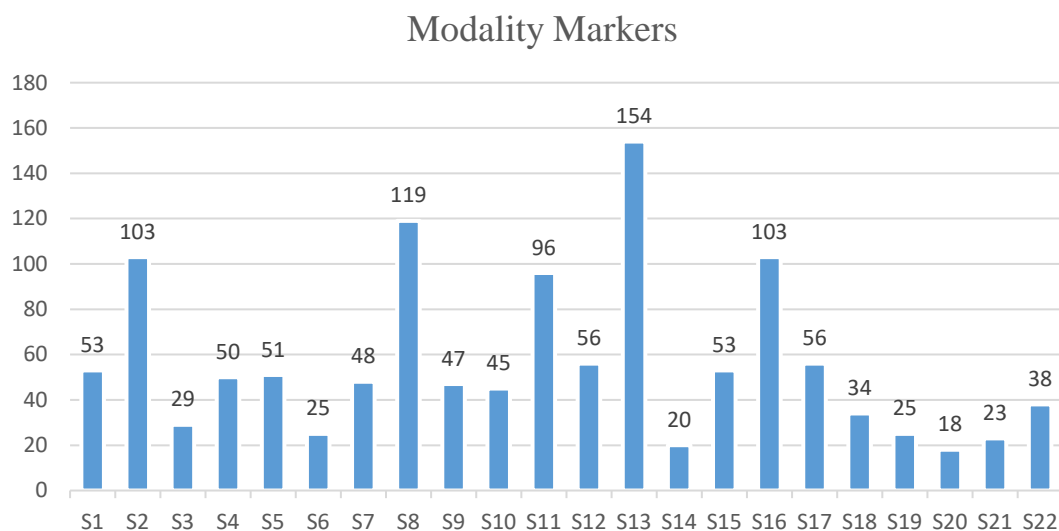

Figure 10. Modality Markers by EFL Arab Postgraduates

Figure 10 presents the occurrences of modality markers in each work. The highest number was found in S13 (158/ 12.37%/ Literature), followed by S8 (119/ 9.32%/ Eco), S2 (107/ 8.38%/ Islamic Education), S16 (106/ 8.3%/ Applied Linguistics) and S11 (99/ 7.75%/ Applied Linguistics). The least use of modality markers occurred in S20 (18/1.41%), S14 (20/ 1.57%), S21 (24/1.88%), S19 (25/ 1.96%), S6 (25/ 1.96%) and S3 (29/ 2.27%). These participants study at Pharmacy, Economics, Mathematics, Applied linguistics, Applied linguistics, and Chemistry departments, respectively.

Table 8. Modality Orientation by EFL Arab Postgraduates

Student	Subjective/imp	Subjective/exp	Objective/imp	Objective/exp
S1	20	-	6	2
S2	61	2	13	1
S3	11	-	5	2
S4	12	-	16	2
S5	25	-	6	3
S6	16	-	5	-
S7	27	-	7	3
S8	64	-	19	2
S9	20	-	9	2

S10	15	-	9	1
S11	35	-	14	-
S12	18	-	13	-
S13	60	1	31	1
S14	12	-	4	-
S15	26	-	11	-
S16	45	1	21	-
S17	23	-	9	-
S18	16	-	4	-
S19	2	-	5	-
S20	7	-	4	-
S21	12	-	2	-
S22	14	-	3	1
Total	541	4	216	20

The results showed different orientations in each chapter. The highest orientation use that was recognized was implicit subjectivity; the total number of the modality markers by which the student showed their stance as a subjective one was the implicit one (541/ 69.27%) followed by the implicit objectivity in modality orientation (216/ 27.66%), then explicit objectivity (20/ 2.56%) and the smallest number was in the explicit subjective orientation (4/ 0.51%) as shown in Figure 11.
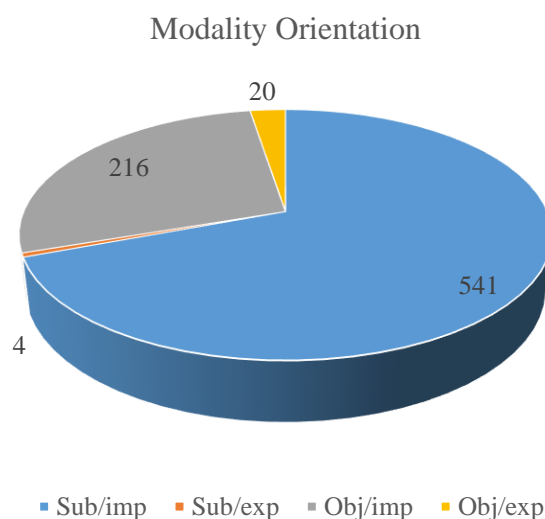

Figure 11. Modality Orientation by EFL Arab Postgraduates

Examples (43, 44, 45 and 46) show the four types of modality orientation that were found in the chapters analysed.

(43) These difficulties can be ascribed to some elements such as pose variation. SUBJECTIVE/ IMPLICIT (S4/ SYR/IT/Pg. 5/ Pr. 1/ L. 7)

(44) I'm sure teachers dream of the perfect student, …. SUBJECTIVE/ EXPLICIT (S2/ EGY/IE/Pg. 3/ Pr. 3/ L. 1)

(45) By trying to marry Freida, probably a fictional portrait of Felice, George is, in a way trying to assert his manhood. OBJECTIVE/IMPLICIT (S13/ JOR/ Lit/ Pg. 10/ Pr. 3/ L. 6)

(46) It is hoped that Unisza can produce leaders in various fields through knowledge, openness, …. OBJECTIVE/EXPLICIT (S10/ JOR/ ID/ Pg. 10/ Pr. 4/ L. 1)

Figure 12 illustrates the modality orientation of the participants in both domains.
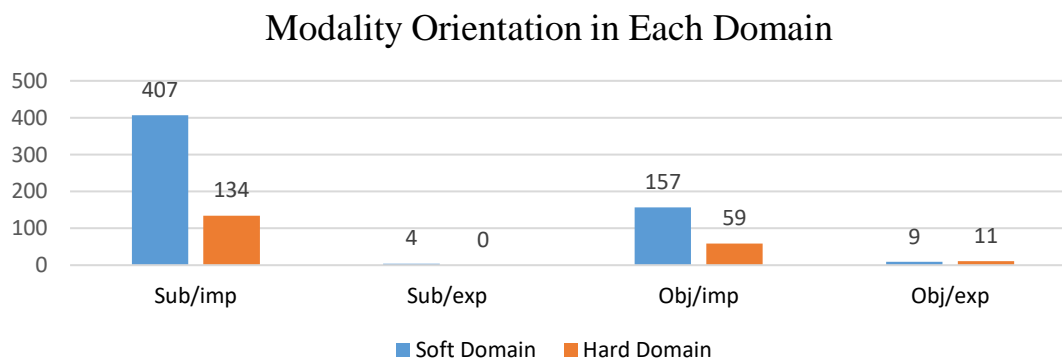

Figure 12. Modality Orientation in Each Domain

The total number of modality markers used in the soft domain is 914, whereby 407 (70.43%) markers were used to express implicit subjectivity in the hard domain, whereas 157 (27.3%) were used to express implicit objectivity in the same domain. 4 (0.7%) were used to express explicit subjectivity in the soft domain, whereas 9 (1.57%) were used to reveal explicit objectivity in the same domain.

The total number of modality markers used in the hard domain is 332, whereby 134 (65.7%) were used in the hard domain to reveal an implicit subjectivity in modality orientation, whereas 59 (28.9%) were used to reveal an implicit objectivity in orientation in the hard domain. However, no markers were used to reveal an explicit subjectivity in the hard domain, and 11 (5.4%) markers revealed an orientation of explicit objectivity in the hard domain. These results demonstrate the tendency of soft and hard domain writers to be more subjective than objective. This may reflect the tenor that is represented by EFL Arab postgraduates. Participants who belong to the academic community of the soft domain tended to be subjective more than objective (71.23% and 28.77% respectively) since, unlike the hard domain which is concerned with facts more than arguments, the soft domain is based, to some extent, on the arguments strength and writers' views. The hard domain writers also were found to be more subjective than objective (65.7% and 34.3% respectively). The subjectivity of the soft domain was slightly higher than the same orientation in the hard domain (71.23% and 65.7%, respectively). For more clarification, see Table 9.

Table 9. Modality Orientation by EFL Arab Postgraduates

Orientation	SD	%	HD	%
Sub/imp	407	70.54%	134	65.7%
Sub/exp	4	0.69%	0	0%
Obj/imp	157	27.21%	59	28.9%
Obj/exp	9	1.56%	11	5.4%
Total	577		204	

The total number of pages collected from students is 286; 198 (69.2%) for the soft domain and 88 (30.8%) for the hard one. The total number of the modality markers is (1246), whereby 914 (73.35%) were collected from participants belonging to the soft domain and 332 (26.65%) belonging to the hard one. Generally, this reveals that the soft domain writers used markers more than those in the hard domain. This can be attributed to two factors; the first one is that the soft domain writers tended to use more modality markers since their fields, unlike the hard domain ones, depend largely on arguments rather than facts as in the hard domain. The second one could be that the hard domain writers may not have good competence concerning the modality markers. These findings are in line with Alia, Jomaa, and Yunus's (2020) findings. Their study also showed that participants were more subjective in the soft domain than those in the hard domain and the authors in the soft domain showed less objectivity than those in the hard domain. However, the ratio of subjectivity and objectivity in both domains in their study differs from the same ratios in the current study; the participants were much more subjective rather than objective in their use of the modality markers in the current study.

5. Discussion

The present study adopted the modality of the Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach which aimed at exploring the use of the metadiscourse markers in the introductory chapters of EFL Arab postgraduates. This study focused on identifying the mood adjuncts, comments adjuncts, and finite modal operators to communicate modalisation and modulation. In examining the stance of the writers, it was found that Finite Modal Operators as 'Finite' constituents and adverbials as Mood adjuncts were used to reveal modalisation and modulation. Modalisation included probability and usuality, whereas modulation included obligation and inclination. The stance that was expressed ranged from a high stance through median to low. In addition, Mood adjuncts were used to express different stances like degree, intensity, presumption, and time. Comment Adjuncts were also employed revealing varied stances. The results of the document analysis are in line with the study of Jomaa and Alia (2019) which analyzed the frequency and wordings of modality within the citations of the literature review chapters of 20 PhD theses employing the SFL.

According to Dunleavy (2003), since the English language is 'writer-responsible', a thesis writer should meet the expectations of their readers. That is, the writer or the speaker is responsible for clarifying and organizing the concepts to make readings/speeches easily understood by the readers/listeners (Hinds, 1987). One significant key to acknowledging their roles as writers responsible is through using metadiscourse (Dahl, 2004) to organize the text and interact with the reader. Hence, metadiscourses play these highly significant roles by revealing the academic voice which is rather challenging for non-native speaker writers (Jomaa & Bidin, 2017; Alia, Jomaa & Yunus, 2020).

The findings reported that EFL postgraduates showed a lack of knowledge in academic writing and difficulties in adopting an authorial stance. Consequently, students' weaknesses in adopting a stance need further emphasis and enhancement (Hei & David, 2015). Hence, a lack of knowledge of the significance of using modality markers resulted in limited use of these markers. Most of the studies on EFL and ESL related to adopting a stance found that writers face difficulties in this issue especially in the employment of the Metadiscourse to reveal their stance (Shen, 1989; Jomaa & Bidin, 2017; Jomaa & Alia, 2019). Metadiscourses that involve adverbs, such as hedges and boosters, are used to reveal the writer's stance and establish his/her membership in a certain academic community (Hyland, 2005a; Hyland & Tse, 2004). The high density of mood adjuncts, comments adjuncts, and finite modal operators in Applied Linguistics compared with the low number in Information Technology (Jomaa & Alia, 2019) showed the effect of tenor on the interpersonal meanings (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Martin, 1993; Eggins, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In other words, each field has its own readers who expect certain expressions and vocabulary from the writers. Consequently, these findings could be employed pedagogically to equip novice writers with the linguistic skills that basically contribute to their academic success in writing academic genres.

6. Conclusions

The findings of this study reveal the importance of metadiscourse in academic writing, particularly the employment of modality to reveal the writer's stance. Supervisors and institutions could provide students with suitable academic writing textbooks to help postgraduates focus on the norms and conventions of each discipline such as using metadiscourse markers and other discipline-specific linguistic structures. Such textbooks can expand students' knowledge and experience about academic writing. Although this study presented significant information about the field of stance and academic writing, it focused only on EFL Arab postgraduates who shared relatively similar socio-cultural and educational backgrounds, which had an effect on academic writing and stance-taking. Thus, including other cultural and educational backgrounds may provide more evidence of the effect of language backgrounds on authorial stance in academic writing. In addition, challenges in academic writing in general and adopting a stance, in particular, were experienced in writing the introductory chapter of Ph.D. and Master's proposals. Therefore, analyzing other genres such as journal papers, essays, and other thesis chapters might result in more essential information about the challenges in the authorial stance and academic wringing challenges.

Future research can also include a comparison between Arab international postgraduate students and Native English students to understand the extent to which Arab students face challenges in their writing and help researchers boost their knowledge about EFL academic writing. In addition, future research could be conducted in exploring, analyzing, and understanding the perspectives and the role of the supervisors in supervisees' academic writing progress. In addition, more research could be done to explore the ways and methods of teaching and learning the use of metadiscourse.

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