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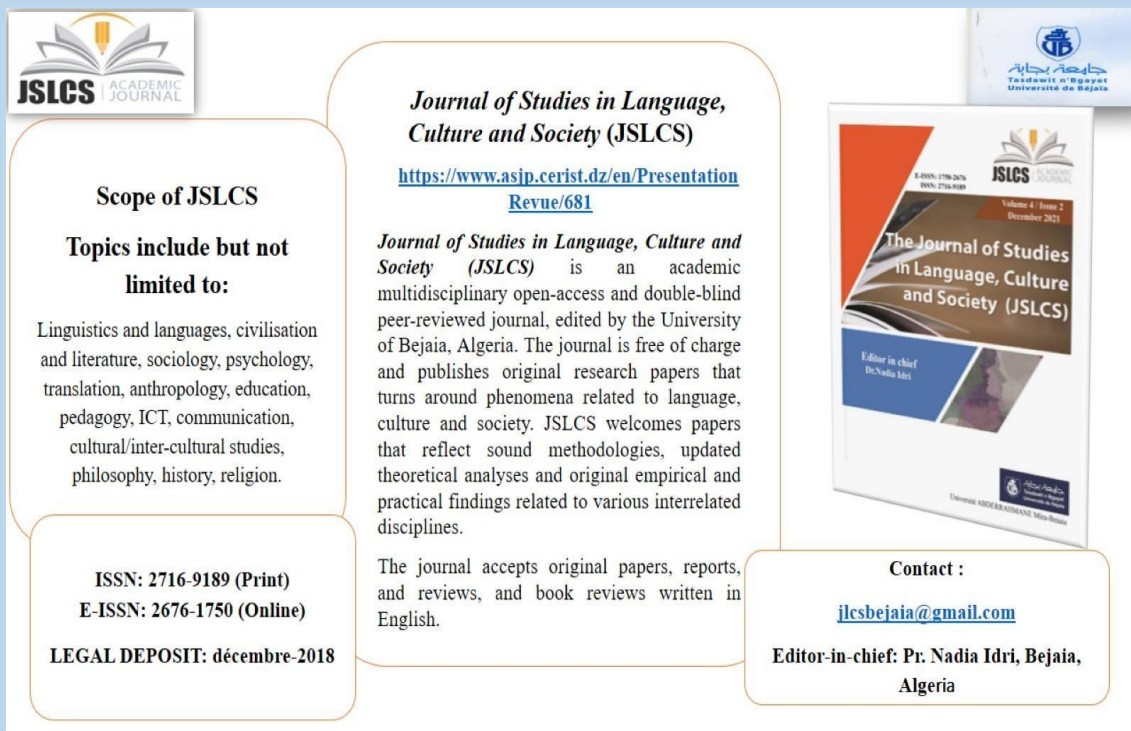


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THE SOCIO-CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC SIGNIFICANCE OF Fe'efe'e WOMEN'S SONG PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF KO CAK FHŪ NDAK HĀ

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Abstract

This paper attempts to shed light on how women use figurative language through songs and dances in the Fe'efe'e traditional community to speak out their cries and yearnings. With the example of the ngwe song and dance named *Ko cak fhū ndak hā*, we demonstrate through ethnography of communication and speech act theories that since time immemorial, in Africa, in order to maintain social harmony and stability, women have been using strategies to express their thoughts in public in contrary to what views from outside and from the West have been stating. The ngwe is a perfect illustration of women's potency in the African society. This *ngwe* has been in Fe'efe'e women's hands a strong weapon to curse, praise and criticise the shortcomings of their society through the use of vivid and rhetorical or poetic language known as stylistic devices. The 'ngwe' song used for illustration expresses the pragmatic use of language as it is geared toward performative acts aiming at influencing the audience or the listeners.

Keywords: Devices, discourse, language, linguistic, ngwe, performance, women.

1. Introduction

Modern discourses around the status of women in the African society have always portrayed them as oppressed beings and second sex, overshadowed by the image and presence of their male counterparts, their husbands, and therefore, a gender unable to make a decision. Yet, from a critical point of view, the truth is that with an insightful observation and analysis, in the African traditional society, they play their role, a role defined according to the societal norms and regulations. In fact, as the analysis will later demonstrate, in order to maintain and sustain stability and harmony in the traditional society, women are not supposed to undertake public speech. The reality is that they play the role of *shadow cabinet* to their males/husbands. The decisions men make in public or implement, are most of the time known as the result of what has been prescribed by their wives in private mostly at night. This has been completely ignored by the Westerner feminists who have usually misunderstood and misinterpreted facts because of their lack of subject's reference knowledge. Since women are not supposed in normal circumstances to undertake public speeches because of respect of traditional values, they have long made use of oral literature through songs and dances to voice out their feelings in public. These songs and dances are most of the time, painting the daily life of their community, advising, criticising its shortcomings and prescribing possible remedies to address

them. They are the expression of African oral literature, full of vivid, attractive and rhetorical devices. The use of these stylistic features confers to the whole performers the attributes of the master of the language. This paper intends in the first place to exhibit how women use oral literature and pragmatics through songs and dances such as *ngwe* in the Fe'efe'e Grassfields community of the Upper Nkam Division in the Western Region of Cameroon to voice out their worldview in public without violating the established societal norms. With focus on the *ngwe* song termed *Ko cak fhū ndak*, we also demonstrate how women have recourse to figures of speech to spice the lyrics of their songs. The dynamism of the African oral literature as the expression of the innermost mind and soul of the African people and women in particular is expressed through this song. In order to capture this information and convey it to the reader, we organise the article into four sections. We begin by explaining the technique used for eliciting the data, then, we discuss the methodological framework adopted for the analysis. In the third section, with the illustration of the *ngwe* song termed *Ko cak fhū ndak*, we show how women effectively make use of these songs and dances in public. In the last section, we explore the rhetorical devices used by the performers in the text to better convey their message, to vivify their language and attract their audience.

2. Data Elicitation Technique

The text used for illustration in this research is audio-recorded in the field, natural linguistic and cultural area of the language in which it is performed. The transcription method adopted is the orthography of the language, based on the commonly-known General Alphabet of Cameroonian Language (Tadadjeu & Sadembouo, 1984). The use of this transcription method is purposeful in that beyond a mere scientific description and scholarly analysis, the paper also intends in a perspective not too close to the objective of this paper, to popularise the writing system of the language as a contribution to the challenge of raising awareness on the use of African languages in the written form. The justification of this choice is simply for practical reasons: popularising or rather making know the writing system of the language to those who are not yet exposed to it. In addition, when scholars want to convey scientific information in European languages such as English, French, German or whatever other western language, they do not make use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). There is no reason why Africans should continue using absolutely the IPA where writing systems are available. The reason is therefore also ideological. The text could also be used in a formal classroom setting without any further required transcription.

3. Methodology

The concern of social scientist is that he tries to capture the causes of human behaviour from within. In fact, as Nolen Turner (2011, p. 204) notes, the 'subject's frame of reference', mostly in African contexts, in order to be well understood and grasped, must be interpreted with an insider's view. This is because, the understanding of facts and messages conveyed in such situations require more than just the linguistic knowledge of the language. It necessitates the pragmatic comprehension of the environment in which the facts and phenomena are happening

as well as their context of production. It is this blended approach, which can enable the understanding of the message behind the words.

The song used for illustration in this article was recorded from two elderly informants living in the natural milieu of the language, the Fe'efe'e natural language and cultural community, and who were former performers of *ngwe*. Furthermore, the song was performed and used during one of our lectures in Cameroonian languages and cultures. We also made use of our insider's view to carry out the research. Our native speaker's knowledge of the language and the culture, our lifetime in the community during our childhood are also an added value to our capacity of deciphering such songs. Furthermore, we used to see school girls performing the *ngwe* during breaks when we were a schoolboy. In the Fe'efe'e linguistic and cultural area, until today, during the first two years of high school, the observation is that during breaks or in the absence of a teacher, some female students move away from the school premises, away from the administrators' curiosity in order to avoid disturbing the institution tranquillity to perform the *ngwe*. However, it must be pointed out that *ngwe* is critically endangered as the original songs and dances are fading away together with their performers.

We analyse the example of *ko cak fhū ndak* to unveil why, how and when females perform the *ngwe*. During the performance of *ngwe*, the songs used by the actors could have some lexical variations from one group to another. This has not to be regarded as an alteration of its initial version. It is rather the expression of the dynamism and creativity of African oral literature. Finnegan (1990, p. 130-149) concurs with this view when he points out that oral texts are at the same time product and process. In other words, an oral text shall never be perceived as a finalized form because each time it will be recorded, or performed from one group to another within the same community, some changes or rather variations will always be noted. The changes might also be observed in the way performers act, i.e., their body movements, and their dancing steps also vary.

In order to capture the innermost of the text, we made use of an eclectic approach in our analysis, description and deciphering of facts. We will make use of what we call a conversational-pragmatic approach, which will borrow at the same time from Gumperz (1982a&b) interactional sociolinguistics and Dell Hymes' (1976) ethnography of communication.

Through what we called a conversational-pragmatic approach, which combines the use of language or oral text in context and situation, we demonstrate that the use of the kind of language found in women's songs and dances are not just the result of a spontaneous act, yet a medium of social construction of identities and their relationship with their environment, the expression of their mastery of the language. Therefore, only those speakers or listeners, who are well-acquainted with the language, would be able to capture the conveyed message. Consequently, the so-called ribald lexical items found in such discourses can only be understood by adult listeners, an audience made up of adult speakers who master the linguistic *dressings* of the language. Doing so, women do not violate the social norms regulating the use of 'polite' language in their society. They rather strengthen their point, spice their words and

embellish their expressions. This is also part of the use of language for expressiveness as can be observed from the presence of the figures of speech, which give the songs and dances a poetic and aesthetic dimension.

In the analysis, we present the data in three levels. The first level displays the original data in Fe'efe'e, language of the song; the second provides the word for word translation of the text while the third indicates the attempted dynamic translation or literary translation of the text in English.

The pragmatic expression of woman's feelings through the expressive use of signs or bodily movements during their songs and dances contribute to the conveyance of their main message and influence their environment. Therefore, gestures play an important role in the process. These bodily expressions, together with the whole song, as mentioned by Habermas (1987), are part of the communication process, as communicating does not only mean conveying a message, but far better more, constructing, altering, influencing and modifying social relationships, taking and defending a position in a given social context.

From a pure speech act perspective, these songs and dances aim at influencing their target as it shall be viewed as an illocutionary act (Austin, 1975). Lakoff (1975) shows that women's linguistic role as perceived in public, with no correlation to their professional status or their job, gets its inspiration from the collective responsibility of support and search for maintaining harmony in the family. This might even be one of the explanations justifying the use of figurative language in public songs and dances, to extend this idea of family preservation of harmony to the public sphere. Notwithstanding, from a sociolinguistic point of view, the use of figurative language can be construed by the pure cultural values characterised in Africa by the categorical imperative use of a 'polite' language by women as pointed out by Yaguello (2002). Furthermore, it portrays the kind of language used by adults to convey a specific message in Africa in specific contexts. Such a language, as we will notice from the text, is full of devices whose usage falls within the saying of Achebe (1995) according to whom, in the Igbo land, '*proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten*'. These devices are therefore, the spices with which texts are spread onto their receptors. This simply unveils the imagery nature of the speech of those who *master the language* in Africa and betrays the eloquence and cultural binding of discourse partners.

4. The Importance of Fe'efe'e Songs and Dances

In the Fe'efe'e traditional society, women are not expected to speak in public spheres where men are present if they want to express their cries and yearnings and to criticise. This is only possible, when they are among women, discussing women matters.

From a critical perspective, this is not because they are oppressed in the society; it is simply due to the fact that each traditional society has its values its norms and regulations. In order to comply with these norms and regulations and preserve social cohesion and stability, each gender category, male or female, has to strictly abide by the rules. However, it should be pointed out that scholarly works have demonstrated the power of women in private in the

traditional African society. The example of marriage decisions in African communities is a sound illustration. In fact, most of the time, before the ceremony to receive the dowry takes place, ceremony chaired and managed by men in the Fe'efe'e community; women are known to play an upstream role. The decision they take in isolation with their husband or imposed on them is adopted during the ceremony -who will be given what and in what quantity-. Furthermore, it is well-known that women highly positively or negatively impact their daughters' choice for their potential husband in the African traditional society. However, it should be noted that nowadays, this tendency is slowly fading out because of the huge influence of the western culture. Yet, some consequences are also observed from such tendencies as marriages are no more as stable as in the traditional society, or do not last as longer as they were in the past because of the so-called freedom of girls to stand by their own in the choice of their partners, disrupting by this fact gender relations which play an important role in the stability of the society. In this vein, Mhlambi (2012, p. 18) states that 'Growing feminist consciousness in African societies seems to have ruffled up the dominance of a patriarchal setup and to a large extent, disrupted presumed harmony that characterised gender relations in African societies'.

Based on the foregoing, women play a decisive role in the community, but their decisions are not to be taken or made in public so as to allow men to always state 'I have said so!', while in reality, what they say, or the decision they take is what has been imposed on them by their wives out of public places. It is no secret in the Bamileke land in the West Region of Cameroon in general, some women, like the mother of the *Fu* 'traditional ruler' are the '*ladder in the palace*'. In fact, if you want the chief to solve an urgent matter for you the only way you can rapidly reach him is either through his mother or his first wife. In most Fe'efe'e villages, there are some women who are empowered by the chief, based on their mystical powers, to watch over the village, and report to the palace any possible mystic evil act in preparation or perpetrated in the village: they play a protective role. This role played by these women has already been reported in other traditional African communities. In Kane (1961, p. 49-58) *La Grande Royale*, portrayed as a woman who influences the daily life of the Diallobe people is a perfect illustration. It is then obvious that African women, according to the organisation of the African Society are strong and active participants to the societal development. Unlike what has been reported and wrongly interpreted by outsiders so far in terms of '*Woman's rights*', African women play a vital and influential role in the transformation of their immediate environment. This has never been ignored by men. A further illustration of this point is the case of the Igbo woman power which has been reportedly used to fight against the British colonial regime in Nigeria in the 20th century. As noted by Azuonye (1992, p. 14), 'In 1929, Igbo women organized and successfully carried through a revolt against the British colonial government which led to the commissioning, by that regime'. Outsiders have always been unable to capture this other side of gender relationship in the African society because of their incapacity to penetrate it, to perceive and analyse issues from below, and consequently, have always looked at things from outside. In this respect, Azuonye (1992, p. 14) talking about the case in the Igbo traditional society, writes:

From a more superficial observation, it is quite easy to see the exact opposite [talking about the power of women in Africa]: an overriding male-chauvinist and patriarchal society in which women appear to be dominated by their menfolk and confined to subservient roles as part of a cartel of "slave wives" in a predominantly polygamous environment. The paradox is indeed striking, and nowhere else, in Igbo traditional arts, is it more eloquently portrayed than in Igbo oral narratives.

One can think that women do not make use of songs and dances in public because they are oppressed. It is however because of their due respect to the norms regulating their society. The use of the *ngwe* song and dance for illustrative purposes shall be our focus in the subsequent section.

An *ngwe* situation involves participants who are at the same time singers and dancers. At the same time they emit the song, they also refrain it all together. They create a communication situation where they all are at the same time speakers and hearers and those around them mere spectators.

5. The Use of *Ngwe* to Portray the Fe'efe'e Society

Ngwe is a form of play or game where women combine songs and dances. During its performance, participants make a half-circle, then each of them one after another has to move out of the half-circle, goes one to two metres from others, runs, jumps slightly and throws herself with her back so that others can hold her, then lift her lightly. Before throwing oneself, one has to make sure that one does not have an enemy in the middle of the half-circle. The *ngwe* is performed by the group by singing a special song or special songs, struck up by one of the participants. At times, the song of *ngwe* is organised in, a) verses, struck up by one of the performers and, b) chorus, repeated by the rest of the group. The chorus is always one of the verses.

A single *ngwe* song can convey messages articulated around many themes. Generally, the different thematic issues addressed in the *ngwe* song express women's worldview. It is in fact, one of the activities women used to carry out in the past during their leisure time or during specific social events to trim their encounters. Nowadays, although the practice is slowly vanishing because of rural exodus, some women who moved and settled in towns still practice the *ngwe* during instances such as visit to new-born babies.

Far back in the past, women used the *ngwe* during certain public ceremonies either to praise, or to express their cries and yearnings, to criticise the evils of their society or the shortcomings of the rulers. In fact, the *ngwe* was used to express faith, joy, and desire or to criticise the society. With the gradual loss of our traditional African heritage, it is becoming more and more unpopular as it is very irregularly practised. Yet, as mentioned above, some women still practice it in a few occasions. Furthermore, school girls do also practice it as their main game during break periods or playtime in schools. Therefore, it is observable that *ngwe* is a woman reserved practice. Any boy/man who gets involved in at school is considered by his

peers as effeminate. In fact, from a societal point of view, a man or boy can only stand aside and admire the rhyme and rhythms of the play.

5.1. The example of *ko cak fhū ndak*

Ko cak fhū ndak is one of the many songs used by the performers of the *ngwe*. In this song, as aforementioned, more than one themes are addressed to them; the most prominent are sexuality, infidelity, forced-marriages, and anti-colonialism.

The song is organised in verses with a lyrical repetition of syntactic constructions and the repetition of the vowel ‘e’ throughout. As for the rhythm, there is no regular pattern to be pointed out. Therefore, there is no special observation with regard to the regular metrical shape. Yet, it should be noted that the bodily rhythmic movement such as hand-clapping, buttock shaking, which comes up to coordinate the dance steps of the performers has not to be considered as a separate constituent, but as an added element, which is part of the performance. In fact, this bodily expression and rhythmic patterns are used at times by the participants to upgrade the event and raise more concern and reactions among the spectators. This view is corroborated by Finnegan (1978, p. 265) who argues that:

The very common songs to strict time, however, have a beat that is articulated with dancing, rhythmic movement, percussion by instruments, or hand-clapping, all of which contribute to the form and attractiveness of the song. These rhythms are worked out in many different ways in various types of song, but one commonly recurring musical feature seems to be the simultaneous use of more than one metre at a time, as a way of heightening the rhythmic tension. (p. 265)

This rhythm is accompanied in this specific song by a sarcastic tone, marked by the deliberate criticism and mockery behind the words.

On the other hand, the song demonstrates that the idea of family planning has not to be perceived in Africa as originated from the Global North civilisation. African women knew exactly how and when to avoid early-birth or to avoid conceiving when their children are still babies. This explains why, without the use of all the contraceptive methods, unlike today, they were able to spend at will four to five years before giving birth to another child. In this song, there is a criticism of why men are not capable of allowing their wives to respect this planning, because of their envy to satisfy their sexual desire. This message is clearly conveyed in the following verses of the song:

(1) *Ko cak fhū ndāk hā lā e*

Take pot come down give lā e

‘Take this food and give to my husband when you will reach down there’

(2) *Kō cāk fhū ndāk há, n sí’ ghēn ndāk bā tia fhū ndak ntām ā*

Take pot come down give I no go down no stick come down knock me

‘ Take this food and give to my husband when you will reach down there, may a stick

come and prick me if I do not go down there.’

(3) N da yá’ ghěn ndak lā ē e

I had already go down lā ē e

‘I had already gone down there.’

(4) N da yá’ ghěn ndak lā nə kwēn ndak ndēn má mén a cwī

I had already go down then animal arrive down say that son my grow up

‘I had already gone down there and the idiot said that my son is already a grown up’.

From the data in 1, 2, 3 and 4, there is evidence that the performers are voicing out their disappointment. They are hammering at the reason why they should not go to their husband’s house. In fact, according to the tradition, women are not supposed to live in the same house with their husbands. In most polygamous marriages, the husband’s house is thrown off centre, in such a way as to enable him control the activities and movements of his wives.

Forced marriages were in the past known as traditional practices against which women had no weapon. The *ngwe* was one of the channels through which those who went through such experiences could express their bitterness. When most of the young girls were forced to get marry to very old men of about eighty years old, one of the consequences of these forced marriages was infidelity. Infidelity is perceived in the African tradition as an abomination, a curse and consequently, is harshly criticised indirectly in this song in the following terms:

(5) Ngǎ tūā cǎk māghαǎ ǎ mōh

I put pot lover on fire

‘I am cooking my lover’s food.’

(6) Ngǎ túá cǎk māghαǎ ǎ mōh, nə mā ndak ncēh ā má n α’ ngá kα?

I put pot lover on fire animal be down call me that I come do what

‘What for is the idiot calling me when I am cooking my lover’s food?’

Not only the verses in 5 and 6 criticise infidelity, in the context of the song, they are also a mockery at those old men who, in spite of their age, marry young girls and are thereafter unable to accomplish their marital duty. Consequently, the wife ends up in the hands of a lover. Therefore, the question indirectly asked by these performers is: Why on earth should an old man marry a young girl when he knows very well that he will not be able to perform his marital duty?

Although there is a popular belief from the western world that women were prevented from expressing their point of view about sexuality in Africa, in listening to a song like *ko cak fhū ndak*, one comes up with a different apprehension of the reality. In fact, in the following verses, the speaker is castigating forced marriages showing how it leads to infidelity because of the incapacity of the old man to be up to the conjugal task. At the same time, it serves as a channel to express hot and vivid insults to all men who fall within this category.

(7) Pō lēn mā m bā nzhwīē mven wen

They say that I be wife old person

‘They forced me to marry an old man.’

(8) Pó lén má m bá nzhwīē mven wen ā mā mbhi ntūā nǎ’ m bā njam nsāngālā

They say that I be wife old person he be front post shakingly I be behind enjoy

‘They forced me to marry an old man; when he walks staggeringly bent on his stick I am behind him enjoying with my lover.’

(9) Pǎh mven wēn ghēn ntē Kāsua (twice), a mā mbhi ntūā nǎ’ n mbā njam

nsāngālā

We old person go market Kāsua he be front post skakingly I be behing enjoy

‘I and the old man went to the market in Kāsua and when he was in front walking staggeringly, I was behind him enjoying with my lover.’

Evidence from these verses shows that the performers are criticising forced marriage. By so doing, they are pointing out the consequences of such marriages as they often lead to infidelity. The case presented in this song is that of a young girl who is forced to marry a very old man.

Criticism of the imposition of the learning and speaking of foreign languages in Africa by Africans is a secular concern. There is a popular belief that all the Africans embraced the imposition of western languages on them during the colonial era. Yet, a critical look at this song shows that it clearly castigates this practice in the verses presented below and that the practice was wrongly criticised:

(10) Pō zǎp Māyá’nkām

they whip Māyá’nkām

‘They whipped Māyá’nkām.’

(11) Pō zǎp Māyá’nkām, mbūā’ nkhu mbūā’ mbō má a kǎ’ yū’ ndāk

They whip Māyá’nkām break feet break hands that she no hear white

‘They whipped Māyá’nkām until breaking feet and arms because she is unable to understand English.’

(12) Mǎ mu ā kǎ’ Māyá’nkām,

If I be Past Māyá’nkām

‘If I were Māyá’nkām (ironically)’.

(13) Mǎ mu ā kǎ’ Māyá’nkām, mǎ ngǎ njū’ si’ ndāk tā njū’ mfəlaŋsi(ironically).

If I be Past Māyá’nkām then I hear until white until hear French

‘If I were Māyá’nkām, I would be able to understand English and French.’

The idea which arises from these verses is that of the harsh criticism of a system in which people are abused because of their inability to understand/speak a foreign and colonial language. These verses prove that African women, in spite of their level of Western education- to be understood in the Western way- of the time, were able to utter a vivid diatribe against the colonial imposition of foreign languages on them through their songs and dances in public in order to raise awareness in their community about the issue. In raising awareness, their intention was also to pave the way to rejecting such practices. They were therefore aware that languages were to colonial masters what a rifle is in the hands of a hunter.

During performances, the bodily movements which accompany the songs are an addendum to draw the attention of the audience and to beautify the scene and the performing act. This bodily movement ends up provoking burst of laughter in the audience and excitement from the youth present on the scene. Consequently, some of the most comic of these youths repeat the song each time they see any of the performers or each time they meet together to imitate the performers, most of the time, in a *slow motion style*.

In order to make this *ngwe* attractive to the spectators and to convey their mastery of the language, the performers make use of figurative language in their songs. The song *ko cak mfhñ ndak* used for illustrative purposes is no exception.

5.2. Deciphering some Stylistic Devices in *ko cak fhñ ndak*

Also called figures of speech, stylistic devices are part of the spices of African oral literature. The accurate choice and understanding of words, do not only depend on the linguistic knowledge of the language, but to all the cultural and imagery connotations that come together to allow the speaker convey a message only receivable to knowledgeable persons. Although most of the words used in the song are straightforward, i.e., common words known by everybody, the choice of their combination and their context of usage confer to them a different semantic connotation whose understanding requires at the same time linguistic and cultural knowledge or ethnographic communication capabilities. Their use aims at making the game or the play attractive and instructive through embellished language features. In addition, they intentionally want to avoid young people to be exposed to the obscenity of the language that the songs often contain.

The main devices used in the song are figures such as metonymy, assonance, figures of repetition in general, irony and onomatopoeia. In the following, we unveil these figures as they appear in the song.

The word *cak* in the analysed text is used to refer to food. This metonymy presents the container to express the contents. The container is the pot itself *cak* while the contents is food which has been referred to as *pot*.

The most prominent category of stylistic devices used in the text is repetition which comes up in a melodic pattern used to draw the attention of the listener through the implicit

creation of a *receptive enjoyment*. In order to achieve this seductive goal, sentences, phrases, words, and sounds are repeated constantly in the text.

Also known in general as syntactic stylistic devices, repetitions are used by the performers to create a kind of musicality in the text. Furthermore, the effect of this musicality as already mentioned, is to captivate the attention of the audience and retain their interest to the song so that they can perceive the message conveyed. A look at the entire song (see appendix) shows that the first verse of each couple of verses is repeated. The very first six verses of the song illustrate this observation. In fact, the first verse serves as the starting point to the second verse which makes a couple as illustrated below.

(14) Ko cak mfhū ndak nhā lá e!

Ko cak mfhū ndak hā, n sí' ghěn ndak bā tia fhū ndak ntām ā.

N da yā' ghěn ndak lā hē e!

N da yá' ghěn ndak lá, nə kwēn ndak ndēn má mēn ă cwī.

Pó lēn mǎ ngǎ tiē mōō lá e!

Pó lén mǎ ngǎ tiē mōō, a mā mēn wen ká lá ŋūhuhū.

Ngǎ tūā cak māghaa ă mōh

Ngǎ túá cak māghaa ă mōh, nə mā ndak ncēh ā má n sa' ngú kǎ?

Take this food and give down there

Take this food and give down there; should a stick come and hit me if I do not go down there.

I went down there once and the idiot told me that my child is already a grown up

They say that I have given birth to a baby when his elder is still a baby

They say that I have given birth to a baby when his elder is still a baby; but is it somebody's child ŋū, hu, hū!

I am cooking my lover's food

I am cooking my lover's food; and why is the idiot calling me down there.

The repetition of the whole syntactic structure is also sustained by the repetition of vowels also called assonance. Assonance is a figure of sound based on the repetition of the same vocalic sound in a word, phrase or sentence.

In order to make the performance scene live and the song more seductive, the singers also have recourse to onomatopoeia, using sounds as words or, using words describing sounds which sound like the sounds they describe as in 'ŋū hu hū !, hē he hē hē he hē !'.

These repetitions do not in any way create monotony in the song. As Nketia (1955, p.104) points out, 'they may have a musical mode of meaning or they may be a means of emphasizing

points that [performers] might wish to make'. Okpewho (1992, p. 71) cited by Mutia (2003, p.4) emphasises that:

It is necessary to grasp first the aesthetic value of repetition in a piece of oral performance. In a fundamental way, the repetition of a phrase, a line, or passage does have a certain sing-song quality to it; if the repetition occurs between intervals in, say, a song or a tale, the audience is often delighted to identify with it and to accompany the performer in going over a passage that has now become familiar. (p.4)

The repetitions create or better still, betray a certain familiarity between the performers and the public.

Rhetorical devices are then used to vivify the scene and give animation to the language. As evidenced by the song, the context of the performance requires a responsive audience. As commonly known in oral literature, the audience shares the same cultural universe with the performers; they have the same '*collective memories and culture*' (Turner, 2011, p. 203). This explains the recurrent repetition which is also a strategy of inviting the audience to repeat or mime the verses.

The irony which transpires in lines 7 and 8 is the illustration of the mockery men usually suffer from their wives in their daily relationship. All together, these figures betray or expose the aesthetic of the Fe'efe'e language and contribution to the convergence of the main message.

6. Conclusion

As has been demonstrated in this analysis, it has always been a mistake for outsiders to argue that African women are not allowed to voice out their feelings, their cries and yearnings. Instead, they are the corner stone of their society, playing the role of 'shadow cabinets'. Yet, oral songs and dances have been proven to be their major means to channel their voice to the public in the traditional Fe'efe'e society. This has not to be confused with the emerging modern world view by some African women who transcend the traditional norms and consequently, brake societal balance through violation of its norms. With the ringing bell of the so-called *human rights* or better put woman rights from the West, African women are on the move and they are breaking African traditional values, and this is leading to the destabilisation of the African society. A blind copy-and-paste version of the values propagated from the West by African women might be one of the consequences of the derailment of the relationship among different gender groups on the continent today. The song used for illustration in this paper demonstrates the richness of African oral literature and the women's linguistic capacities to manipulate language in their public performances and to use this language through songs at will to foster change. The pragmatic dimension of the language used, accompanied by gestures through prolific songs and dances are strategies to convey to community members their social philosophy and to distract people during performances on ceremonial grounds and social events as well. In seducing the audience, the beauty or aesthetics of the language, assists in the conveyance of the core messages to the target listeners through a "game language".

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Appendix

Ko cak mfhū ndak nhā lá e! Take pot arrive down give then e!	Take this food and give to my husband when you reach down there
Ko cak mfhū ndak nhā, n sí' ghě̃n ndak bā cia Take pot arrive down give I no go down no stick fhū ndak ntām ā come down hit me	Take this food and give to my husband when you reach down there. May a stick comes and hit me if I do not go down there.
N da yā' ghě̃n ndak lā hē e!	I had already gone down there

I past-already go down there e!	
N da yá' ghēn ndak lá, nə kwēn ndak ndēn má I past-already go down there animal arrive down say that mēn ă cwī child my big	I had already gone down there and the idiot said my son is big enough
Pó lēn má ngǎ tiē mōō lá e! They say that I sow child then e!	They said that I have given birth to a child while feeding another
Pó lēn má ngǎ tiē mōō, a mā mēn wen ká lá they say that I sow child he be child person Q-then ŋūhuhū! ŋūhuhū!	They said that I have given birth to a child while feeding another. Is it someone else child ŋūhuhū!
Ngǎ tūā cak māghaa ă mōh I put pot lover my fire	I am cooking my lover's food
Ngǎ túá cak māghaa ă mōh, nə mā ndak ncēh ā I put pot lover my fire animal be down call me má n sa' ngá kǎ? That I come do what?	I am cooking my lover's food, and why is the idiot calling me down there?
Nkinken Mōōnkakntē Idiot Mōōnkakntē	Mōōnkakntē, the idiot
Nkinken Mōōnkakntē, mā ă njī ta' mfəlāŋ má ā idiot Mōōnkakntē that he see one franc that he kǎshūā wūā pass death	Mōōnkakntē, the idiot, when he sees a coin he thinks he has challenged death.
Mα mu ā kǎ' Mōōnkakntē That me if past Mōōnkakntē	But if I were Mōōnkakntē
Mα mu ā kǎ' Mōōnkakntē, mā ngǎ njī ta' pōk má If me I be Mōōnkakntē therefore I see one coin that n kǎ' ghú wū. I not have thing	But if I were Mōōnkakntē I would argue that I have nothing but a coin.
Pō zǎp Māyá'nkām They beat Māyá'nkām	They whipped Māyá'nkām
Pō zǎp Māyá'nkām, mbūā' nkhu mbūā' mbō má a They beat Māyá'nkām break feet break hands that she kǎ' yū' ndāk no hear white	They whipped Māyá'nkām, breaking his feet and arms because she was unable to understand English.
Mα mu ā kǎ' Māyá'nkām If I me be Māyá'nkām	But if I were Māyá'nkām

<p>Mα mα ā kǎ Māyá'nkām, mα ngǎ njū' si' ndāk tα If I me be Māyá'nkām therefore I hear white until njū' mfəlaŋsī hear French</p>	<p>But if were Māyá'nkām, I would be able to understand English and French.</p>
<p>Pō lēn mbā nzhwīē mven wen They say be wife old person</p>	<p>They forced me to marry an old man</p>
<p>Pó lén mbā nzhwīē mven wen, ā mā mbhi ntūā ɲǎ' They say be wife old person he be front post shaking n mā njam nsāngālā I be behind enjoy</p>	<p>They forced me to marry an old man and when we are walking together, he is in front of me moving staggeringly while I am behind him enjoying with my lover.</p>
<p>Pǎh mven wēn ghěn ntē Kasua We old person go market Kasua</p>	<p>I and the old man went to the market in Kasua</p>
<p>Pǎh mven wěn ghěn ntē Kasua, a mā mbhi ntūā ɲǎ' We old person go market Kasua he be front post shake n mbā njam nsāngālā I be behind shake-joy</p>	<p>I and the old man went to the market in Kasua and when he was in front of me moving staggeringly, I was behind him enjoying with my lover.</p>
<p>Nu mó' ɔghú ā lā ē he! problem other arrived me then ē he!</p>	<p>I had a problem ē he!</p>
<p>Nu mó' ɔghú ā lā ē, hē he hē hē he hē! Problem other arrived me then ē, hē he hē hē he hē!</p>	<p>I had a problem ē, hē he hē hē he hē!</p>

ATTITUDES AND PERSPECTIVES TO INTEGRATION, ASSIMILATION, AND MULTICULTURALISM IN THE U.S. IN A NEW ERA OF IMMIGRATION

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Abstract

Immigrants' integration in the United States is a dynamic two-way process in which immigrants and the receiving country work together to build a cohesive society. The qualitative and quantitative approaches used to conduct this research show that undergoing integration cannot happen without immigrants' intentional efforts as well as Americans' acceptance. As a reciprocal process, rubbing shoulders together will help create a new mainstream that is greater than the sum of its parts. Although America is a nation built by immigrants, it refuses any menace that could threaten the American legal status. Specific minority groups do not enjoy open access to the mainstream due to different factors, mainly race. Their experiences in the new American life do not determine how good they are at assimilating. This paper reviewed the terms integration and assimilation intending to discuss the problem of visibility that considers racial groups unassimilable by default. It will attempt to answer the following questions: Since assimilation does not offer a place for racial groups in the past, how would today's immigrants join the mainstream? If assimilation does not accept differences, will multiculturalism be a good alternative for these groups? Indeed, America should rethink assimilation and be more tolerant of differences.

Keywords: Assimilation, integration, multiculturalism, newcomers, new mainstream.

1. Introduction

The durability of the American mainstream led to think that any foreign civilizations brought with immigrants do not change it, but the mainstream does. What happened, in the past, is that integration and assimilation proved to be reciprocal approaches. Considerable overlap between immigrants and the host country resulted in a new product that is neither the original nor new. Guy Garcia calls it: 'The new mainstream.' (Guy, Garcia, 2014, p. 4). However, the US keeps this fact under wraps to help assimilation prevail.

Newcomers today see it as a requirement to find a new alternative to incorporate into American society. In his book titled *-Reinventing the Melting Pot: New Immigrants and What It Means to Be American*, Tamar Jacoby states that:

Today as in the past, immigrants' absorption has two main dimensions: objective and subjective. The first challenge facing any newcomer is to make a life in the new country: to find a job, master the language, eventually put down roots and launch

one's children toward a better life. The second dimension is more nebulous: the long, slow process of coming to feel that one belongs in the new place. (p. 17)

Regarding the first dimension that concerns the individual, newcomers tend to work at both the top and the bottom of the job ladder to achieve a high level of institutional integration. The majority are engaged in the jobs native-born Americans refuse to occupy, thus, "a large percentage work in dirty, demanding, low-paid jobs" (Jacoby, 2004, p. 18). However, the debate goes around the second dimension which is usually subtle and debatable.

When discussing immigrants' delay to integration, many sociologists believe that the slow progress in the assimilation process is due to its coercive nature that treats immigrants as strangers, mainly racial groups. Emerson's private journal entry, for instance, declares his hate for the "narrowness" of Americans against immigrants, notably, including "people of color" (Parrillo, 2009, p. 11). For Emerson, "America as a melting or smelting pot was a tomorrow to come, not a reality that was" (Parrillo, 2009, p. 11).

At the time old stock immigrants were subject to assimilation and ready to renounce their cultural background, will today's newcomers accept this subjectivity? In case they do, will America consider that racial differences do not threaten but thrive the mainstream?

2. Milton Gordon's Theory as a Guide to Assimilation Then-and-Now

The term assimilation in American life today takes a new connotation. In the past, the literature referred to it as a forcible and coercive process in which immigrants renounce their cultural backgrounds, habits, traditions, languages, and mores and obtain the new one (Do We Really Want Immigrants to Assimilate? March 1, 2000). Opponents of assimilation described it as "the inevitable evil". As long as the U.S. is a nation that is changing every day, the mechanisms to integrate new immigrant cohorts would be changed as well.

The paper examines the theory of assimilation between rhetoric and reality. Moreover, the inclusion of the approach of multiculturalism is not to conduct a comparison to assimilation, but it comes to interpret the margin that was left by the old theories. They are defined as two 'contrary processes, but they are not mutually exclusive' (Healey, 2011, p. 43). Groups that choose to keep their individual identities are thought unassimilated. However, immigrants who were placed at the edge of society are not assimilated because of an external rejection not by their own choice.

Proponents of assimilation distinguish between the cultural attainment and social integration of immigrant groups. They consider the process as a long-term system that may last for years or decades to adjust its variables into practice. This view was supported by Robert E. Park and Milton Gordon who both agree on the inevitability of immigrants to be eventually part of the new nation (Gordon, 1964). However, the exclusion of ethnic and racial groups, demonstrated by sociologists' discourse analysis, drives heated criticism.

Gordon visualized the seven dimensions of immigrants' integration and assimilation on purpose that each stage will possibly occur at different degrees. The speed or delay of the process depends on the set of immigrants coming to the nation. Undeniably, the immigrant willingness to incorporate is the motor of the process (the objective dimension). The operation *per se* may stop at any stage regarding social impediments for example segregation, prejudice, and discrimination (M. Gordon, 1964, p.70). However, the question that is worth asking is whether Gordon's facets are straightforward or one could precede the other. For him, the presentation of the seven stages by the order would refer to assimilation as a one-way process. The stages that

pursue the cultural and structural sub-processes are shown in Table one. The sociologist tends to show the different steps necessary to “operationalize” assimilation in reality.

Table 1.

Gordon’s Assimilation Variables: “Assimilation in American Life (M. Gordon, 1964, p. 7).

Change of cultural patterns to those of the host Society	Cultural or behavioral assimilation
Large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of host society, on primary group level	Structural assimilation (Integration)
Large-scale intermarriage	Marital assimilation
Development of sense of people-hood based exclusively on host society	Identificational assimilation
Absence of prejudice	Attitude receptional assimilation
Absence of discrimination	Behavioral receptional assimilation
Absence of value and power conflict	Civic assimilation

Although Gordon's assimilation model continues to guide researchers to understanding its nature, it was subject to criticism. One voiced criticism argues that any stage of assimilation variables may precede the previous one, for instance, the structural stage precedes acculturation. In other words, 'many researchers no longer think of the process as necessarily linear, or one-way' (Healey, 2011, p. 48). In addition, a group could be very much similar to the majority culturally, for example, racial groups, but restrained and segregated in the social sphere (Marger, 2012, p. 87). Thus, it will be next to impossible for these groups to proceed to the eventual level of the process.

Today, newcomers reject subjectivity and prefer new paths to find their place in society. The rebirth of the conventional idea of cultural pluralism led to the re-emergence of the so-called multiculturalism. Many proponents of this theory are members of racial and ethnic backgrounds usually those who were not able to integrate and assimilate as a result of their physical differences. In his book titled *In Mortal Danger: The Battle for America's Border and Security*, Congressman Tom Tancredo argues that this category of immigrants may pose a danger to the unity of America. He states that 'In today's America, immigrants are welcomed in a society intoxicated with the idea of multiculturalism' (2006, p. 22). Unlike the old stock of immigrants, newcomers are not ready to give up their individual identities. According to the Congressman, 'becoming an American has changed over the years' (p.23).

3. The Analytical Approach and Quantitative Method in Use to Measure Assimilation

The success or failure of integration and assimilation, then and now, is based on two major factors: racial differences and fear of cultural confrontation. To understand the gap that was left by previous theories, it is important to use the analytical approach. It becomes clear that the biological and psychological aspects are essential to whether ease or block the process. Back in history, African Americans were brought to America forcibly, seeking a better life, and were treated as slaves. Yet their long-term experience in the US society pushed them to go beyond the handicaps and break down the chains of racism. They sought to achieve integration and become

in their identities as Americans, but still rejected. Racial minorities did not actually assimilate or even integrate within society, but this fact does not reflect the belief that they are “unassimilable” as Americans describe. Instead of being excluded from the majority, they could integrate and resemble the middle-class assimilators (Alba & Nee, 2003, p.3).

This approach is also needed regarding the analysis of previous classical literary criticism. In the very classical work entitled *An American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal said that 'it is to the advantage of American Negroes as individuals and as a group to become assimilated into American culture, to acquire the traits held in esteem by dominant white Americans' (Alba & Nee, 2003, p. 3). The author considers people of color assimilated once they acquire the new culture. If they are not eventually assimilated, they should not be blamed for something out of their depth.

Scholars who attempt to analyze the process and suggest solutions assume that assimilation theory makers should consider equity and treat racial groups as they treat European immigrants. If they do so, they would never face any issue in integrating them. Bolaffi refers to the same point and poses the question '...how can one explain the apparent failure of American racial groups to assimilate at the same rates enjoyed by European immigrant groups?' (Alba & Nee, 2003, p.100). Bolaffi, Alba, and Nee call the various groups to move forward with integration and do not wait for policymakers to include them or solve their problems. On the other hand, Banton argues that racial groups' attempt to challenge social discrimination and prejudice is ineffective.

Other fundamental ways to examine the process of assimilation in the 21st century are the quantitative and qualitative methods. The former will be based on statistics that will answer the following question: How well do racial groups conform to the majority today? The latter approach will be based on immigrants' own experiences and feedback toward the terms assimilation and multiculturalism. It will also attempt to answer these questions: Is the new American immigrant familiar with the term assimilation? and does multiculturalism exist as a choice or an alternative? To cover this practical part, the paper will be based on statistics provided by the Pew Research Centre (Tamir, 2021), in addition to the qualitative study provided by the author Laila Lalami that was based on understating the term of assimilation by different categories existing in the same society (Lalami, 2017).

4. Assimilation is an Old Fashion: Does Multiculturalism Alternate?

The classical literary criticism on the field of ethnic and racial studies finds that the physical difference is the responsible factor for the delay or sometimes the complete failure of integration and assimilation. Race and skin color became a stigma for those who are left on the margin of society. It is an unavoidable obstacle that locks the different sub-processes to access a high assimilation degree. Marger (2012) distinguishes between the difficulty that both ethnic groups and racial-ethnic groups usually encounter. The public separation and refusal to allow them to share their experiences with the dominant group makes racial-ethnic people more distant than ethnic groups, who are different just culturally (Marger, 2012, p. 90).

The exclusion of blacks and intolerance of the white population come under fire. Most critiques dispute that racial groups did experience different social attributes of American life in their own neighborhood, but do not take chances to practice them on the level of social networks. One essential element of study should be centralized on the racial construct which dominates the U.S. society, notably, the relation between “segregation, social life, and public attitudes” (Oliver, 2010, p.9). Robert C. Smith adds that "the ideology of white supremacy" thwart assimilation to

some subordinate groups, such as African Americans, Asians, and the ones coming from Latin America. The conventional approach supports those supreme groups to exploit the privilege of their physical traits against the marginalized communities.

A recent study by the Pew Research Centre finds that diversity in America is increasing. In the 2021 census, 46.8 million people in the US identify their race as "Black" up from 36.2 million in 2000. Moreover, the new immigration wave of the black population is growing overtime to present 10% in 2019 (Tamir, 2021). According to Christine Tamir, this diverse black population has made it subtle to identify their identities as a result of 'intermarriage and the "international migration"' (Tamir, 2021). With this in mind, it is important to measure the success or failure of assimilation in such a diverse world.

A study conducted by Harvard University sociologist Mary Waters has examined the question of integration and assimilation today. Waters relied on Census Bureau and other sources to determine whether today's immigrants are integrating or not. To find accurate results, the report relied on different dimensions including: "education, occupation, residential segregation, language acquisition, poverty, health, crime rates, family type, intermarriage, and naturalization" (Powell, 2015). The study finds that immigrants today are integrating as well as their predecessors yet assimilation takes time. Therefore, it is a "multigenerational process" that proved difficult to be accurately measured.

Lalami, on the other hand, asked the question: "What does it take to assimilate in America?" To answer this question, she has examined the connotation of the term assimilation among the different groups. She finds that some people in the US identify the term as the achievement of some "pragmatic considerations", like speaking the language of America, acquiring some of its culture and history, and realizing some educational and economic success (Lalami, 2017). For others, it is deeply based on giving up the old background and acquiring the new one (the American). Yet others completely refute the model of assimilation and believe that integrating is enough to immigrants' absorption. In this regard, retaining the individual identity does not hurt.

The American society keeps oscillating like a pendulum between hope, that immigrants will eventually assimilate, and fear, of the strident threat of foreign identities. Lalami refers to the reasons why America failed to clarify the skeptical side of assimilation and said:

One reason immigration is continuously debated in America is that there is no consensus on whether assimilation should be about national principles or national identity. Those who believe that assimilation is a matter of principle emphasize a belief in the Constitution and the rule of law; in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and in a strong work ethic and equality. Where necessary, they support policy changes to further deter any cultural customs that defy those values. (para. 7)

As it was assumed, over time, integration and assimilation proved to be a mutual process in which immigrants integrate to America, and America, reciprocally, integrate to immigrants as well. According to a recent survey, integration or assimilation 'works not just on immigrants but also on the rest of the population as well. One in seven marriages is across racial or ethnic lines, statistics show. According to one survey, 35 percent of Americans have close relatives of a different racial or ethnic group' (Powell, 2015). Waters concludes that the model of assimilation in America is strong enough to be an ever-existing process among present and future generations.

5. The Fears of Multiculturalism: The Fact on the Ground

In their strong and quick response to current multiculturalism, the conservatives emphasize the danger of this menace. For them, as long as differences are retained, the mainstream is threatened. They believe that America is embracing new patterns of immigrants that are not seeking to cut ties with their previous heritage and culture. The matter will be easy for them with the emergence of multiculturalism. Legitimizing this system will be used as a pretext to preserve the ancestral heritage and promote "radical multiculturalism". At its core, multiculturalism does not aim to damage the old thinking, but the consequence of disuniting between people is what proponents of this ideology did not bear in mind (Tancredo, 2006, p. 22). Two approaches in the same society may not help bring all the population under the same umbrella (the mainstream).

Reconsidering the concept of multiculturalism shows that this phenomenon is a non-threatening ideology. The need to find a place among the majority led to its emergence. Likewise, the nation itself needed new analytical tools to understand the critical new mainstream. In this sense, multiculturalism is used as a mechanism to spread the voice of respect, recognition, and the strident need to speak the language of tolerance and accept individuals (Hartmann, 2014, p. 2). The nature of wide demographic changes occurring in the US in the last decades shows that multiculturalism is a fact on the ground rather than a threat.

In short, the US needs to rethink assimilation in the 21st century, otherwise, the immigration issues will remain unsolved. The balance between the two processes is found when the criteria to Americanize immigrants is based on respecting the national principles of the host country and accepting individual differences.

6. Conclusion

Multiculturalism did not come to exist as an alternative to assimilation. For thousands of years, U.S. society was regarded as a melting pot, but today it is symbolized as a salad bowl. The dramatic demographical shift has caused transformations in the mainstream. Multiculturalism exists to clarify the fact that the US becomes, to a large degree, multicultural.

When conservatives called for the support of the melting pot, they have put many undeniable facts under wraps to ensure solidarity. The emergence of multiculturalism today, as an ideology, was the unexpected consequence of racial groups' ignorance. Today, these groups seek out integration throughout diversity. In return, immigrants' integration is a requisite to survive and assimilation in the US is inescapable and will always prevail.

Indeed, integration in the west is an automatic process that forces its consistency through generations. Like it or not, the immigrant eventually assimilates to the US and the US assimilates to immigrants. After integration, immigrants split into two ways, whether they assimilate and melt themselves with the nation or they integrate at a modest level and keep their differences. The latter type is American in the public sphere and multicultural in the private.

The paper concludes that the unity of the US population depends on the extent of tolerance between the different cultures and beliefs. Integration is dynamic but assimilation takes time. Unlike other European countries, the US has a long and successful history of integrating its immigrants into the mainstream. Although the challenges immigrants have faced are difficult and time-consuming, integration prevails. As Waters said: 'it's really impressive how strong the force of integration is in America' (Powell, 2015).

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TANSNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY ALLIANCE IN MY REVOLUTIONS AND MEANING MORNINGS IN JENIN: A GENEALOGY OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM IN THE AGE OF AMPIRE

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Abstract

In this article, I analyze “global terrorism” as a postcolonial response to the supranational capitalist Empire, through a genealogical approach to the making of transnational revolutionary alliances in Hari Kunzru’s *My Revolutions* and Susan Abulhawa’s *Mornings in Jenin*. I argue that in their pursuit of specific religious or nationalist agendas, for instance, transnational fundamentalist “terrorist” groups are strengthened through alliances with non-religious, local or international, revolutionary activists. Such revolutionary groups often seek to intersect their different programs, in response to the Capitalist Empire, an enemy that is so strong and transnationally-grounded that it controls the media and either renders invisible their struggle as in *My Revolutions* or distorts the truth and presents the oppressor as a victim as in *Mornings in Jenin*. Thus, despite their recurrence in discourses on contemporary terrorism, race and religion are but secondary categories in the ongoing violent confrontation between the West and the postcolonial world.

Keywords: Empire, political violence, postcolonial, race, terrorism, religion, revolution, transnational.

Geospatial Coverage: Europe, United States, Palestine, Israel.

1. Introduction

“I’m a sworn enemy of France. I tell you I am a Muslim and I have nothing to do with a nation of homosexual Crusaders... You are America—the defense, the judge, the attackers. These people are American. I’m al Qaeda. I’m a sworn enemy of you.” Thus spoke, on February 14, 2006, before the court, Zacarias Moussaoui (Thompson, 2006). The only person that has been convicted in the United States in connection with the 9/11 hijackings had just renounced his French citizenship and positioned himself as the enemy, not only of the USA, but of the entire West. He willingly embodied the barbaric homophobic Muslim other, rejecting both the US Justice System and Western humanist values. The stage was thus clearly set. What happened on September 11 was unambiguous; the victims of the Western Empire had struck back. The usual oppressor was now seeing the world through the eyes of a vulnerable victim. How and why did such a shift occur?

This imperative need to understand the roots of anti-western international political violence has aroused a renewed interest for the literature on terrorism. Fiction, non-fiction, or scholarly works of all kinds dealing with or documenting the evolution of various forms of terrorist organizations have since been extensively revisited and reinterpreted. From the same

perspective, the present paper attempts to account for the rise of what is now called “global terrorism” in light of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s views on political violence in the “age of Empire.” In doing so, the paper proposes a genealogical study of the ways in which local activist groups shift into transnational revolutionary alliances in both Kunzru’s *My Revolutions* and Abulhawa’s *Mornings in Jenin*. At first sight, there is no apparent link between the 1960s expressions of dissent, from within the West by pro-Marxist anti-imperialist groups, documented by Kunzru and the Palestinian nationalist resistance to Israeli occupation culminating in a transnational suicide bombing at the Beirut US Embassy in *Mornings in Jenin*.

However, both novels show the different stages leading revolutionary groups to terrorist action first and then to the gradual intersecting of their agendas with other transnational entities’ programs. Therefore, despite the differences in the historical, geographical, and political settings of these two novels, I will resort to a genealogical approach to situate, in each of them, the rationale behind the manifestations of transnational political violence against what Hardt and Negri dubbed the capitalist Empire.

After a conceptual clarification on my usage of the terms “Empire,” “terrorism,” and “transnational political violence,” I will show that “global terrorism” is, to a large extent, a transnational reaction to the supranational capitalist Empire. Then, I will demonstrate that despite their recurrence in discourses on contemporary terrorism, race and religion are but secondary categories in the ongoing violent confrontation between the West and the postcolonial world. Finally, I will explain how Empire’s totalizing cultural discourse and its imposition of a single model of society might, on the one hand, lead to extreme reactions within the West, and on the other hand, unfortunately, trigger the postcolonial world’s sympathy for transnational fundamentalist organizations like al-Qaeda, the Islamic Jihad Movement, or AQIM.

2. Empire, beyond Nation-State Imperialism

The concept of Empire, contrasting with formal Nation-State imperialism, has been theorized among other scholars by Hardt and Negri (2000). The connection they made in *Empire* between the capitalist Empire and global terrorism earned them much fame in the wake of the 9/11 attacks which proved, to some extent, the accuracy of their theory on the inevitable drawbacks of the capitalist Empire’s political violence on the postcolonial world. According to Hardt and Negri, the roots of transnational political violence against Western interests can be traced back to the rise of Empire, which is not a single imperial Nation-State but a set of supra or transnational power structures at the service of the collective capital.

However, as in Foucault’s genealogical account of modern power’s mutation from the discipline regime of power to the rise of biopower, the shift from Nation-State imperialism to the more subtle rule of the capitalist Empire should be conceived in a logic intensification rather than displacement (Nealon, 2008, pp. 28-29). On this score, Hardt and Negri have pointed out their indebtedness to Foucault’s account of the genesis of biopower. As they remark,

Foucault’s work allows [them] to recognize a historical, epochal passage in social forms from disciplinary society to the society of control” In fact, even in the most advanced capitalist societies, it is obviously clear that both panoptic surveillance and discipline and punish modes of power enforcement are still present alongside of the more subtle and immanent manifestations of biopower which “regulates social life from its interior. (2000, p. 21, p. 28)

Therefore, while the capitalist Empire has been increasingly powerful since the end of the Second World War, formal Nation-State imperialism is still a reality in the 21st century as one can notice through the recent US colonization of Iraq and Afghanistan or the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Likewise, although both *Mornings in Jenin* and *My Revolutions* are set in the post Second World War period, they show that 20th century state repression against revolutionary activism in Britain or nationalist resistance in Palestine was as violent as it could have been under any formal 19th century colonial empire. In *My Revolutions* “the tens of thousands” of people protesting against the Vietnam War in front of the US Embassy at Grosvenor Square are fiercely “charged with horses” in a scene that the main protagonist, Chris Carver, describes as “medieval” (p. 35). Similarly, the “Lansdowne Road” activists and the homeless families they illegally housed in unoccupied buildings were evicted in such a violence that “within half an hour, most [of the houses] had been rendered uninhabitable. Floors were torn up, toilets smashed, pipes and cables pulled out of the walls” (p. 163).

In *Mornings in Jenin* too, the Israeli repression of Palestinian nationalists is carried with extreme and even dehumanizing violence. For instance, Youssef has been tortured, beaten, and humiliated for six months in Israeli prisons (p. 108). As for the children and teenagers involved in the “intifada,” they were repressed” with “might, force, and beatings,” imprisoned and tortured (pp. 249-250).

Hardt and Negri (2000) are well aware that Empire takes up and reinforces many of the characteristics of traditional imperialism. For, even though it is “formed, not on the basis of force itself, but on the basis of its capacity to present force as being in the service of right and peace” (p. 15), Empire “constructs its own relationships of power based on exploitations that are in many respects more brutal than those” of Nation-State imperialism (p. 43). Without, naming it properly, McClintock, A. (1992) has well determined the functioning of Empire except for the fact that, unlike Hardt and Negri, she addresses an exclusively American Empire, with no reference to other capitalist Nation-States or transnational power structures:

[T]he United States’ imperialism-without-colonies has taken a number of distinct forms (military, political, economic and cultural), some concealed, some half-concealed. The power of US finance capital and huge multi-nationals to direct the flows of capital, commodities, armaments and media information around the world can have an impact as massive as any colonial regime. (p. 89)

Contrary to McClintock (1992), both Negri (2001) and Leela Gandhi (1998) believe that Empire includes and supersedes the United States. From her postcolonial posture, Gandhi views capitalism as the primary source of economic injustice in the Third World. “Neo-colonialism,” she writes, “[is] held in place by transnational corporations and the international division of labor linking first-world capital to third world labor markets” (p. 175). In “*L’ Empire, stade supreme de L’impérialisme*,” Negri gives a more comprehensive definition of Empire which he considers as a supranational, global superstructure exercising complete monopoly on military, monetary, communicational, and cultural powers. As he argues, in the age of Empire, a single authority detains military power, as seen in the US-lead coalitions in the Gulf wars; global finance is subordinated to a single hegemonic currency, the dollar; and the communicational power imposes Western civilization as a single model of culture. Negri makes, however, the precision that “the Empire is not American; it is simply capitalist; it is the order of collective capital.” In face of such overwhelming, almost ubiquitous, capitalist power networks, the militarily, economically and culturally dominated postcolonial peoples have little room for

maneuver. Their only way out of the yoke of imperialist capitalism is through the recourse to unconventional types of warfare such as guerilla and terr

3. Modern Terrorism: A Postcolonial Response to Empire's Political Violence and Economic Injustices

Since the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent US-lead "War on Terror," "terrorism" has become a most popular term, not only in political discourse, but also in the media as well as in academia. Sometimes overused, often misused, it has been so negatively loaded as to become an all-purpose rhetorical weapon used to demonize enemies and illegitimate their cause. According to Best S. and Nocella A. (2004), the term "terrorism" is "one of the most commonly used words in current vocabulary" and also "one of the most abused terms, applied to actions ranging from flying fully-loaded passenger planes into buildings to rescuing pigs and chickens from factory farms" (p. 1). As they further remark, in his address to the nation shortly after the 9/11 attacks, "President Bush used the terms 'terror,' 'terrorism,' and 'terrorists' thirty-two times without ever defining what he meant" (p. 1). In defense of President Bush on this particular context, one might nevertheless acknowledge that the concept of political terrorism is as controversial as uneasy to define.

According to former PLO leader Yasser Arafat, "the difference between the revolutionary and the terrorist lies in the reason for which each fights." Therefore, "whoever stands by a just cause and fights for the freedom and liberation of his land from the invaders, the settlers, and the colonialists cannot possibly be called a terrorist" (as cited in Shughart II, 2006, p. 10). Depending on which camp one sides with in a conflict then, the enemy's celebrated freedom fighter, revolutionary activist, or patriot is unequivocally viewed as a lawless terrorist.

In the beginning of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in *Mornings in Jenin*, for instance, the Israeli "Irgun, Haganah, and Stern Gang" are called "terrorists" by "the British," "Yahood, Jews, Zionists Dogs, Son of whores, Filth" by "the Arabs," and "Freedom Fighters, Soldiers of God, Saviors, Fathers, Brothers" by "the recent Jewish population" (p. 24). Likewise, to the ABC reporter commenting on the suicide bombing at the US Embassy in Lebanon, there is no doubt that "terrorists hit the US Embassy" (p. 234). At the same time, Amal, believing that her brother Youssef is the suicide bomber, rather sees the attack as the legitimate or desperate act of a man who was "denied, imprisoned, tortured, humiliated, and exiled for his wish to possess himself and inherit the land bequeathed to him by history" (p. 239).

In *My Revolutions* too, the label terrorist is controversial. For while the main protagonist Chris Carver and his friends view themselves as radical "revolutionaries" (p. 127) involved in armed resistance, their activism is seen as "an act of insanity" (p. 198) or "terrorism" (p. 261). In a nutshell, the rhetoric of terrorism is always polemical in the sense that "depending on the interpreter, violence against a perceived enemy can be seen as terrorism or counter terrorism, as aggressive offence or legitimate defense" (Best & Nocella, 2004, p. 3).

If there is any consensus around the concept of political terrorism, it is perhaps that it is generally assumed to suggest both violence and terror. The term "terrorism" is in fact etymologically derived from the radical "terror." As such, whether it involves actual acts of violence or not, the phrase "political terrorism," suggests a certain reliance upon public perception of threat in the pursuit of political goals. In *My Revolutions*, when Chris and his friends put the first bomb at "the American bank near the Mansion house," on a weekend, at a moment when "the City of London is deserted," they relied more on the psychological effect of violence threat than on violence *per se*. Their main objective was to get "the BBC and ITV" relay their revolutionary action which, as Chris insinuates, will be insignificant if "it is

unobserved” and “not reported” (pp. 83-84). In *Mornings in Jenin* too, the first Israeli attacks, though violent, were meant to conquer the land by frightening and then “getting rid of the non-Jewish population, first the British, through lynching and bombings, then the Arabs through massacres, terror and expulsion” (p. 25).

In light of these few examples, it is clear that despite the recurrence of the terms “terrorist” and “terrorism” in post 9/11 political discourse, terrorism is not at all a recent phenomenon. Bernholz P. (2006) even argues that terrorism is “an old phenomenon” which could be traced back to the Middle Ages when, “for nearly two hundred years, the Assassins, an Ismaelite Shiite sect,” had “been systematically applying it in all its traits” (p. 221). Even if, as a form of revolutionary or political resistance, the traits of terrorism have not significantly changed since the Middle Ages, one can nevertheless distinguish between three different “stylized waves” in the history of modern terrorism: “terrorism in the service of national liberation and ethnic separatism, left-wing terrorism, and Islamist terrorism” (Shughart II, 2006, p. 7).

All these three types of terrorisms somehow dovetail with one another in *Mornings in Jenin* and *My Revolutions*. In *Mornings in Jenin*, Youssef and some of the Palestinian nationalist freedom fighters join the Islamic Jihad whereas the left-wing anti-imperialist revolutionary group in *My Revolutions* ends up in a “pragmatic alliance” with the PFLP—a Palestinian Marxist-Leninist nationalist organization (p. 220). These types of connections between revolutionary groups from different political backgrounds and the subsequent intersection of their respective agendas is a turning point in what is now called global or transnational terrorism.

When militarily inferior sub or transnational groups join their forces to combat a common enemy, there is reason to believe that the latter is not the traditional Nation-State, but a trans-nationally-grounded entity which, according to Hardt and Negri is nothing but the capitalist Empire. On this score, Bacchetta, Campt et al. (2003) draw attention on the fact that the very “nature” of capitalism and globalism “generates transnational movements of all kinds;” “transnational networks as diverse as al- Qaeda and the Red Cross productive of new identities and practices as well as new kinds of political repressions” (pp. 306-307).

4. Global Terrorism, a Transnational Reaction to a Supranational Capitalist Empire

The current transnational character of political violence is tightly related to the ongoing transnational configuration of geopolitical power structures from the Second World War to the present. In fact, due to the bipolarization of international politics during the Cold War, both Nation-States coalitions and revolutionary transnational alliances were centered either on the US-led capitalist camp or around the Soviet-led communist bloc. According to Sobel, “although terrorists [were] found among adherents of almost every brand of left-wing or right-wing ideology, the overwhelming majority of terrorists [could] be described as leftist. Most [had] a New Left or Trotskyist character”(as cited in Bernholtz, 2006, p. 223). This state of facts is absolutely observable in *My Revolutions* where, despite the existence of right-wing neo-Nazi activism, the striking majority of local activists were of Marxist-Leninist affiliation: the “Free Pictures” and “Lansdowne Road” revolutionaries, the “PFLP,” as well as “the African Liberation Caucus” and “the Revolutionary Socialist Students’ Federation.”

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, marked, not only the end of the Cold War, but also the beginning of a New World (dis)Order with the emergence of the United States as the sole Global super power. In this context, the so far ideological international political confrontations

took a religious, cultural, and racial turn. Capitalist Nation-States in alliance with the now reinforced capitalist supranational power networks within and outside the West are thus confronted with fundamentalist transnational organizations like al-Qaeda and the Islamic Jihad claiming their anchorage in both Islam and Arab or other forms of Third World nationalisms. Therefore, during the Cold War as well as in the post-Cold War era, religious and non-religious transnational revolutionary alliances can be viewed as reactions to the capitalist Empire which did not rise after the Cold War, as Hardt and Negri (2000) would have it, but as early as the end of the Second World War. If we consider that Empire works for the capital, benefits from supranational military power, and seeks to impose a single cultural model, we can easily agree that the post-World War II capitalist camp, formed around the United States and major Western European countries like France, the United Kingdom, and the former Federal Republic of Germany, had almost all the characteristic features of Empire as described by Hardt and Negri. In fact, with a military alliance as strong as the NATO and an obviously Western cultural model to promote through a worldwide media network put at the service of its capitalist interests, this post-World War II alliance between capitalist powers was, without doubt, the first step toward the making of Empire. In McClintock's view, the rise of the Empire can definitely be traced back to the post-independence period since, "despite the hauling down of colonial flags in the 1950's, revamped economic imperialism has ensured that America and the former European colonial powers have become richer, while, with a tiny scattering of exceptions, their ex-colonies have become poorer" (2000, p. 94).

To be sure, there has been, in the aftermath of the Cold War, a logic of intensification reinforcing transnational capitalist networks to the detriment of traditional Nation-State imperialism. The connection between these two components of the capitalist Empire is well visible in Kunzru's *My Revolutions* whose two plots are respectively set in the heart of the Cold War and in late twentieth century Britain. In the novel's late 1990s plot, the main protagonist, Chris Carver alias Michael Frame, reacting to his step daughter's apparent disinterest in politics, explains that even though twentieth century Europe is through with the Cold War and lives in the so-called "end of history" era, there are still reasons for political activism and resistance, even in the "age of shopping":

Thatcher's gone, the Berlin wall's down, and unless you're in Bosnia, the most pressing issue of the nineties appears to be interior design. It's supposed to be the triumph of capitalism – the end of history and the glorious beginning of the age of shopping. But politics is still here, Sam, even in 1998. (p. 47)

Moreover, in the 1960-70's plot, the junction of left-wing revolutionary groups in the protest against the Vietnam War shows clearly their awareness of the connection between the capitalist Empire and Nation-State imperialism. In response to the American News reporter's tricky question about the point in criticizing American intervention in Vietnam at a moment when they could "do something about injustice" in Britain, Chris Carver remarks that "it was all connected" in the sense that "the differences between the Viet Cong and poor blacks in Mississippi and factory workers in Bradford were artificial" (p. 32). In the mind of 1960-70's leftist revolutionary activists then, the source of all these forms of oppression and injustice was the capitalist system. Furthermore, both the "Lansdowne Road" and "Free Pictures" groups, were in their very composition transnational entities with, not only British, but also German and American Citizens. In addition, the revolutionaries remained connected to or, at least, aware of the activism of other revolutionary groups throughout the world.

It took much longer to the refugees in *Mornings in Jenin* to realize that Zionism was actually part of a wider capitalist project in the Middle East. They first realized that the international community would be of little help before their enemy. The Swedish UN mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, who in 1948, condemned Zionism as “an offence against the principles of elemental justice” was, right after, assassinated by “Jewish terrorists” under the impotent gaze of “the five major powers” who had appointed him (pp. 39-41). The United Nations were visibly not the actual global authority as their series of ineffective resolutions and recommendations on the Palestinian crisis will confirm later on. One only has to compare the UN inefficacy on Israeli-Palestine conflict with its readiness to back the 1991 US-led military coalition in the Gulf in order to realize that the true global authority is Empire. On this score, Lisa Hajjar, focusing on Empire’s manipulation of international jurisdictions, argues that “the center of gravity in establishing, interpreting, and shaping the law of war” is now subordinated to the actual practices of leading capitalist states (p.13).

In addition to the UN’s subservience to Empire, the Jenin refugees will later realize that Arab solidarity was inconsistent and unreliable because of the economic, geopolitical, and military realities of the region. For instance, “the Hashemite monarchy, [fearing] for its own survival,” either because of economic considerations or due to military reasons, “crushed Palestinians Guerrillas and civilians in terrible massacres” (p. 180). On this account, it is worth noting that the military strength usually ascribed to Israel has naturally much to do with Empire’s support. Even if no coalition of armies was created in favor of Zionism, the Israeli army can always rely on an indefectible US support in military intelligence, logistics, and even armament. Given the very hegemonic nature of Empire, the existence of the State of Israel as a militarily strong non-Arab ally in the Middle East is a crucial geostrategic option for the capitalist Empire. In fact, the creation of a regional political or economic union between Arab countries would seriously endanger Western control over the oil market and relativize Empire’s monopoly on economic power structures. Regarding the use of Empire’s military power against Third World alliances, there is, as McClintock rightly points out,

A global security system based on military muscle, not political cooperation, policed by the US’s high-tech, mercenary army (and perhaps NATO), moving rapidly around the world, paid for by Germany and Japan, and designed to prevent regional, Third World consensuses from emerging. (p. 90)

Alongside the fear for Israeli military reprisals against countries hosting Palestinian guerrillas though, the Hashemite Kingdom’s “fear for its own survival” might also be understood on economic grounds. In fact, beyond the Hashemite royal family, most Arab monarchs and princes in the Persian Gulf do share, in one way or another, responsibility in Empire’s take over and control over the region’s natural resources. They are even part of Empire which, once again, is neither American nor European but Capitalist. Whoever benefits from the capitalist Empire and willingly contributes to its development is therefore part of it, regardless of racial or national origins.

Another important aspect of the capitalist Empire’s intervention in the Palestinian crisis resides in the bias of the Western media in their coverage of the conflict as well as the official US declarations in favor of Israel. In *Mornings in Jenin*, Palestinians finally discover that what Negri calls “the communicational power” at the hand of Empire is systematically directed against their cause and interests. In this context, we can definitely agree with Gayatri Spivak that the subaltern cannot speak, his voice is inaudible since the oppressors control the media and construct their own truth according to their own interests. As Amal points out in *Mornings*

in *Jenin*, right “a week after the massacre at Sabra and Shatila, *Newsweek* magazine determined that the most important story of the previous seven days had been the death of Prince Grace. The following week, the cover story was ‘Israel in torment.’ Israel, a victim.” In the same logic of bias, President Bush, referring to Ariel Sharon, the main perpetrator of the horrors of Sabra and Shatila, as “a man of peace,” cynically demanded from Yasser Arafat, then “holed up in a room of his [bombarded] headquarters to stop the terror” (pp. 231, 292).

It is only after the Sabra and Shatila massacre, when they understood that the Jews did not actually mind “making a liar of their only supporter,” that PLO freedom fighters like Youssef, knowing that their real enemy was multifaceted, joined the Islamic Jihad in order to strike any of Empire’s perceived manifestations (p. 240). While being incontestably condemnable terrorist attacks against civilian innocents, both the 1983 bombing of the US Embassy in Lebanon reported in *Mornings in Jenin* and the 2001 World Trade Center attacks were, after all, directed against symbols of the American-lead capitalist Empire. Furthermore, the transnational character of “terrorism” can further be observed in the very nature and locations of the targeted buildings in both *My Revolutions* and *Mornings in Jenin*. In *My Revolutions*, after a series of attacks and protests within Britain against both British and American symbols of power, the revolutionary group ends up assailing the German Embassy in Copenhagen. In *Mornings in Jenin* too, the suicide bombing did happen on Israeli or American soil, but in Lebanon. It did not hit an Israeli building but the US embassy.

5. Race and Religion: Secondary Categories in International Political Violence

Today, terrorism is given a Muslim-Arab face. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is often wrongly presented as a religious, cultural, and racial confrontation. Of course, contrary to what orthodox Marxists claim, the economic base cannot alone account for the cultural super structure. When it so happens that economic power is generally detained by White people of Judeo-Christian confession, both race and religion are readily viewed as significant categories in any serious study of global power relations. As Fanon points out, in his analysis of the colonized-colonizer relationship in the Algerian context, “Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with” the colonial problem where “what parcels out the world is, to begin with, the fact of belonging to or not to a given race, a given species” (p. 32).

However, while race, religion, and culture can hardly be ignored in both the Israeli-Palestinian war and the “War on Terror,” they should only be considered as secondary categories, not primary causes. Actually, the racial and religious aspect of the terrorist-counterterrorist confrontation should be viewed as a logical consequence of the resistance to the single model of culture imposed by Empire. It is in this sense that, during his trial for his alleged implication in the 9/11 attacks, Moussaoui, deliberately chooses to embody all anti-western values and identify himself as the homophobic Muslim enemy of the West in order to defy the so-called Western civilizing mission theorized to cover up a purely imperialist agenda in the Third World. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon has well-articulated the native’s rejection of Western values as a form of cultural resistance to White supremacy:

The violence with which the supremacy of White values is affirmed and the aggressiveness which has permeated the victory of these values over the ways of life and thought of the native mean that, in revenge, the native laughs in mockery when Western values are mentioned in front of him. (p. 35)

Although a Moroccan born French citizen, Moussaoui is without doubt a committed member of al-Qaeda. Unlike him though, many people join or sympathize with transnational “terrorist” groups without sharing their religious or nationalist agenda. In *My Revolutions* and *Mornings in Jenin*, this form of intersectional politics works respectively in favor of the Palestinian PFLP and the Islamic Jihad groups. In fact, in *My Revolutions*, the revolutionary group has little or nothing to do with the Palestinian nationalist cause, but they decide to connect with the PFLP in order to have allies capable of providing them with the weapons and the financial means necessary for the pursuit of their agenda (p. 220). Likewise, Youssef and some of the PLO freedom fighters, while fighting for a strictly nationalist cause joined the Islamic Jihad Group for its stronger military strike force and regardless of its religious agenda.

In *Mornings in Jenin*, Abulhawa makes it clear that at its very beginning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had almost nothing to do with either religion or race since only the land was at stake:

On its first day of occupation, Israel bulldozed the entire Moroccan neighborhood of some two hundred ancient houses and several hundred residents, who were given less than two hours’ notice to evacuate. Muslims and Christians alike, Greeks and Armenians saw most of their property confiscated, while they themselves were evicted to ghettos or exiled. (p. 140)

Furthermore, the lasting friendship relations between Hasan and Ari Perlsteine first and later between their two families demonstrate that religious, cultural, or racial issues did not oppose Jews and Palestinians before the advent of *El Naksa*, the disaster. How could race or culture be a significant bone of contention between two peoples of the same Semite stock? John Hess has clearly demonstrated that, the concepts “Semite” and “Semitic” were Orientalist constructions meant to set in opposition the “Indo-European,” “Indo-Germanic,” or “Aryan,” to “the inevitably inferior Semitic race,” including both Jews and Arabs, “as the foil for the triumph of Western, Christian civilization” (pp. 56-7). Therefore, while Arabs are today portrayed as the anti-Semitic group per excellence, no other people is physically and culturally closer to the Jews than the Arabs who belong to the same Semitic group. Abulhawa gives a telling illustration of this state of fact through the story of Ismael *cum* David. If an Arab baby stolen by an Israeli soldier has been raised within the Jewish community and even served in the Israeli army, without arousing any suspicion about his Arab origins, then the physical differences between Jews and Arabs must really be insignificant.

The alleged connection between terrorism and either the Arab race or the Muslim religion is a Western construction meant to demonize the Muslim other and illegitimate revolutionary causes that have more to do with national resistance than religion. At the same time, this conflation of the terrorist-type with the Arab/Muslim nationalist activist covers up the numerous cases of politically motivated expressions of violence, internal to the West, and which would definitely fit in any rigorous definition of terrorism. There is clearly a racist operation at work “in the naming of terrorism” since, whenever the terrorists are not people of color, no one associates acts of political violence with race, as in the case of Timothy McVeigh who “bombed the Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 men” (Bacchetta et al., 2003, p. 304). In “The Rhetoric of Terrorism,” Tomis Kapitan deplores the fact that “young Palestinian” suicide bombers and “those who flew hijacked planes into the World Trade Center towers” were systematically ascribed the label of terrorists while many other acts of political violence which “would qualify as terrorist under most definitions” were not considered as such by Western media. In the long list of condoned “terrorist” acts provided by Kapitan let us single

out the “attacks upon civilians in Nicaragua by the U.S.-supported ‘contra’ rebels of the 1980s claimed over 3000 civilian lives,” the mass murder of “over 2000 Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Beirut in 1982,” the “destruction of Grozny by Russian forces” in the 1999 Chechnya war, or the U.S. bombing of Tripoli in April 1986.

6. Cultural Resistance to the Empire’s Civilizational and Cultural Model of Society

Beyond terrorism, Kunzru’s *My Revolutions* deals extensively with various forms of resistance to the capitalist Empire’s hegemony. In fact, to the multidimensional manifestations of the Empire, the revolutionaries oppose a multifaceted resistance. As a matter of fact, in response to the model of culture imposed on them, the revolutionary experiment with several forms of dissent ranging from the questioning of the class system to the rejection of patriarchy and sexual normativity. Regarding the class system which is among the most visible by-products of capitalism, Chris and his friends, start their revolutionary actions with the disturbance of bourgeois events. In turn, they “[disrupt] property auctions by making false bids” and mess up a bourgeois party on the ground that “these sophisticated people” are “complicit in everything they are ignoring,” including the “Vietnam” War (p.119, pp.124-126). Still, faithful to the belief that “the experience of transgression is part of [their] formation as revolutionary,” they further apply their “principle number one” which consists in breaking the Law” to serve the lower classes, victims of the capitalist system (p.117). Thus, Chris and his revolutionary fellows of the “Lansdowne Road group” successively “run a free shop”, robbing groceries from stores to feed allegedly poor people, and illegally house the homeless for free in public buildings (pp.105-108, 140-163).

Since the capitalist Empire imposes a model of society based on rigid moral standards and societal rules, an efficient revolutionary struggle should, beyond class issues and the protest against the Vietnam War, consider also resistance on a cultural level. As Chris makes it clear, “for [them], there was only one war” which demanded “to destroy the class system, combat state oppression and end the war” (p. 28). Combating State oppression also entails combating the State-imposed model of society which, in *My Revolutions*, is based on patriarchy, sexism, sexual normativity, and the cult of individual property. The revolutionaries are therefore aware that “a revolutionary transformation of society would require a transformation of social life” which could only be made by “[throwing] a clog into the big machine” of the “capitalist state” (p.109). As such, they experimented with “free love,” and shared both rooms and sexual partners on the ground that “love for freedom” meant that love itself “had to be free,” whereas “bourgeois individualism” or individual property of any kind had to be condemned (pp. 111-112).

Such extreme reactions to the Empire’s imposition of a single model of society are obviously not a specifically Western phenomenon. The total rejection of Western societal norms from within the West by Chris and his friends is much similar to Moussaoui’s diatribe against the whole Western world when he considers that, as a Muslim, he is the enemy, not only, of the America and its institutions, but also of France, his country of citizenship which he calls a “nation of homosexual Crusaders”. According to Fassin E. (2006), such a homophobic stand can be viewed as a postcolonial response to the fact that “in the postcolonial world, and particularly after September 11, the liberal Western norm updating human rights with ‘sexual democracy’ is intertwined with the norm of antiracism.” Moussaoui, just like “young French Muslim girls of North African origin” who defy the French law against the Burqa, “was well aware” of these liberal Western norms and was, to some extent, defying them as he consciously jumped in what, in Fassin’s words, is “a formidable trap to those postcolonial subjects who

have the misfortune to overstep it: accused of complicity with racism, they are called barbarians and pushed into the background.” Thus, in face of the totalizing imperial cultural discourse discarding non-western values as barbaric and backward practices or beliefs, postcolonial peoples tend to empathize and identify with any entity that looks capable of confronting Empire on military, cultural or ideological grounds.

7. Conclusion

Despite the fact that “terrorism” is an old phenomenon, modern terrorism, particularly in its transnational or global aspects can be viewed as a postcolonial response to capitalism in the age of Empire. Since the latter is economically, militarily, and culturally both hegemonic and ubiquitous, the postcolonial reactions and resistances are logically multifaceted. This state of fact largely explains the various forms of intersectional politics at work in the transnational alliances between local and international revolutionary, nationalist, or fundamentalist groups with initially different political agendas. In the pursuit of specific religious or nationalist agendas, for instance, transnational fundamentalist “terrorist” groups are strengthened through alliances with non-religious, local or international, revolutionary activists. Indeed, such revolutionary groups often seek to intersect their different programs, in response to various forms of political violence generated by transnational power structures which, alongside Nation-State imperialism, operate at the service of the capitalist Empire.

In fact, given that their common enemy, the capitalist Empire, is a supranational entity, only a coalition of the forces of resistance could effectively confront it. In addition to these types of transnational revolutionary alliances, both *My Revolutions* and *Mornings in Jenin*, show that, in the end, Empire is attacked wherever its symbols are visible. When the revolutionary in Britain attack both the US Embassy in London and the German Embassy in Copenhagen, and Palestinian nationalists bomb the US Embassy in Lebanon, “terrorism” or revolutionary actions can be said to have definitely taken a transnational turn.

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THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION IN THE DIALOGUE OF CIVILISATIONS: WEST/ISLAMIC WORLD

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Abstract

Globalization created a state of cultural diversity, which became an essential condition of human society. This new reality increased the interrelatedness among all countries and cultures. Consequently, the inter-civilizational dialogue became necessary for global peace and common prosperity. The lack of communication can be considered as the major reason that leads to other phenomena like racism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, or even more serious issues like clash of civilizations. For that reason, the focus of dialogue of civilizations spread from security like political and military fields, and social and economic fields into the area of culture, which is more likely to promote exchange and mutual learning. This paper will discuss how translation, as a means of interlingual communication works to exchange information between speakers of different languages, which helps them, know and understand each other. It will clarify its role in linking users of different languages to humanity and international society. The paper will also investigate the role of translation in fighting stereotypes and prejudices about the cultural “Other” by providing unbiased texts through which the latter is presented. Knowing that the ultimate goal of the dialogue of civilizations is the realization that all civilizations are different but equal, translation can help correct the illusion of Western dominance and its cultural supremacy by showing that all civilizations experience periods of rise and fall.

Keywords: Civilization, dialogue, Islam, translation, west.

1. Introduction

The relation between the Islamic and Western, Christian world has always been turbulent. In November 4, 1998, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution, which designated 2001 as the Year of the Dialogue among Civilizations. This attempt of reconciliation was unfortunately interrupted. The attacks on the United States, on September 2001 started an era of fear and uncertainty. The war against terrorism that followed put Islamic culture under the spotlight, particularly its relation to the West and the possibility of their coexistence.

Feelings of hatred between the two sides increased, Muslims felt they have become a target of America’s war against terrorism. The anger and suspicion they felt rendered any

attempt for a military collaboration or political negotiation impossible. People across the world are now perfectly aware that the open clash between the Muslim and the Western civilization was caused by the struggle for power. The West wanted nothing but to perpetuate its domination. It is according to Ajami (1993) “Using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western predominance, protect Western interests and promote Western political and economic values.” (p.19)

Hence, international relationships are based on political and economic interests not on peaceful alliances. This fact makes public opinion in Muslim countries distrustful towards the West and its initiatives to start a dialogue with the Islamic world. These attempts are usually considered as means for the West to serve its interests and to contain and westernize the Islamic world. However, in a multicultural, globalized world, dialogue is no longer an option but a necessity. Politics and economy proved their inefficiency to bring the two civilizations together, the two fields are a source of tension and conflict.

Unlike the political and economic fields, the world of culture is naturally diverse. It brings people from different cultural backgrounds together and helps them discover each other. It is a world of ideas and this makes it more suitable for dialogue.

Ideas are exchanged through language, which is the most essential vehicle of communication. However, the interaction between people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds necessitates a medium. Translation ensures the spread of information, knowledge and ideas among different cultures. Larson (1998) defined it as the comprehension of the meaning of a text and the production of an equivalent text. It communicates the message or the source text in another language or the target language. In addition to its communicative function, language also holds the identity of people as it reflects their values and the way they see the world, for that reason, translation entails the understanding of the culture of different peoples.

The so-called clash of civilizations between the West and the Islamic world is at the heart due to a huge lack of communication. The two civilizations are definitely different but this is not the reason why they cannot reconcile. In fact, both make little if no effort to see what they consider as the other as it is rather than through stereotypes and prejudices. Translation is an act of transfer that eventually leads to intercultural communication. Such exploration and understanding of a different culture can help achieve the effective communication and co-operation that other fields failed to achieve.

2. Translation and the War of Representation

Translating a text is an activity that takes a good knowledge of both the source and target language i.e.: the language of the original text and that to which one wants to make a transfer. The translator who is a bilingual writer becomes a bridge between two languages and between the cultures, they represent. This activity is an act of intercultural communication that brings people together and makes them understand each other's mentalities because the transfer of knowledge and information leads to an automatic discovery of cultures and civilizations.

Translation represents one of the best ways to provide people in the West with neutral representation of Islam and the Islamic civilization. In fact, the war against terrorism waged by America after September 11th was the most recent attack against the Islamic world; it was at the heart a war of representation. The way to the attack was paved by spreading prejudices and

stereotypes about Islam. This eventually helped justify and legitimize the act of violence. Translation of works written by Muslim writers can help introduce Islam to people in the West as it really is.

The barriers which were set by governments between cultures can be broken down by translated works. Translation offers people a voyage beyond geographical boundaries as it allows them to discover different places, societies and cultures that they have never encountered before. This direct contact between western readers and the original text translated into their mother language provides a more reliable source of information.

After September 11th attacks, many Americans came to know Islam and Muslims through the unfortunate incident, since some Quranic verses were decontextualized in order to represent Islam as a violent dogma that wants to annihilate all non-Muslims. This led to a huge wave of fear but also to an unprecedented curiosity towards a culture that Westerners had little knowledge about. The availability of a translated version of Quran in different languages allowed numerous non-Muslims around the world to see for themselves the real preaching of a religion that they knew only through biased media propaganda. The translated version of the Quran provided autonomy and neutrality. It allowed people to see what Islam consists of as it gave them the ability to read the original text and make their own conclusions. To the surprise of numerous people, the post September 11th curiosity led many people in the West to reach out for the Islamic world and research about Islamic culture. Many got rid of the fear and incomprehension they had towards Islam, and ironically, many others converted to it.

This is a real example of how translation allows people to read in their language a text that was not accessible before. This frees the individual as it exposes him to the source text without any filter or medium what would eventually free the public opinion. This example shows us that the translated version of Quran allowed people in the West to understand Islam as it is, but also to stay vigilant and aware of media's manipulation that was meant to spread fear and xenophobia. It also gives us an idea about the importance of translation as it helps prevent the misuse and de-contextualization of any text.

The process of translation starts an ongoing relationship of exchange and exploration between cultures no matter how different these might be. By making texts from different cultures available and known to people who cannot read a certain language, translation helps shape a global world. It creates harmonious relationships that lead to peace between cultures and civilizations. It allows people to see the similarities between these cultures rather than to focus uniquely on differences.

3. Translation as Self-Representation

Thanks to its ability to provide access into original texts, translation can help correct the image of Islam by providing a more true to reality representation. Translation of works written by Muslim writers can work as a medium that presents an unbiased vision of Muslim culture with all the contradictions that any culture may hold, presented by Muslims themselves. The distortion of the image of Islam and Muslims is not new. It dates back to the days of Orientalism. Edward Said (1979) linked his criticism to European colonial discourse to the issue of representation. Western racist discourse pictured the East in a way, which is closer to mythology than to reality. This representation is based on stereotypes that are supposed to maintain Western power and domination. This discourse hinders any attempt to understand the Orient as it really is and keeps the relationship between the two entities one of struggle over power rather than peaceful co-existence.

In the present day, Muslims are presented as violent people and Islam as a regressive ideology incapable of dialogue with other cultures. These stigmatizing stereotypes are mainly spread by media. As people nowadays get informed from news and internet, they get to know Muslims and their culture through erroneous, overgeneralized propaganda that create the phenomenon of Islamophobia and keeps fuelling it.

The Islamic world has been denied for centuries the right of self-representation. Counter-discursive literature is one of the most powerful tools that give the ability to voice what has been hushed for centuries. It sheds light on the side of the story that the West dimmed and omitted. It helps rewrite history and correct stereotypes and prejudices. The reality of most Muslim peoples is still unknown to people in the West. In fact, most Muslim countries are ex-colonies of European countries namely the British Empire and France. This makes the discrimination against Muslims multi-faceted. All what people in the West know about the Muslim peoples is in fact a result of the European imperial discourse.

Counter-discursive literature, whether written directly in English or French or translated from other languages like national or indigenous languages of ex-colonies, aims to correct the picture painted by the West. It provides a new, more realistic image of these peoples. It is not evident that this new image can lead anyone to forget about prejudices buried deep in the collective unconsciousness of the West, but the existence of this opposing, defying representation liberates these people and helps them retrieve their ability to impose their own identity.

As a consequence, translation allows people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to re-discover the cultural other through its own representation. Writing back is a right and a duty of any oppressed, discriminated against group which has been exclusively portrayed by its oppressor. Translation can provide an auto representation and help people from the West make a difference between Islam as represented by Muslims and the picture, created by the West and believed during centuries just because no other version existed.

In addition to counter-discursive literature, the availability of translated texts in different fields: art, philosophy and others can certainly liberate the Muslim world from the monopoly of Western representation imposed on it for centuries. These works help also people in the West to understand that Muslims have different opinions about both their culture and the West. When it comes to Islam, media in the West tends to shed light on extremists and neglect the majority of Muslims in different countries who are also against them. Therefore, the real worry should not be Islam but extremism. Some Muslims even want to separate religion from politics and wish for a modern model of their societies.

This can be seen obviously in the writings of many Muslim writers, researchers and modern philosophers, novelists and artists who aspire for social and political reform that would help achieve a modern version of Islam. The translation and popularization of such works will expose the western media's arrogance, ignorance, and its overgeneralized conception of Islam and Muslims. It will show the multi-faceted nature of the Islamic culture.

Most people in the Islamic world, who suffer from tyranny, aspire for prosperity and democracy but they do not necessarily want to follow the Western model or need to be civilized or modernized by the West. Every society has its specificities, and if people wish for reform, they will never accept to change their identity. This shows that cultures and civilizations need to meet in the middle, in a globalized world where they are constantly exposed to each other, translated works can give a clear idea about the public opinion in the Islamic world. It will

clarify that even Muslims themselves can be very different .Even if some of them wish for an improved existence, a different societal model , the Western interference-justified by imposing democracy and reform_ will never be welcomed or accepted .Thus, the West needs to stop infantilizing the Islamic world and impose its world view on it.

Thus, translated works written by Muslims can give an insight into their culture, but most importantly about the dynamics that regulate their society. The fact that Muslims do not have a unified vision of their religion, nullifies all Western claims that Muslims represent one hostile entity that aims to destroy the West.

4. Translation as Preservation of a Nation's Heritage

According to the Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary,(2003) ,Civilization is the culture and way of life of a society or country at a particular period in time. This definition clarifies that civilization differs from one country to another, and in the same country from one epoch to another, so civilization as a concept is diverse .Each country has a specific system and a way of life that sets it apart from other countries. This diversity of civilizations is a natural and a positive thing that should be encouraged and preserved. However, the West's economic superiority had it claim that the values it represents are higher than those of Islam are, what eventually led it to feel entitled to spread and impose its worldview.

Since September 11th, America has been waging a furious media campaign in which it represents Islam as a total absence of civilization. The occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq was paved by a hostile Othering of the Islamic world i.e.: "transforming its difference and particularity into a deviation from the norm which is Western civilization" (Said, 1979,p.3) The stigmatizing stereotypes depicted Muslims as violent, under developed people who never actually contributed to human civilization and global progress, what made it extremely necessary for the West to modernize and democratize them.

However, the American media blackout cannot erase centuries of Muslim enlightenment and prosperity or deny the role this civilization played during its peak. Even though the current economic state of most Muslim countries is one of decline and underdevelopment, this does not make the Islamic culture inferior. Muslim scholars and scientists contributed tremendously to the development of other civilizations. They provided inspiration and help while the west itself was in a state of decline. Their works were considered as a reference and were translated to different languages for the originality of their ideas. The translated human heritage witnesses that all civilizations owe each other as they all contribute to the development and progress of human race and human civilization.

These translated works, which helped different cultures evolve show that underdevelopment and decline are not inherent to any civilization. These temporary states reflect the natural shift of power among civilizations. The translated works written by Muslims protect their bright history. This same heritage that was translated and participated to the development of other civilizations proves that any civilization has its share of contribution in human progress. This in itself shows that the relationship between cultures is one of complementarity and exchange not of clash and dominance.

The Islamic civilization, which flourished from the seventh to approximately the 14th century in both Central Asia and the Iberian Peninsula in Spain, reached its peak while Europe struggled through the dark ages. It provided an example to the West in different fields: scientific, artistic and philosophical. Muslim scholars significantly contributed to different

aspects of knowledge: chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, religion, geography, theology, and sociology.

The philosophy manuscripts by Ibn Sina, al-Farabi, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Bajjah and Ibn Rushd, and the medical manuscripts by Ibn Sina and al-Razi quickly spread all over Europe.

Ibn Sina's -better known in the West as Avicenna-Al-Qānūn fī al-tibb (The Canon of Medicine) was considered the fundamental reference book in studies of medicine in Europe. Abul-Qasim Al-Zahrawi : known in Europe for his work, Concessio (Kitab al-Tasrif).

(Jabir Hayyan) chemistry: mathematics (Khawarizmi).

Ibn Khaldun in the field of Sociology, geography civilization and history with his famous book 'al mouquadima' which is still known and used till today. (Bertolacci, 2018)

The translation of these works written by Muslim scholars helped the West get out of its superstition. In addition to the prolific production of Muslims, they participated in the translation and preservation of the intellectual heritage of several nations like the Indians, Romans, and Greeks. They integrated their knowledge, built on it, spread it, and helped keep their ideas and creativity alive.(The Golden Age,n.d.para.8) Civilizations hence, go through cycles; they experience states of rise and decline that is why they benefit from each other's knowledge. Their relation is a natural state of sharing and exchange and they contribute to the advance of human kind at different epochs. The only medium to all these operations of communication and exchange between civilizations is translation, which allows for a durable and universal exploitation of the fruit of human intellect.

This is what made Caliphs like al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun (Abbasid rulers) encourage a translation movement, a formal translation of scholarly works. They wanted to make famous texts, such as Aristotle's works, available to the Arab world. Their goal was to translate as many of these famous works as possible in order to have a comprehensive library of knowledge and to preserve the philosophies of different nations.(The golden Age,n.d.para.9)

The activity of translation itself and the number of books translated by a nation can witness to the degree of progress a civilization has reached. It reflects its richness and openness on other cultures, its prosperity and its willingness to build bridges of communication and collaboration through exchange of ideas. Translation is the only medium that enables a nation to make its culture known to different peoples, to discover different works and expand its knowledge about other civilizations, but also about the world itself, what gives it more chances to see this latter from different perspectives and thus prosper and progress.

The Islamic intellectual heritage refutes any claims about the inherent rigidity and intolerance of Islam that the West claims. The immense scholarly revolution and the prosperity Muslims reached were in fact rooted in the most important characteristic of Islam: tolerance. Islam preaches against all kinds of discrimination; racial, ethnic...etc. This provided an atmosphere of freedom that allowed people to co-exist in an environment of peace and mutual respect. This heritage does not only show the participation of the Islamic civilization to the well-being of humanity at large, it also negates the prejudiced view that Islam is a backward and intolerant dogma.

Civilizations are not meant to clash but to dialogue and learn from each other. The exchange of knowledge through translation is the element that can bring different nations together. This is one of the most important preaching of Islam indeed. It encourages people to travel and explore the world, but most importantly to meet different people, learn their

languages and learn from them “ *O mankind !We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes ,that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other!)*(49:13)

Diversity and multiplicity of cultures is a natural state that works to fuel human curiosity to reach out for other nations in order to learn from their knowledge and their human experience. Translation is thus necessary as it makes all encounter and exchange possible. It is an act of creation that is supposed to bring different peoples together, help them know each other, exchange and benefit from each other’s knowledge and traditions. In fact, it preserves the accumulated human knowledge, which belongs to humankind in general, and keeps it evolving and growing.

Cultural interaction and peaceful coexistence between civilizations guarantee prosperity and progress for all. History witnesses to the beauty, richness and the diversity of the Islamic culture. It was a result of harmonious contributions of Muslims from different colours and ethnicities, and non-Muslims as well. This fact can also reveal a more interesting characteristic of civilizations in general. Openness, tolerance and cooperation help any civilization prosper, ethnocentrism, rigidity and clash isolate a nation, weaken it and lead to its decline. It is only through encounter and exchange that a culture guarantees to achieve progress and continuation. Communication and relations of mutual respect with different cultures allow any civilization to reach universality by spreading its knowledge so that its heritage could be preserved to next generations of humankind.

Lessons should be learnt from history. The present state of the Islamic world is a result of different factors like the decline of scientific activity, rigidity and rejection of change. Its unwillingness to open up and communicate with other cultures will certainly end it. It will hinder its chances to improve, evolve, and spread its culture in order to preserve it. No one denies that it is harder for civilizations to open up at times of decline; out of fear of being overwhelmed by stronger, dominant cultures, however, the present rigidity of the Islamic world will cause more harm than good.

Communication is no longer an option in a globalized world .It would enrich Islamic culture but also guarantee its survival. Unfortunately, this latter kept fighting change and transformation, this did not lead to its preservation and protection from acculturation, but it rendered it stagnant and unfit to meet the needs of the present, this might even make it perish eventually .The same rigidity can be used by the West against the Islamic world and justify its endless attempts to interfere and impose what it calls universal ideals of individual freedom.

The art of translation gives a glimpse into different cultural and intellectual aspects of the life of a certain people. It reflects their history, religious practices and their day-to-day existence. This helps both sides look critically to both self and to the other .Translated works give insight into people’s convictions and beliefs, what makes them question their own culture and look at it differently ,what would alter their perception of the world around them. Recognizing and acknowledging the difference of the other is a good start to communicate with them. It leads to look at other cultures but also one’s own culture critically, to evaluate its practices and recognize its flaws. Knowing the good and the bad in both sides, calls for dialogue and exchange of ideas, habits and anything that can improve human existence in general.

Exchanging knowledge and establishing relations of mutual respect between individuals and communities, translation preserves the cultural heritage of nations. The latter can reflect and witness for the participation of a particular culture to human progress and human

civilization. Thus, translation can refute claims about the inferiority of some cultures, reduce attempts of dominance between cultures, and replace them with relations of mutual respect, exchange and complementarity.

5. Conclusion

The relationship between the Muslim world and the West is very complicated .Although their history is sure full of beautiful examples of peaceful co-existence, humans are more likely to remember stories of victory and domination. In a capitalist world where economic interests justify all exploitation, many fields proved their failure to bring the two civilizations together as they are meant to implement and maintain Western supremacy.

The field of culture presents itself as the only bridge left that could help both sides meet in the middle. Translation is a natural and innate need in all humans to discover other cultures and made one's culture known to others. Humans made use of language as a medium to transfer not only texts that have the ability to broaden the horizons and change the minds, but also to discover the cultures those languages hold. This interconnection between language and culture is the key that gives translation the ability to set constant dialogue and mutual respect between cultures. Along with the exchange of information and ideas, a cultural exchange follows naturally. Translation enables people to get insight into different people's mentalities and understand their particular human condition.

What causes clash of civilizations is the fact that some believe in hierarchy of cultures i.e.: some cultures are superior to others what makes them entitled to impose their worldview and life style. Translation preserves the cultural heritage of different civilizations both at home and abroad. This intellectual legacy refutes all claims that some cultures are void and never participated in human progress. It rather clarifies the relationship between civilizations, which is one of constant exchange. All civilizations contribute to the advance of human kind, each at its pace, at a different time. Knowledge is the legacy of all humans, it has been accumulating and transforming by different peoples and civilizations. Each of them uses the knowledge of prior cultures, incorporates it into their own knowledge and leave it to future generations of human beings to use it. Translation thus guarantees generational continuity but most importantly the survival of human kind.

Image nowadays is the most powerful medium of communication. Translation can prove its efficiency in transforming images and representations especially for groups and cultures, which have been denied the right for a self-portrayal. Translation equips individuals in the West with the freedom to get direct, one on one encounter with these cultures and civilizations and thus ,it participates in liberating these peoples from the confining frame ,it fights Western monopoly of representation and helps them impose their identity and show the world who they really are.

Translation helps people criticize their own cultures, practices and question their beliefs. It helps fight dogmatism and extremism as the exchange helps people on both sides see what is good in the other and that each culture has something to offer, something that the rest of the world can learn and benefit from. Cultural diversity is a source of richness and development of human kind that is why it should be protected to guarantee the continuity of human existence.

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WRITING BACK TO THE CENTER: THE POSTCOLONIAL NOVEL AS COUNTER-DISCURSIVE

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Abstract

Aschcroft, Boehmer and Harlow considered postcolonial writing as an act of resistance that supposes the existence of a center and margin. In that sense, the postcolonial novel is considered as counter-discursive. Its concern is not merely questioning or problematizing but resisting and subverting. The postcolonial writer does not aim at occupying the center in the center/periphery struggle, but to project itself as an acceptable difference. In doing so, postcolonial writers employ different methods, such as counter-discourse as a counter-discursive strategy and make of their writings a dynamic arena for counter-canonical texts by means of parody, intertextuality and allegory. The postcolonial text is, then, an indefatigable aplomb and arduous pursuit which attempts to probe into the roots in which the Western literary tradition has marginalized, mis-represented and silenced its other by providing a platform for these dissenting voices. Several textual codes are employed within the postcolonial writings which dodge any direct way to encounter the colonial center. More importantly, the postcolonial novel makes of the European canonical texts a crucible out of which the postcolonial struggle would persist and continue and the postcolonial identity would be ripen. This article will be devoted in many ways to show the response of the postcolonial genius creativity to their Eurocentric counterpart by adopting certain stylistic strategies which came as a challenge to deconstruct the colonial discourse and the Eurocentric concept of the other. The postcolonial novel is not a mere replica of its Western counter-part, this study will show the postcolonial literary potential in contextualizing its concerns shedding the light on Tayib Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*.

Keywords: *Colonial discourse; counter-discourse; hybridity; Season of Migration to the North.*

1. Introduction

The negative stereotypes and misrepresentations weaved into the Western narrative sparked an extreme wrath amongst the postcolonial writers giving birth to a new hybrid spirit of an embellished literature with an African stamp. Postcolonial writers do not choose the mute side and rather admit a commitment to the restoration of African values, history and dignity. They take, then, from the English novel a start to write back to the humiliation of the Africans and Africa and preoccupied with reworking Western canonical works. This could be considered as logical and natural as Ayo Kehinde maintains that due to the fact that Africa's contact with Europe has impacted greatly on its socio-cultural, political, economic and psychological well-being. This article displays the postcolonial novel with its schizophrenic nature that duals between the European face and the Margin's face, while it may mimic or oppose, articulate or abrogate colonial ideas in terms of characterization, themes, names, or geography in previous European text, it strongly works to oppose and de-focalise the hegemonic concepts of power. Crucially, the postcolonial novel has sealed its own specificities from its European counterpart, while it repeats; it has entailed the intention to differentiate itself from the European canonical text. The postcolonial novel makes of the European canonical texts a crucible out of which the postcolonial struggle persists and continues and the postcolonial identity would be ripen. In *Season of Migration to the North*, Tayib Salih opens up new international prospects for the Postcolonial novel by getting it out of the localization. Salih was successful in inventing a persuading character in the literary sphere competing with its Western counterpart.

2. The Postcolonial Novel as Counter-discursive

Postcolonial literature has some distinguishing characteristic features among them; the referentiality and oppositionality. Whereas referentiality has articulated the concepts of agency and materiality, oppositionality takes the form of resistance, subversion, counter discourse, writing back and critique (Ball, 2003). A host of thinkers and critics captured the core ideas of counter-discursive strategies and contextualized them with the colonial and postcolonial experience. Helen Tiffin (2003) sets the basic tenets for the postcolonial literature and counter-discourse. She asserts that the process of artistic and literary decolonization requires a radical dismantling of European codes and a postcolonial subversion and appropriation of the dominant discourse. Tiffin superimposed counter-discourse in contrast with other models that are based on nationality, race or culture, because it does not involve only a mere writing back to the metropolitan center but does it account for situations in which postcolonials themselves occupy the role of the colonizers.(Tiffin, 2003, p. 98). Tiffin identifies two types of counter-discourse that are familiar within postcolonial literature, one type is considered as a reaction or response to colonialism and colonialist literature as well. The second is considered as a rewriting of specific, canonical colonialist text. The latter has received most attention; Tiffin concentrates on such type referring to as 'canonical counter-discourse'. Tiffin delineated it mostly as 'in which a post-colonial writer takes up a character or characters, or the basic assumptions of a British canonical text, and unveils those assumptions, subverting the text for post-colonial purposes' (Tiffin, 2003, p. 97).

John Thiem (2001) uses the term "counter-discourse" mainly to refer to the process of rewriting a certain canonical colonialist text while he asserts that several terms could be used interchangeably with the term 'Writing Back' like counter-discourse, 'oppositional literature', 'con-texts'. According to him these are some of the terms that have been used to identify a body of postcolonial works that take a classic English text as a departure point. Like Tiffin, John

Thiem considers the process of writing back 'supposedly as a strategy for contesting the authority of the canon of English literature' (Thiem, 2001, p. 1).

Another critic who draws attention to counter-discursive strategies is Edward Said. In his book *Orientalism*, Said (1978) regards orientalism as a discursive strategy of Europe to dominate the rest. As a discourse, it is possessed totally by the West and confines the Orient. Said displays how the West's imperialist images of its colonies govern its hegemonic policies. Through different discursive strategies the West has built an image of the Orient as other both in the Western mind and in the Eastern mind. Since the colonial discourse embodies strategies which impose this state of mind, it contains fissures which can be identified in order to subvert the colonizer's ideologies about his moral superiority which has dissuaded him from understanding and treating the Other as difference. So, wherever discourses function, there are counter-discourses that run to the dominant with counter-hegemonic projects.

On the other hand, Richard Terdiman (1985) observes that since a dominant discourse is an imposition from outside, individuals who are subjected to it will try to gain control over its power and turn it to their own use. Terdiman identifies this process as 'Counter- Discursive'; he adds 'a counter-discourse presupposes the hegemony of its Other. It projects a division of the social space, and seeks to segregate itself in order to prosecute its critique' (Terdiman, 1985, p. 36) A counter- discourse is not merely engaged in contradicting the dominant. It tries to represent reality differently and to counter the strategies of the dominant which regulate the understanding of social reality.

Certainly, the postcolonial literary process of writing back is at the core of postcolonial theory and studies but it should be pointed out, using Helen Tiffin's words, that such texts are not "simply "writing back" to an English canonical text, but to the whole of the discursive field within which such a text operated and continues to operate in post-colonial worlds" (Tiffin, 2003, p. 23). Likewise, Aschcroft and his associates (1995) argue that the subversion of the canon is not a matter of replacing one set of texts with another, "since the canon is a set of reading practices, the subversion of it entails the bringing –to-consciousness and articulation of these practices and institutions"(Aschcroft et al.,1995, p. 186). This, however, will result in the "reconstruction of the so-called canonical texts through alternative reading practices" (ibid, p. 187).

The postcolonial novel, in particular, has been occupying an important position in the counter-discursive field. It has been taken "to be as an aesthetic object of choice for a majority of postcolonial scholars" (Murphy, 2014, par.1) For many reasons, the postcolonial novel has had a tremendous influence, due to "its representational nature and heteroglossic structure" (Murphy,2014, par.1); it makes implicitly its concerns with colonialism, its consequences and the representation of both. Noticeably, the post-colonial novel emerged significantly when it engaged the process of writing back to the colonial discursive practices in which it responds strongly in terms of content, narrative form, memory and history

The postcolonial novel stretches its link to postmodernism; it borrows some postmodern strategies to mold it within the African literature. Through a rich web of intertextual connections, the postcolonial writers try to explore the idea of reversal and writing back by means of parody and allegory to the imperial center. From a literary perspective, the definition of parody can expand upon the traditional notion of parody as an often humorous, mocking imitation of a previous literary work (Hutcheon, 1995) It is closely linked to postmodernism, as articulated in the work of Linda Hutcheon who describes parody as "a form of imitation" distinguished by ironic inversion, criticism need not be present in the form of ridiculing

laughter for this to be called parody” (Hutcheon, 1995, p. 5-6). Mikhail Bakhtin, on the other hand, introduces the concept of ‘ Double-voicedness’, a mode of dialogic discourse in which he draws several distinctions between different kinds of appropriation of one speech act into another, among this is the distinction between parody and stylization. According to Bakhtin, in parody, the author speaks “in someone else’s discourse, but in contrast to stylization, parody introduces into that discourse a semantic intention that is directly opposed to the original one” (as cited in Hassan, 2003).

Another key concept which is associated with the literary genre of parody is the postmodern concept of intertextuality which depicts a central aspect of literary tradition in that contextual references and structural network within a work that relate either purposely or spontaneously to an earlier literary work. According to Julia Kristeva, any work of art does not come from nothingness but with relation to other text or texts (as cited in Friedman, 1991)

Allegory is another postmodern strategy that is used here for postcolonial purposes. Frederic Jameson in an article entitled ‘Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism’ (1986), introduces national allegory and considered all Third World literatures as national allegories, because their central aim is the focus on the subject of their nation. Stephen Slemon (1988), on the other hand, relates allegory to the notion of history. In his essay “Post-colonial Allegory and the Transformation of History”, Slemon affirms that the postcolonial allegory departs from the conventional understanding of the allegory as a " constrained and mechanical mode " of representing history, as it is involved in " displacing [history] as a concept and opening up the past to imaginative revision " (Slemon, 1988, p. 165). Hence, postcolonial writers use allegory to travel back in history and make their essential revision to the colonial past which is distorted by the colonizer and try to open it with a new vision.

3. Tayib Salih’s *Season of Migration to the North*

Though it has been written in Arabic, Tayib Salih’s “*Season of Migration to the North*” (1969) is considered as one of the counter-texts of the non-European novelists who tend to appropriate the forms of colonial culture for their own postcolonial purposes. In telling the story of a black man’s journey into the white territory, thereby reversing the Kurtz and Marlow story of a white man’s voyage into the unknown. In his critical essay “The Empire Renarrated : *Season of Migration to the North* and the Reinvention of the Present “, Saree .S. Makdisi (1992) argues that while *Heart of Darkness* narrates the history of modern British imperialism, *Season of Migration* presents itself as the counternarrative of the same bitter history .

Tayib Salih’s response to the colonial misrepresentation is shown as complex and paradoxical in its allusions raising rich and various questions about power and textuality. He maintains intertextual references to the master narrative by open and veiled allusions by the use of the names of the characters making reference and links to the previous texts, and also by the recasting of the situations of the earlier texts in the new textual space. Salih takes from the English novel a start to write back to the humiliation of the Africans and Africa and preoccupied with reworking Western canonical works like other African writers. This could be considered as logic and natural as Ayo Kehinde states, that due to the fact that Africa’s contact with Europe has impacted greatly on its socio-cultural, political, economic and psychological well-being (Kehinde, 2007)

Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1902) has made a range of varied, but often hostile, responses from postcolonial writers and critics. This novel occupies a central place in the British canon and considered as an example of the master narratives which offer blueprints of colonial

practices, at particular historical moments. Indeed, several critics have noted the structural parallels between Conrad's "*Heart of Darkness* and *Season*", especially regarding the characterizations of Kurtz and Mustafa Sa'eed. According to Laura Rice (2003), *Season* mirrors Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* in which two protagonists, Marlow and Kurtz, journeyed to the South. Saree Makdisi (1992) echoes Achebe's view of the relationship between Conrad and postcolonialism when he argues that "just as Conrad's novel was bound up with Britain's imperial project, Salih's participates (in an oppositional way) in the afterlife of the same project today, by 'writing back' to the colonial power that once ruled the Sudan" (Makdissi, 1992, p. 805) Hence, *Season* marks a confrontation with *Heart of Darkness* on many levels.

There are other critics who take the other extreme, among them, Mohamed Shaheen (1985) who considers Salih's novel just as an imitation to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and renders it as an "unsuccessful attempt to integrate [...] Conradian elements into his fiction" (Shaheen, 1985, p. 156). This perspective sets Salih's writing as mere replica of the Conrad's which denies any attempt to destabilize colonial discourse or to write back to the center, a mere way of 'stylization' in Bakhtin's words (Bakhtin, . However, it is not enough for Salih to reinscribe Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* through mimetic reversal; he goes on reinterpreting and recovering the territorial mapping of Conrad. Ibrahim A. El-Hussari (2010) asserts that the parody used by Salih to mimic Conrad is not futile after all; it is postcolonial Africa writing back to colonial Europe in an attempt to fill the wide gap between the two continents with a constructive dialogue.

Doing so, *Season* deliberately depends on parodic rewriting, which intends not to be a mere replica of the master narrative, on the contrary, it aims at confronting and responding to the imperial hegemonies and colonial misrepresentation encompassed within the master canon. Therefore, Bakhtin's distinction of parody and stylization, according to Wael Hassan (2003), is relevant to reading *Season* because it allows the reader to see what the novel accomplishes, it parodies through double-voiced intertextuality, previous European and even Arabic texts that thematize the cross cultural encounter between Europe on the one hand and Africa and the Arab world on the other.

Accordingly, *Season* engages intertextually with *Heart of Darkness* on the level of the plot. In the experience of Sa'eed, Parody is employed through reversing the geographical destination and the reversal of the colonial oppression witnessed in *Heart of Darkness* caused by Kurtz and replaced by the postcolonial suppression of the British women. Ibrahim A. El-Hussari (2016) in his article "*Season of Migration to the North and Heart of Darkness African Mimicry of European Stereotypes*" asserts that *Season of Migration to the North* is a parody of the physical and psychological journey of *Heart of Darkness* but in a reverse order. A journey taken by Mustafa Sa'eed, the protagonist of the tale, but retold by the anonymous Sudanese narrator who also takes a similar journey. It is from the Sudan in the South to England in the North and the way back. According to Krishnan (1996), Sa'eed's experience in England, similar to Kurtz's in Africa, is marked by self-loathing, despair, and a desire for annihilation. After killing his wife, Jean Morris, and driving three women to commit suicide, he has spent seven years in prison, then, Sa'eed retreats to a village near Khartoum in the Sudan where, before committing suicide, he meets the Marlow-like narrator and makes him the guardian of his sons and wife, and the repository of his enigmatic life.

Krishnan (1996) makes an argument about the relationship between the two books, and he places *Season of Migration to the North*'s tremendous impact within the discussion of Orientalism. He writes that Salih works to "resist, reinterpret, and revise [*Heart of Darkness*]

from the perspective of the colonized Other”, in this way, he “reinscribes the ‘truth’ of colonial encounter from the perspective of the colonizer, and in doing so engages in a dialect of cultural discourse that reverses the narrative and ideological conventions that inform Conrad’s dark fiction” (Krishnan, 1996, p. 7)

Indeed, Salih re-inscribes *Heart of Darkness* and reverses roles of the oppressor and this can be considered as part of *Season*’s parody. Importantly, the oppressor in *Season* is Sa’eed the Other who has reversed the colonization turning it on its companions through series of sexual relations with the British women whom he drove three of them to suicide. Throughout the novel it is observed that the process of colonization is reversed especially by Mustafa Sa’eed expressing that he’ll “liberate Africa with “his sexual conquests to the British women (*Season*, 1969, p. 120). Mohammad Shaheen (1985) points out, "the journey of Mustafa Sa'eed . . . echoes Kurtz's journey, but in reverse. . . . Kurtz in the Congo is a colonizer and invader (Shaheen, 1985, p. 156). Mustafa announces himself in England as conqueror and invader. He says "I, over and above everything else, am a colonizer" (*Season*, 1969: 94). Edward Said defines such reversals as acts of literary ‘resistance’ that participate in ‘the charting of cultural territory ‘herald the ‘recovery of geographical territory’. He argues that one of Salih’s aim is to reclaim Conrad's fictive territory and thereby articulate "some of the discrepancies and their imagined consequences muffled by Conrad's majestic prose" (Said).

According to Wael Hassan (2003), *Season* contains of a hidden polemic against Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. Particularly in the character of Sa’eed, Salih was able to create a parodies of European stereotypes of Africa and the Orient, as well as “a discursive destabilizer of Arab notions of identity” (Hassan, 2003, p. 84). Like Chinua Achebe who responded to Conrad’s misrepresentation of Africa as the dark Continent and to the dehumanization of the African natives, Salih reacts against such misrepresentation harshly in different way. He creates the character of Mustafa’s life related to the roots of the colonial history and discourse, and mainly refers to the notion of illusion or Wahm which the writer himself explains as the basic tenets that mediates the relationship between Europe and its Arab and African colonies.

Implicitly, *Season* parodies the European stereotypes of African peoples by creating white characters superficially portrayed as either marginalized and hollow or arrogant and pretentious, yet Salih gives them voices. (Elhussari, 2010, p. 115). With those English characters, especially women whom Mustafa seduces into his oriental bedroom, the tale caricatures Mustafa as a bestial character who deftly bears personal and national memory to take revenge of the colonial Europeans for their unforgettable exploitation of his country and Africa, thus justifying revenge (Maalouf, 2000).

It must be pointed out that Salih in writing his novel from that English canon, he “must have meant to restructure some European colonial worldviews in postcolonial terms where a monolithic, authoritative colonial vision is challenged by a subversive yet dialogic postcolonial hybridity.” (Elhussari, 2010, p. 119). This way, the parody used in *Season* as a counter-discursive strategy is to write back to Europe. It also provokes a mocking message that calls for a dialogue through which human life can assume significance and the diverse cultural values endurance.

4. Re-storying the Past: *Season* in Quarrel with History

In relation to Slaih’s *Season of Migration to the North*, the symbolic allegorical representations refer to Sa’eed life which coincides with the history of Sudan that seeks to re-imagine Sudan and re-position the Revolution from the vantage point of the postcolonial. This

way, *Season* creates a counter discourse to the colonial mixed myth of history as Stephen Slemon (1998) argues: “post-colonial allegorical writing not only constitutes a challenge to prevailing theoretical assumptions about what kind of cultural grounding is required for allegorical communication to take place, but also, that it is helping to change our received ideas of history” (Slemon, 1998, p. 158). Salih’s dependence on Allegory would seem as a strategy aimed at creating Sudan’s history which had been once humiliated in colonial state. Such recourse would open the door for the possibility of change, a means of rereading and revising the past as Achebe calls it “an act of Atonement”

Obviously, it could be observed Salih’s return to the past which is considered as one of the allegorical aspects. Throughout the course of the novel, the battle of Omderman and many other historical events are recalled. There are even many references to Arab and Sudanese historical figures. Further, many characters come to parallel Sudanese historical events throughout the novel. More significantly, it appears that Mustafa Sa’eed represents the reincarnation of Sudan’s colonial past, in that Salih was able to bring the past in confrontation with the present. Sa’eed wants to live again the colonial past while making himself the oppressor who achieves victories over his oppressed.

Nouha Homad (2001) asserts that Mustafa’s “domination has to be of the women of the other’ culture. He sees the act symbolically as one of liberation...The sexual act becomes for Sa’eed, then, not an act of tenderness but one of wielding political power, an expression of distorted brutal love” (Homad, 2001, p. 59) *Season* reverses the position of colonizer/colonized individuals displaying the devastating effects of colonization through an African-Sudanese man’s eyes as he allows and encourages sexual exploitation by four separate European women.

Additionally, the relationship between East and West is represented through the milestones of Mustafa Sa’eed’s life which Salih parallels with the historical events of European imperialism in the Arab world. Mustafa Sa’eed incarnates the history of Sudan. Above all, he embodies some Arab historical figures like the Muslim leader Tariq Ibn Ziyad. Thus, Salih is occupied with redeeming and revising the colonial past of Sudan and European conquest to the Arab world in general as Slemon (1998) assumes that allegorical writing concerns itself primarily “with redeeming or recuperating the past , either because the present pales in comparison with it , or because the past has become in some ways unacceptable to the dominant ideology of contemporary society “ (Slemon, 1998, p.158). The past is evoked as a challenge and at times a parallel to the present state of chaos.

Embraced within the painful Sudanese historical memories is the heavy casualties caused by the British in April 1898 at Atbara, a town in the north of Sudan, the British killed two thousand Mahdist soldiers and violently defeated the Khalifa Mahmoud Wad Ahmad, a figure to whom Sa’eed likens himself. In September 1898, British won the battle at Karari north of Omdurman, where over 10,000 *Ansar* (Mahdist supporters) were defeated by British machine guns. The Khalifa was finally captured and killed by the British. By the end of the summer of 1898, the Mahdist state had broken (Azzam, 2007, p. 59) Accordingly, Sa’eed last book, *The Rape of Africa*, serves as a model for his counter-revenge, as he attempts to liberate Africa with his sexual exploits. It is within this historical frame that Mustafa’s life has been built.

Indeed, Sa’eed launches his sexual campaign against the British women, he chooses the women as an arena where his historical revenge would be fulfilled. As Sudan once had been raped and left sunk in its bleeding so Sa’eed craves for the rape of England through its women. As the women hurt and bleed emotionally and physically, so Britain would pay for the cost of

its rape to Sudan and Africa in general. Partially, Sa'eed's campaign bring some sufferance to these women who commite suicide.

It is with Isabella Seymour that Mustafa Sa'eed, according to Hussein A. Alhawamdeh (2013), incarnates the Muslim leader Tariq Ibn Zeyad , who led the Islamic conquest of Visigothic Hispania (Spain) in 711-718 A.D. He recalls the glory of the Muslim Arabs and the estimated power that the Muslims had at that period. Sa'eed imagines himself that he can conquer London: 'For a moment I imagined to myself the Arab soldiers' first meeting with Spain.' Isabella Seymour, a British woman of a 'Spanish' mother, is transformed in Sa'eed's imagination into 'Andalusia' (*Season*, 1969).

The history of the Sudan with the British colonialism is recalled in the memory of Sa'eed, the scene of the trial embodies some important allegorical clues to the history of the Sudan. When Sa'eed is brought to trial in London for the murder of Jean Morris (as well as other women), he recalls the Sudanese historical figure "Khalifa Mahmoud Wad Ahmed", who was brought in shackles to Kitchener upon the defeat at Atbara in the summer of 1898:

I, over and above everything else, am a colonizer, I am the intruder whose fate must be decided. When Mahmoud Wad Ahmed was brought in shackles to Kitchner after his defeat at the Battle of Atbara, Kitchner said to him, "Why have you come to my country to lay waste and plunder?" It was the intruder who said this to the person whose land it was, and the owner of the land bowed his head and said nothing. So let it be with me. (*Season*,

Sa'eed's trial summons the obsession of empire. Conquest creates a distorted roles of who is native and who is intruder. Consequently, Kitchener can accuse Mahmoud Wad Ahmad of plundering his nation, and Sa'eed can arrive at London as a colonizer. For Sa'eed, history is a feminine body that he will contaminate with his poisonous presence:

In that court I hear the rattle of swords in Carthage and the clatter of the hooves of Allenby's horses desecrating the ground of Jerusalem. The ships at first sailed down the Nile carrying guns not bread, and the railways were originally set up to transport troops; the schools were started so as to teach us how to say "Yes" in their language. They imported to us the germ of the greatest European violence, as seen on the Somme and at Verdun, the like of which the world has never previously known, the germ of a deadly disease that struck them more than a thousand years ago. Yes, my dear sirs, I came as an invader into your very homes: a drop of poison which you have injected into the veins of history. (*Season*, 1969, p. 94-95)

Essentially, the colonized associates the European woman's body with land. Since his land is raped by the colonizer once, so the colonized vengeance in this case is plunging through the colonizer's woman. For this reason, it is no wonder that Mustafa always associates the bodies of European women with cities.

Interestingly, the past is woven into Salih's novel by the allegorical nets he makes to defocalise the Eurocentric assumption. The Sudan colonial humiliation comes to the national memory of the novel's characters. Each character deals with the past differently. Sa'eed's poisonous seed as one of the colonial remnants in a period of once cultural conflict makes of him a poisoned serpent all with flowers, a "thirsty desert" and quenchless fire that his in-depth vengeance came to quench. The history of Sudan is retold through the eyes of Mustafa Sa'eed

and relived throughout the events of story but in reverse and opens up the clash between the two cultures. The narrator seeks rather for a middle path wherein both cultures live altogether.

5. Conclusion

The present work has demonstrated the counter-discursive strategies in postcolonial novel and sheds the light on the historical context. Postcolonial novel is considered as a counter-discourse which embodies different strategies in an attempt to respond to the colonial misrepresentation of Africa and Africans. The postcolonial African author, Tayib Salih introduces his work as a counter-discourse and serve as a counter-text to the dominant discourse of representation. In that sense, *Season* establishes itself in dialogue with the British canon. Such counter discourse could be justifiable as Kehinde argues, because everything made about the Other whether seen as Oriental, African, Caribbean or aboriginal is recorded in Western literature and travelogue.

The most important thing about counter-discourse is to subvert and deconstruct the dominant discourse. Postcolonial nations among them the Africans suffered from colonialism and after a long fighting, they gained their liberation, but there remained a psychic liberation that would be achieved only through subversion of the colonial discourse and its Eurocentric assumptions.

In his novel, Tayib Salih responds back to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and colonialism. Salih makes a dialogue between the West and the Other by travelling through the British books of literature. He responds to the colonial racial misrepresentations that Conrad inserts and he subverts the Eurocentric view that superimposes the West over its colonial other.

More importantly, *Season* addresses the issue of the Otherness under the light of the racial representation that the West associates the colonized with. Salih creates an Arabic Faust myth led by Mustafa Sa'eed, the Arab Other who tends to challenge his otherness and rather make the British supreme race wear it.

Interestingly, the past is woven into Salih's novel by the allegorical nets he makes to de-focalise the Eurocentric assumption. The Sudan colonial humiliation comes to the national memory of the novel's characters. Each character deals with the past differently. Sa'eed's poisonous seed as one of the colonial remnants in a period of once cultural conflict makes of him a poisoned serpent all with flowers, a "thirsty desert" and quenchless fire that his in-depth vengeance came to quench. The history of Sudan is retold through the eyes of Mustafa Sa'eed and relived throughout his story but in reverse and opens up the clash between the two cultures. The narrator seeks rather for a middle path wherein both cultures live altogether.

Truly, the postcolonial novel is considered as counter-discursive narrative and it is not only a way of articulation with the Western narrative but above all, a challenge to the picture drawn about "the Other" which reflects not the passivity of the colonized subject. On the other hand, by adopting the postcolonial context within this novel, postcolonial authors mingle the postcolonial taste within their narratives which prove arduously the postcolonial creativity.

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INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF ALGERINE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ENHANCING ACADEMIC SELF-REGULATION: A KEY TOWARDS TEACHING HOW TO LEARN

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Abstract

Academic self-regulation or self-regulated learning is the field that underlines the autonomy of learners and self-directed steps to learn. Accordingly, academic self-regulation is the process by which learners plan, monitor and evaluate their learning process to gain a successful learning experience. Despite extensive research in the area of self-regulated learning, bounded research has unfortunately been done on such an idea in the Algerian context. This research paper examines the attempts of middle school teachers in improving academic self-regulation and teaching pupils how to learn. It examines the role of these teachers as models in approaching the development of self-regulated learners. To conduct this study, a mixed-methods design was followed. As such, it was made use of observation and questionnaire to gather data from eight middle school English teachers. The results indicated that explicit attempts by Algerian middle school teachers to improve academic self-regulation are limited.

Keywords: Academic self-regulation, Algerian middle school teachers, teaching how to learn.

1. Introduction

Helping pupils learn academic self-regulation has become among the goals of education because it is considered as a predictor of pupils' academic achievement and motivation (Zumbrunn et al., 2011; Sahranavard et al., 2018). Academic self-regulation is defined as the self-directive process involving meta-cognitive, motivational and behavioural sub-processes initiated by pupils to acquire new knowledge (Zimmerman, 2001). This notion has become a substantial topic in the secondary school context (Istance & Damount, 2010). Therefore, research has emphasised the importance of promoting academic self-regulation among pupils of secondary school (Salter, 2012; Kindekens et al., 2014; Nugteren et al., 2018). In this light,

many scholars suggested that academic self-regulation can be thought by different means of demonstration and modelling (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007; Zumbunn et al., 2011). Some scholars further contended that academic self-regulation is not an innate ability but a process that can be developed through modelling and instruction (Judd, 2005).

In the Algerian context, however, limited endeavours have been done to explore how secondary school teachers of English approach the development of academic self-regulation in their classrooms. Further, there is a limitation in understanding the factors that hinder EFL teachers from enhancing autonomy and self-regulated strategies among their pupils. This study aims at exploring the EFL secondary school teachers' level of awareness in implementing and developing pupils' academic self-regulated strategies. Specifically, it is to examine the role of teachers in demonstrating and modelling strategies of academic self-regulation. Therefore, the following issue has been raised: What are the procedures carried by EFL middle school teacher to teach academic self-regulation?

While answering this question, it was relied on a sample of EFL middle school teachers. Specifically, consent was given by two groups of teachers: Experienced and novice teachers. The advantage of this study lies in informing Algerian middle school teachers and basic education programme designers about the need to foster skills of academic self-regulation among middle school pupils.

2. Theoretical Overview: Academic Self-regulation

The initial interest in how students regulate their behaviour from a socio-cognitive perspective emerged as a result of answering some questions related to pupils' achievement. These questions included: 'why some students fail while others do not?', 'how students become aware of their learning process?' what instructional methods and techniques can teachers use to produce life-long learners? ' While answering these questions, theorists embraced Bandura's social cognitive theory to support the emergence of academic self-regulation as a primordial notion to promote long-term learning (Zimmerman, 1998; Pintrich, 2000; Schunk, 2001). The theory introduced by Bandura (1986) viewed individuals as active agents in the process of learning and development. This view of human development informed the basis of Zimmerman notion of academic self-regulation. Zimmerman (2002) introduced an exclusive definition of self-regulated learning (SRL) as the degree to which students are metacognitively, motivationally and behaviourally active participants in their learning process. Self-regulated learning became a field that stimulated the interest of different researchers to introduce similar definitions. According to Fluminhan and Murgo (2019), academic self-regulation is defined as the active process through which students systematically control and direct their actions to achieve certain learning goals. In addition, Fluminhan and Murgo (2019) emphasized the need to teach students how to self-regulate their learning. In this regard, Sharon et al. (2011) suggested that teachers need to instruct self-regulated learning through modelling and demonstration.

Research has accumulated enormous evidence that self-academic regulation is of great benefit in the academic context. From a self-organised point of view, pupils are no longer seen as passive recipients (Salamanca, 2015, p.77). Additionally, Cubucku (2009) stated that the benefits of academic self-regulation are evident in the behaviour of some learners in the classroom. Accordingly, academic self-regulated learners are generally themselves, confident, strategic, resourceful and responsive to the results of the execution of tasks. Another notable comment by Cubucku (2009) on the benefits of self-regulated learning is the control students have over their thought, impact and behaviour.

It has also been reported that academic self-regulation has a massive influence on students' motivation and self-efficacy. Lavasani et al. (2001) conducted a study to explore the effect of teaching academic self-regulation on student motivation and self-efficacy. The research followed a comparative study model where they included two groups. The first group received instruction of some academic-self regulated strategies while the other group did not. Through the questionnaire, the results indicated that the teaching of academic self-regulation had a positive effect on pupils' motivation and self-efficacy.

The fact that academic self-regulation is not an innate ability but a process that can be developed through modeling and instruction, has triggered the interest of different researchers (Judd, 2005). These researchers attempted to investigate the attitudes of stakeholders toward the implementation of academic self-regulation in middle schools, and whether pupils in their early stages are provided with the adequate support to enhance their academic self-regulation. Salter (2012) conducted a study to explore stakeholders' beliefs and attitudes around the development of self-regulated learning in Australian schools. The results gathered from online surveys, group interviews, and documents indicated that stakeholders highlighted the role of academic self-regulation in enhancing critical thinking and creating a joyful learning experience. In addition, stakeholders reported their unawareness of the specific approaches that best help pupils learn academic self-regulation. Overall, findings indicated that academic self-regulation in Australian schools is not implemented because Australian schools do not have self-regulated learning curriculum or a specific policy on how to teach and develop academic self-regulation. In a more recent study, Kistner et al. (2010) investigated teachers' direct and indirect endeavours in promoting academic self-regulation. Through the analysis of videos recorded while teachers were teaching in the classroom, the results indicated that teachers' explicit efforts to teach academic self-regulation were rare. The current study joins these studies to explore whether Algerian ELF middle school teachers are aware of academic self-regulation, and if so, what kind of strategies of academic self-regulation they enhance in their classrooms.

3. Methodology

Mixed method research is the sibling of multi-method research in which either solely multiple qualitative approaches or solely multiple quantitative approaches are combined (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017, p,108). The current study, therefore, used quantitative models to obtain precise numerical results for participants' responses. At the same time, qualitative models were used to collect non-numerical data and follow the role of teachers as models while developing the strategies of academic self-regulation of students. The data collection tools used in this study are classroom observation, and a questionnaire addressed to teachers.

The questionnaires are among the widely used tools in mixed methods to gain confirmatory results (Harris & Brown, 2010). For that reason, a questionnaire was given to teachers to collect accurate answers. According to Zoharbi (2013), quantitative data is best obtained through close-ended questions. This type of question was used to collect consistent opinions from teachers and allow them to choose an option. As for a class observation, it was implemented with four teachers of English as a foreign language at the level of rural middle schools to capture their routinely based instructional behaviour within the classroom.

3.3 Context

This research study took place in two middle schools situated in rural areas of Mostaganem and Relizane. The first middle school 'Baghdadi Benattia' is located in Sirat (Mostaganem); whereas the second middle school 'Ben Dehmane Belgandouz' is located in Yellel (Relizane).

3.4 Participants

For this study (8) middle school English teachers were selected to scrutinise their English classes and reveal the procedures they follow to enhance academic self-regulation. This selection focused on two groups of teachers. The first group made of novice teachers (4 teachers), while the second consists of experienced teachers (4 teachers). This selection will help compare between the two groups to capture the similarities and differences, if found, in enhancing academic self-regulation. Besides, it is to explore whether experience could have an influence on teachers' awareness of academic self-regulation. The experience of teaching fluctuated between 6 months for the newly recruited teachers and 11 years for most experienced teachers.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instruments used in this research are questionnaires handed to teachers (4 experienced teachers and 4 novice teachers) to compile the strategies they follow in English classes to promote academic self-regulation of their learners. In addition to observation to capture the routinely based activities and strategies teachers employ in their classrooms. This observation was held with four EFL (with 2 experienced teachers and 2 novice teachers) middle school teachers. Hence, it directs attention to the following principal areas:

- When dealing with exams' correction in the classroom
- When dealing with classwork
- When starting a new trimester
- When dealing with one of the language micro-skills such as reading

While observing these areas, the aim was to explore the different strategies that might be promoted and enhanced by teachers in their classroom. As such, a close attention was given to their role as models and demonstrators in the classroom.

4. Data Analysis

4.3 Description of The Class Observation

This section offers a comprehensive description and discussion of each classroom observation. It focuses on the strategies English teachers use to promote academic self-regulation in the classroom. As mentioned earlier (see data collection instrument section), the main focus of the observation was on whether teachers enhance academic self-regulation strategies during exam correction, classwork, new trimester, and when teaching micro skills like reading. Below is a description of classrooms' observation considering the four principle areas.

4.3.1 Classroom observation 1

The class took place shortly following second-trimester exams, i.e. it was the session of exam's corrections. Pupils were asked to copy the uncorrected version of the exam's exercises from the board and wait for a collective answer. Once pupils put their pens down, the teacher asked them to share answers to a given exam exercise.

The pupils started to respond after the teacher agreed. However, the teacher did not bother to involve who had no answers to share and who were generally sitting at the back. After correcting a particular exercise, some students (often only 2) were asked to read the corrected version of the task audibly. At this point, the teacher did not spend part of his time commenting on the pupils' reading, such as marking the end of a sentence when these pupils encountered a period.

Throughout the session, the teacher selected and involved certain pupils to respond and participate in her session. This routine action lasted during the time of the exam correction, as the teacher asked one of pupils to write the exercise on the board and correct it with peers. Sometime before the end of the hour-long session, the teacher handed over the papers to the pupils to check their grades.

It was no surprise that pupils did not have questions or comments to add; besides the teacher did not encourage them to ask questions or reflect upon their work; and the one-hour session followed the same routine of engagement. This was done so based on the teacher deciding who needs to answer the questions and who needs not do so. In addition, during the classroom observation, the experimenter has rather expected to see the teacher asking those who had good marks to share the strategies they followed when revising for exams. However, the one-hour session ended, and the teacher did not devote time for good achievers to share the strategies they followed to get a good mark.

4.3.2 *Classroom observation 2*

For this second classroom observation, just after holidays, the focus was on the first session. It was the onset of the trimester and the first thing that was noticed was the classroom embellishment. Pupils' group work as well as individual work were posted on the walls. This was to motivate pupils and enhance peripheral learning. With pupils' enthusiasm to begin the lesson, the teacher revised the previous course before starting a new one.

For this trimester, the novel teacher's strategy was involving the pupils to guess the lesson's title. The teacher did not write the title of the lesson on the board. After being intensively exposed to the present perfect tense and how to use it, the teacher invited the pupils to deduce the title of the lesson.

While explaining the same lesson on the present perfect, the teacher followed another teaching strategy which is asking pupils to conjugate the verb between parentheses: 'The teachers (have written) the lesson on the board', then he explained that the easiest way to know how to conjugate this is to replace the teacher by something else. One of the pupils replied by saying 'they'.

During the classroom activity, it was observed that both the teacher and the pupils were engaged in the session. In other words, there was an interaction between the teacher and the pupils in that the teacher did his best to involve his pupils through reinforcing their prior knowledge. As mentioned earlier, the session was after the holidays which is a period where pupils might feel in need of more rest. Despite this, pupils were attentively engaged with the lesson. During the observation it was expected from the teacher to lead-in pupils to the first

session with a careful consideration of sharing the objectives and skills that will be developed during the third semester. However, this form of warm-up was not observed in the classroom.

4.3.3 *Classroom observation 3*

This observation occurred in tutorials1 (often referred to as TD). Pupils were divided into groups of four.

Tutorial or Td1 occurs in small classroom with a limited number of students, approximately ten, where the teacher provides student with the adequate activities and support to reinforce their understanding of what they have learned in the classroom.

The tutorial focused on exercises on the lesson of rights and duties in school. On that basis, the teacher explained to pupils what duties and rights mean. While explaining this, she did not dwell on translating what duty and right mean to pupils` mother tongue.

Alternatively, she made use of some examples such as “you have to wear a uniform in the school” as a duty, and “you have the right to learn” as a right. After the teacher made sure his pupils understood the concept of right and duty, she wrote the exercise of ten sentences on the board with a table for answering by ‘Yes, I do’ or ‘No, I do not’.

The primary observation made is that pupils were asked to bring the dictionary from the library to look up words to enlarge their repertoire of vocabulary. The teacher asked pupils to highlight or underline the keywords that they were asked to explain in order to grasp the meaning. Sentences like ‘I respect my friends’, ‘I cheat in exams’, etc.

Tutorial One was given in a small classroom with ten pupils. They were given to reinforce their understanding of what they have learned in the lesson (which is done in large classroom).

Contrary to what happened during the lesson in a large classroom, in Tutorial One pupils seemed to be engaged probably because of the class size. During such activities, it was observed that pupils worked rather collaboratively and responded positively to teamwork.

4.3.4 *Classroom observation 4*

In this classroom, the teacher started the session with a warmup that consisted of asking pupils to remember the last lesson. Reviewing the previous lesson before starting the new one was an advantageous technique that kept pupils engaged at the beginning of the session.

After that, teacher started reading a dialogue between a patient named Amina and a doctor. For the reading, the teacher focused on three stages of reading: The first was very quick, while the second and third readings were slow, with a complete focus on the gesture (body language) to explain certain words as fever, stomach upset, etc.

When the reading part was over, the teacher wrote keywords on the board and asked pupils to memorize them. Then the teacher wrote the dialogue on the board and asked the pupils to write it down. A pupil asked: “What does a butterfly mean?” The teacher responded by drawing the butterfly on the blackboard instead of translating it into Arabic.

The teacher rewrote the dialogue creating some gaps and asked the students to fill in what is missing, using the keywords they already knew and supposedly memorized. This activity occurred in pair work

After correcting the exercise, the teacher asked a few pupils to perform the dialogue. During their performance, the teacher kept correcting their mistakes and pronunciation.

Although the teacher used some of the classroom reading techniques, explained above such as skimming and scanning, she did not expand them for her students. Instead of allocating some time to explain to pupils that what she has used are techniques that are useful during reading comprehension, she carried out her lesson without any clarifications on how to use these techniques while reading.

4.4 Questionnaire Analysis

The questions asked for promoting meta-cognition are the following.

- In reading comprehension, how often do you demonstrate or model some reading comprehension strategies such as summary, using graphs, locate words, evaluate understanding?
- How often do you ask your pupils to reflect upon their learning process to know their strengths and weaknesses?
- If you have pupils who got good marks in a given test, how often do you ask them to reveal the strategies or ways they followed to have this mark?

a. Novice EFL teachers' responses on enhancing meta-cognition in their EFL classes

The following figure demonstrates novice EFL teachers' frequency of enhancing meta- cognitive strategies.

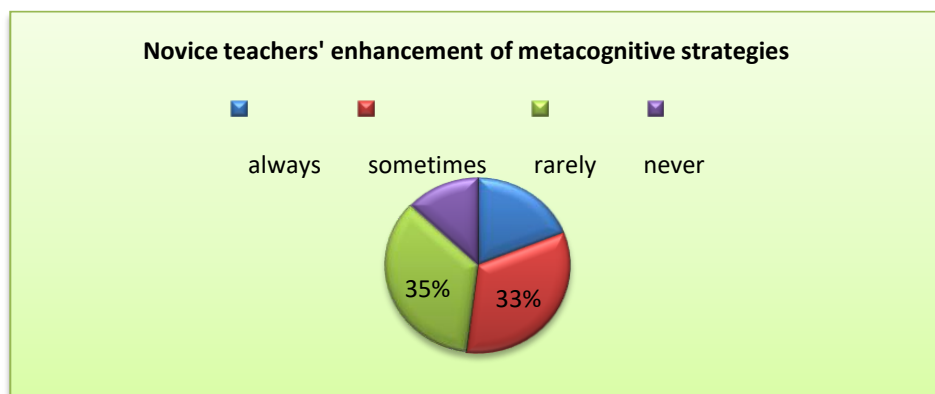


Figure 1. Novice EFL Teachers' Enhancement of Meta-cognition

Figure one displays the variable rate of novice teachers' responses to the enhancement of metacognitive strategies of their pupils in the classroom. (19%) of the permanent novice teachers always attempt to inaugurate the metacognitive plans; however, (33%) of novice teachers sometimes attempt to enhance meta-cognition. Furthermore, (35%) of teachers rarely attempt to enhance meta-cognition. The remaining (13%) of teachers never demonstrate their attempts and effort to develop meta-cognition. This result remains low as compared to their continuous efforts to develop meta-cognitive strategies. On that account, this graph's results indicate teachers' narrowed efforts towards the development of the meta-cognitive strategies in their English classes.

Figure 2 shows the variable rates of experienced teachers' frequency of developing metacognitive skills in their EFL classrooms.

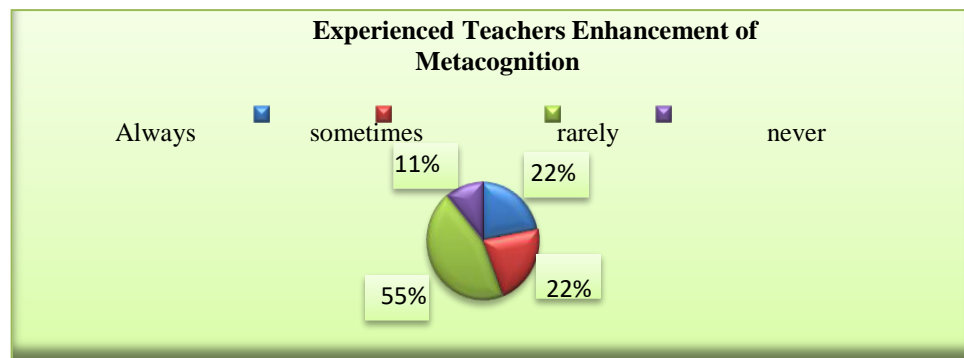


Figure 2. Experienced EFL Teachers' Enhancement of Metacognition

The evidence from this pie chart shows the results of the old generation of teachers' inclination towards the increase of meta-cognitive strategies in their EFL classrooms. Accordingly, (45%) of experienced teachers rarely attempt to launch meta-cognitive skills, while (22%) always attempt to enhance meta-cognition; against (11%) seldom enhance meta-cognitive strategies among their pupils.

b. Novice teachers' responses on enhancing motivation

Firstly, the main concern in this study is to know about teachers' frequent attempts to reveal different tactics that pupils can use to motivate themselves because pupils regulate their learning only if they are motivated.

The other questions put are as follows:

- How often do you remind your pupils to have self-talk to increase their motivation?
- How often do you ask your pupils if they are motivated to accomplish a given task?
- How often do you create challenge between your pupils?

The figure below represents the results obtained from the second part of the questionnaire.

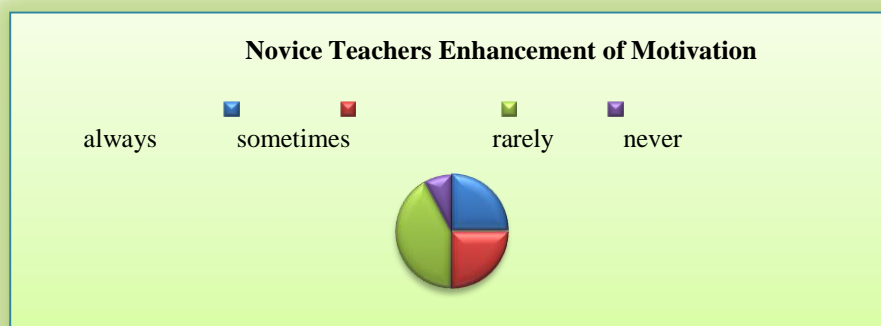


Figure 3. Novice Teachers Enhancement of Motivation

The above figure interprets the variable rates of EFL novice teachers to enhance their pupils' motivation. (42%) of teachers' have rare endeavours towards demonstrating some strategies that boost their pupils' motivation; against (25%) of the respondents said they have perpetual attempts. The results confirm to some degree the teachers' limited endeavours to enhance their pupils' motivation.

c. Experienced teachers' responses on enhancing motivation

The figure below discloses the result of the tactics that experienced teachers use in their classroom to increase their pupils' motivation.

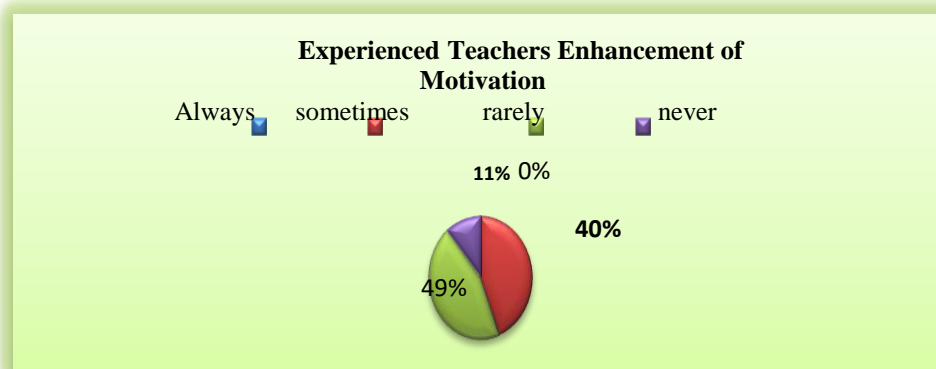


Figure4. Experienced Teachers Enhancement of Motivation

This figure reveals the limited methods and techniques available to experienced teachers in order to improve the academic self-regulation of their students. In effect, (40%) of teachers said they continue to use different methods that allow pupils to regulate their motivations; against (49%) said that they have unusual attempts to use different techniques to boost motivation.

d. Novice teachers' responses on promoting social strategies

Enhancing social skills is the other important part of the questionnaire. Indeed, the aim is to investigate the different strategies that teachers use to enhance an atmosphere of social support in their EFL classrooms. The focus was on the analysis of the following questions.

- How often do you encourage group work or peer work in your classroom?
- How often do you raise your pupils' awareness of different strategies through small group work?
- How often do you encourage your pupils to ask you/peers questions?

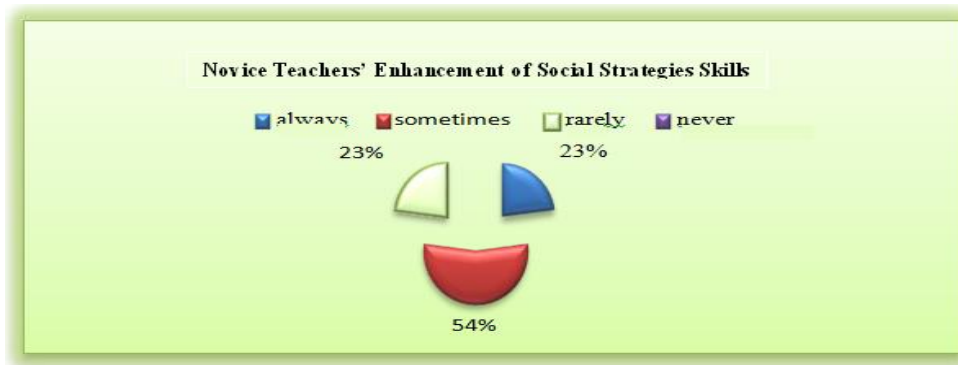


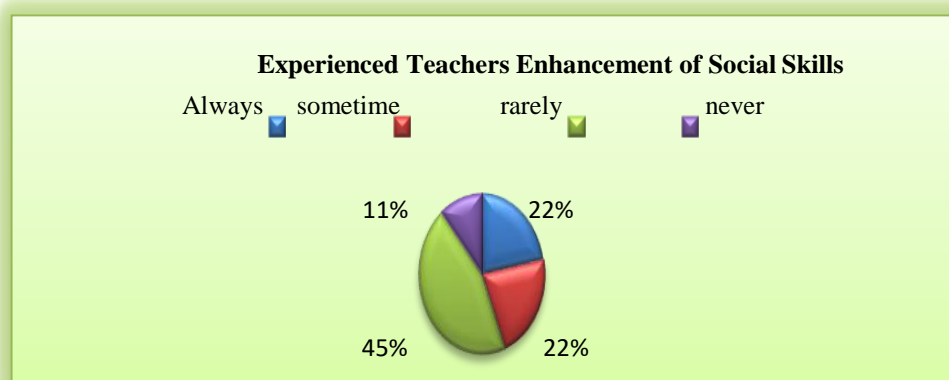
Figure 5. Novice Teachers' Enhancement of Social Skills

The figure above indicates the attempt by novice teachers to improve their pupils' social skills. In effect, (23%) of teachers reported that they have a constant attempt to enhance some social skills within the classroom; against (54%) of teachers who said they have occasionally tried to enhance social skills.

e. Experienced teachers' answers on promoting social skills in their classrooms

The following figure demonstrates experienced teachers routinely efforts to develop their pupils social skills.

Figure 6. Experienced Teachers Enhancement of Social Skills



The above figure represents the variable rates of experienced teachers' enhancement of social strategies in their EFL classrooms. The evidence from the pie chart indicates that (45%) of teachers' said they have (rare attempts to promote social skills ; against (11%) who said they do not have any attempt to enhance social strategies still, their efforts remain low as compared to their continual (22%) attempt to promote the social skills.

5. Discussion

The results indicate that the English teacher in the two middle schools 'Baghdadi Benattia' and 'Ben Dehmane Belgandouz' demonstrated limited endeavours to develop pupils' academic self-regulation. Based on the observation, some of the teachers (three teachers out of four) demonstrated some unconscious efforts in promoting some skills of academic self-regulation in their classrooms. Some of these strategies used by these teachers while teaching vocabulary or grammar can be listed. As reported earlier, in some classes, teachers used group

work where pupils enjoyed learning some new vocabulary (see class observation 3). Within the same classroom, the same teacher tried to make pupils independent and involved in the process of finding new words and synonyms so that they enlarge their vocabulary repertoire. When asked about these strategies outside the classroom, that teacher reported that the use of these strategies was unconscious with no specific knowledge of academic self-regulation strategies. That teacher also reported that even if they (referring to other teacher colleagues) sometimes try to change their way of teaching, time constraints and large classes prevent them from doing so. This limited knowledge of academic self-regulation and context factors like time, explain why those teachers did not allocate time to enhance some strategies of reading (see classroom observation 1).

In this study, the experimenter tried to include both experienced and novice teachers to gain an understanding of whether the experience of teaching influences teachers' implementation of academic self-regulation strategies in their classrooms. The answers gathered from the two groups of teachers, indicated that the experience of teaching has no specific influence on teachers' endeavours to implement and foster some strategies of academic self-regulation. The result might show that the two groups of teachers followed the same teacher training programme provided by the ministry. This training focuses mainly on developing teachers' disciplinary or subject matter knowledge rather than professional skills (Ghedghoudji, 2005; Maraf, 2012). In this light, many Algerian authors emphasised the need to provide an appropriate training programme to teachers of English (Ghedghoudji, 2005; Maraf, 2012; 2016).

Furthermore, both novice and experienced teacher make use of the same strategies in their classroom to enhance autonomy. The strategy that is constantly used by these teachers is group work. Group work is considered as a challenge in the Algerian classroom because most of the time classrooms are crowded, which makes the process of teaching under such a condition difficult.

6. Conclusion

This research paper attempted to uncover Algerian middle school teachers' role in promoting academic self-regulation. Throughout the whole work, the attempt was to portray academic-self regulation as a learning system that organises pupils in a metacognitive, motivational and social fashion.

The study has established itself as a platform to reveal the potential of academic self-regulation in the Algerian middle schools to generate autonomous English language learners. The integration of academic self-regulation in Algerian middle schools is strictly required, particularly at a very young age where pupils initiate their first steps with a total understanding of how to learn. If Algerian schools decision makers take steps to promote academic self-regulation, it is expected to proffer a journey of learning that is full of control.

This research work aimed to raise awareness towards the necessity to approach ways for helping pupils to become self-regulated knowledge-seekers. Many pupils might show their loss of interest if they are not guided. Hence, this research study focused on the role of teachers in guiding these pupils.

For a systematic orientation of this research, a mixed methods design was followed for yielding better results. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to collect

the required data. A classroom observation and a questionnaire were the research tools used in middle schools at Sirat and Yellal in Mostaganem.

As a result, it was discovered that teachers' attempts to develop pupils' academic self-regulation skills were limited to certain strategies that they used in their classroom. These strategies included group work, the use of labels on classroom walls (see class observation 2), encouraging pupils to use dictionary to look up for words (see class observation 3). This limited attempt might be linked to their little knowledge of academic self-regulation and contextual constraints such as time and crowded classroom.

To sum up, academic self-regulation is viewed as an engaging academic tool that has attracted the attention of many educational researchers in the context of middle school (eg; Dembo and Eaton, 2000; Lee et al, 2014).

This view is based on its contribution towards successful and skilled life-long learners. Academic self-regulation manufactures flexible learners who are ready to take charge of further learning experiences. For that reason, considerations should be given to developing and training Algerian EFL teachers with the professional skills necessary to produce autonomous learners.

Recommendations

For future work, it would be interesting to conduct further research attempting to understand how English language teachers are trained in Algeria. On a cautionary note, it is also important to explore how the graduates in English are trained during their master's degree and assess the content provided to them. It has been reported that the graduate of English students studying under the LMD system (The bachelor's master's doctorate system) have more chances of specialized training (Sarnou, et al, 2012). Therefore, exploring this period of training and what it consists of is of paramount importance to inform stakeholders and higher education programme designer about the need to provide an appropriate training programme for these students.

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POWER AND APOLOGY IN PALISTINIAN EFL CONTEXTS

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Abstract

This study demonstrates the mutual relation between power and apology in Palestinian EFL contexts. It also shows the reciprocal effect between power and apology. The researcher used the descriptive analytical methodology which is appropriate for this study. The sample of study includes thirty Palestinian English language students. To achieve the objective of this study, the researcher utilizes a basic tool which is an open-ended questionnaire including twenty situations based on apology. The results of the study revealed that there is a relationship between using power and apology. Moreover, the findings show that using of apology for females is more males.

Keywords: Apology; Palestinian EFL context; power.

1. Introduction

The mutual influence between any language and the society in which it is used is quite axiomatic and self-evident. Each one of these phenomena is absorbed in the other and, consequently, they greatly influence each other. (Howell & Paris, 2011, p. 51)

It is this influence that makes it easy for almost everyone to identify a speaker as belonging to a certain society and/or region. The choice of vocabulary items, sentence patterns and the accent of the speaker, all reveal different facts about the speaker's age, power, gender, social class, education, among many other things. These sociolinguistic variables are engraved in the language a speaker uses to the extent that it is impossible to isolate them from it.

In addition to what is mentioned above, the various sociolinguistic variables that frame any situation determine the level of directness and the choice of speech act strategy and whether or not to issue a speech act, at the first place. This type of influence of the sociolinguistic variables on the perception and production of speech acts is the main area of a relatively recent field of study called sociopragmatics. Sociopragmatics, as reported by Kasper (2001, p. 51), focuses principally on the social rules of speaking, that is to say, the expectations about the interactional discourse that is viewed by the members of a speech community as normal and appropriate behaviour.

Thus, in using whatever language, whether native or not, one must pay heed to the social rules of speaking that are essential to achieve appropriate communication. Being of such an importance, these principles have to be absorbed and internalized so as to escape any potential for a communication breakdown that is caused by their non-observance. The failure to observe the social rules of speaking has to be eliminated to guarantee successful communication.

There is no elaborately empirical study, to the best of our knowledge, which extensively accounts for the influence of sociolinguistic variables on Palestinian EFL university students' performance in relation to the level of using power and apology strategy of speech acts. Henceforth, the present study attempts to find out whether there are significant differences in the way Palestinian EFL male and female university students use apology strategy of speech act in L2 contexts, to identify Palestinian EFL university students' ability to modify the illocutionary force of the strategy they choose, and to investigate the mutual effect of the Palestinian EFL university students' academic progress on their appropriate choice of speech acts strategies in the EFL contexts. This study, in consequence, tries to answer the following questions:

1. Are there any significant differences in the way Palestinian EFL male and female university students use apology speech act strategies in L2 contexts?
2. Are Palestinian EFL university students able to appropriately modify the illocutionary force of the strategy they choose?

The study, as a result, sets itself the task of finding answers to these questions that would by consequence confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis stating that there are no significant differences in the way Palestinian EFL powerless and powerful university students in using apology in L2 contexts. This would hopefully bridge a gap in the relevant literature.

It is hoped that this study will be of both theoretical and practical value to all those interested in the fields of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, sociopragmatics and applied linguistics. EFL syllabus-designers and textbooks writers, EFL teachers, and EFL students can make use of this study as it sheds light on linguistic performance of EFL students in real life communicative situations.

2. Literature Review

The main aim of this study is to investigate the way in which sociolinguistic variables influence Palestinian EFL university students' realizations of some speech acts (i.e. their choice of strategies). As a result, it falls within the domain of sociopragmatics which involves, as Trosborg (1995, p. 39) states, the exploration of speech acts with respect to the social situations they are used in, and the social functions that language fulfils (2009, p. 28).

Therefore, it is intended to provide a theoretical background for the study discussing the related domains of sociopragmatics, context and appropriateness. Besides, it approaches the sociolinguistic variables of relative power, social distance and sex and ends up with introducing the speech acts of request, apology, and complaint.

2.3 Pragmatics

Yule (2010, p. 127) argues explaining that communication evidently depends not only on knowing the meaning of words in an utterance, but more importantly, on making out what speakers mean by their utterances.

2.4 Sociopragmatics

Aijmer and Andersen (2012, p. 21) believe that sociopragmatics comes as a natural consequence of advances in sociolinguistics, variational pragmatics, linguistic anthropology, critical discourse analysis and other related disciplines.

On his part, Kasper (2001, p. 51) proclaims that sociopragmatics refers to the connection between "action-relevant context factors" (which are mainly social) and "communicative action" (i. e. issuance of speech acts). Thus, it is about deciding whether (or not) to request a promotion, complain about the neighbour's barking dog, etc. and does not necessarily require any links to specific forms at all. Put differently, sociopragmatics focuses primarily on the social rules of speaking, that is, those expectations about interactional discourse viewed by members of a speech community as normal and appropriate behaviour.

LoCastro (2012, p. 159) asserts that a major thread through the study of sociopragmatics is how communication of pragmatic meaning involves speakers' presentation of their identities. The choice of a cell phone or an intonation contour is as important as a greeting in signaling to other community members how the speaker sees her/himself to be. She (ibid) explains that the categories which are habitually used to describe features of human beings (like ethnicity, race, sex/ gender, socioeconomic background/ class) are abstractions. Those abstractions become real or transparent as they are enacted through our choices of clothing, hairstyles, posture, lifestyles, and most assuredly how we use language. Word choice, prosody, tone of voice, degree of grammatical complexity, and interactional routines are all components of sociopragmatics.

It can, thus, be stated that sociopragmatics aims at showing how social and cultural features are influential in language practices, and how they affect the pragmatic strategies that are manifested by linguistic forms in certain communicative contexts. Consequently, sociopragmatics does not view pragmatic phenomena, such as speech acts, inference, presupposition, etc., as mere theoretical constructs or as cognitive phenomena but aims to account for their realizations in empirical socio-cultural contexts and to present cultural, social, and situational differences in their manifestation. In other words, sociopragmatics, , in its broad sense, is distinct from theories of pragmatics based in philosophical, logic or cognition.

3. Methodology

In light of the title, questions and objectives of this study, the researcher will use the descriptive analytical and quasi-experimental methodology. This approach is regarded the most suitable one to achieve the objectives of this study.

3.3 Population and Sample

The population which is targeted by this study is the Palestinian EFL university students in both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Consequently, a representative sample of this population is chosen from both levels. Table (1) below shows the demographic aspects of all the groups which have participated in this study.

3.4 Tools of Study

The researcher mainly uses a questionnaire, which will be in the form of a discourse completion test as the basic tool of study.

3.5 Procedures of Study

In order to fulfill the objectives of this study and verify its hypotheses, the under-mentioned procedures will be followed:

1. Presenting a theoretical background that:
 - a. Surveys the literature on the relevant fields of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and sociopragmatics.
 - b. Discusses the speech acts of apology.
2. Reflects on the relevant sociolinguistic variable of relative power, Conducting an empirical work via a questionnaire in the form of a discourse completion test (henceforth: DCT) to collect data about Palestinian EFL university students' performance. This procedure entails the following steps:
 - a. Designing a DCT containing various situations representing everyday authentic encounters evenly distributed in light of apology.
 - b. Submitting the designed DCT to a jury of experts (professors and supervisors of English) to judge its validity, suitability, and the authenticity of its situations.
 - c. Conducting a pilot study to test the practicality of the DCT.
3. Using suitable statistical methods represented raw frequencies, means, percentages, and the T-test to tabulate, compare, and calculate the significance of the differences between the results of the collected data of all groups.
4. Discussing the results to arrive at conclusions and recommendations.

3.4 Data Collection

3.4.1 The Elicitation Technique

There is no doubt that the most reliable data that really represent genuine linguistic performance is found in authentic, naturally-occurring discourse (Cohen, 1996, p. 66; Beebe & Cummings, 1996, p. 70). To obtain data of such a quality that are both thorough and complete, Trosborg (1995, p. 141) states that researchers need to record lengthy stretches of naturally-occurring speech in order to find representative samples of the speech act(s) that are required for a particular study.

In linguistics and more specifically in pragmatics, however, such data are not easily collected. They are in fact hard, if not impossible, to control in terms of consistency of situations. Restrictions on personal as well as situational variables (e. g. age, sex, education, social distance, relative power, etc.) demand the collection of an enormous quantity of data to avail the information needed on native speakers' natural performance.

As for the foreign learners, the probability of collecting data of natural speech is almost nil, since such learners rarely, if ever, have the opportunity to use English in real-life foreign environments. Above all, the chance to find the same situation repeated even only twice cannot be assured. Besides, there is no guarantee that the collected data are exhaustive and sufficient. It is because of these problems that many researchers have adopted the discourse completion task (henceforth: DCT), by means of which researchers can fully control the situations from which they get the required data (See Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989a) and Cohen (1996).

3.4.2 Why DCT?

Because of the above mentioned reasons, the technique used in this study to elicit data from Palestinian EFL university students, as well as the native speakers of English, is the DCT. Ellis (1994, p. 163) reports that the DCT has been employed extensively since its first initiation in the CCSARP which is designed and run by Blum-Kulka, and Olshtain (1984a). In the same vein, Trosborg (1995, p. 141) argues that it is usually employed in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics research because it offers a handy and fast way of attaining a plethora of data, not to mention that it ensures full control over the contextual variables of the needed situations.

4. Results

4.2 Results of Apology

To find out whether there are differences between the male and the female use of apology strategies, the results are presented in the following tables according to whether the speaker is male or female. In male speaker situations, table (4.46) displays the two groups' choice of apology category. In line with the previous results, the use of "indirect requests" is equally used by BA and MA groups. The highest percentage recorded for "direct apologies" is by the MA group (66.66%) and the lowest is by the BA group (63.98%).

Table 2.

The Groups' Category Choice in Male Speaker Apology Situations

	BA %	MA %
Making No Apologies	3.03	0.00
Indirect Apologies	32.99	33.34
Direct Apologies	63.98	66.66

Table (2) shows that "Direct Apology" is the strategy most frequently used by the two groups, though with variant percentages (in a descending order BA 63.98 and MA 66.66%). In addition to this strategy, the two groups also use "no apologies" but with significantly lower percentages. Besides, the MA group employs "indirect apologies" (32.99 and the BA group "lack of intent" (33,34).

Table 3.

The Groups' Strategy Choice in Male Speaker Apology Situations

	BA		MA	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Denying responsibility	2	0.67	0	0
Blaming the complainer	7	2.36	0	0
Acknowledgement	34	11.45	8	14.81
Lack of intent	32	10.77	3	5.56
Embarrassment	11	3.70	3	5.56
Explanation	21	7.07	4	7.41
Expressing regret	162	54.55	24	44.44
Expressing apology	10	3.37	5	9.26
Asking for forgiveness	18	6.06	7	12.96
Total	297	100	54	100

Table (3) below presents the results of the situations where the speaker is a male. It shows that the highest percentage of " Expressing regret " is by the MA (44.44%). As for "Expressing apology", while the MA group is (9.26) percentage and the BA group is (3.37).

Table 4.*The Groups' Category Choice in Female Speaker Apology Situations*

	BA%	MA%
Making No Apologies	0.90	2.03
Indirect Apologies	32.96	36.55
Direct Apologies	66.13	61.42

In strategy choice, table (4) shows that the BA and the MA groups use this strategy with different percentage. Other strategies used by female speakers are “Making No Apologies”, “Indirect Apologies”, and “Direct Apologies” though with noticeably lesser percentages.

Table 5.*The Groups' Strategy Choice in Female Speaker Apology Situations*

	BA		MA	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Denying responsibility	7	0.70	0	0
Blaming the complainer	2	0.20	4	2.03
Acknowledgement	88	8.84	20	10.15
Lack of intent	87	8.74	26	13.20
Embarrassment	27	2.71	9	4.57
Explanation	126	12.66	17	8.63
Expressing regret	543	54.57	107	54.31
Expressing apology	28	2.81	6	3.05
Asking for forgiveness	87	8.74	8	4.06
Total	995	100	197	100

5. Discussion

In light of the data analysis presented above, the researchers concluded that there are significant differences in the way Palestinian EFL male and female university students use apology speech act strategies in L2 contexts in favor for female students. Additionally, Palestinian EFL university students are able to appropriately modify the illocutionary force of the strategy they choose.

These findings lead us to confirm the hypothesis stated prior the investigation in which it was assumed that there are no significant differences in the way Palestinian EFL powerless and powerful university students in using apology in L2 contexts.

6. Conclusion

The study findings confirmed that Palestinian EFL university students succeed to appropriately modify the force of their illocutionary acts. With respect to the gender of the speaker, it is found that there are significant differences between the males' and the females' use of apology in favour for females. Besides, the results of the speech act of apology proved that the Palestinian EFL students use direct apologies across all situations and with evidently high percentages.

The generated findings set the ground for a number of pedagogical recommendations that are listed below:

- The first indication the findings give is that the students lack adequate sociocultural knowledge of the rules of use that enable them to communicate appropriately in a range of authentic communicative situations. In consequence it is highly recommended that Palestinian EFL students be directly exposed to the English culture by living a suitable period of time, two months at least, in an English-speaking country.
- English language teachers have to adjust their methodologies as required in order to meet the learners' requirements and interests. In addition, teachers have to associate rules of language usage with the rules of language use because correctness of usage alone does not bring about successful communication unless accompanied by appropriateness of rules of use. This means that teachers should not lay too heavy emphasis on grammar and pronunciation but rather they have to stress language fluency, the matter which demands setting priorities on what, when, and how to correct in accordance with the immediate context of learning.
- Language students need to be given more room for practicing language inside the classroom since they might not have other opportunities to use the target language. Consequently, language teachers need to play the role of administrators and facilitators in their classrooms. The benefit of this practice is twofold: it gives teachers more chances to observe and evaluate the students' performances in the target language.
- To achieve the previous point, it is found very helpful that language teachers apply the role play technique in the classroom, which would definitely boost the linguistic correctness as well as the cultural appropriateness of different speech acts.

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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTONOMOUS LEARNING IN ESP CONTEXT

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Abstract

The present article attempts to investigate the concept of learner autonomy within an ESP context from students' perspectives. The ultimate purpose is to contribute to the reflection on the autonomy of foreign language learning by presenting a case study relating to a particular EFL teaching/learning context. To this end, a survey questionnaire was distributed to a randomly selected sample of forty (40) Engineering students at L'Ecole Supérieure en Sciences Appliquées d'Alger in order to find out their attitudes towards, and readiness for self-dependent ESP learning. It also unveils the activities students engage in both inside and outside the classroom within the framework of their perceived responsibilities. The questionnaire was an adaptation of Cotterall's (1999) and Joshi's (2011) Learner Autonomy Questionnaires. Research findings are discussed with regard to students' needs appealing for future research and for innovations in the teaching/learning process.

Keywords: Autonomous learning; ESP; students' attitudes; teachers' role.

1. Introduction

A literature review indicates that ESP, as an approach for English language teaching/learning, is getting more and more researchers' interest all over the world including Algeria. This claim is proved by the increasing number of research articles, master/magister dissertations and PhD theses done by researchers to meet the identified need of specific groups of learners. Every single research work acknowledges the many key roles ESP course plays in one's academic, professional, occupational... career. Such roles, however, do not seem to be appreciated by some Algerian scientific and technical studies departments. For example, the time allocated for ESP by the institution where this study has been conducted is a mere weekly ninety-minute class which usually takes place on Wednesday or Thursday afternoon: that is the end of the week.

Given that, engineering as a profession is applying the principles of mathematics, science and technology, which are inexorably evolving, in order to find workable resolutions to technical problems, learning and profession development are pressingly relentless for the engineer. Under these conditions, exhorting students to develop their autonomous learning

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skills should be important to teachers in every discipline, but it should be of particular importance to the teachers of those Engineering students who are learning English for specific purposes. That is to say, in preparing students for professional life, not only should teachers be devoted to the teaching of language skills, they also should be committed to develop a life-long learning skill of their students, because “teachers can never teach "all there is to know", since new knowledge is created daily[...]Therefore, what people need in order to be able to maintain their ground in a rapidly changing world are skills that allow them to independently address new questions and new situations, integrate already acquired and new information, developing new” (Sercu & Raya, 2007, p. 7). In the same line of thought, Bransford(1979) contends that “if people can discover things on their own, they not only acquire new knowledge but also develop skills for effectively utilizing what they already know” (p. 243). Moreover, Belcher (2017) affirms that “learner-centeredness has been the priority of ESP since its earliest days”(p.2).

Inspired by the above stances, the present paper is an attempt to investigate the attitudes of a sample of 40 Algerian Engineering students about autonomous ESP learning. Although the study has been conducted at ESSAA, its insights could be valuable to the other Algerian colleges of Engineering and technical studies as well, since ESP should be the most widely used approach to teaching English in higher education institutions in Algerian and abroad as well.

2. Literature Review

2.3 *ESP Origins: a Critical Overview*

Many scholars seem to concur that ESP came into existence after WWII when science and technology transfer became conditioned by the mastery of English, which in its own turn, was accepted as a global lingua franca. In this respect, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that ESP emerged in unplanned and incoherent way. They believe that the increasing need for an international language to keep up with both the expansion of international trade and advances in technology resulted in the need for specific language courses which paralleled the acceptance of English as the international language after the Second World War. Hutchinson and Waters put forward two other factors for the rise of ESP. The first one is the revolution in linguistics that was marked by the shift of attention from grammar of language to the use of language whose teaching became “tailored to specific need”. The second factor is the focus on learners’ need and interests in learning (pp. 6-8). Bouabdellah (2014) portrays ESP as a response to such a number of practical concerns as:

- the need to prepare growing numbers of non-English background students for study at American and British universities from the 1950s;
- the need to prepare materials to teach students who had already mastered general English, but now need English for use in employment, such as non-English backgrounds doctors, nurses, engineers, and scientists (p. 14).

Contrary to all the previously exposed arguments and assumptions that English language in general and ESP in particular was willingly and naturally given the status of the first international language through which political, economic, academic... concerns are communicated, some scholars believe in another history of ESP. In her book, *Critical English for Academic Purposes: Theory Politics and Practice*, Benesch (2001) questions the neutrality of English spread over the world and gives alternative grounds for the acceptance of English with such a prestige. She argues that many British and American governmental and private agencies either organized or funded conferences, teacher-training courses and other programs in different parts of the world to ensure the dominance of English over the other rival languages,

i.e. German and French. It follows from this latter assumption that English was planned to linguistically dominate the universal academic research for political and ideological motives. Benesch writes: “ESP did not develop inevitably and naturally. The 1971 Beirut conference is just one example of the conscious planning on the part of industry, aided by governments, foundations, and academic” (p. 30). The researcher continues to assert that the people who wanted English to receive such a universal acceptance saw it “as a ticket to the modern world” (p. 33). In the same vein, Philipson (1992) refers to an Anglo-American collaboration on the plan for “English language imperialism” which “facilitated global imperialism” (pp. 64-69). All what has been said so far does not lend support to the claim that ESP came into existence because of “three important factors: the expansion of demand for English to suit particular needs and developments in the fields of linguistics and educational psychology” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.8).

2.4 *Learner Autonomy and ESP*

So many efforts have been made by specialists to substantiate the effectiveness of Learner-Centred Approach in foreign languages teaching/learning. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) in their part, stress the significance and role of learners in designing and implementing the ESP course. The authors even expand the concept of self-dependence from a philosophy of teaching/learning to a philosophy of life when they open chapter 5 of their book by citing a well know Chinese saying:

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day

Teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime (p. 39)

Quoting such a saying implies that both writers strongly believe in creating a life-long and self-dependent learner rather than restricting the learning process to the classroom setting. Pirsl, Popovska and Pirsl (2013) argue that due to researchers’ recent interest shift from what to learn into how to learn “autonomous learning and metacognitive strategies are suggested as the two basic essentials for teaching and learning ESP” (p.5). As far as ESP students are concerned, Dobrota (2009) concludes that since they are urged to master the professional English, ESP students “need to be given necessary guidance to become autonomous learners, able to cope independently with the various challenges in their working environment” (p. 511).

There are voices calling for a broader change in the EAP teaching/learning conditions by involving students in the design of ESP curriculum. Benesch (2001), for example, criticizes the traditional procedures of EAP teaching. She mainly addresses the professional’ standpoint that EAP “is not viewed as a vehicle for questioning or improving those conditions” (p. 49). The writer, then, proposes *students’ rights analysis* through critical EAP as a solution. According to Benesch, *rights analysis* “assumes that each academic situation offers its own opportunities for negotiation” (p. 58). The researcher further explains that “critical EAP teachers do not know what might emerge but are prepared to help students enact their reactions in a thoughtful, cooperative, and communitarian fashion” (p. 58). Clearly then, what Benesch calls for is involving students in reciprocity and negotiation with their teachers about all what concerns their ESP course taking into account the prevailing academic, pedagogical, political and economic context in which the teaching/learning process is taking place. In Benesch’s terms, “rights analysis is a theoretical tool for EAP teachers and students to consider possible responses to unfavourable social, institutional, and classroom conditions” (p.102). In an elaboration to Benesch’s model of rights analysis, Ahmadvand et al., (2015) write: “Critical EAP asks for students’ ideas on present and future academic assignments to keep open the

possibility of change; it helps students show their resistance, objections, or unwillingness, and helps them to exercise their democratic rights as members of an academic discourse community” (p. 7). This, however, raises many questions about student-teacher power relations.

2.5 The Psychological Dimension of Teaching/Learning Process

There is empirical evidence given by language teaching/learning scholars that learners’ attitudes have an enormous influence on their learning achievements in general and developing autonomous learning strategies in particular. For example, Little (1991) argues that learner autonomy “entails that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning” (p.4). Therefore, Swales (1980, as cited in Stika, 1999, p. 33) recommends that ESP designers should know about their students’ will to learn. He states: “it is very important for a course designer to know not only what his students can do and need to do but also to know what they would be willing to do or could be persuaded to do within the confines of their particular educational environment” (p.68). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) put forward a diagram (figure 01) through which they explain how important it is when the learner wants to learn. According to this diagram, the first step of learning is the learner’s will to learn. To sum, learner’s beliefs are so important when autonomy is to be implemented “simply because the beliefs and attitudes learners hold have a profound influence on their learning behaviour” (Cotterall, 1995, p. 1).

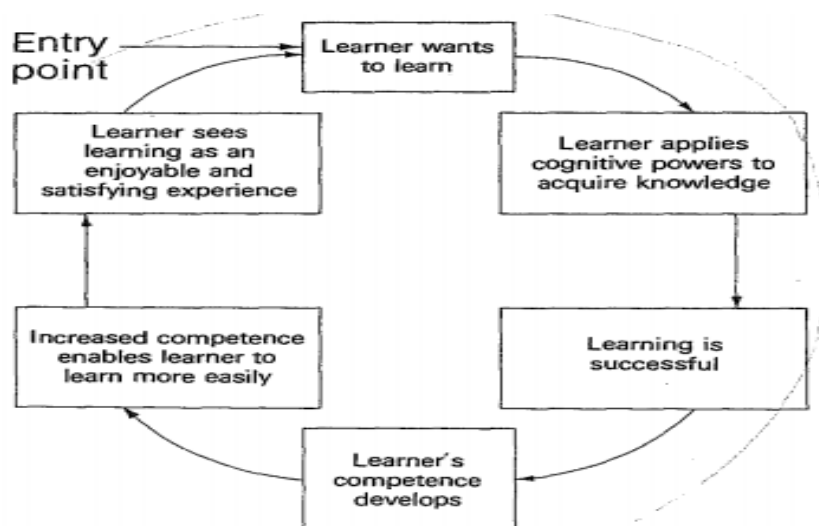


Figure 1: A positive learning cycle. (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 47)

The concerned literature shows, however, that learner autonomy is not developed only on an individual scale but it can be also constructed at a social level. Put differently, learner autonomy can be either encouraged or discourages through individual and social discourses. In this respect, Nunan et al., (1999) argue that “the extent to which it is feasible or desirable for learners to embrace autonomy will depend on a range of factors from personality to the cultural context in which they find themselves” (p.70). In the same line of thought, Riley (1999) states the following: “the way we talk to children determines the kinds of learners they become” (p.35). These two citations acknowledge the fact that developing learner autonomy is concerned with both the individual and social interactions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Objectives and Research Questions

The growing interest in ESP has made researchers investigate it from different dimensions: intercultural communicative competence (Zaghar, 2016; Aguilar 2018), critical thinking (Vanicheva et al., 2015; Pirsl et al., 2017), and learner autonomy (Ajedah, 2009; Díaz Ramírez, 2014). Regarding the latter dimension we noticed that it is not yet much emphasized. Therefore, this study endeavours to explore it from students' perspectives. Our interest in investigating learners' attitudes towards autonomy is the key role they play in teaching/learning as both cognitive and social process. In this regard, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that learners, like all people, have their like and dislikes that should not be ignored because they may result in success or failure in learning (pp. 46-47). The same idea is put by Hozayen (2011) who states the following: "exploring the learners' beliefs could help in explaining particular learners' success or failure in language learning as well as their degree of readiness to become self-directed, inquisitive and independent learners" (p. 117).

To fill the research gaps mentioned above, the present study aims to:

1. Identify ESSAA students' attitudes toward, and readiness for an autonomous language learning;
2. Explore the activities ESSAA students' engage in both inside and outside the classroom within the framework of their perceived responsibilities.

To reach the set up goals, the following research questions have been formulated

1. What attitudes do Engineering students hold towards ESP autonomous learning?
2. What support, guide, and assignments do students receive in order to develop their autonomous learning skills?

3.2 Participants

The present study was conducted at The High School of Applied Sciences of Algiers (L'Ecole Supérieur de Sciences Appliqués d'Alger; Ex L'Ecole Préparatoire Sciences & Techniques d'Alger). The sampling group consisted of forty (40) 2nd cycle 1st year students enrolled in Electrical Engineering. They have already had a two-year ESP course during the 1st cycle of their studying in one of the preparatory schools across the country. The subjects were all willing to participate in the study.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument we used in this study is a questionnaire. It has been adapted (with permission) from Cotterall' (1999) and Joshi's (2011) questionnaires on learners' beliefs about key factors in successful language learning that might reflect learners' autonomy. It consists of 48 items. The items are divided into sections related to the autonomous learning: the role of the teacher, the role of feedback, learner independence, learner confidence in study ability and students' activities.

4. Results

The study results are presented in this section. The data, which are mainly elicited from the survey questions, are reported in the following tables.

4.3 The role of the teacher

Table 01.
Students' Beliefs about the Role of the Teacher

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
(28) I like the teacher to tell me what my difficulties are	11	27.5 %	24	60 %	3	7.5 %	0	0 %	1	2.5 %
(29) I like the teacher to tell me what to do	8	20 %	15	37.5 %	10	25 %	5	12.5 %	2	5 %
(31) I like the teacher to tell me how long I should spend on an activity	7	17 %	14	35 %	8	20 %	7	17.5 %	5	12.5 %
(32) I like the teacher to help me	13	32.5 %	19	47.5 %	6	15 %	1	2.5 %	1	2.5 %
(33) The teacher should always explain why we are doing an activity in class	20	50%	16	40 %	2	5 %	1	2.5 %	1	

As a comment on the importance of the teacher, Table 1 shows clearly that the majority of subjects regard the teacher's role as consisting of identifying learners' difficulties (Item 28: 87.5%), telling them what to do in their learning (Item 29: 57.5%), telling them how long they should spend on an activity (Item 31: 52%), helping learners learn effectively (Item 32: 80%), explaining the purpose of learning activities (Item 33: 90%). These results indicate that students see the teacher's role in language learning as dominant.

4.2. Role of feedback

Table 2.
Students' Beliefs about the Role of feedback

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
(7) It is important for me to be able to see the progress I make	23	57 %	11	27.5 %	4	10 %	1	2.5 %	1	2.5 %
(8) I need the teacher to tell me how I am progressing	7	17.5 %	20	50%	7	17.5 %	4	10 %	4	10 %
(10) I find it helpful for the teacher to give me regular tests	9	22.5 %	15	37.5 %	9	22.5 %	6	15 %	1	2.5 %
(11) I have my own ways of testing how much I have learnt	1	2.5 %	13	32.5 %	8	20 %	15	37.5 %	3	7.5 %
(14) Talking to the teacher about my progress is embarrassing for me	2	5 %	13	32.5 %	8	20 %	10	40 %	7	17.5 %

The underlying meta-cognitive strategies which have also been examined when questioning learners' readiness for autonomy include *evaluation* and *feedback* on their learning progress. Students' responses to Items 8 and 10 (see Table 2) reflect a great dependence on the teacher as a source of feedback. 67.5% agree that they need the teacher to tell them how they are progressing. Likewise, 60% of students incline to depend on the teacher in giving learners regular tests (Item 10: 60%), where as only 35% self-monitor their learning, which shows that students assign these responsibilities to the teacher. It should also be mentioned that 57.5% of the subjects responded they do not get embarrassed when talking to teacher about their progress.

4.3. Learner autonomy

Table 3.
Students' Beliefs about Learner Independence

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
(15) I like trying new things out by myself	11	27.5 %	15	37.5 %	1	2.5 %	1	2.5 %	4	10%
(19) I have a clear idea of what I need English for	10	25 %	17	42.5 %	5	12.5 %	6	15 %	2	5%
(20) I like to look for solutions to my problems by myself	5	12.5 %	20	50 %	10	25 %	3	7.5 %	2	5%
(23) Learning a language is very different from learning other subjects	13	32.5 %	12	30 %	7	17.5 %	5	12.5 %	3	7.5 %

Surprisingly, most of students agree with these statements which indicate that they are likely to be comfortable experimenting with new activities (65%), and to have clearly-defined goals (68%). Students' responses demonstrate their propensity to operate independently with learning obstacles (Item 20: 62.5%). Subjects' affirmative response to Items 23 shows that they appreciate the difference between language learning and other types of learning. It can be inferred from the above data that these students are ready to be autonomous. They are probably dependent on their teachers or feel more secure when surrounded by them. It could be argued, however, that these students might occasionally use technical English textbooks, but are ready to study on their own and independently of the teacher.

4.4. Learner confidence in study ability

Table 4.

Students' Beliefs about their Confidence in Study Ability

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	0	0 %	13	32.5 %	16	40 %	7	17.5 %	4	10 %
(3) I know how to study languages well	0	0 %	13	32.5 %	16	40 %	7	17.5 %	4	10 %
(4) I know how to study other subjects well	1	2.5 %	18	45 %	17	42.5 %	3	7.5 %	1	2.5 %
(18) I expect to be successful in my language learning in the future	11	27.5 %	22	55 %	6	15 %	1	2.5 %	0	0 %

These items concern the learners' confidence in their overall ability to learn a language, as well as their ability to achieve more specific language goals. Table 4 indicates that almost one third of the subjects (32.5%) believe they know how to study languages well (Item 3). While 40% of the informants are undecided about their ability of language learning, 27.5% of them, however, were considerably less confident of their learning ability. It must be noted that reporting of group responses to Item 4 may reflect a success or failure to recognize the difference between the skills and knowledge required to succeed in language learning and those required for success in other subjects. Table 4 clearly shows that the subjects' confidence was higher on other subject learning ability (4with 47.5%) than that of the general language learning ability (Item 3, with 32.5%). Students' responses to Item 18 reflect that the majority (82.5%) have a high confidence to be successful in studying language in the future. It can be inferred from these statistics that students plan to improve their level of English after the completion of their engineering degree.

4.5. Autonomous learning activities

Table 5.
Students' Autonomous Learning Activities

Items	Never		rarely		Some times		Often		Always	
(36) I make good use of my free time in studying English	8	20 %	12	30 %	14	35 %	3	7.5 %	3	7.5 %
(37) I preview before class	17	42.5 %	15	37.5 %	6	15 %	2	5 %	0	0 %
(38) In the class, I try to use every opportunity to take part in the activities where and when I can speak in English	4	10 %	1	2.5 %	16	40 %	14	35 %	5	12.5 %
(48) Besides the contents prescribed in the course, I read extra materials in advance	11	27.5 %	17	42.5 %	8	20 %	3	7.5 %	1	2.5 %

The data shows interesting responses about students' independent work habits in language learning (Table 5). Twenty per cent of them do not make use of their free time in studying English and thirty percent rarely do this. Regarding Item 37 -I preview before class- 42.50% rarely use it as their part of autonomous learning activities. 37.5% of them use it only rarely and 15% use it sometimes. Only two students often preview before class and no one do it always. Table 5 indicates that Item 38 is sometimes and often practiced by the majority of subjects i.e. 40% and 35% respectively. 12.5% of the population also answered that they always practice this activity. There only four students who never do it and those who rarely do so remain 2.5 % of the subjects. Item 48 is prepared to see if students read extra materials besides the contents included in the course. The results show that only a minority (i.e. 2.5%) of them always undertake the activity. The majority rarely do it, while 27.5% never practice it.

7. Discussion

The Role of the Teacher: the majority of students agreed on the significance of the teacher's role. These results show that students still think that they cannot successfully learn a language without dependence on the teacher. Students' beliefs that the teacher should be at the centre of their learning and that s/he is capable enough to plan their learning goals might be the consequence of a teaching philosophy. That is to say, the education these students have received all along their learning process might have been teacher-dominated.

The Role of feedback in language learning: students' responses to the items that reflect students' perceptions about *the role of feedback in language learning* showed their belief in the teacher as an external source of feedback. However, "their agreement need not necessarily be associated with dependence on the teacher. Rather, it could reflect an understanding of the importance of monitoring progress and a recognition of the assistance a teacher can provide in that process" (Cotterall, 1995, p.)

Learner independence: students' agreement with the statements indicates that they are likely to have clearly-defined goals, and to be comfortable experimenting with new activities. However, a number of obstacles to learner independence have been identified. As aforementioned, culture and educational background interact as they contribute to learners' beliefs about the role they should play. It may be reasonable to argue here that having the willingness to plan their learning goals renders those students autonomous to a certain extent.

Learner confidence in study ability: Students' efficacy beliefs are strongly correlated with learning achievements. Students with high *self-efficacy* believe that they can learn well and believe they have a certain degree of control over learning process. In her study, Cotterall (1999) links respondents' lack of confidence in study ability, identified in *Factor 4*, to their inability to use strategies for self-monitoring and self-evaluating identified in the items that investigated the role of feedback. Among the beliefs that students hold which have a direct impact on their confidence refer to beliefs about the lack of language learning skills.

Autonomous learning activities: seem to engage students in autonomous activities "never" or "rarely" rather than "often" or "always". Students' engineering-subjects-overloaded program, which devotes a limited time to ESP, in addition previous studying habits learned in high schools, and the classroom activities carried out by previous teachers, particularly those with traditional teaching styles, may be a cause of this behaviour.

8. Conclusion

To be able to cope independently with the various challenges in their working environment and pursue their academic and professional development even after graduation like attending in-service professional training events or writing reports on professional-related issues, ESP students need to develop their autonomous learning skills. This implies that ESP teachers are expected to engage their students in a more student-focused teaching/learning environment. However, engaging in such a learning mode requires a certain level of willingness and readiness so that students have the right learning behaviour. Therefore, the present study aimed at revealing a sample of ESP students' attitudes towards, readiness for and practices related to autonomous learning. To reach this aim, we based our survey on eliciting information from forty (40) Engineering students by means of questionnaire.

The analysed data showed encouraging signs of students' willingness to engage in an autonomous ESP learning mode. However, students' responses to the items that investigated their views on the role of the teacher and the role of feedback indicated that they still believe in teacher's role as the centre of teaching/learning process. Another important elicited data, which relate to the area of students' confidence, indicated that the majority of respondents expressed low confidence in their general ability to learn a language. Concerning the area of autonomy-oriented practices, Informants declared that they do not tend to engage in self-dependent learning activities. Such a condition calls teachers to work on how to encourage students to change their learning behaviours.

The obtained results prove that students' perceptions on learning styles are so crucial that teachers should be aware of the impact they may have on learning behaviours. Therefore, teachers, as pointed to by Chen (2016), may try to "change ESP learners' attitudes towards their own learning abilities by showing them that their failures can be attributed to the lack of effective strategies rather than to the lack of ability or to laziness" (p. 620). Finally, teachers are recommended to provide autonomy-oriented instructions of ESP learning and find what kinds of strategies are useful and effective for students to acquire the needed professional English.



In this part, try to remind the reader of the strengths of your main argument(s) via restating the research main conclusions. Make sure that your conclusion is not simply a repetitive summary of the findings, rather try to include your reflections on the research issue investigated to increase the impact of the argument(s) developed throughout the study.

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DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF MAJOR NEGATIVE INTERPERSONAL EVENTS MEASUREMENT FOR ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

The research concerning finding out recent measurements/scales/inventories/questionnaires on major negative interpersonal events revealed a paucity of such instruments. The study both aimed to develop and check the psychometric properties of a newly developed measurement; Major Negative Interpersonal Events Measurement (MNIE-M). To develop the MNIE-M, the researchers reviewed the previous instruments in this regard. Then, the MNIE-M contained 29 events that were distributed under five factors as follows: Family-related events, classmates-related events, student direct-related events, teachers-related events, and friends-related events. The MNIE-M was administered to a sample of 49 adolescents whose ages (12, 15, and 18) years old. As for the psychometric properties, the researchers used the following: For validity, we used Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Structure Validity. For reliability, we used Cronbach's Alpha, Split Half Method, and KMO and Bartlett's Test. The study revealed proper psychometric properties that made the MNIE-M well-developed. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was high in all of the items, Structure Validity showed high values in each factor as well. Cronbach's Alpha was (.898), a very high value. Split Half Method revealed (.693) by Guttman Split-Half Coefficient, (.696) by Spearman-Brown Coefficient, (.861) for the first part, and (.847) for the second part – high values. KMO and Bartlett's Test was (.599) - an acceptable value.

Keywords: Adolescents, major negative interpersonal events, psychometric properties.

1. Introduction

Social problem-solving is a cognitive-affective-behavioral process by which people attempt to resolve social (interpersonal) problems in a social environment (D'Zurilla et al., 2004). One of the main social problems that affect people's lives is the experience of Major Negative Events (MNE). These events negatively impact on life, especially the life of adolescents. Aburezeq and Kasik (2021a) revealed that social problem solving had been found to be in connection to MNE and stressful life events. MNE are the dangerous factors that occur in one's life and affect his/her psychosocial adaptation due to having emotional effect and the possibility that these MNE abate person's coping strategies (Gonçalves, et al., 2017, Aburezeq

& kasik 2021b). It is worth mentioning that people do not react identically to the same MNE as it usually depends on the perceptions individuals have and the adaptive strategies towards MNE (ibid). Life events are those incidences that change individuals' habitual activities and then forcing them to readapt their behaviour (Bras & Cruz, 2008, cited in Gonçalves, et al., 2017) and affecting their overall stability. The most common negative life events of senior students are unwanted pregnancies, parental divorce, and relations' break-ups (Canavarro & Lima, 2006). MNE have been considered of great interest to be searched as etiologic factors in disease as they can be a cause for psychopathology (Coddington, 1972). Assessing the nature of MNE among adolescents could contribute to deal appropriately with such events. The psychological research concerning the relationship between life events and depressive disorders has usually concentrated on the relationship between events and following depressive symptoms (Hammen 2006). In addition, peers and family members could be a source of stress for adolescents (DuBois et al., 2002; Smetana et al., 2006), previous research placed emphasis on stressful hassles concerning the interpersonal domain (Flook, 2011).

There are fatal consequences that could be formed based on the accumulation of MNE over the past years such as suicide (Sinha et al., 2008). The life events are various and could be those ones which occur to one of the family members (i.e. father's loss to his job) or ones that occur to the adolescent's friends (e.g., a death of a friend). Furthermore, by the exposure to MNE, adolescents may increase their association with deviant peers (Wills et al., 2011).

Recently, researchers have shifted their research to focus on the repercussions of negative life events (NLE) on social adaptation (Bodell et al., 2011; Lewis et al., 2012). Furthermore, the following studies found a connection between the NLE and interpersonal communication considering them as a source for psychological stress affecting young people's social adaptation (Abu Taha & Aburezeq, 2018, Rabkin & Struening, 1976; Sarason et al., 1978). In addition, it is evidenced that NLE will create anger, anxiety, and depression, and also behavior adaption problems (Buckley et al., 2004; Vangelisti et al., 2005).

2. Literature Review of Related Instruments

2.1. The Chronological Review of the Previous Instruments

Until the eighties of the last century, scholars had been interested in defining the major (negative or positive) events in persons' life (i.e. death, marriage, accidents, and etc.). This methodology changed when Lazarus and some fellows started to concentrate on the everyday hassles. They considered them better predictors to examine the negative mental and somatic consequences (Kanner et al., 1981). It is thought that daily events capture much of the turmoil associated with major life events. However, they also measure the more dull characteristics of daily life (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In addition, the Kanner hassle scale asks subject's to rate the severity of the hassle, while the uplift version asks subject's to rate frequency. In our study, we cannot use frequency for each item as there are items that could not be frequented such as the death of a parent.

Coddingtons Life Events Questionnaire by (Coddington, 1972), consisted of 72 items to assesses the experiences of various life events (i.e. the death of a parent, breaking a relation with a boyfriend/girlfriend, failure in school, getting married, jail sentence of a parent, mother's beginning to work and so on). This measurement mentioned the negative, positive and normal life events – all the life events. The respondents should respond to each item mentioning how many times they experience it (event of life). There were many adaptations to this measurement by (Bailey & Garralda, 1990; Coddington, 1972; Garrison et al., 1987).

The Inventory of Small Life Events (ISLE) by Zautra et al. (1986) was constructed to cover events in major areas of life (i.e. family, work, leisure, household, financial, health, illness, non-family relations, crime-criminal activity, education, religion, and transportation). However, this inventory was general and contained events rather than interpersonal.

Negative Interpersonal Life Events Questionnaire was developed by (Saxe & Abramson 1987 cited in Birgenheir et al., 2010). This questionnaire inquires about the negative interpersonal life events that occurred to individuals over the past 6 weeks. The questionnaire consisted of 66 items that focus on seven different life domains, precisely were specified to college students.

Interpersonal Negative Life Events Scale (INLES) was developed by (Liu et al., 1997) and included 19 items of interpersonal negative life events. Respondents to this scale were required to explain if they experienced such events. They had two main options; not happened, and in this case they should select the option "never", or if it happened, they should rate their evaluation to the experience based on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = not troubled to 5 = extremely distressed. Cronbachs alpha coefficient for the INLES was .77. This scale was adopted recently by Li et al., (2013) who investigated the characteristics of negative interpersonal life events among 210 Chinese college students. The results showed that the following events ranked as the top three: Having a weak social network, reducing or losing contact with good friends, and being nervous or silent with unfamiliar people.

Elwan (2001) devised a checklist for investigating the MNE among Palestinian children containing 13 very hard MNE that are just bound to the experience of killing, war, watching the arrest of others, hearing sounds of bombs, and watching scenes of killing. This study was implemented during the Palestinian Second Intifada (2000-2005). Therefore, the context of the study chose very serious MNE. There was no reference in these MNE to social or interpersonal MNE.

Kowal et al., (2007) created negative life events scale of 16 items. The researchers addressed this major question: Have any of these things been a worry for you or anyone else living in this house during the last year? The events of MNE contained the following (i.e. the prison of a family, discrimination, serious illness, serious accident, death of a family member, death of a close friend, the divorce or separation of parents, not able to get a job or lost a job, having a trouble with the police, having alcohol related problems, having drug related problems, experiencing abuse, experiencing violent crime, experiencing gambling problems, annoyed of the overcrowding at home, watching some acts of vandalism or hateful damage to property, seeing incidents of fights).

MNE were investigated among various peoples in different countries as a comparative study; it was found that Elklit and Petersen (2008) investigated MNE among adolescents in four countries (Denmark, Lithuania, Iceland, and The Faroe Islands). The study focused on the natural disasters happening in these countries.

Leist et al., (2010) created a list of positive and negative life events, which are also major and minor events. The response to the questionnaire was by asking the respondents to report each event's frequency. There were 31 negative life events contained (i.e. illness, exposure to an accident, or a surgical operation, experiencing periods of loneliness or anxiety). The other part of the list contained 15 positive life events (e.g., the birth of a baby or marriage). The respondents were asked to mark the events (positive or negative) they experienced and mentioned when that event occurred.

2.2. Commentary on the Previous Instruments and what Makes the MNIE-M Distinguished

Our measurement is different from the previous measurements on negative life events in several main aspects as follows.

1. We considered the issue of addressing the adolescents, regardless of their gender as we used neutral language to sexual orientation (e.g., girls/boys, parents, family members, classmates, teachers, and friends).
2. We did not make this measurement general; it was mainly distinguished for the inclusion of major negative events and interpersonal ones.
3. The items of the measurement were designed to measure the adolescents' interpersonal relationships; therefore, it included five factors concerning family members' relationships, classmates' relationships, teachers' relationships and friends' relationships. We excluded some interpersonal factors (i.e. spouse relationships, work relationships) as they are not related to adolescents' life.
4. The previous studies mentioned bad events or hassles together with major negative events. However, in our measurement all of the items were major negative events. No minor negative events or hassles were mentioned. Therefore, there was no need to ask the respondents to specify the severity of each item as all of them were severe.
5. The respondents were not asked to tell about the frequency of each event.
6. All of the studies showed that they use frequencies to indicate the participants' level of exposure to these events.

Consequently, this new measurement is an important tool to the field of education; it will specifically define the events negatively affect adolescents as deciding the prominent MNE in one's life makes it possible to understand the situation s/he lives in. Therefore, MNE could be addressed by the right social problem-solving skill. This measurement helps in understanding the context where they live and what they experience and consequently benefits school management and counselors to know how to deal with such incidents and how to serve adolescents' psychology, which is reflected in classroom settings (Wilson et al., 2011).

3. Methodology

3.1. The Major Negative Interpersonal Events Measurement (MNIE-M)

We tailored our measurement to investigate the major negative interpersonal events among adolescents by the means of listing the MNIE in type of items, and then calculating the frequencies of each event in the adolescents' life during the past six months. In addition, the items of MNIE were classified under factors forming the final version (i.e. family-related events, classmates-related events, student direct-related events, teachers-related events, and friends-related events). The 29 items were included under the five factors. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 were classified under family-related events. Items 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 were classified under classmates-related events. Items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 were classified under the student direct-related. Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 were classified under teachers-related events. Items 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 were classified under friends-related events. The respondents should choose (yes or no) to indicate their experiences to MNIE during the past six months. Based on the earlier investigations (e.g., Archea et al., 2007; Buri et al., 2018), they used a list of MNE to measure their occurrences in the life of the study participants during the past six months.

3.2 Translation and Back Translation of the measurement

The items of the measurement were originally collected and written in English. After making the final version of the measurement, we translated it into Arabic by a specialist translator to be distributed to Arab students – Palestinians. Then, we conducted back translation to make sure of the matching of translation between Arabic and English version.

3.3 Referee Validity

First of all, we collected the items of the measurement depending on the previous studies and related literature. After that, we made our preliminary measurement, and then it was distributed to a panel of specialists to decide about the accuracy of the items and the affiliation of the items to the factors. Finally, we made a measurement of 29 items. There was no need to calculate Cohen Kappa Coefficient as there is 100% agreement on the 29 items of the measurement by the referees. Consequently, the items that had disagreement were eliminated.

3.4 Participants

Forty nine adolescent students were drawn from the schools of KhanYounis City in Palestine. Their ages ranged; 12, 15 and 18 years old. They were requested to respond to the online questionnaire, which was sent to them by Google Forms. We used (gender, age, family composition, father's education, and mother's education) as socio-demographics variables. The following tables illustrate the distribution of the participants:

Table 1.

Participants' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	24	48.0
Female	25	50.0
Total	49	98.0

As shown, there were 24 males and 25 females. This indicated a good distribution for both genders.

Table 2.

Participant's Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
12 years old	14	28.0
15 years old	23	46.0
18 years old	12	24.0
Total	49	98.0

As shown, there was a good distribution to the participants' age; 14 participants were 12 years old, 23 participants were 15 years old, and 12 participants were 18 years old. We can say that there was a relatively good distribution to the participants' age.

Table 3.

Participants' Family Composition

Family composition	Frequency	Percent
Mother, father, and one child.	3	6.0
Mother, father, and more than one child.	45	90.0
Grandparents and grandsons only.	1	2.0
Total	49	98.0

As noticed from the table, the majority of respondents reported that their family was composed of (mother, father and more than one child). However, just one adolescent lived with his grandparents. Three lived with a family that has mother, father and one child.

Table 4.

Participants' Father Education

Father's education	Frequency	Percent
Elementary school	3	6.0
Preparatory school	19	38.0
Secondary School	20	40.0
University degree	6	12.0
Postgraduate degree	1	2.0
Total	49	98.0

The table showed that (40%) of the respondent had fathers whose education was secondary school. (38%) of the respondents' father education was preparatory school. Just (2.0%) adolescents reported that their father had a level of postgraduate degree, while (6.0%) of them reported that their father had university degree.

Table 5.

Participants' Mother Education

Mother's education	Frequency	Percent
Elementary School	3	6.0
Preparatory School	12	24.0
Secondary School	28	56.0
University degree	6	12.0
Total	49	98.0

The table reported that (56%) of the respondents' mothers' education was a secondary school. (24%) of the mothers had preparatory school. No adolescents reported that their mother had a level of postgraduate. (6.0%) mothers had elementary school, while (12.0%) had university degree.

4 Results

For validity, we used Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Structure Validity. For reliability, we used Cronbach's Alpha, Split Half Method, and KMO and Bartlett's Test

4.3 Validity of Internal consistency

Table 6.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient for each MNIE with its factor/group

o.	N	F	MNIE	Corr	ig	S
		actors		elation		
		of				
		MNIE				
1.		Family	My family member passed away.	.326 *	.05	0
2.			My family member experienced a physical assault.	.593 **	.01	0
3.			My family member moved out of my home.	.533 **	.01	0
4.			My parents separated.	.361 *	.05	0
5.			My family member had an accident.	.777 **	.01	0
6.			My family member had a serious illness.	.624 **	.01	0
7.			One of my parents was fired from his/her job.	.326 *	.05	0
8.		classmates	One of my classmates passed away.	.539 **	.01	0
9.			One of my classmates had a serious accident.	.805 **	.01	0
10.			One of my classmates had a serious illness.	.721 **	.01	0
11.			One of my classmates experienced a physical assault.	.751 **	.01	0
12.			One of my classmates was fired from our class.	.619 **	.01	0
13.		Student	I had a serious incident.	.585 **	.01	0
14.			I had a serious illness.	.513 **	.01	0
15.			I made a big problem with my friend (boy/girl).	.834 **	.01	0

16.		I had a bad problem with one of my parents.	.554 **	.01	0
17.		I had a bad argument with my teacher.	.319 *	.05	0
18.		Some of the people attacked me physically.	.802 **	.01	0
19.		I made a big problem with my classmate.	.829 **	.01	0
20.	Teachers	One of my teachers passed away.	.461 **	.01	0
21.		One of my teachers had an accident.	.403 **	.01	0
22.		One of my teachers had a serious illness.	.504 **	.01	0
23.		My best teacher left the school.	.417 **	.01	0
24.		One of my teachers experienced a physical assault.	.626 **	.01	0
25.		Friends	My friend (boy/girl) passed away.	.576 **	.01
26.	My friend (boy/girl) had a serious accident.		.782 **	.01	0
27.	My friend (boy/girl) had a serious illness.		.780 **	.01	0
28.	My friend (boy/girl) experienced a physical assault.		.818 **	.01	0
29.	My friend (boy/girl) was fired from the school.		.821 **	.01	0

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table (6) shows that all of the items of MNIE were related to the factors/groups that they affiliated to. It meant that the measurement had strong internal insistency.

4.4 Structure Validity

Table 7.

<i>Pearson Correlation Coefficient for each factor with the whole</i>		
Factor	Correlation	Sig
Family members	.824**	0.01
Classmates	.885**	0.01
Student himself/herself	.849**	0.01
Teacher	.385**	0.01
Friends	.910**	0.01

Table (7) showed that all of the factors/groups revealed high correlation coefficient. Just the factor of teacher showed less correlation, but it is still acceptable.

4.5 The measurement Reliability

Table 8.*Cronbach's Alpha for the whole Measurement*

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.898	29

The table showed that the overall reliability of the measurements was (.898), which meant a very high reliability.

Table 9.*Cronbach's Alpha for each factor/group of the Measurement*

	Item-Total Statistics			
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Family-Members	82.8980	144.052	.779	.770
Classmates	86.7551	141.147	.854	.760
Student himself/herself	83.2041	131.249	.855	.740
Teacher	85.4490	168.003	.323	.825
Friends	86.7143	136.167	.881	.748
MNEQ_All	47.2245	44.178	1.000	.860

The table above displayed that the Cronbach's alpha for each factor was high.

Table 10.*Cronbach's Alpha for each item of the Measurement*

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale	Scale	Correc	Cronb
	Mean if Item	Variance	ted	ach's
	Deleted	if Item	Item-	Alpha
		Deleted	Total	Item
			Correlation	Deleted
M NEQ1	45.39	44.242	-.041	.902
M NEQ2	45.84	39.556	.707	.889
M NEQ3	45.65	41.815	.327	.897
M NEQ4	45.37	42.571	.321	.897
M NEQ5	45.84	39.473	.721	.889
M NEQ6	45.55	41.961	.325	.897
M NEQ7	45.39	43.367	.136	.899
M NEQ8	45.37	42.529	.330	.896
M NEQ9	45.71	39.583	.683	.889
M NEQ10	45.63	40.612	.524	.893
M NEQ11	45.84	39.223	.764	.888
M NEQ12	45.88	40.943	.488	.894
M NEQ13	45.55	41.419	.416	.895
M NEQ14	45.41	41.747	.451	.894
M NEQ15	45.84	39.348	.743	.888
M NEQ16	45.51	41.255	.463	.894
M NEQ17	45.47	43.254	.129	.900

M NEQ18	45.82	39.320	.740	.888
M NEQ19	45.73	39.491	.698	.889
M NEQ20	45.47	46.004	-.342	.908
M NEQ21	45.31	43.675	.117	.899
M NEQ22	45.37	43.154	.193	.898
M NEQ23	45.57	42.250	.271	.898
M NEQ24	45.41	41.788	.442	.895
M NEQ25	45.41	41.747	.451	.894
M NEQ26	45.67	39.474	.705	.889
M NEQ27	45.63	40.237	.586	.892
M NEQ28	45.82	39.111	.776	.887
M NEQ29	45.86	39.542	.718	.889

This is a very important table as it showed that all of the measurement items were highly reliable; having a value that was above .88 for the entire items.

Table 11.

The Reliability Statistics by Split Half Method

Cronbach's Alpha	Par	Value	.861
	t 1	N of	15 ^a
		Items	
	Par	Value	.847
	t 2	N of	14 ^b
		Items	
	Total	N of	29
	Items		
Correlation Between Forms			.534
Spearman-Brown	Equal Length		.696
Coefficient	Unequal		.696
	Length		
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.693
a. The items are: MNEQ1, MNEQ3, MNEQ5, MNEQ7, MNEQ9, MNEQ11, MNEQ13, MNEQ15, MNEQ17, MNEQ19, MNEQ21, MNEQ23, MNEQ25, MNEQ27, MNEQ29.			
b. The items are: MNEQ29, MNEQ2, MNEQ4, MNEQ6, MNEQ8, MNEQ10, MNEQ12, MNEQ14, MNEQ16, MNEQ18, MNEQ20, MNEQ22, MNEQ24, MNEQ26, MNEQ28.			

As shown by the split half method, the first part of the measurement got a value of (.861), while the second part got a value of (.847), which meant a high validity.

Table 12.

The KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for the Measurement

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.599
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Square	Chi-	1146.590
	df		406
	Sig.		.000

The table showed that the KMO result was .599, which was relatively good result. It is known that above .6 in KMO is acceptable.

5 Discussion

The MNIE-M was found reliable and valid based on the results that were shown above; thus, it meant it was valid to be adopted by other future studies. This new measurement – the MNIE-M, focused on one aspect of the MNE, which was the interpersonal aspect of the MNE that occurs in one's life. In addition, the MNIE-M concentrated on the major negative events among persons, not minor or hassles as mentioned by some of the previous studies.

This new measurement was considered as a leap in the field of instruments that investigated MNE or MNIE. As mentioned, the previous studies were relatively old as the last one that was reviewed had been developed in 2010, some in 2008 and other in 2007. In addition, the majority of them were developed before 2000. Therefore, the new measurement will be modern and specific one in the field of interpersonal major events. This study offered a reliable translation, in Arabic, for the MNIE-M; therefore, it helps the researchers in the Arab countries to adopt it in their studies.

6 Conclusion

The study mainly aimed to develop a measurement for examining the major negative interpersonal events among persons, and then to investigate the psychometric properties of a newly developed measurement. The new measurement came as a response to the paucity of measurements/scales/inventories/questionnaires on major negative interpersonal events. The 29 events of the measurement were collected from the previous studies to be distributed under five factors of the measurement as follows: Family-related events, classmates-related events, student direct-related events, teachers-related events, and friends-related events. In the measurement, we only concentrated on mentioning the events that are interpersonal and major. This differs from the previous studies.

The new MNIE-M was administered to a sample of 49 adolescents whose ages (12, 15, and 18) years old. This also strengthened the purpose of the MNIE-M to be very suitable for adolescents as the ages were carefully selected to be at the beginning of the age of adolescence (12 years old), then the middle of the adolescence (15 years old), and finally (18 years old). The other factors that made the MNIE-M proper to be implemented that all of the psychometric properties were high; Pearson Correlation Coefficient was high in all of the items, Structure Validity showed high values in each factor. Cronbach's alpha was (.898), a very high value. Split Half Method revealed (.861) for the first part and (.847) for the second part. KMO and Bartlett's Test was .599 - an acceptable value.

To sum up, the MNIE-M was reported to be valid to be used, after checking the psychometric properties, in the field of MNE, especially, the MNIE among adolescents.

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Appendix (1)

The Major Negative Interpersonal Events Measurement (MNIE-M) for Adolescents

r.	Item	During the last 6 months	
.	My family member passed away.	es	o
.	My family member experienced a physical assault or attack.	es	o
.	My family member moved out of my home.	es	o
.	My parents separated.	es	o
.	My family member had an accident.	es	o
.	My family member had a serious illness.	es	o
.	One of my parents was fired from his/her job.	es	o
.	One of my classmates passed away.	es	o
.	One of my classmates had a serious accident.	es	o
0.	One of my classmates had a serious illness.	es	o
1.	One of my classmates experienced a physical assault or attack.	es	o
2.	One of my classmates was fired from our class.	es	o
3.	I had a serious incident.	es	o
4.	I had a serious illness.	es	o

5.	I made a big problem with my friend (boy/girl).	es	0
6.	I had a bad problem with one of my parents.	es	0
7.	I had a bad argument with my teacher.	es	0
8.	Some of the people attacked me physically.	es	0
9.	I made a big problem with my classmate.	es	0
0.	One of my teachers passed away.	es	0
1.	One of my teachers had an accident.	es	0
2.	One of my teachers had a serious illness.	es	0
3.	My best teacher left the school.	es	0
4.	One of my teachers experienced a physical assault or attack.	es	0
5.	My friend (boy/girl) passed away.	es	0
6.	My friend (boy/girl) had a serious accident.	es	0
7.	My friend (boy/girl) had a serious illness.	es	0
8.	My friend (boy/girl) experienced a physical assault or attack.	es	0
9.	My friend (boy/girl) was fired from our class.	es	0

Appendix (2)

The Arabic Translation for the Major Negative Interpersonal Events Measurement for Adolescents

الرقم	البند	حدث آخر 6 شهور
		لا نعم
1.	توفى أحد أفراد عائلتي.	لا نعم
2.	تعرض أحد أفراد عائلتي لاعتداء جسدي.	لا نعم
3.	ترك أحد أفراد عائلتي البيت.	لا نعم

لا	نعم	4. انفصل والداي عن بعضهما البعض.
لا	نعم	5. تعرض أحد أفراد عائلتي لحادث.
لا	نعم	6. أصيب أحد أفراد عائلتي بمرض خطير.
لا	نعم	7. تم طرد أحد والداي من العمل.
لا	نعم	8. توفي أحد زملائي في الفصل.
لا	نعم	9. تعرض أحد زملائي في الفصل لحادث خطير.
لا	نعم	10. أصيب أحد زملائي في الفصل بمرض خطير.
لا	نعم	11. تعرض أحد زملائي في الفصل لاعتداء جسدي.
لا	نعم	12. تم طرد أحد زملائي في الدراسة من الفصل.
لا	نعم	13. تعرضت لحادث خطير.
لا	نعم	14. أصبت بمرض خطير.
لا	نعم	15. حدث بيني وبين صديقي/تي مشكلة كبيرة.
لا	نعم	16. حدث بيني وبين أحد والداي مشكلة كبيرة.
لا	نعم	17. حدث بيني وبين معلمي جدال سلبي.
لا	نعم	18. تعرضت للاعتداء الجسدي من قبل بعض الأشخاص.
لا	نعم	19. حدث بيني وبين زميلي في الفصل مشكلة كبيرة.
لا	نعم	20. توفي أحد معلميني.
لا	نعم	21. تعرض أحد معلميني لحادث.
لا	نعم	22. أصيب أحد معلميني بمرض خطير.
لا	نعم	23. ترك أفضل معلم عندي المدرسة.
لا	نعم	24. تعرض أحد معلميني لاعتداء جسدي.
لا	نعم	25. توفي أحد أصدقائي/صديقاتي.
لا	نعم	26. تعرض أحد أصدقائي/صديقاتي لحادث خطير.
لا	نعم	27. أصيب أحد أصدقائي/صديقاتي بمرض خطير.
لا	نعم	28. تعرض أحد أصدقائي/صديقاتي لاعتداء جسدي.
لا	نعم	29. تم فصل أحد أصدقائي/صديقاتي من المدرسة.

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Abstract

Digital storytelling (henceforward DST) refers to the idea of mixing the traditional art of storytelling with a variety of technological and digital devices. It is one of the most effective teaching and learning techniques used by teachers to promote social-emotional learning atmosphere. The proponents of DST believe that this technique can enhance students' engagement, achievement and motivation. In this respect, this instructional innovation has revolutionized the traditional educational practices with its crucial role in developing learners' competencies, especially emotional intelligence (henceforward EI). This research paper investigates the effectiveness of using digital storytelling, in the department of English language at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University in Mostaganem, Algeria. It also examines the effects of this innovative technique on developing English as foreign language (henceforward EFL) learners' emotional intelligence. We employed a mixed methods design to cover the principal elements and queries of the research. We conducted an experiment that lasted for four weeks, a classroom observation and an emotional intelligence test for learners. The target population consisted of 44 third year bachelor students. They belonged to group one and group five at the University of Mostaganem. They were randomly selected to test the effectiveness of digital storytelling in developing their emotional intelligence. The results revealed a significant development of learners' emotional intelligence due to the DST project.

Keywords: Digital storytelling, emotional intelligence, social-emotional learning.

1. Introduction

Over the past few years, many practitioners and active teachers around the world have attempted to apply in their educational process new teaching and learning techniques using information and communication technologies (henceforward ICTs). The latter has dramatically transformed the usual educational norms, shifting from traditional to technology-based education. Digital storytelling (henceforward DST) is one new technique used in education to promote learning. It is widely known as an entertaining and powerful pedagogical tool that can bring about several benefits for learning and teaching that engages both teachers and learners (Incikabi, 2015; Walters L.M., Green, Walters T.N., & Wang, 2015). Likewise, digital storytelling could provide a functioning social and emotional learning (henceforward SEL) atmosphere that has implications in enhancing students' learning. As digital storytelling is facilitated through the use of multiple digital tools and multimedia, it brings together an amalgamation of script, music, pictures and audio narration that allows learners to present their

collected information through the medium of technology. To be more specific, in the Algerian context, the fashion of digital storytelling in education was not recognized by most teachers and learners; hence, few of them are familiar with this trend that has prevailed in the educational environments.

This study is motivated by the current gaps that exist between the skills students learn at university and the skills they need to operate successfully in the 21st century. In that, traditional learning falls short of providing them with the competencies and knowledge they need outside the classroom. Thence, digital technologies could transform the way people learn and the nature of work and social-emotional relationships. In particular, emotional intelligence (henceforward EI), decision-making, information sharing, innovation, creativity, collaboration are all of a great value in the 21st century, but traditional methods and approaches do not provide learners with these skills (Darling-Hammond, et al. 2008). Moreover, DST is a new educational tool that could assist learners in honing the skills required for effective operation in contemporary society (Robin, 2008).

A need for change is justified as teachers have to adopt new ways of teaching to help their students develop various competencies. Hence, this study investigates the effects of implementing digital storytelling in English as a foreign language (henceforward EFL) context in higher education, and the extent to which it helps students develop their emotional intelligence. This research work also aims at raising teachers' and learners' awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence and instilling the culture of digital storytelling. Therefore, the main issue raised in this study is as follows:

- Can digital storytelling assist EFL students in developing their emotional intelligence competencies?

Reflecting on the question above, we hypothesized that DST could be a good asset for EFL students as it promotes social and emotional learning atmosphere through providing a safe and comfortable environment, as well as encouraging interaction and collaboration between learners. It may also help learners to develop and strengthen their emotional intelligence competencies.

2. Literature Review

The enormous developments of digital technologies have changed the art of storytelling, giving birth to a movement called digital storytelling. As digital media has increasingly become a part of human life with its ever-changing format of images, applications, software, and hardware, it also allows us to change the way we tell stories in our global world.

The beginnings of the use of digital storytelling in education were a result of Lambert's and Ashley's creation of the Center for Digital Storytelling (henceforward CDS) in 1996. As CDS collaborated with various schools and universities to implement digital storytelling projects, the use of DST in education spread (Banaszewski, 2005). Moreover, with the publication of Lambert's book; *Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Community* (2002) and his development of the seven elements of digital storytelling, teachers gained further awareness of this educational technique and how it can be used in the classroom to promote the development of various skills. In this perspective, digital storytelling has been generally described as the process of commingling and weaving one's stories with digital sources such as music, audio, and text (Alrutz, 2014).

Using digital storytelling in the educational context has become increasingly common in higher education and a number of studies have been conducted to showcase the advantages of DST. For example, a quasi-experimental study was conducted in the EFL context to investigate the effects of digital storytelling on 6-year-old Spanish learners' listening comprehension. The results demonstrated the enhancement of the experimental group students' listening skills including an improvement in their foreign language 'linguistic structure' and ability to comprehend 'vocabulary', 'sound patterns', 'and prosody of the foreign language' (Verdugo & Belmonte, 2007, p.89).

Furthermore, Among the other proven benefits of digital storytelling is that it increases 21st century learners' level of attention in addition to stimulating their curiosity and interest (Robin, 2006). Students were found to develop a cooperative spirit as a result of group work, criticizing, and assessing their own and their peers' digital stories. It also "provides value in enhancing the student experience through personal ownership and accomplishment" (Robin, 2006, p.712).

From another angle, teachers are also capitalizing on the benefits of digital storytelling by making and exhibiting/presenting their own digital stories in their classes (Robin, 2006). Robin (2006) also noted that teacher-centred digital stories are substantially capable of assisting students to better understand the lesson's "abstract or conceptual content" in addition to becoming more engaged in the learning process (p.711).

The creation of digital narratives is a collaborative activity that enables social learning, which further enhances and stimulates emotional intelligence. For example, Frenzel, Müller & Sottong (2004) argue that "storytelling-based learning promotes knowledge as well as social and emotional intelligence" (as cited in Felicia, 2011, p.986). In this venture, a study that was carried out by Pieterse and Quilling (2011) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa found that making and watching digital stories helped students change their preconceived ideas about others. Additionally, it has provided them with a positive emotional experience and development. Participants were also able to voice their leadership thoughts and make them heard by their adult counterparts as well their parents (Pieterse and Quilling, 2011). From a similar angle, a collaborative learning atmosphere would in itself be sufficient in boosting learners' EI through group discussions and work.

Moreover, there is a compelling relationship between emotional intelligence and individuals' ability to effectively function and work with other people as part of a team (Cox, 2011). In this regard, Slater (2005) emphasizes the fact that since "the key components of the collaborative process are inherently emotional in nature, leaders who are successful in developing collaborative work cultures may be those who are able to manage, rather than deny, their emotional selves" (Slater, 2005, p. 330 as cited in Cox, 2011, p.443).

To conclude, the irrevocable relationship between digital storytelling and emotional intelligence has not been widely researched, especially in the Algerian educational context. Emotions have been corroborated to be crucial in the process of learning and teaching. In this regard, DST may assist learners in developing their EI and validating their emotions as it gives them voice and space. DST can "provide closure to deeply emotional issues in ... [students] lives" (Robin & Pierson 2005, p.713) although "[t]he emotional potential of digital storytelling, however, is still largely untapped" (Miller, 2008, p.19).

3. Methodology

We used a mixed methods design to gather the data needed for the validation of our research work. The research tools were an Emotional Intelligence Test to measure students' EI and a classroom observation in order to qualitatively gauge learners' EI development and provide a more in-depth analysis. We observed them in natural settings with their learning process during the oral expression sessions.

3.3 Context

We carried out the research study at Abdelhamid IBn Badis University, English language department, Mostaganem, Algeria. This setting was chosen because it fitted the requirements of our experiment such as the availability of rooms equipped with projectors.

3.4 Participants

The target population, for this study, consists of 44 third year bachelor students. They belong to group one and group five at the University of Mostaganem. Their ages are between 18 and 24 years old. They are randomly selected to scrutinize and investigate the effectiveness of DST in developing their emotional intelligence.

3.5 Procedures

The experiment lasted for four weeks with third year bachelor students, specifically, group one and five in the department of English language, at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. Our experimentation was based on various lessons taken mostly from the Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling website in which learners were introduced to DST. Its process was based on Dávid Bán's and Balázs Nagy's (2016) model "The Digital Storytelling Workshop Step by Step" which is further modified to suit the demands of our context. The experiment took place every Wednesday from 9.30 till 11.00 with group one and from 11.00 till 12.30 with group five for four weeks.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments used in this research are an experiment conducted at different stages, a classroom observation and an EI test for learners in which it was taken in a modified fashion from Anapys Development model 2013.

4. Results

The following section presents the data collected in the observation sessions as well as students' answers on the emotional intelligence test.

4.3 The Effects of Digital Storytelling on Learners' Emotional Intelligence

This section discusses the analysis of the data collected from learners' responses on the emotional intelligence test and via classroom observation to gauge their level of EI before and after the experiment. The classroom observation and emotional intelligence test are analyzed and illustrated as follows:

4.1.1. Classroom Observation

a- Pre-Experiment Observation

We attended four sessions with third-year bachelor students (group 1 and 5) to collect information about their emotional intelligence quotient and to see whether it is possible to realize the experiment with them.

We observed that learners' self-awareness and self-regulation were low; most of them could not regulate their emotions, especially when responding to the teacher's comments or working in groups. They also demonstrated lack of confidence and high anxiety. Students' undesirable reaction to criticism and feedback was also detected. Additionally, we deduced that learners' motivation was low as volunteering, risk-taking, engagement and participation were rarely observed, for example, when the lecturer asked them to volunteer and prepare a story for the coming week or be the first to present.

In addition, when the lecturer asked students to give their points of view on the presentations or ideas of their colleagues, they did not demonstrate empathy. They did not provide constructive feedback, and sometimes their answers showed that they were not actively listening. When one female student expressed a personal opinion regarding the negative effects of polygamy and spinsterhood, she was faced with a high lack of empathy, negative opinions and comments from her colleagues. Rather than dealing analytically with facts, they addressed the topic from a subjective point of view. In addition, they did not take turns when speaking or respect conversation etiquettes. The lecturer had to intervene to calm down the situation.

Besides, we examined social skills through collaborative work. For instance, in the second session, the teacher asked her learners to work as a group and each one should re-tell the story that his/her classmate wants to write in the future, i.e. each student should present the story of his/her classmate. Students at this stage were discussing the ways stories will be told and performed. Some students said "you write in details which story you want to write, and I do the same and when you finish give it to me to read it, and I will try to paraphrase it, and you should do the same" others said, "I talk about mine, you talk about yours". Instead of listening to and communicating with each other, each learner was working individually. From these comments, we could infer that their social skills and ability to communicate with each other, were highly low and weak.

Additionally, the teacher could not control the classroom as students' side conversations dominated oral expression sessions. She usually used her coercive power by warning and punishing students in order to make them listen to each other and follow her instructions. After the last observational session, students were handed an EI questionnaire in order to collect quantitative data that would either support or disprove our preliminary findings.

b- During-Experiment Observation

We observed learners when working as a group in the classroom during the story circle sessions in order to trace the developmental journey that students were going through as they became aware of emotional intelligence and its significance.

➤ **Session One**

Learners showed a massive interest in emotional intelligence after the EI test they took in the pre-experiment stage. Many of them admitted their prior lack of awareness of this type of intelligence, but once they took it, they started re-considering their emotional intelligence level. After they have watched our digital story, they started reflecting on the situation described in the given story, empathetically and positively. They attempted to see the problem elucidated in the digital narrative from the Narrator's and the Character's perspectives and points of view. They started to describe their ability to be self-aware and control their emotions as if they were

the storyteller. When illustrating the idea of creating a digital story, we observed an increased motivation in the classroom and on the Facebook Group about the process of realizing this project. Unlike the pre-experiment sessions where students refused communicating with us, many of them took the risk of developing their social skills and started sharing their fears and anxieties with others. One of the learners said: “We could share our fears and experiences with everyone in the classroom, thanks to this story, but I think creating our own story will be highly beneficial”. In conclusion, learners elucidated a willingness to develop their emotional intelligence and felt that the DST process would be helpful.

➤ **Session Two**

During the second session, we observed an enhancement in learners’ EI. We can say that learners moved from being in the lowest level of EI to a moderate state. Learners started appreciating and respecting each other’s contributions wherein they became active listeners. Learners revealed the topics of their stories varying from educative, instructional, to historical. They produced a personal story with various subjects in groups, such as: “Over Weight”, “Facing Fears”, “Trust God”, “Jerusalem”, “Social Anxiety”, “Being Born”, “Keep Faith”, “The Lost luggage”, “The Fated Chance of Friendship”, “The Pursuit of Happiness”, “Mulan”, “Life Experiences”, “Time Is Remedy”, “The Aged Mother”, “Ratatouille”, “The Giving Tree”. The students commented on and asked questions about the stories in the story circle sessions. Their reactions to the feedback was not negative as they tried to benefit from their classmates’ comments. For instance, when the first group talked about their story “Social Anxiety” and shared their narrative, prompt feedback was given. One student said, “I believe that your story is well-structured, but I think that you need some examples to illustrate more”. Another student declared “I find the topic a little bit general, and I think you should either add a definition at the beginning of the story or do something to make it clearer and attractive”.

The group accepted these pieces of advice wholeheartedly and integrated the proposed changes into their digital stories. In other words, there were less negative reactions to criticism and greater comfort with the uncertainty of the teacher or their classmates. For example, when the teacher pointed out that the story of “Mulan” should be shortened to draw their classmates’ attention to the message of their digital story, they accepted the teacher’s comments and modified their story. Some students stood up and asked for feedback to create a treasured digital story. Besides, students’ motivation has noticeably increased, in which it was middling and almost reaching accepted levels of enhancement. In a similar angle, learners became more aware of other emotions, and they consummately progressed towards achieving higher levels of empathy. Although their social skills were developing slowly, there was a clear shift in terms of valuing their friends’ efforts.

➤ **Session Three**

Differing levels of digital literacy did not present an issue as everyone was able to work collaboratively with others. Although our context has many limitations, we could pursue our aim and could realize the project in which learners showed their willingness to bring their laptops and work in the classroom. Eventually, this session was devoted to digital storytelling creation in the class, where learners sat in groups and helped each other. Though many obstacles appeared at the beginning of the session, collaboration and the emotional intelligence spirit made it special for everyone. Their competencies were gradually improving. Self-awareness and self-regulation were detected as students exhibited high control of their

emotions when they moved to different classes in addition to some learners who were struggling with digital programs. We observed accurate self-assessment as they could assess their digital skills and EI development honestly and self-confidently. Despite the issues that could arise with group work, we noticed that many learners tried to manage and control their negative emotions and stress by empathizing with and learning from their classmates instead of providing unconstructive feedback. Learners become more empathetic as they tried to help each other while respecting differences in level of digital literacy. There was also much evidence of student motivation and engagement in their actions, happy faces, and the large number of questions they asked whether related to their specific topics or not. In the same vein, people's skills unexpectedly flourished during this class; their motivation led them to participation and risk-taking. Generally, learners transformed in a constructive way as they made attempts to behave in a more emotionally intelligent way.

➤ **Session Four**

The last session was devoted mostly to the presentation of the digital stories with feedback provided by peers. In doing so, learners appeared to be more aware of their EI and considerate in the wording of their feedback and actions. Throughout this session, we could detect that learners appeared to possess self-awareness, which was evident in their high self-confidence, self-esteem, and ability to word their feelings in front of their classmates which dominated the oral expression sessions. Many students could monitor their negative emotions when confronting and presenting their digital stories in front of others, in which self-confidence was adopted by many of them; this trait has characterized many students' presentations and general attitudes. In a similar vein, they showed improved self-regulation, especially when receiving comments and critiques on their answers, performances and presentations of digital stories.

Furthermore, it seems that technology motivates learners more than the traditional way of learning and teaching. Additionally, they seemed more excited and intrinsically motivated, participating and taking risks. Furthermore, their empathy altered as well in which they became more careful with their comments and prejudices. They tried to understand their mates and change their judgemental glasses into empathetic ones. In a similar aspect, social skills improved as learners could stand on the stage and talk to their classmates. Learners did not ridicule others' mistakes, but they supported each other. Among other matters we observed was that while some students were sitting alone before the experiment, they moved to sit with others during the experiment. In other words, DST project allowed them to broaden their social network. The participants were also able to communicate and work collaboratively with some guest classmates from the other group as well as some Master's students. Nevertheless, despite all these improvements, we would argue that although the DST project helped students shift their focus towards the importance of emotional intelligence, they still need more time, practice and knowledge about the different ways they can enhance their Emotional Intelligence.

4.1.2. Emotional Intelligence Test

In addition to the observation, we designed an EI test to equip our findings with credibility and reliability. At this stage, 44 students participated in answering the EI test, and the responses were analysed quantitatively from very low to very high emotional intelligence. The analysis of the EI test enlightened and provided us with more credibility that was relevant to our observation outcomes. In this respect, we asked the respondents to be honest since this test is of high importance and value.

a. *Analysis of the Pre-experiment Emotional Intelligence Test*

The pre-experiment test aimed at gauging learners' EI before the integration of digital storytelling in the classroom. The following figure further discloses the findings of the pre-experiment emotional intelligence test:

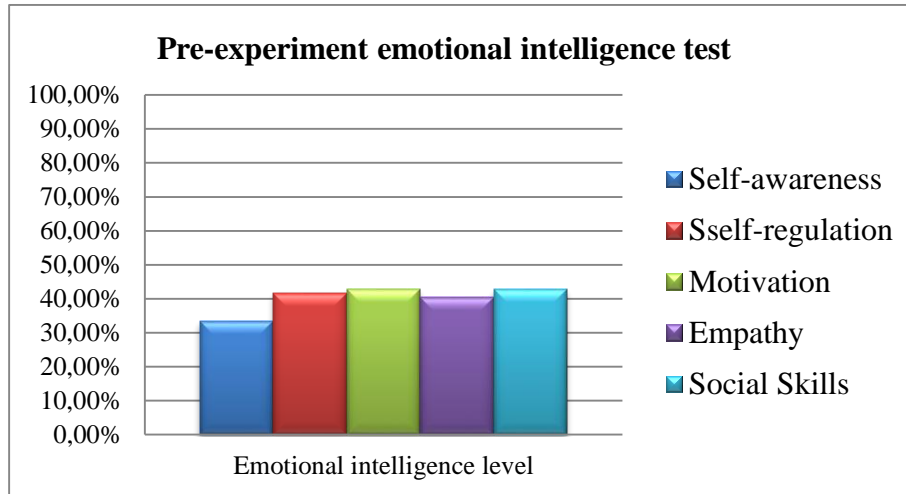


Figure 1. Pre-experiment Emotional Intelligence Test

Figure 1 shows varying rates of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. There are low to moderate rates on all different components of EI. In particular, students' self-awareness is low with a percentage of 33.33%. Their self-regulation competency level is also low, and amelioration should be considered with a rate of 41.67%.

As motivation fluctuates between low and moderate levels of EI with a percentage of 42.83%, it is also necessary to increase this EI component. Learners' empathy is poor and requires further development with a percentage of 40.5%. Finally, students lack social skills as they fluctuate between low and moderate levels of EI with a percentage of 42.67%.

b. *Analysis of the Post-Experiment Emotional Intelligence Test*

The post-experiment test aimed to measure the emotional intelligence of learners after incorporating digital storytelling in the classroom. The following figure shows the results of this test:

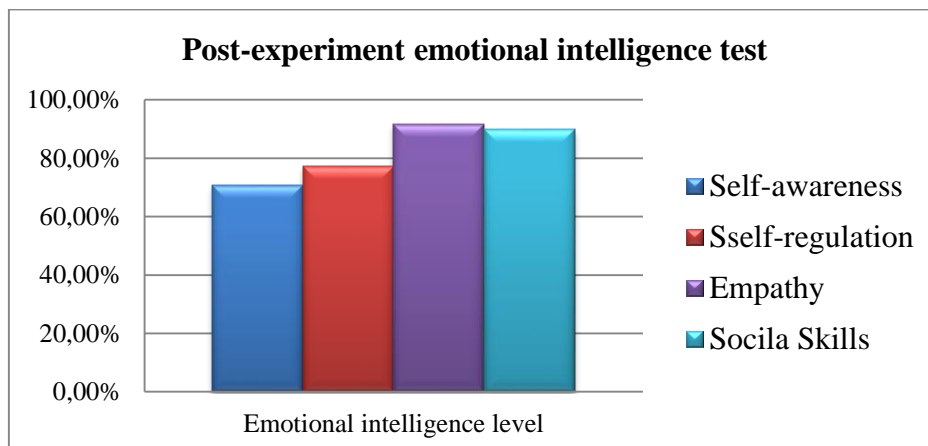


Figure 2. Post-experiment Emotional Intelligence Test

The above figure presents the results of the post-experiment emotional intelligence test. First, their self-awareness becomes at a high percentage of 70.83%. In parallel, their self-regulation competency is developing after the experiment, but it still needs further attention with a rate of 77.33%. In keeping with this perspective, students' motivation is increasing in which a shift towards high intrinsic motivation is recognised with a percentage of 86.83%. Regarding empathy, consummate resettlement of this competency is also noticed with a high rate of 91.67%. In a parallel fashion, social skills are enhancing, and a move towards perfection is observed with a percentage of 89.83%.

5. Discussion

The findings of the pre-experiment EI test indicated that the learners participating in the study needed to work to develop this competency, as the results of their EI test either fluctuated greatly or revealed a number of gaps. Furthermore, through classroom observation, we could figure out that learners lacked many competencies such as social skills and empathy. This lack of social skills and empathy caused problems for the teacher who sometimes used threats and wielded her coercive power to make them respect her and others. Before the experiment, the culture of emotional intelligence was not incorporated in the classroom as students demonstrated unawareness of this area of competency through portraying irresponsible attitudes towards the teacher and their classmates.

The learning atmosphere transformed greatly when students heard that we are going to use digital tools in the classroom. During the story circle sessions, learners became more enthusiastic, started admiring what they were doing in oral expression sessions, they asked questions, shared personal stories happy and sad, talked about the history of Algeria, moral lessons, etc. Several students portrayed an urge and an impetus towards developing their EI and creating their digital stories. By the end of the workshop, we observed a change in learners' emotional intelligence which was measured quantitatively through EI test in which the results were distinct from the pre-experiment EI test.

It was evident that digital storytelling affected learner EI in several ways. Initially, by comparing how the students were before the integration of this innovative technique and after the realization of the project, we confirm that DST is beneficial for students' EI development. In the pre-experiment phase, students were neither sure of themselves nor aware of their emotions and how they affect their actions. They were unable to cope with their feelings which were often embodied in their angry attitudes towards feedback. They could not see the world from other's point of view. These negative dispositions were almost eliminated during the experiment as they developed a greater awareness of EI, and its importance and they learned how to give constructive criticism and feedback. Also, they could display EI behaviour that allowed them to share and receive experiences and emotions. Positive attitudes are clarified, and willingness to accept the emotions, opinions and comments of others has become a defining characteristic of their reactions.

Finally, we can say that digital storytelling can help learners develop their EI, specifically when using this technique in collaborative groups. In better words, DST process including story circle, writing the narrative, the multiple choices that DST offers, collaboratively collecting digital tools, all of these can assist learners in developing and improving their emotional intelligence competencies.

In conclusion, assessing and measuring learners' emotional intelligence is neither an easy task nor a stable one, i.e. we utilized a number of data collection tools to supply our hypotheses with reliable data.

6. Conclusion

In this study, we investigated the effectiveness of digital storytelling in developing students' emotional intelligence at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. We endeavoured to find a modern way to help today's generation develop their emotional intelligence. Achieving such an aim required the implementation of a carefully designed experiment coupled by/with classroom observation and the administration of an EI test as valid data collection instruments. Our results indicate that this new technology-based way of telling stories can assist learners in improving one of the most primordial competencies in the 21st century which is emotional intelligence.

To conclude, digital storytelling can consolidate and reinforce learners' EI as well as other 21st skills such as collaboration, digital literacy, creativity, etc. It also assists teachers in creating a classroom environment that is motivating and allows room for creativity and innovation. Accordingly, digital storytelling integration is warranted as the Algerian Universities mainly utilise rote-learning approaches to teaching without trying technology-based techniques such as DST.

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