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## THE PALIMPSESTIC TIME AND IDENTITY IN GRAHAM SWIFT'S *EVER AFTER*

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**Abstract:** *The essay analyses Graham Swift's Ever After and shows that the concepts of time and identity are fictional constructs which stand for a palimpsestic world presented as an eternal stage of past and present stories. Time and identity are revealed to us through symbols which stand for a palimpsestic world. They are reinvented and rewritten according to the narrator's vision.*

**Key words:** *identity, palimpsest, past, present, time, the world.*

### 1. Introduction

A postmodernist novel which evokes a palimpsestic world in symbols and which associates the Real with Fiction and with an illusion, Graham Swift's *Ever After* consists of 22 chapters focusing on the story of Bill Unwin, the narrator and the main character of the novel. He investigates his past, expressing his thoughts and evoking his memories in an attempt to highlight the importance of three themes: 1) the ever repeated pattern of past times to be recognized in the present stories and events; 2) identity as a palimpsest; 3) the world as a palimpsest on an eternal stage. The 22 chapters of the novel do not introduce a chronological story but just Bill Unwin's remembrances and his reinterpretation of the past from his perspective and cultural experience. Bill Unwin, a former academic and professor of English Literature, comes to write this novel following a big disillusion regarding his past life and identity. In the aftermath of a failed attempt to commit suicide, Bill Unwin wonders who he is, presenting us bits and pieces of his past, of his childhood remembrances. He admits that he has reinvented the past and its protagonists following his recovery from a desperate suicidal act. He refers to the past as to "a foreign country" (Swift 1992:243) and to his words as coming from "a dead man" (Swift 1992:3).

Analysing Graham Swift's concepts of time and identity in the novel *Ever After*, this essay focuses on the theoretical support offered by: 1) Mark Currie (1998:17) who develops the idea that "identity exists only as narrative"; 2) Linda Hutcheon (1988) who explores the concept of "historiographic metafiction" and shows that the past and identity are reconstructed in this type of postmodernist fiction; 3) Patricia Waugh (1996) who defines the concept of metafiction and emphasizes the role of metafictional strategies in postmodernist fiction writing. This essay shows that Graham Swift's *Ever After* illustrates and reinforces the above-mentioned theorists' ideas by introducing us to a recreated past time and to redefined identities, and by unveiling postmodernist metafictional strategies. Throughout the novel, the reader is invited to imagine the past as if he were an onlooker at the theatre. The 22 chapters look like scenes on a theatre stage frequently introduced by "I see", "I watch", "You have to picture this" (Swift 1992), suggesting to the reader that what he reads about past times and identities is nothing but pure fiction. Moreover, the frequent references to William

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the comparisons between William Shakespeare's fictional characters and Bill Unwin and his relatives suggest the idea that the world and time are palimpsestic and recreated on an eternal stage that the readers have to carefully analyse.

Fiction, poetry, diary fragments, letters and drama are mixed in the novel whose title, *Ever After*, is an allusion to the present past, to the eternal present of life events, plots and outcomes. The concept of life *ever after* evoked by Bill Unwin's narration suggests that the past is frequently revisited, reconstructed and lived again: "This is my second life, my reincarnation. Perhaps there is life and life again, always and for ever. Perhaps the world has been reinvented for me in its full potential. This is the Garden of Eden. And here comes Eve" (Swift 1992:88). Time becomes a palimpsest. Nothing is new but the story told by Bill Unwin in a unique manner. Everything loses life and energy but the words whose power to fictionalize the past and the world prevails over our limited, mortal nature. Bill Unwin's memories of his past happy life with his beloved wife whom he has just lost represent what he calls "happiness ever after" (Swift 1992:132). He admits that his novel "commemorates [...] happiness ever after" (Swift 1992:132). Moreover, the concept of *ever after* is an allusion to a palimpsestic present which is highly reminiscent of the past. Imbued with the memories of the past, the present becomes dissatisfying and devoid of creative energy and strength. The present just draws its energy from the past which is thoroughly investigated in Graham Swift's novel and associated with the symbols of the *clock* and the *Notebook*.

## 2. The Palimpsestic Time and Identity in Graham Swift's *Ever After*

In Graham Swift's *Ever After*, the concept of time is not only an abstract concept but also a human construct. It is a redefined and a reinterpreted time. Thus, the past, which is a haunting presence in the life and memories of Graham Swift's narrator, Bill Unwin, turns into his own story. He compares the present with the symbol of *plastic*, which stands for a dissatisfying creation associated with a low-quality material made by the human hand. Unable to accept the present, Bill Unwin returns to the past to investigate it and to understand what his real identity is and who his real father was. Having been told two different stories about his real father, Bill Unwin decides to find the truth by studying alleged historical documents. The first story about his real father comes from his childhood when colonel Unwin, whom Bill has known to have been his real father, commits suicide allegedly due to his wife's affair with Sam, Bill's future adoptive father. This story makes Bill Unwin consider himself a kind of Hamlet ready to take revenge against Polonius, associated with Sam, his mother's second husband. When his mother dies, his adoptive father tells him a different story claiming that colonel Unwin committed suicide after his wife had told him that Bill was not his real child. Examining and clarifying this issue, Bill discovers that he has never met his real father who was an engine driver and who died at war.

In his attempt to recreate the past and his own identity, Bill Unwin presents the world as an eternal stage where he can see his past life events and relatives dominated by the spirit of the fictional characters in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Most characters in Bill's story are compared with famous characters in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Redefining the theatre and poetry as "only mirrors for our lost, discredited souls" (Swift 1992:263), Bill compares the human beings with immortal figures wearing an "amoral mask" (Swift 1992:108). He associates himself, his dead beloved wife, his parents and friends with actors wearing the mask of the present on the pattern of the past. Bill Unwin is convinced that his dead beloved relatives and ancestors reflect the spirit of William Shakespeare's characters as he strongly believes that "the people go; the patterns remain" (Swift 1992:53). Moreover, Bill Unwin compares himself with Hamlet for his thirst for vengeance. He compares Sam, his adoptive father, with Claudius. He compares Ruth, his dead beloved wife and a famous actress, with

Ophelia. He also compares Ruth, who died from lung cancer because of too much smoking, with Cleopatra, whose role she had played on the stage: “And no one, [...] alluded to the fact that Cleopatra is a woman who, with serene and regal deliberateness, commits suicide” (Swift 1992:125). Bill Unwin admits that he used to play a difficult role on the stage of life. Furthermore, he seems to be playing that role on the stage of his own novel: “I had to play this scene. I understood how hard it is to act. The lines were so awful, so unconvincing” (Swift 1992:125). Having survived a desperate suicidal act and feeling that he has taken on a new identity, Bill Unwin claims that he is wearing a mask the same as an actor: “When I look in the mirror (especially these days), I see this incorrigible mask. I know it’s not me, but I’m stuck with it” (Swift 1992:128). His failed suicidal act and his tormenting inner pain make him question the old clichés that life goes on and that every Jack has his Jill. He argues against these clichés by making contrasting sentences: “Our wooing doth not end like an old play; Jack hath not Jill. It’s not the end of the world. It is the end of the world [...]. Life goes on. It doesn’t go on” (Swift 1992:131). According to Patricia Waugh (1996:139-140), this contrast of ideas is a metafictional strategy:

Metafiction, however, is more interested in the juxtaposition of contradictory words and phrases which foreground processes of linguistic selection, rather than the surrealistic juxtaposition of extremely disparate images and objects (Waugh 1996:140).

By these contrasting sentences, Bill Unwin suggests that nothing is new but palimpsestic and recreated by our minds the same as he recreates his past and identity in his vision and story. The past is nothing but fiction in Graham Swift’s novel. It is presented as visions introduced by the verb *see*, which is frequently repeated in order to allude to an eternal present time that incorporates all times. Bill Unwin frequently addresses his readers the invitation to imagine and recreate the past: “You have to picture the scene. You have to reconstruct the moment” (Swift 1992:197). He views his dead beloved relatives as if they were alive on a stage in front of him: “I see the two men in the little apiary at the far corner of the garden. I see Ruth pacing beside the tumbledown fence [...]. And now here is Matthew again, showing up with his face like the calm before a storm” (Swift 1992:196). The former “third-rate academic” (Swift 1992:123), Bill Unwin, who used to be his wife’s manager, presents his visions as possible stories of the past, admitting that we only read what he has invented. That is why he often uses the modal verbs *could* and *would*: “It was only the thought of the possibility. It could have been them, you see; it could have been Ruth and G – all along, not Ruth and me” (Swift 1992:123). Admitting that his account of the past does not present us the truth of the past, but only some fictional suppositions, Bill Unwin proves that he is the protagonist of what Linda Hutcheon (1988:105-123) calls “historiographic metafiction”, which “realizes that we are epistemologically limited in our ability to know the past, since we are both spectators of and actors in the historical process” (Hutcheon 1988:122). Bill Unwin is an instance of what Linda Hutcheon (1988:117) calls “an overtly controlling narrator” who fails to present the objective reality of the past. As Hutcheon remarks,

First of all, historiographic metafiction appears to privilege two modes of narration, both of which problematize the entire notion of subjectivity: multiple points of view [...] or an overtly controlling narrator [...]. In neither, however, do we find a subject confident of his/her ability to know the past with any certainty. This is not a transcending of history, but a problematized inscribing of subjectivity into history (Hutcheon 1988:117).

The difference between the Real and the Fictional disappears. Not only is the past fictional but so is Bill Unwin’s identity. The narrator focuses on the theme of the world as a palimpsest on an eternal stage showing that his identity and his ancestor Matthew’s identity wear the masks of other past identities. He claims that he is both Bill Unwin and Hamlet the



Dane: "I am who I am. I am Bill Unwin (there, I declare myself!). I am Hamlet the Dane" (Swift 1992:172). At certain moments, he still questions his identity: "Who am I? Who am I? A nobody. An heirless nonentity. What's more – a bastard" (Swift 1992:246). His identity is constructed in the process of his narration and it is nothing but a story to be further reinterpreted by the readers. This idea that someone's identity is revealed by his own story is supported by Mark Currie in his book *Postmodern Narrative Theory*, where he shows that identity "exists only as narrative" (Currie 1998:17). Bill Unwin associates the "fiction of his life" (Swift 1992:171) with a fact, which is nothing but his discourse and story. This idea confirms the postmodernist theory put forward by Linda Hutcheon (1988:149) who shows that "facts in historiography are discursive, already interpreted (granted meaning)".

The narrator's deeply held conviction that identity is our own creation and that other past identities are mirrored in the present characters' identities is reinforced by the story of Matthew Pearce whose *Notebooks* Bill Unwin quotes and analyses. Matthew Pearce, Bill's ancestor, is presented with a reconstructed identity according to the narrator's vision: "Let Matthew be my creation" (Swift 1992:100). By comparing Matthew with Hamlet, whom Bill also identifies with, we are shown that the patterns of the past identities can be seen in the present ones: "Matthew was just another disillusioned idealist, an over-reactive Hamlet type – couldn't take it that the world was real" (Swift 1992:226). Bill Unwin recreates Matthew as his alter ego. Thus, we can notice that their ideas and writing styles are similar. Both characters rediscover their real identity after having been struck by misfortunes which make them either try to commit suicide (Bill's case) or abandon their family to forget about everything (Matthew's case). Matthew's life is presented as an *ever after* experience lived by Bill Unwin. The narrator's phrase "I see him" (Swift 1992:101) suggests that the figure of Matthew belongs to the present even if Matthew is Bill's ancestor whom he has never met. Matthew's story is presented as a possible story the same as Bill's life story. That is why the narrator repeats the modal verbs *would*, *could*, *must*, and the adverb *perhaps*, throughout his account of the past. Nothing is presented as certain but only as possible and fictional: "From his father Matthew would have inherited the conscientiousness, the self-reliance [...]. But from his mother he would have inherited his simple, sanguine faith. Susan Pearce was perhaps not exceptionally God-fearing" (Swift 1992:105). Bill quotes long passages from Matthew's *Notebooks* whose writing style resembles his own as we can remark the same emphasis laid on the modal verb *would* and on rhetorical questions. Bill Unwin turns his novel into a narrative poem, inviting the readers to imagine Matthew's world wherefrom the present world draws its energy and essence. By comparing Matthew with an ichthyosaur, an ancient creature whose traces are haunting him, the narrator alludes to the idea that the present exhibits the patterns of the past, that one's present identity reveals the patterns of other past identities. Therefore, Bill Unwin suggests that Matthew's identity is palimpsestic, the same as his own.

Focusing on the similarities between Bill Unwin's life story and Matthew's story, we are suggested that identities are nothing but repeated patterns on the stage of life. We can see the same play with a different background and different actors. For instance, just as Bill feels happiness only when his beloved wife is alive, Matthew feels happiness when his beloved son, Felix, is alive. Both characters, Bill and Matthew, lose their happiness and hope when they are deprived of their beloved relatives. Moreover, just as Bill Unwin presents moments of his past life as if they were scenes on a theatre stage, using the first person singular, Matthew's *Notebooks*, quoted in Graham Swift's novel, introduce us to similar life scenes on a stage. Similar to the way in which Bill wants to do away with his life, trying to commit suicide after his beloved wife's death, Matthew leaves his wife and the other children after his beloved son, Felix, dies. The same as Bill, Matthew believes in the mind's capacity to reconstruct a new world, which is nothing but a palimpsestic world: "Is there not in our minds, no less than in physical nature, a power of regeneration and renewal? Are we not

lopped and smitten only so we will grow again” (Swift 1992:144). Just as Bill associates the Real and the Literary World with an illusion, Matthew associates the written Bible with “mere poetry, like the Rector’s Virgil” (Swift 1992:149) and life with fiction: “And they were, by his own description, the record of his life as a fiction: ‘the beginning of my make-belief’.” (Swift 1992:195)

Approached in a postmodernist manner in a novel which can be included into “historiographic metafiction” (Hutcheon 1988:105-123), the concepts of time and identity are palimpsestic in Graham Swift’s *Ever After*. They are recreated according to the narrator’s vision and cultural background. Both time and identity are reconstructed from memories and are highly reminiscent of other past times and identities. As fictional constructs, time and identity are subject to different possible interpretations given by the modal verbs *would*, *could*, *must*.

### 3. The Symbols of the Palimpsestic World in Graham Swift’s *Ever After*

Starting from the definition of the palimpsest as “a surface, usually vellum or parchment, which has been used more than once for writing on, the previous writing having been rubbed out or somehow removed” (Cuddon 1999:631), the world of Graham Swift’s novel *Ever After* can be defined as palimpsestic. The narrator of the novel, Bill Unwin, claims that the world he evokes in his writing is palimpsestic: “I must have seen it once – many times – that living palimpsest” (Swift 1992:213). This idea is supported by the fact that Bill Unwin admits that his life story as well as his past have been reinvented and rewritten in his account. He views the world as our creation which is subject to interpretations in a postmodernist fashion. He compares fiction with “what doesn’t exist” (Swift 1992:243), wondering what the function of literature is and suggestively associating it with the symbol of *honey*. Therefore, fiction, which Bill Unwin associates with the past and with his present reality, is our sweet food for thought in the absence of any real evidence of historical truth. That is why Bill Unwin invites us to ponder on the meaning of three recurrent symbols in the novel – *the plastic*, *the clock* and *the Notebook* – which stand for his palimpsestic world and time.

The narrator of Graham Swift’s *Ever After* makes a clear distinction between his past life before attempting to commit suicide and his present life after having survived his suicidal act. He compares his present life with life “in plastic” (Swift 1992:12), which is a vulnerable, untrustworthy creation subject to change and destruction. He views *plastic* as “the epitome of the false” (Swift 1992:10). His new life “in plastic” (Swift 1992:12) stands for a life devoid of love, energy, hope as well as for a life devoid of a clear identity. His story evokes his desperate search for his real identity, being haunted by a past which he considers to be just fictional. Claiming that he is “a plastics heir” (Swift 1992:9), he indicates that his own past is as dissatisfying as his present. He shows that he has inherited a false identity as the knowledge he has had of his real father turns out to be false. He is no longer able to recognize himself – “I have become someone else” (Swift 1992:6) – and the words he writes do not seem familiar to him. His real self seems to have turned into a false one associated with *plastic*. He believes that the *plastic* is the replacement of the Real and remembers the moment of his childhood when Sam told him: “You see what you can do with plastic, pal? Everything’s an exact replica of the real thing” (Swift 1992:72). Remembering how he had to rearrange the plastic pieces of the plane he had received as a gift and how he had to arrange the plastic pilot in his cockpit, he compares his creative capacity with the will of destiny: “I was like the hand of fate itself” (Swift 1992:72). The *plastic* stands for a human creation at the mercy of fate. Associating his present identity with *plastic*, Bill Unwin implies that it is palimpsestic.

Bill Unwin's palimpsestic world is also symbolized by *the clock* received as a gift from his mother, "a wedding gift over successive generations" (Swift 1992:51). The clock stands for an eternal time which marks all generations. It resists historical change and what Frederick M. Holmes (1997:83) calls "the historical imagination". According to Holmes (1997:83), "Swift's novel betrays an awareness that the historical imagination cannot ultimately defeat time. The unequal contest is symbolized in *Ever After* in the clock". In Graham Swift's novel, the clock ensures the continuity of life, love, hope, as well as the continuity of the past in the present. Keeping it wound shows the characters' resolution to further live their life and fulfil their aspirations. It symbolizes the present past and the present future. If not wound up, it brings about one's death: "Ever since that moment of panic, less than two days after her death, when I remembered that the clock had not been wound (but it had not stopped), it has been my resolution never to let the clock wind down" (Swift 1992:53). Bill Unwin explains that the same clock used to belong to his ancestor Matthew, who considered time man's creation: "Time, this stuff which Matthew still thought of as being essentially human in meaning, the companion and guardian of human affairs" (Swift 1992:115).

Another symbol which stands for Bill Unwin's palimpsestic world is the *Notebook*. It offers Bill and us a glimpse of the past and shows that the present is nothing but a redefined and recreated past. Bill quotes Matthew's *Notebooks* and analyses them in order to understand the past. He suggests that these *Notebooks* do not evoke the historical truth due to the missing details he has to fill in. Moreover, he emphasizes the fact that they are nothing but fiction: "And they were, by his own description, the record of his life as a fiction: 'the beginning of my make-belief'." (Swift 1992:195) Matthew's *Notebooks* stand for the rewritten past which turns into a story. Analysing the quoted *Notebook* fragments and Bill's story, we can notice that Bill Unwin's present is highly reminiscent of his ancestor's past (Matthew's past) and that is why it can be associated with a palimpsest.

#### 4. Conclusion

A postmodernist novel which supports the theories of postmodernism put forward by Linda Hutcheon (1988) and Mark Currie (1998), Graham Swift's *Ever After* evinces the narrator's art of recreating the past and his identity based on his cultural background and vision. The concepts of time and identity are fictional constructs subject to various interpretations given by the modal verbs *would*, *could*, *must*. They stand for a palimpsestic world presented as an eternal stage of past and present stories. One's identity is rewritten and reconstructed from memories, being highly reminiscent of other identities which are referred to by means of quotations and comparisons. The symbols of *the clock*, *the plastic* and *the Notebook* stand for the palimpsestic nature of time, identity and the world in Graham Swift's novel. Analysing it, one can notice that only fiction and discourse evince their remarking novelty which prevails over an eternal palimpsestic time.

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## AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY INDEED!

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**Abstract:** Robert Browning's "Up at a Villa—Down in the City" is a dramatic monologue, a fact unnoted by criticism. Browning employs irony throughout that undercuts the stated views of the speaker, who is not a person of quality, as the subtitle has announced. The speaker reveals himself to be a man of little experience in art and literature, of meager taste, poor judgement, and in general dull and inflexible. Browning cleverly sets up the clues whereby the reader can distinguish between what the speaker intends and what the reader understands. The speaker's repudiation of the countryside actually makes clear the virtues of country life, and his praise of city life makes it clear what is undesirable in it. Browning accomplishes this manipulation through imagery, ambiguity in language, and by reference to outside facts.

**Keywords:** dramatic monologue, Robert Browning, technique in dramatic poetry, unreliable speaker

### 1. Introduction

William Clyde DeVane identifies the source of Robert Browning's "Up at a Villa – Down in the City" as the poet's and his wife's own experience when they lived in the hills two miles above Siena in the autumn of 1850. From their country villa Browning used to go "down to Siena for newspapers and supplies, and possibly for diversion" (DeVane 1955:215). This back-and-forth movement, in which he noted the contrast of life in the country with life in the city, could very well have given Browning the idea for the poem. But the speaker in the poem is not Robert Browning, who was a keen observer and appreciator of country as well as city life, while, as we shall see, the speaker in the poem is dull and imperceptive. And so when Donald S. Hair remarks that in "Up at a Villa – Down in the City" "the poet is attracted, not to the country but to the city" (Hair 1972:97), he misses an essential feature of the poem – which is that it is a dramatic monologue, as are many of the poems that it shares space with in *Men and Women*.

The silent listener in this dramatic monologue is in fact not silent to the poem's main character. The speaker acknowledges the listener's probing questions and expressions of doubt that urge the speaker to give evidence and to defend his views. The first indication of the presence of the "silent" listener is in line 11, when this character urges the speaker to abandon his vague and less than compelling ecstasies about the city and give some reason for his preference. "Why?" we see that he has asked, from the speaker's repetition of the listener's question. After the speaker, in section 6, complains of a premature summer in the country, the listener reminds him, in the following section, that the same sun shines on the city: "Is it ever hot in the square?" (Dooley et al. 1981:26; all parenthetical line numbers refer to this edition). At one point, after he has complained about the long country winter, the speaker turns to the listener and poses a question that he is prepared to answer: "Is it better in May, I ask you?" (21). That we are frequently reminded that the words are being spoken to an

attentive listener adds a sense of immediacy to the poem, and we observe – at the listener's urging – that the speaker actually does respond with specific details about life in the city and the country and why he prefers one over the other.

Before anybody in the poem says anything, Browning provides a sub-title that is as effective, by way of irony, as the parenthetical sub-title of "Andrea del Sarto"—"(CALLED 'THE FAULTLESS PAINTER')"

 (Berkey et al. 1996:6-7) – in defining the character of the speaker. The sub-title for "Up at a Villa—Down in the City" is also in parentheses: "(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY)." The ironies of this sub-title become obvious early on, as the drama of the poem unfolds. The apparent sense of "distinguished" is "differentiated," and the term applies directly to the speaker's inability to distinguish thoughtfully and perceptively between villa and city. The word "distinguished" does not here denote "eminent," "famous," or "renowned" as would naturally describe a personage of quality, for here the word and concept apply neither grammatically nor intrinsically as a modifier of the poem's speaker. The term "distinguished", lurking as a possible adjective at the beginning of the phrase, casts an ironic shadow on the "person" at the other end because the term would not apply to him. Further, the word "person" achieves its own ambiguity, supporting the speaker's eminence and then undermining it. In the first sense, "person" refers to "A man or woman of distinction... a personage" (OED, II, 2c). Quickly, an alternative possibility insinuates itself: it is a term "Used contemptuously or slightly of a man" (OED, II, 2d). Therefore, we are to suspect that the speaker is not a man of quality, is not discerning, not one who can recognize the true value of what he sees. All this becomes clear as he begins to speak to a man he has met in the city.

Were the speaker a man of real quality, the first words out of his mouth would not be a complaint about his not having enough money: "Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare, / The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square; / Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!" (1-3). His heavy-handed repetitions, the filler expression here ("no doubt") and elsewhere ("I maintain" [6], "Well now" [7], "as a matter of course" [15]) mark the speaker as verbally inelegant. Another indication that the speaker is not a personage of quality is his crude way of referring to his body and its movements. He speaks of scratching his "shag of a bush" to see if his "hair's turned wool," an attempt, possibly, to be humorous about the beastly effects of living in the country. Furthermore, when he hears the "*Bang-whang-whang*" of the drum and "*tootle-te-tootle*" of the fife, he cannot keep his "haunches still" (53-54). "Haunches" is a term usually used for the hind quarters of an animal, and the term is an early indicator that the speaker's quality of speech owes something to his country breeding.

His referring to his own haunches that he cannot keep still on account of the music accords with his argument that life in the country is so degrading that one lives at the level of a "beast" (6). Yet his vision of life in the city is not elevating in any sense. While it is true that he is almost in a rapture of excitement just thinking about sitting and gazing out the window of a city-square house "the whole day long," and though he imagines that this passive "activity" will make "life... a perfect feast" (4-5), the listener and reader see – and the speaker does not – that gazing at life going by from a window is the existence of an indoor cat. The speaker unintentionally seems to desire the life of a beast.

## 2. Paucity of Critical Attention

It is surprising to find that so few critics have given attention to "Up at a Villa – Down in the City." Even in his *Browning and Italy*, Jacob Korg offers only two-and-a-half unilluminating sentences about the poem (Korg 1983:124). In "Browning's 'Up at a Villa – Down in the City' as Satire," Richard Fleck gestures in a promising direction, but the title

promises more than the essay delivers (Fleck 1969:345-49). Ian Jack, observing that the speaker lacks discrimination, was one of the early insightful observers of the poem (Jack 1973:155-58). More recently, Britta Martins (2007:4-16) has written an informative essay fitting the poem into its cultural context. The most perceptive and detailed commentary on the poem itself, however, is in Michael Bright's *Robert Browning's Rondures Brave*, which sets forth the organizational devices and the effects they create; he emphasizes the ironic and dramatic distance between Browning (as well as the reader) and the poem's speaker. Bright explains,

The essential difference between Browning and his speaker is that Browning always looked at things from two sides, as he does in "Before" and "After," or three, as he does in "A Light Woman," or even more, as in *The Ring and the Book*. The Italian Person of Quality sees only the bad in the villa, the good in the city, distinguishing between these two as the subtitle says, but not distinguishing between the good and bad within each, and thus unable to see the good in the villa, the bad in the city. (Bright 1996:34)

### 3. Browning's Method of Characterization

Browning devised an effective means of conveying the speaker's low estimate of life at a villa. The speaker's descriptions of the countryside belie his denial of anything attractive there. The brown ploughed fields in the foreground, the "faint grey olive-trees" beyond, and the "hills over-smoked" in the distance (19-20) constitute a picture of the ideal Italian landscape, and that beauty is conveyed to the reader in the speaker's own language, yet he comprehends nothing of that beauty, because his turn of mind will not allow him to see what he sees. In May, the speaker tells his listener, one finds

'Mid the sharp short-emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,  
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell  
Like a thin clear bubble of blood. . . . (23-25)

Martins comments on this "double vision," which she explains as being from an English and an Italian point of view: "thanks to Browning's agency as an English poet who can put the beauty of Italy into verse, the reader can enjoy it, while the speaker who describes it is blind to it." (Martins 2007:10) With such unacknowledged beauty in his memory, then, the Italian speaker can only complain that "All year long at the villa, [there is] nothing to see though you linger" (31). Then, standing in the city square, looking over his shoulder towards his villa in the distance, he notes "yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger" (32), introducing the unpleasant association of death and thus undermining appreciation of the beautiful landscape.

In commenting on the smells and sounds of a summer at the villa, the speaker cannot help but counter the attractive pictures of the countryside that he has inadvertently offered. This undermining is accomplished through a vocabulary marked by sensory unpleasantness – "stinking" and "shrill." But the beauty and the actual pleasant and lively sounds seem to refute his efforts to deny them:

Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,  
Or thrid the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.  
Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,  
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the  
hill. (33-36)

Here Browning clearly distinguishes between how we should understand what the speaker actually says and how he means it. The word "stunning" in its earliest sense means

“deafening,” but in the sense current in the mid-nineteenth century it means “splendid,” “delightful.” Browning hints that the speaker is stuck in the old meaning, which prevailed in the seventeenth century, by giving “thread”, a nearby word, an old spelling – “thrid,” which was used in the seventeenth century by Sir William Davenant, for example, in his “Song” (“Thy Tears to Thrid instead of Pearle, / On Bracelets of thy Hair”; Davenant 1673:321). Furthermore, even as the villa-dweller complains of the “tiresome” [*italics mine*] bees, the reader hears the vibrating “ome” combine onomatopoeically with “whine round the resinous firs,” which is as pleasant and engaging a sound as Tennyson’s famous “murmuring of innumerable bees” or Yeats’s “hive for the honeybee” and “live alone in the bee-loud glade” (Tennyson 1969:836; Yeats 1967:44).

When the “Person of Quality” turns his attention to what he loves in the city, the opposite effect often ensues: he praises what the reader finds objectionable. Though the speaker somehow finds pleasure in having his sleep interrupted by the clanging of church bells and though he is thrilled by the noise of the diligence (stage coach) rattling in, the reader remains dubious; and it is quite a mystery how this person manages to discern pleasure in contemplating the travelling doctor’s letting of blood and drawing of teeth. Yet there are true benefits to being in the city as there are to being at a villa. For example, the city offers entertainments: “the Pulcinello-trumpet” announces the start of a puppet show, and a “scene-picture” advertises a “new play” (42, 43). Also, the reader as well as the listener participates in the speaker’s interest in the city’s elaborate parade: “our Lady born smiling and smart / With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!”, priests processing two by two, “monks with cowls and sandals”, “penitents dressed in white shirts”, a flag, a cross, “And the Duke’s guard bring[ing] up the rear, for the better prevention of scandals” (51-52, 59-64). The music of drum and fife excite the speaker, body and soul.

In line with his dramatic intent, Browning has arranged details that alert us to the superficiality of the speaker’s enjoyment of the parade, for he cannot discern the political elements in the parade that a thoughtful person might find troubling. The “Duke’s guard” is there to prevent a scandal – that is, any protest against the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Leopold II, who had been deposed in 1849 but quickly restored to power by Austrian forces. In 1850 he dismissed parliament and agreed to Austrian occupation with 10,000 soldiers. And the speaker has remarked several lines earlier on the posted notice that “three liberal thieves were shot” (44). He accepts without question the characterization of patriots who sought the liberation and unification of Italy as common criminals, and it seems not to bother him that these men were executed. He does not take seriously the oppression of the Italian people by a foreign power; we see him diminish the significance of Austrian domination through his reference to “some little new law of the Duke’s!” (46). Browning certainly saw the Duke as a threat to Italy. Although he and Elizabeth had once thought highly of Leopold II, they changed their minds in 1849 when he was forced to leave Florence. After the Austrian victory at Novara and his return with Austrian soldiers, Browning denounced the Grand Duke in some lines that have survived only in a letter from Robert Lytton to John Forster:

The G[rand] Duke wash’d and kiss’d ten poor men’s feet.  
You’ll say His Grace is gracious to inferiors:  
But even Tuscan toes must taste sweet  
To one who kisses Austria’s p[osteriors.] (Meredith 1990-91:3; Crowder 2011:109)

Michael Bright identifies the Church as an institution of religious repression parallel with the Duke’s civil repression. “These two forces of repression” are linked by the arrangement of the elements of the procession in section 10: the penitents march between the priests and monks – who represent “ecclesiastical authority” – and the Duke’s soldiers, who represent “civil authority” (Bright 1996:36-37). The ecclesiastical and civil forces are linked



“through their symbols of flag and cross” (Bright 1996:37) and through the rhyme in the previous stanza of “the Archbishop’s most fatherly of rebukes” and “some little new law of the Duke’s!” (45-46). The speaker’s mollifying phrases “most fatherly” and “little new” direct attention to his determination not to be troubled by any aspect of what he wants just to find pleasure in.

The most egregious example of the speaker’s motive to approve the city over the country is to be found in his acceptance of the outlandish praise in the absurd sonnet written to “the Reverend Don So-and-so” (47) and posted in the city. Two lines from this sonnet verify for the reader that the sonnet is hopeless – yet the speaker does not bat an eye upon reading in this panegyric that the priest being described has equaled “Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint Jerome, and Cicero” in his Lenten lectures (48, 50). It is hard to think of what could more clearly confirm the speaker’s dullness than his admiration of this sonnet.

Still, Browning makes sure that we understand that there are in fact aspects of the city that are desirable, and nowhere is this clearer than in the speaker’s description of the fountain in section 7. Upon the listener’s asking if it were “ever hot in the square,” the man from the villa focuses on the fountain in the town square, the implication being that water is cool and will relieve heat:

There’s a fountain to spout and splash!  
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foam-bows flash  
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash  
Round the lady atop in her conch—fifty gazers do not abash,  
Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash. (26-30)

He is closer to truly appreciating something of value in the city here than he is anywhere else in the poem; his genuine excitement skips on the overflow of alliteration – “spout”, “splash!”, “shade”, “sings”, “springs”, “shine such foam-bows flash”, and “prance and paddle and pash”. His inclination to think that a naked Venus in her shell could embarrass her gazers suggests a man unfamiliar with Italian art in general, however.

The speaker’s general lack of experience is clear from the start – from the very fact that what he thinks is a city is actually a village. In this village, albeit a big village, as Mrs. Orr suggests (Orr 1890:284), all of the action takes place in the square, where the shops are, “with fanciful signs which are painted properly” (16). There is one fountain; an Italian city would have several. The population is insufficient to warrant a doctor in residence, medical services therefore being provided by an itinerant physician.

## 5. Conclusion

Browning arranges the monologue to reveal the sentiments but also the biases of the speaker, demonstrating in “Up at a Villa – Down in the City” how a man can be blinded to full comprehension by adopting *apriori* notions that impede flexibility of response. The poet has the country man / would-be “city”-dweller speak for himself, revealing his dissatisfactions with country life (but also conveying its attractions and pleasures) and revealing what he finds to praise in “city” life (along with a clear idea of many of its drawbacks that the speaker is unaware of). The one problem with city life that the speaker is fully aware of is the cost of everything there: “it’s dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate,” and he laments the high taxes (55-56). What he does not see is that what he imagines as an exciting life of watching life go by from a window would really be boring; that the village is a hard place to find peace and quiet; that the trivial things that seem so interesting to him on his visit – post-office notices, a panegyric on a priest, a puppet show, and so on – because he is not used to them, would become old hat in short order. He would soon begin to ignore the

fountain, were he to pass it every day. He does not really understand the repression exerted in the village by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and life would soon become too regimented for the speaker. He does not fully take in the beauty of the countryside and the natural sounds that put one in touch with nature, nor does he grasp the essential fact of life in a villa: that it is lonely. One suspects that the real problem with life in the country is that there are no strangers to talk to, as he has done for the one hundred lines of this poem. Therefore, Browning chooses the dramatic monologue as the ideal form to convey the speaker's condition. A dull mind is destined to be bored – whether it looks out upon a village square or upon a beautiful Italian landscape.

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### **Note on the author**

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ON GARBAGE AND ICE: ETHICS OF THE SLUMS  
IN KATHERINE BOO'S *BEHIND THE BEAUTIFUL FOREVERS*

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**Abstract:** *The present paper dwells on the complex representation of the Indian slums in Katherine Boo's 2012 novel Behind the Beautiful Forevers. Leaving behind the conventional over-sentimentalised and over-optimistic literary and cinematographic depictions, the writer places her text on the boundary between fiction and journalism, discussing poverty, inequality, hope and despair in one of the most surprising cities of the globalised world, from a new perspective.*

**Keywords:** *beautification, impossible ethics, policies of representations, relocation, urban planning*

## 1. Introduction

The confrontation of our contemporary world with the ever-increasing globalisation, extensive urbanisation and new neo-liberal policies has drawn attention to the life, politics and aesthetics of the slums around the world. Their eradication vs. their assimilation has inspired endless debates and analyses, statistics and governmental policies – that promote either unrealistic or apocalyptic assessments, along with literary and cinematographic representations, most of the time focusing on idealist and sentimental depictions. Though slums are a global phenomenon, we tend to juxtapose the image of the slum with the overcrowded, squalid and insalubrious Indian slum.

Mostly ignored by the urban upper classes and generally invisible for the governmental officials, with the brief exception of election periods, slums have become the evidence that global capitalism, the rapidly spreading urbanisation and the aggressive neoliberal policies might have a gloomy counterpart. Slums often translate as the spectral space inhabited by the new urban poor, a space usually associated to violence, moral degradation and criminality, and thus demonised and economically excluded.

Katherine Boo, an investigative reporter for *Washington Post* (between 1993 and 2003) who also wrote for *The New Yorker*, took an active interest in the lives of the poor communities living in the big cities of America, especially in the wake of Clinton's welfare reforms, and in the possibilities of improving their living conditions. The investigation she carried on related to the learning-disabled people's status in the American contemporary society brought to light many dramatic and traumatic revelations (also shedding light upon many unexplained deaths during the 90s) and brought her The Pulitzer Prize in 2000. *After Welfare*, the investigation on the life in the ghettos, was rewarded with the Sidney Hillman Award (2003), whereas *The Marriage Cure*, an analysis of the African-American women's situation involving the government-sponsored marriage programmes, brought her another prestigious National Magazine Award (2004).

Boo's interest in the Indian slums came shortly after her marrying Sunil Kilnani, the director of the Indian Institute at King's College London. "Ten years ago," she confessed in

the Afterword of her non-fictional novel *Beyond the Beautiful Forevers*, “I fell in love with an Indian man and gained a country. He urged me not to take it at face value” (Boo 2012:247). She did not “take it at face value”, as warned, but underwent a meticulous research on the Indian slums that resulted in three years of living in India (between November 2007 and March 2011), in the slum she was investigating, sharing the same experiences as her characters, being a keen witness of the events narrated in the book, going scavenging or running away from the police along with her teenage heroes, checking on all the available official records and police documents. In an interview given for *The Hindu* she explains the methodology she generally uses in her researches and investigations and this is obvious in the way in which she wrote *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*:

I’m watching people negotiate the dilemmas of their lives in real time. Simultaneously, I’m using investigative techniques, including right-to-information act requests, to illuminate events that involve the police, courts, voting offices, public hospitals and morgues, and even charitable institutions. (Menon 2014)

Her aim in writing *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* (2012) – which brought her the 2012 National Book Award for Nonfiction and PEN/Kenneth Galbraith Award for Nonfiction – was to answer to a shortage of non-fiction about India. Her documentary storytelling and her style, described as immersion journalism, are marked by an obvious detachment from the idealist and spectacular representation of Indian poverty that sells well in the West but does not always reflect the truth. Her entire endeavour – “time spent, attention paid, documentation secured, accounts cross checked” (Boo 2012:249), also displays profound sympathy for the people she studied.

As a writer I’m not looking to tell the most flamboyant tales, nor to describe only the most virtuous and super-talented people. I’m looking for resonant stories—stories that might illuminate something about the structure of a society. And it’s difficult to predict in the beginning which individuals’ experiences, months or years later, will come to shed that light”. (Interview with Kate Medina)

## 2. Ethics of Representation

There are obvious discrepancies when it comes to the extremely diverse representations of the slum, depending on their purpose, target public and political interests that generated them. Official statistics tell us that 924 million people (31.6 % of the entire world population) lived in slums in 2001, and out of these, 554 million slum dwellers were located in South Asia. The rapid urban growing and the ensuing social segregation generate these “gigantic concentrations of poverty” (Davis 2006:5) that expose ever deeper social inequities and extreme exploitation. According to the UNHABITAT 2003 report “slums are a physical and spatial manifestation of urban poverty and intra-city inequality. However, slums do not accommodate all of the urban poor, nor are all slum dwellers always poor” (UNHABITAT 2003:xxvi).

Extremely poor living conditions, squalid housing and lack of basic infrastructure are the general coordinates by which we assess and represent the slum. Seen as a result of intensive urbanisation and industrialisation that triggered massive migration from rural areas and engendered the urban poor, the slum has been and continues to be caught between governmental vain promises, shiny neo-liberal policies and idealistic vs. demonic media representations. The UNFPA (The United Nations Population Fund) 2007 contradicted the generally accepted claim that the urban poor represent a drain to economy by bringing arguments that demonstrate the capacity of this “informal sector” to offer a considerable potential that makes it a very dynamic field well integrated into the urban economy.

The slum has been variously and conflictingly represented in the global geography of the “megacity” as offering an active “home-based entrepreneurship” (Nijman 2010:13) that redraws the dialectics of centre and periphery – now seen as a “potentially generative space – a source of innovation and adaptation”, that may lead to the “destabilisation of the center” (Simone 2010:40) or as representing a space of “subaltern urbanism” (see Roy 2011) that undermines apocalyptic representation of the megacity.

The forces generally working upon the fluctuating geography of the slums and of their representation are most of the time dialectical. They can be negative policies, related to forced eviction and slum clearance, performed in the name of and under the pretext of city beautification, spiced up with beautiful electoral promises of better relocation, and to benign neglect that renders slums virtually invisible and leads to involuntary resettlement. These negative policies most of the time create negative representations mainly focused on sordid, naturalistic descriptions of utter poverty, lack of hygienic conditions and high criminality.

The positive policies applied on the slum are largely equally inefficient. They are based on self-help and *in situ* upgrading – thus forcing slum inhabitants to bring adjustments and alleviation to their own lives. Different enabling rights-based policies seem to offer relatively more reliable, at least in theory, solutions through urban poverty reduction and economic structural adjustment policies as well as urban planning based on urban inclusiveness.

If official representations (statistics, analyses, surveys, etc.) are most of the time engendered according to the interests of the moment (during electoral campaigns or whenever the issue of governmental reform is brought up), fictional accounts are also sometimes accused of perpetuating a false image of India, mostly Western oriented. In literature, texts that depict the slums are not numerous and if they tackle the subject, they do it quite fugitively, except perhaps for Rohinton Mistry’s *A fine balance* (1995), Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* (2008) and *Last Man in Tower* (2011), and Vikas Swarup’s *Q&A* (2005), which dwell on more extensive approaches of the slum. In cinema, classical works like *Boot Polish* (Prakash Arora, Raj Kapur 1954), *Salaam Bombay* (Mira Nair, 1988) and *Slumdog Millionaire* (Danny Boyle, 2008), praised, awarded and warmly received in the West, are however criticised in the East for promoting a sentimental perspective and putting forth unrealistic solutions.

## 2.1 New versus old India

The slum may or may not be ugly, it may or not symbolise absurdity, but it always has a story to tell about the state of the vitality, creativity and moral dynamism of the society that defines the relationship between the slum and suburbia. That story can take many forms. The slum can be read as the past of the suburbia or as an alternative to or decline from it. (Nandy 1999:11)

Katherine Boo chose to tell the stories of a particular Indian slum, Annawadi, a place where 3,000 people live in 335 more or less improvised huts. Her stated intention is in fact to make all the silent little stories of these unfortunate people heard and to render them visible. Boo is mainly interested in getting her readers acquainted to what it means, at least in theory, to live in the slum and what the mechanisms that make it function are. For Boo’s characters life in the slum means a continuous struggle to survive. It looks like a sentence to lifetime prison – implying low-paid temporary occupations, lack of means of subsistence, taking up degrading jobs like waste picking, cleaning, tanning, etc. – that does not allow an easy escape but, at the same time, does not completely annihilate hope and aspiration.

Living in the slum, however unlikely it might seem when seen from the perspective of gloomy statistics and apocalyptic assessments, is governed by general ethical principles among which the most basic ones are “Avoid trouble!” and “Don’t call attention to yourself!”,

translating as an urge for self-effacement and invisibility. Invisibility is utmost bliss in a place where poverty is the norm and sickness and guilt are inevitable conditions: “To be poor in Annawadi, or in any Mumbai slum, was to be guilty of one thing or another” (Boo 2012:xviii). This is what the main characters in *Beyond the Beautiful Forevers* know all too well. They all try to survive and still preserve their humanity in spite of the harsh slum dynamics that mainly operate on hunger and economic envy, thus opposing the general urge to annihilate any sense of community and solidarity in favour of selfishness and personal profit.

“Every house was off-kilter, so less off-kilter looked like straight. Sewage and sickness looked like life” (Boo 2012:5). Life in the slum is given a very accurate and vivid description in Boo’s novel. It is a continuous struggle but, as the title suggests, hidden beauty might also be found somewhere behind the encrusted layers of ugliness and extreme poverty.

This is a space located at the intersection between the old, caste-conscious India, that cherishes traditions, customs and colonial reminiscences, and the new India, ever-thriving, ever-globalised, postcolonial and capitalist, between the formal and informal city. Annawadi is situated near the Sahar Airport Road and the International Airport. It is, in fact, a space where “new India and old India collided and made new India late” (Boo 2012:5), an isle of poverty and garbage, surrounded by five luxurious hotels – “Everything around us is roses and we’re the shit in between” (Boo 2012:xii) – and separated from the rest of the world by a tall wall on which series of posters advertise for Italian floor-tiles, under the slogan: BEAUTIFUL FOREVER.

Initially built by a team of workers from the Southern state of Tamil Nadu who, after finishing their work, decided to settle there, probably lured by the economic possibilities the proximity to the airport might have offered, it was extended with the addition of new shanties improvised by migrants coming mostly from rural areas. Poverty spread and deepened, though official statistics do not count Annawadians among the poor people but include them among the one million Indians allegedly freed from poverty by economic liberalisation.

### **3. Ethics of the Slum**

As India began to prosper, old ideas about accepting the life assigned by one’s caste or one’s divinities were yielding to a belief in earthly reinvention. Annawadians now spoke of better lives casually, as if future were a cousin arriving on Saturday, as if the future would look nothing like the past. (Boo 2012:xvi-xvii)

Judging according to how media represent the slum, goodness and beauty might seem incompatible and unexpected in such a place, but Boo discovers them in the personalities and philosophies of life of many of her teenage characters. Abdul is the central character, a garbage sorter a notch above his fellows in the social hierarchy of the slum. His earnings bring prosperity to his family and this is obvious in the progressive consolidation of their shanty and in the climactic attempt at redecorating the kitchen with Italian floor tiles. In the noisy process of redecoration, Zehrunisa, Abdul’s mother, starts a fight with her crippled neighbour, Fatima, the One-Leg, who, envious of the Husains’ better living conditions, complains about the noise, pours kerosene upon her clothes and sets herself on fire. Surviving this self-immolation, she accuses the Husains of attempted murder.

The accounts of the police investigation give Boo the occasion to severely criticise the Indian justice system and its extreme corruption. Abdul, his father and sister are taken to the police and forced to indefinitely wait for what turns out to be a Kafka-like process. After Fatima’s death in the hospital, the Husains lose everything they possess while trying to prove their innocence, even if the entire neighbourhood could have testified for their good intentions.

The Husains' story, in no way unique, lays bare the new mentality of the slums, inspired by the global market society on whose criticism Boo extensively dwells. A combination of desire and hope is what keeps people going on and provides them with the motto of the New Indian Miracle promoted by Bollywood and Hollywood: "from zero to hero". Starting from this, a sharp tongue, "discretion and subtlety" (Boo 2012:19) and the art of dodging catastrophe become the leading life principles in the slum.

In Annawadi, fortunes derived not just from what people did or how they well they did it, but from the accidents and catastrophes they dodged. A decent life was the train that hadn't hit you, the slumlord you hadn't offended, the malaria you hadn't caught. (Boo 2012:xx)

The inhabitants of the slum seem to perpetually oscillate between the permanence of poverty and destitution, and the provisionality of jobs, fortune and good health. The inheritance of guilt and bad luck seems also to be sometimes counteracted by an instinctual ethical sense that engenders goodness, beauty and dreams of a better life. Even if dreaming unrealistic dreams is like "trying to write your name in a bowl of melted kulfi" (Boo 2012:15), Boo's characters never cease to hope and to offer instances of unexpected ethical philosophy.

There is a general longing for rebirth in the slum: Abdul Husain, the main character and Boo's favourite teenager in the book, dreams of social rebirth translated as an attempt to transcend his condition while preserving his ethics – "aiming for a future like the past but with more money" (Boo 2012:111); Mr. Raja Kambal dreams of medical rebirth that might provide him with a new heart valve; Asha, uneducated, unscrupulous, promiscuous though very beautiful, dreams of political rebirth as the first Indian slumlady, whereas her daughter, Manju, dreams of personal rebirth through education, as the first college graduate of the slum. Her childhood friend, Meena, wishes for a happy family life and Kalu, the top slum thief and entertainer wants to keep children happy through his jokes and funny impersonations. Such characters as the hard working Abdul, the virtuous Manju and Sonu provide Boo with insights into the ethical principles of the slum. The solutions found to the various problems of living in this space of fierce struggle for physical and spiritual survival range from finding an "entrepreneurial niche", embracing politics and corruption, to education.

### **3.1 The philosophy of garbage**

Through the real voices of her characters Boo gives her readers a valuable lesson of life starting from the science and philosophy of garbage, since garbage is the most powerful metaphor in the novel and garbage pickers and sorters, her main heroes. Seen as remnants of an urban prosperous overcity civilization, garbage becomes, in the undercity, a real waste business, an example of vendible excess that ensures people's daily means of living since someone's waste is someone else's prosperity.

There is a paradoxical equation between garbage and progress which is visible when we try to quantify progress in the amount of things we consume rather than produce, so that the huge expanses of landfill and garbage piles where people, live, work and die are the obvious measure of our progress and welfare. This is a thorny issue in the case of a metropolis like Mumbai, the global city by excellence, which privatises any available spot, maximises profit and assumes a fierce global competitiveness. Discarding 8,000 tons of garbage on a daily basis and producing 6.11% of the Indian total waste in 2012 (according to *The Indian Express*, 2014), Mumbai is actively involved in garbage management strategies that might alleviate the plight of the inhabitants of its slums.

Boo uses garbage as the most powerful metaphorical image in the novel, using it to comment upon life, politics and humanity. Thus, the ever worse quality of waste indicates

social decay and a general deterioration not only of people's living conditions but also of their sense of solidarity and humanity. To the same extent, sorting garbage becomes a means of sorting people, according to the garbage they produce. "It made sense to Abdul that in a polyglot city, people would sort themselves as he sorted his garbage, like with like" (Boo 2012:13). Garbage finally becomes an image of an ever more divided society and of a fractured humanity, as well as of chaotic and dysfunctional institutions: "The criminal justice system was a market like garbage, Abdul now understood. Innocence and guilt could be bought and sold like a kilo of polyurethane bags" (Boo 2012:107).

Waste segregation provides a helpful metaphorical means not only of assessing the corruption of major Indian institutions but also of building new national myths – the fluctuating quality and quantity of garbage mirrors the "chaotic unpredictability of everyday life" and this "chaotic uncertainty" engenders "a nation of quick-witted, creative problem-solvers" (Boo 2012:219).

### **3.2 Instinctual ethics**

The ethical world of the slum as depicted by Katherine Boo, though sometimes totally obliterated by greed and economic envy, is governed by solid principles of life and conduct in the slums. Typical examples are Sunil, the little boy in charge with taking care of his sister, for whom "the habit of not asking anyone for anything had become a part of who he was" (Boo 2012:35) and Manju, who uses virtue almost as a weapon against her mother, wholeheartedly embraces education and clings to the study of the English language as to a life buoy.

Abdul adopts an instinctual rejection of vices thought to impede on his working capacities. He completely embraces righteousness and summarises his life philosophy in the metaphorical images of water and ice – that translate both the slum, as a place where sharp contrasts meet, where beauty and ugliness are inseparable, and human nature as a battle ground of opposite drives:

Water and ice were made of the same thing. He thought most people were made of the same thing, too. He himself was probably little different, constitutionally, from the cynical, corrupt people around him. [...] If he had to sort all humanity by its material essence, he thought he would probably end up with a single gigantic pile. He wanted to be better than what he was made of. In Mumbai's dirty water, he wanted to be ice. He wanted to have ideals. For self-interested reasons, one of the ideals he most wanted to have was a belief in the possibility of justice. (Boo 2012:218)

Abdul is perceptive and wise enough to realize that the world – as seen by Asha, the upstart of the slum, and Fatima – can also function on no ethics at all and might leave no space for solidarity, empathy and kindness. Under these conditions the slum becomes a space that does not recognize the link between effort and result, virtue and moral reward. In such a place he knows nothing and nobody could change, he craves for purification and self-improvement: "He wanted to be recognized as better than the dirty water in which he lived. He wanted a verdict of ice" (Boo 2012:220).

### **4. Conclusion: Impossible Ethics**

In spite of Abdul's idealist principles and in spite of the fact that many other characters never cease to stick to their moral ideas, the slum proves to be a space that most of the time resists ethics. If Mumbai itself represents "a hive of hope and ambition, festering grievance and ambient envy" (Boo 2012:20), the slum can only intensify and bring corruption to a dramatic climax. This is ironically and cynically depicted in the way in which the Husains' trial is conducted, in the manner in which politicians make use of and manipulate the



slum inhabitants according to their electoral purposes, in the absurd accusations of violence against animals when children are exploited and abused with no legal consequences, or in the mind-blowing governmental decision that Abdul's sorting garbage business damages the quality of air and life in Annawadi. Equally hilarious, even Abdul's age is a matter of negotiation in the Detention Centre for Juveniles: he "was seventeen years old if he paid two thousands rupees and twenty years old if he did not" (Boo 2012:129), thus making his punishment as a child or as an adult dependable on his bribe. On the other hand, corruption seems to be the only means of surviving in the slum and it provides the only way out of the chaotic bureaucracy.

In the West, and among some in the Indian elite, this world, corruption, had purely negative connotations; it was seen as blocking India's modern, global ambitions. But for the poor of a country where corruption thrived a great deal of opportunity, corruption was one of the genuine opportunities that remained. (Boo 2012:28)

The dysfunctions that mar all Indian institutions, including the medical, educational, and justice systems, engender a pervading indifference to human suffering and a generalised sabotage of the innate capacity for moral action. "If the house is crooked and crumbling and the land on which it sits uneven, is it possible to make anything lie straight?" (Boo 2012:254) People still dream it is, they still conduct their life according to moral principles and Katherine Boo (2012:253) herself claims "hope is not a fiction" in the end of her book, but reality seems to point towards a gloomy image and impossible ethics.

The fact that Boo used real people and real incidents as the core of her non-fictional novel has often been questioned. Moral issues have been debated since many lives and slum experiences have been exposed to public attention, in the attempt to ameliorate things, but also to public retaliation. Nobody can question the moral aims of the novel that tried to defend ethics in a world where "much of what was said did not matter and much of what mattered could not be said" (Boo 2012:172). Once uttered, Boo's stories succeeded in touching many hearts but did not produce the expected effects as practically no character's life was changed for the better after the publication of the book, but drew public attention, once more, upon a problematic reality. Slum proves to be an insidious prison (of one's life, mentality, and self-esteem) with almost no means of escape. Abdul, finally, best summarizes this state of things when stating:

For some time I tried to keep the ice inside me from melting. But I'm just becoming dirty water, like everyone else. I tell Allah I love him immensely, immensely. But I tell him I cannot be better, because how the world is. (Boo 2012:241)

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## THE CRISIS OF MASCULINITY: JEZ BUTTERWORTH'S *MOJO*

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**Abstract:** During the late twentieth century, crisis of masculinity appears in all societal settings; at work, at school, on the street and in the family. The crisis of fatherhood, anxiety, power, and abuse create the crisis of masculinity. As a concrete example of the masculinity crisis Jez Butterworth's most discussed stage play *Mojo* was first performed at London's Royal Court in 1995. This paper takes *Mojo* under observation as a frontier play depicting a male identity that portrays rock and roll culture, gangland violence, and male Soho gangsters of the 1950s. With these concepts in mind, this paper analyses the contemporary anxieties related to masculinity through witty, absurd dialogues and homoerotic relationships of this striking play.

**Keywords:** Jez Butterworth, *Mojo*, *The Crisis of Masculinity*, *Father-Son Relationship*.

### 1. Introduction

Jez Butterworth's *Mojo* was staged at the Royal Court Theatre in 1995 when he was 26 years old. *Mojo* was widely advertised parallel to *Look Back in Anger*, and was the first play since 1956 to be staged at Royal Court's Theatre's main hall. *Mojo* represents the soul of "angry young men". Stuart (1996) states that "*Mojo* typifies not only the current predominance in the British drama of plays by and about men (of which the recent profusion of gay plays is, of course, a subset), but also the concomitant retreat to more conservative theatrical models and forms". This outstanding, multi-award winning (Olivier Award for Best New Comedy, The George Devine and Evening Standard), was set in Soho in 1950s. Apart from awards, critics have compared it with Pinter and Quentin Tarantino because Butterworth uses rhythm, repetition and absurd dialogues akin to Pinter as well as at times, extreme dialogues, extreme scenes and violence akin to Tarantino. David Ian Rabey (2015:37) provides us with general information about the play's setting:

Soho is the square-mile area of London popular with immigrants in the seventeenth century; when deserted by the rich and fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century,... from the late-nineteenth and into the first half of the twentieth century, it became an edge land district of London in its association with notorious plague, ... an area of multicultural restaurants, music halls, theatres, prostitution and sex industry... and non-respectable forms of musical entertainment and experimentation.

In the 1950s Soho becomes a place dominated by rock and roll, gangland violence and possibly boy gangs. In *Mojo*, gangsters are the subject of witty and communal dialogues, violence, and a playful elusiveness within situation, character, and relationships (Stuart 1996) but Butterworth does not accept the fact of gangsters:

What I didn't want it to be was about gangsters. I wanted it to be about people who think they are – or who possibly know – gangsters, but aren't. Because they're a bunch of children, everyone in the play: it's like a school playground game really. Sweets and Potts aren't gangsters (Interview in Butterworth 2011: vii).

However, *Mojo* portrays a war between two gangsters in the hustle and bustle of establishing superiority and taking ownership over rock and roll star Silver Johnny. This article will trace how Butterworth portrays ganglands, gangsters, violence, and the crisis of anxiety and masculinity through the lens of fear, and power of fathers men and fatherless. Thus the play is interpreted not only as depicting 1950s London/Soho but also how male relationships are described in this period.

## 2. *Mojo*

Butterworth's play starts with thundering sound of drums, pulsating bass, and screams as Silver Jonny dances like a boxer who tries to show his mannish boy performance however he does not set free his energy; he only waits and observes audiences' reactions. Butterworth's aim is to invite audiences to fill the gap in their minds as a reaction to Silver Jonny's performance. Later Butterworth portrays two other young men Sweets and Potts and their ordinariness. They are sitting at the table with a pot of tea and three tea cups. The third cup represents a third but non-present person, either Mr Rossand or Ezra, as they are talking about them and their objects:

Potts. He's Mr Ross.

Sweets. They are talking about it aren't they ... (Pause). Okay. Okay. So where's Ezra?

Potts. Ezra's at the desk, but he's not in his chair. He's round here to one side.

Sweets. The Mr Ross side or the miles away side? (Butterworth 2011: 6).

Sweets and Potts go on their conversation, describing Silver Jonny's effect on women as well as their envy towards Silver Jonny, paying special mention to girls; "Potts. These girls. They shit when he signs" (7). This jealousy is translated into wit by Potts. "One day he's asking his mum can he cross the road the next he's got grown women queuing up to suck his winkle" (7). This example of linguistic wit in the play shows Harold Pinter's and Tom Stoppard's effect on Butterworth. In Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* (1960) "two gangland hit-men find their alliance stretched to breaking point under increasingly mysterious forms of external pressure" (Rabey 2015:40). In Butterworth's play, Sweet and Potts play with a third object (cup) which reflect third person and similar pressure like in the form of Pinter's play. Sweet and Potts also make reference to Tom Stoppard's characters Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and Beckett's characters Vladimir and Estragon:

Sweets. Good rule.

Potts. Great rule.

Sweets. There's got to be rules and that's a rule.

(...)

Potts. So what?

Sweets. So what happened?

Potts. Nothing.

Sweets. Right. (Butterworth 2011:7-8).

Beside these effects, the usage of pills and amphetamines creates a different structure containing repetitions and overstatement within the dialogues. Repetitions and overstatement are introduced with Baby, Ezra's son and heir of Ezra's nightclub Atlantic in Soho. Following Baby's entrance, Sweets and Potts try to conceal Silver Johnny's situations and, when Baby

exits, Sweets and Potts realize that Ezra does not trust Baby, and then tell him about Silver Johnny: “Potts. What do you think? Sweets. Ezra wouldn’t tell him” (14). They also mention “their baroque fantasy of reflected glory that enfolds them into the honourable historic tradition of the entourage, visible portraits of Napoleon” (Rabey 2015:42), alongside Sam Ross with his dyed hair and different typed of clothes. With the entrance of Skinny, “a small time crime”, (Middeke et al 2011:44) violence and cruelty appear in the play: “(shouts). You cheap fucking sweaty fucking... fucking... Jew... fucking... (Pause. Lights a cigarette.)” (Butterworth 2011:18). This stems from Skinny’s decision to part from boss Ezra, and is tormented by Baby because of his bad breath. Baby also awes Skinny, squeezing his bollocks: “Skinny .... Not playful. Really gripping. And you know when you’re crying but water comes to your eyes” (19).

Violence and cruelty continue in Scene 2. Baby enters with an old navy cutlass, and threatens Skinny with death. While Sweets and Potts try to stop Baby, Mickey, Ezra’s older child, enters and observes the others’ behaviours, and tries to understand what’s going on in the club. Sweets and Potts talk about how they got swimming pills. Skinny gains Baby’s hatred and Baby explains his hatred implying Skinny’s homoerotic feelings for Mickey: “Skinny. Mickey. Enough. Remember what we spoke about in the van. And this isn’t for me. It’s for you. Fuck me. For you. Baby. This is advice you’re about to get Mickey” (23). After warning Baby about looking at the door of the club, Mickey drops a bombshell stating that ‘Ezra is dead’. Everything and everyone stops in the club. After receiving the news, behaviours and words of others are pure shock:

Omnes. Oh Jesus. Jesus, Jesus fucking Christ.

(...)

Skinny. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. We’re fucked.

(...)

Sweets. Warm milk. I need some warm milk (26-27-28).

(...)

Potts. It’s a joke. It’s Mickey’s joke. It’s Mickey morning joke.

(...)

Skinny. You hear that? Is it clear now? He is dead because they fucking cut him in half. So yes, he’s fucking passed away.

(...)

Sweets. Wake up have breakfast. They saw you in half (29-30-31).

Because of Ezra’s death and his body parts, they start to worry about their own personal security and lives. Baby reappears, unaware of anything. Mickey tries to inform him about his father’s murder. “Mickey. Baby, I call... I got a call this morning. Somebody’s murdered your dad” (38). Baby, going against the grain of what is believed, astonishes the others by saying: “there’s a Buick park out there. A Buick in Dean Street. Right outside the Bath House. It’s brilliant. (Pause.) Makes it look like Las Vegas” (39). This reaction shows his psychological disorder and dramatic world: “Baby. Mickey, I just drink the beer, have a laugh, kiss the girls and make them cry” (43). He states that he is a working man who needs to work, a continuation of is already his confused mood. While the others are in state of panic, Baby takes pleasure from the developments around him. Mickey, without considering Baby’s reactions, appeals for help because Baby is Ezra’s son and heir, too. However Baby, mentioning the phone conversation that Mickey makes, does not respond to the incident: “Baby. So why did they call you? (Pause). Somebody decides to kill my daddy, do they call me tell me? No Mickey. They give you the call. (Pause). You see what I mean Mickey? You got the call” (48). Following Baby’s utterances, a third bombshell then occurs. Skinny finds a box on the doorstep. Everybody thinks that it is Silver Jonny’s head and with the exception of Baby, nobody is brave enough to open the box. While others’ fear hit their peak, Baby

approaches the box, opens it and shows the silver jacket to them, and later walks closer towards Mickey and stares at him.

As the play progresses, the characters are downstairs in the Atlantic club. There is a banner overhead that reads "Ezra's Atlantic Salutes Young People" (51). Baby is wearing the silver jacket found it in the box, while Mickey places his support behind Sam via a phone conversation. Sweets and Potts on the other hand try to avoid situation, however Mickey is not at one with them. Sweets and Potts show sympathy for Baby and start to discuss about how Baby feels after his father's death. There within, Potts states that Baby should start a new life considering Baby's father figure: "... Oh. His dad did the funny on him. Well that's all the past isn't it. Fucker's dead. He ought to draw a line now. Start afresh. But he won't. I know he won't" (55). While gossiping about Sweets and Potts, Skinny enters with a derringer pistol to protect himself and those around him. Sweets and Potts both ridicule with this derringer, Skinny's uncle Tommy and his RAF service adventures.

In the following part we observe Sweets' and Potts's support towards Baby. Baby, contrary to Act I, starts to question the developments around him. Sweets and Potts especially question Skinny's behaviours and sayings towards Baby:

Potts. Fucking bad breath... He opens his mouth something uncouth plops out.

Baby. What did he say then?

Potts. He saying to Mickey he reckons we should brush you off. That 'blah blah  
pissing on we don't need the Jew no more (69).

After Sweets and Potts tell Baby about Sam Ross' mercilessness related to his manager, Baby wants to meet Sam Ross, stating: "there's nothing like someone cutting your dad in two for clearing the mind. (Pause)" (p. 73). Later, Baby does not permit Mickey to phone call with Sam Ross. Baby gives an order to Mickey, asking him to dream as if Ezra would order. The others think that Baby loses his consciousness and is in shock. When Baby returns with a cutlass, Mickey wants to take control, again saying:

Mickey. I'm not listening to you Baby. You've fucked around here for too long. I'm sorry.

(...)

Mickey. I'm sorry. I'm not going to ask you again (79).

However Baby reminds Mickey who the owner of the club is:

Baby. Mickey. (Pause). Watch what you say to me.

Mickey. I don't think I have to. I don't think any of us do.

Baby. This is my dad's place. And there's... I'm his son. There must be deeds, and it Passes on to me (79-80).

Silver Jonny appears again in *Mojo's* last scene (scene 2). Here we see Baby wearing the silver jacket. He starts to talk about his father's story. He goes to Wales, here resembling "a personal version of the story of Abraham and Isaac" (Rabey, 2015: 50), with sharp knives that Baby points out were used to kill this. However, the knives are used to slaughter a cow in the dark. While Baby telling all of this to Silver Johnny, Sweets comes but is not aware of Silver Johnny's presence. When Potts enters he realizes the presence of Silver Johnny and says: "Potts. Baby. Okay. Listen. This changes a couple of things. First of all, you're my hero" (Butterworth 2011: 90). Later, Baby starts to narrate how he found Mr Ross: "And I parked it, right, and asked around, and the first bloke I ask actually knows where Mr Ross lives" (91) and how he slashes him from the top of the head. He later Baby starts to question why Mickey is near Mr Ross when Ezra and Silver Johnny head over there. "Moreover, Johnny has related Mickey's presence and central implication in Ross's plan and in Ezra's disappearance" (Rabey, 2015:51). Mickey has to accept his guilt and admits: "Baby, I had no choice. We were going to lose everything" (Butterworth 2011:51). He tries to explain why he helps to Mr Ross in Ezra's death. Skinny enters and tends to guard Mickey:

Skinny. Mickey's done nothing. Bastard's been hanging upside down for two hours he's gone back to front. And I'll prove it. I'll prove it. Because Mickey was at home and then he came here. He was ill then he came here. Anyone listens to some little fuck ditched us all in the lurch is a sissy. I believe Mickey (96).

Then Baby puts the derringer to Skinny's head and fires it, however "Skinny does not die immediately: the fatal but indirect wound leaves him to explore his own shock, outrage and fear, and the other characters (...) are thrown into further ineffectual panic by his death throes" (Rabey, 2015:51). Silver Johnny appears again and approaches them in order to speak with Baby. They together clarify the beauties of life, mentioning the sun, air, heat, light and people on the street, and leave silver jacket on the floor. In the ongoing process this study examines the play *Mojo* with the aim of demonstrating how abusing, father-son relations and violence construct masculinity crisis.

### 3. The Crisis of Masculinity in *Mojo*

Masculinity is a complicated term and it is difficult to define exactly because its meaning is continuously changing. Masculinity is socially constructed therefore; it shows variations according to factors such as age, ethnicity, race and class. Without a doubt the masculinity of an aging, high class is different than the masculine behaviours related with urban youth. David Collinson and Jeff Hern (2001: 149) states that "(m)asculine identities constantly have to be constructed, negotiated and reconstructed". In *Mojo* young urban boys (Baby, Mickey and other groups of male) are portrayed to declare and show their maleness. Masculinity theory examines the orders that masculine elements and ideals reflect society as a whole and masculinity, inferred as an organization of practice in everyday life, is significantly a social construction. Haddox (2011:32) reveals that "construction of masculinity is usually associated with construction of power in a society". As a social construction masculinised power, maleness or manhood can be separated from individual power because masculinised power refers to "hegemonic masculinity". This term is elucidated as:

Hegemonic masculinity is far more complex than the accounts of essences in the masculinity books would suggest... It is, rather, a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance. An immediate consequence of this is that the culturally exalted form of masculinity, the hegemonic model so to speak, may only correspond to the actual characters of a small number of men... Yet very large numbers of men are complicit in sustaining the hegemonic model (Carrigan et al 1987:92).

Particular groups of men in Butterworth's play *Mojo* question their positions of power and wealth in their own society because these positions build their social relationships which constitute their hegemony. Hegemony between father and son relation is observed through Baby and Mickey. In the course of the play, actual characters (Baby and Mickey) desire to produce their dominance over small group of men. While producing their dominance, Jez Butterworth depicts a world where father-son relations are destroyed. This theme is evident in most of In-yer-face plays of the 1990s. As Ian Rickson has pointed out "one of the most important issues of the late twentieth century has been the crisis in masculinity- in the workplace and the family- and that's why there's been a lot of boys' plays" (qtd in Sierz 2000:154). During this period, the contemporary male psyche suffers from disorders due to destructive effect of patriarchal masculinity. Jez Butterworth handled the term by using the loss of power and crisis in fatherhood with his *Mojo*. In this context, fatherhood and violence among relations are presented as masculine crisis.

In Butterworth's *Mojo*, besides violence, gangland, addiction, and cruelty; shocking, comical and absurd events are shown on stage. *Mojo* especially focuses on father-son

relationships, masculine desire, and the crisis of masculinity. Aleks Sierz describes the crisis of masculinity and its relation with young writers:

Then years on (1980s – 1990s) young writers were looking for an equally urgent preoccupation, an equally symbolic theme. They found it in the crisis of masculinity. Writers obsessively and probably unconsciously returned time and time again to stories which are not about family but about boys. And, in opposition to the feminist plays of the 1980s, artistic directors chose plays that had a laddish nature: all men casts became common and the theme of violent and homo-erotic male relationships unavoidable. Examples are numerous, but Jez Butterworth's *Mojo* is a classic case (Sierz, *Cool Britannia- In-Yer-Face*).

Towards the late twentieth century, crisis of masculinity seems to occur everywhere – at work, at school, on the street and within the family – so playwrights produce plays about boys and male relationships. Mangan (2003: 247) lay bares that “we may indeed be experiencing a current crisis in masculinities, but there is no single stable anterior position against which was contemporary crisis is to be measured... On the contrary, it now seems, crisis and anxiety are rather the conditions of masculinity itself”. In his play, Butterworth writes his play around dealing with contemporary crises and anxieties relating to masculinity. *Mojo* is a gangster play with men as its central theme. Aleks Sierz states that “like other gangster plays, it dips in and out of violence, but, more significantly, its theme is men” (Sierz 2000:161). It concerns itself with men and their existence, their struggle for power, their desire, their anxieties, their courage, and their revenge, all in turn symbolizing a crisis of masculinity.

At the very beginning of the play, this crisis starts when Sweets and Potts backstab Silver Johnny and his growing influence:

Potts. One day he's asking his mum can he cross the road the next he's got grown women queueing up to suck his winkle  
Sweets. Seventeen child.  
Potts. These girls. They shit when he signs (7).

And also they envy Silver Johnny's relationships with women as well as women's reactions towards Silver Johnny. The other crisis we witness between Skinny and Baby. Baby usually ridicules with Skinny, especially for his bad breath, and squeezes Skinny's bullocks: “Baby torments Skinny, squeezing his nuts or threatening to cut them off” (Sierz 2000:165). It causes anxiety for Skinny, saying that “I might want to have children one day” (Butterworth, 2011:19). This refers to “the spectre of consequences of long-term damage to his manhood” (Rabey 2015:43) and crisis of masculinity. In Act I Scene II, Mickey gives the news of Ezra's death “it's all right. Baby, I call... I got a call this morning. Somebody's murdered your dad” (Butterworth, 2011: 38) however Baby's reaction “somebody decides to kill my daddy, do they call me tell me? No Mickey” (48). This shows a serious problem between two men, Baby, and his father Ezra. It shows the crisis of the father and son relationship. On the other hand when the box arrives, only Baby has the power to open the box. This power stirs fear among others and, with this power and stare into Mickey's eyes; Baby tries to use the agitator effect of masculinity over both Mickey and the other characters. In the second part of *Mojo*, the source of the crisis, between Baby and his father Ezra, is abuse and torture:

Sweets. Yeah but there's dads and dads. You're thinking of a dad. Like in a book. Fucking figure of something.  
Potts. Yes but –  
Sweets. Not some bloke waits for you come home from school stuffs his hands Down your pants. Not one has you biting the sheets and then don't tell your mum (55).



It is powerful point that Baby was victim of abuse when he was a child, “just a lost soul, damaged by his father’s sexual abuse of him, capable of disarming childlike enthusiasm as well as terrifying childish cruelty” (Rabey, 2015: 43). Now he becomes abuser by torturing Skinny and humiliating his psychological disorder.

The other crisis of the play is when Skinny and Potts mention about Silver Johnny and Ezra, causing Skinny to express his confusion: “Skinny. What? Ezra never saw straight again the day the kid walked in here. Buying him silver suits. Wearing tight trousers himself. I mean an old man wearing tight trousers. It’s asking for trouble” (59). He expresses the abuse and how it critically affects them: “just because some old man wants to fuck children for a hobby don’t mean we all have to die in his good name” (59). Apart from the abuse and power crisis, depressive feelings and repressed homoerotic fascination between Skinny and Baby are observed though the way they continuously quarrel with each other:

Potts. He saying to Mickey he reckons we should brush you off. That ‘blah blah  
pissing on we don’t need the Jew no more  
Baby. Ah... He doesn’t mean that.  
Potts. He said it. Something like it...  
Baby. He doesn’t mean that. He only says that because he loves me (69).

Actually these homoerotic feelings spill over into other characters in the play as well, and are easily expressed. These feelings include “allusions to child abuse and relationships with minors to the implication of a homoerotic dimension to Sweets and Potts’s relationships” (Stuart, 1996).

At the beginning of scene two, the other main source of the cruelty and crisis of masculinity is narrated again by Baby. This long monologue represents that they took a journey to Wales when Baby was nine. There were sharp knives on the front seat. Ezra kills and slaughters a cow. Baby witnesses to it and is covered in blood. This blood forms a psychopathic male. Sierz expresses this event: “more on exercise in black humour than a psychological portrait, the story still underlines the play’s main theme: boys will be bloody boys” (2000: 165). These bloody boys are sons of cruel and abusive fathers. The absence of fathers and their masculine desire causes *Mojo*’s overall themed crisis of masculinity. As mentioned before, this journey also represents a journey of sacrifice of Abraham and Isaac. In these two journeys, fathers do not sacrifice their sons. This shows their obedience towards the divine father figure and “their pact to exclude feminine principles” (Rabey, 2015: 28). This sacrifice is a “purely masculine ritual and a period of sexual segregation, a journey, often the fear of danger and death, and eventually some form of sacred initiation of the adolescent male by the elders of the tribe” (Mangan, 2003: 39).

In the play Ezra and Sam Ross are never seen on the stage; however their existence and influence are always felt by means of other characters in the play. Their existence creates an additional crisis among them because Sam Ross kills Ezra with Mickey’s help, slicing his body in two parts. Baby, the main abuse victim, later kills Sam Ross using a cutlass. In these events, Mickey’s betrayal and lies are revealed: “instead of Ezra, there is a parade of surrogate fathers led by Mickey, whose maturity is finally revealed as based on lies and betrayal” (Middeke et al, 2011: 45). Psychological destruction and relationships crises create the core of the story. Yet again, Baby has to deal with his psychological destruction because of Mickey. For the second time Baby’s thoughts and beliefs are disoriented. Mickey’s guilt and Baby’s psychological disorder reflect the crisis of masculinity because “both states of mind are silent, solitary and male” (Sierz, 2000: 164). Mickey is another father figure for Baby, but he “turns out to be a study in failed masculinity – never is cool and strong as he’d like to be” and neither helps or nor leads Baby for that reason; “Baby becomes a symbol of maleness psychopathology” (165).

In *Mojo*, the crisis of masculinity comes from absent fathers. Baby's father cannot be seen and even if Baby knew he was abused. On the other hand, Skinny does not have his real father, so he feels admiration towards his stepfather Uncle Tommy and Mickey. He shows loyalty and supports Mickey throughout the play. This support "provides Skinny a definite paradigm of masculinity based on the sacredness of obedience" (Rabey, 2015: 31) and causes a homoerotic spark. When Skinny dies, Mickey is sick at heart and "he is hunched over Skinny's body" (Butterworth, 2011: 99). Butterworth deals with homoerotic feelings, with written perversion, misogyny and homosexuality being important sub-themes within the place.

The absence of fathers is analyzed by Sierz: "its images of masculinity also shoulder a simple and powerful message: these boys have never grown up. And maybe never will (2000: 166). At the end of the play, Baby, who experiences a current crisis in masculinity at the hands of his father's abuse, Ezra's death, becomes a difficult journey like Abraham and Isaac. Furthermore the killing of Sam Ross, takes Silver Johnny with him, representing "homoerotic subversion of the sacrificial (postlapsarian) scenario" (Rabey 2015: 31). Like Adam and Eve, Baby and Silver Johnny start a new life without innocence.

In the film version of *Mojo*, Ross asks Mickey to prove his fidelity and gives Mickey a gun to kill Ezra: "(...) when Mickey finally summons the resolve to pull the trigger, Ross ironically reveals that the gun is empty: like a demonic version of an Old Testament God, Ross primarily seeks a demonstration of obedience to his power and authority as tribal patriarch" (31). This patriarchal point is expressed by Butterworth who, when prepares about the story "the fairytale idea I came up with right at the start: two kingdoms, two kings, both of whom are off-stage and with Silver Johnny like a princess who gets stolen from one by the other. Then there are all the knights fighting over who's going to take over" (Gilbey 2013). Butterworth, showing Silver Johnny like a princess, tries to form the war of power, crisis of power and relations among males.

#### 4. Conclusion

*Mojo*, starting as a gangster tale, ends with fatherless men. A crisis of fatherhood, anxiety, power, and abuse in turn create crisis of masculinity. While dealing with these terms Butterworth portrays social problems in *Mojo* as problems of fatherless men, abuse and violent crime in contemporary society. In this contemporary society, the abuse of boys by their fathers as well as lack of fatherhood cause aggressive strength, as observed in Baby, the inadequacy of Potts and Sweets, the mortification of Mickey, and the crisis of masculinity. The crisis of masculinity forces the characters to hide their feelings. They are not allowed to be weak in society and, for that reason, they turn to violence and kill the other men because of their own inner oppression. This in turn leads them to experience a different crisis: as loss of identity and masculinity, all at the hands of abuse.

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THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR I ON MIDDLE EAST  
“ARABS” IN AWWAD’S “AL-RAGHIF”:  
A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** *My paper will explore the genre of war narrative from a cultural perspective, namely the impact of the Great War on Arabs in the novel Al-Raghif (The Loaf) in 1939 by the Lebanese novelist Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad, as it is the first Arabic novel which is totally concerned with WWI and its long-lasting consequences: hunger, despair and the elusive promise of freedom to Arabs.*

**Keywords:** *Arab identity, consequences, diachronic relevance, great famine, macro-history, micro-history, refugee, the First World War.*

## 1. Introduction

When the First World War broke out, the entire Arab provinces, some of them being under Ottoman rule, were dragged into this colonial war, so that they should be re-divided. Such desires to control and possess were the reasons to drag the Arab provinces into this war. The Germans attempting to obtain a vantage point in the Ottoman Empire’s provinces put the position of Britain in the Middle East under threat. France also wanted to lay hands on Great Syria as well as the British wished to get hold of Palestine and Iraq and also to keep its control in Egypt.

As Lenin puts it in his collected works:

The war was brought on by the clash of two most powerful groups of multimillionaires, Anglo-French and German, for the re-division of the world. The Anglo-French group of capitalists wants first to rob Germany, deprive her of her colonies (nearly all of which have already been seized), and then to rob Turkey. The German group of capitalists wants to seize Turkey for itself and to compensate itself for the loss of its colonies by seizing neighboring small states (Belgium, Serbia and Rumania). (Lenin, 1917:335)

Each side of the belligerents exploited and utilized all kinds of resources and bases of the Arab provinces that were under their control. Britain and France (the Allied) used the land and resources of Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and the British spheres in the Arabian Peninsula. Germany and its ally, Turkey concentrating on its own provinces, exhausted all the manpower and natural resources of Iraq, Syria, Palestine, the Lebanon and part of the Arabian Peninsula (Lutsky:1969)

The involvement of the Arabs in First World War, on one side or on the other side, still did not reveal the real attitude of the Arab people. In fact, they were antagonistic to all sides and the rear fronts of Britain and France as well as Germany and Turkey were unsecure and unsteady. The Arabs loathed these overseas persecutors, and this loathing was competently applied by one imperialist bloc against the other. (Ibid)

In Arabs' homeland, each one of the belligerents supported nationalism and the revolutions in the rear of the other side and urged them, in order to achieve their own goals. The resistance against the British, French and Italian colonization started in Sudan, Egypt, and the countries of North Africa. The strong resistance was exactly in Libya and Morocco. Turkey and Germany used the Arab tribes in Libya to resist the British colonization in Egypt and by organizing much of the Bedouin attack from Libya on the Egyptian province. On the other side, the Anglo-French alliance used the nationalism in the Arab province obedient to the Ottoman Empire for the resistance against Germany and Turkey. The Arabs manage a preliminary survey mission and vandalize places behind the Turkish front and spark off the anti-Turkish revolution. (Ibid)

The Ottoman Army was located in Great Syria, a country that was totally not ready for such a kind of war. Syria's economy was unable to bear up the consequences of war. Hence these conflicts led to cause the Great Famine in the mountains of Lebanon, which was the disastrous consequence of both policy and environment, the amalgamation of an acute dry spell with locusts attack and a suffocating siege. Since the Ottoman Empire entered the war on Germany' side, the allied forces had laid a maritime siege to the Mediterranean Sea to block all kinds of goods from reaching the Ottoman Empire. On the other side, Jamal Pasha, chosen to be the minister of Navy over Great Syria at the same time, also laid the same siege along the eastern Mediterranean rim to prevent supplies from reaching Britain through the Suez Canal which also stopped any goods from reaching the people of Lebanon. This was the main reason which led to the death of thousands of people. He was called as "Al-jazzar" or "Al-saffah" which means "the butcher" and "the blood-shedder" due to his slaughter of Lebanese as well as Syrian people.

So if these two sieges were not enough, especially to the people in Mount Lebanon, what came was even worse. A dry spell hit the region and was followed by a locusts attack. On the one hand, the siege by the allied forces led to the Ottomans taking hold of resources and grains from the people to feed the army. On the other hand, locusts ate everything where they landed, thus removing any probable resources of livelihood. This led to famine and the increase of diseases like typhus, malaria, and smallpox in villages.

A grim conclusion emerges: disaster was two-fold. On the one hand, anthropomorphic disaster (the slaughtering, the cannon-fodder thereof) is noticeable; on the other hand, the natural disaster (the locusts attack) that was superimposed to the former in a strangely palimpsestic way.

For months, the small but greedy creatures ate anything that was left behind by the Turkish army, who had prioritized grain and food reserves for their own soldiers as part of the effort of this colonial war. This signalled the beginning of an era that is currently just an annotation in the history books. Note the marginality thereof:

The Great Famine of 1915-18, which left an estimated 500,000 people dead. With a lack of accurate data, estimates range from 100,000 to 200,000 deaths in Mount Lebanon alone. At this time, the population of Lebanon was estimated at about 400,000, meaning that half its people died. At 250,000, the American Red Cross estimated an even higher death toll. It was the highest death toll by a population of the First World War .(Ghazal: 2015).

There was information of people eating dogs, rats and cats, even of cases of cannibalism. There is a compelling story told by a church priest who narrates the experience of a father who wanted to confess and said that he ate his own kids, in a stance of forced cannibalism under the duress of war.

## 2. The Arabic Novel and the Great War: *Al-Raghif* “*The Loaf*” (1939) Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad:

When the First World War sparked in August 1914, the Arabic novel was still taking its first steps, hesitant in describing the personal adventures, recording the historic glories of the past, religious preaching, or translating some of Western narratives. Arab novelists did not focus that much on this great global event, and it lasted until 1939, the emergence date of the novel *Al-Raghif*, which derived its narrative events from the Great War, and its impact on the Arab region, and thus first Arab novel about the First World War came into being.

Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad (1911 – 1989) is a Lebanese writer and diplomat. He published two novels and four short stories. His 1939 novel *Al-Raghif*, “*Loaf*” described the great famine in the mount Lebanon as well as inspired by the Arab resistance to the Turks in World War I, “was quickly recognized as a landmark in the literary expression of Arab nationalism” (Tanoos 1994:71) As the Palestinian- Lebanese writer May Ziade puts it: “No one has documented the tragedy which was experienced by my country except Awwad in “*The Loaf*”. Awwad has lived it (tragedy) on behalf of all of us.” (Al-Abtah:2014). The representational power of this author is indeed noteworthy, as are his characters saliently archetypal.

The novel *Al-Raghif* was derived from the events of the Great War, and its impact on the Arab region, which becomes the first Arabic novel that revolves around the First World War, *Al-Raghif* stands for starvation and humiliation caused by hunger, and also the novel amply recounts the uprising against the monopolists who put their hands on wheat and flour in anticipation of profit and wealth, while the common people are starving and they are displaced in search of a morsel and dying on the roads and in the fields with swollen bellies. And the humiliation in some people went so far as to make them look for the remains of barley in cow dung. “There was a woman lying on her back, covered with lice. A newborn with enormous eyes was at her breast. The child kept pressing the breast with his hands and lips and would then give up and cry and cry.” (Awwad 1939: 169)

Arguably, this is a striking image, not dissimilar to those so dear to naturalistic writers such as Emile Zola. Indeed, the emphasis is laid on physiology here, in an attempt to portray victimhood as an aftermath of the Great War. The mechanics of gratification is hardly working here, as the suckling tries to get fed to no avail. The woman herself lacks functionality as a mother as she is covered in lice. Sanitary considerations are overridden here by survival from poverty and famine at large.

Isomorphous to Salman Rushdie’s concern for the overlap micro-history/macro-history, *Loaf* tackles the intricacies of the two inter-woven categories. Indeed, the highly personal, the physiological is used here to hint at the deteriorating nature of all things political. Not only is the biology of man precarious, but also politics is.

The novel begins with the narrative perspective of Turkish soldiers as they enter one of the Lebanese villages in November 1914, as the story unravels in time between 1914 and 1918 and most of its events happen in a small Lebanese village called “*Saqiat Al Misk*” and tells the biography of a revolutionary hero, Sami Asim who was struggling for the independence of Arab countries from the Ottoman Caliphate; he subsequently becomes a fugitive hiding on the outskirts of the village in “*Khuria cave*”; nobody knows his hideaway except “*Zina*” his beloved, who visits him from time to time, to provide him with food and news, and after several attempts, he is held captive in the hands of Turkish soldiers who abused him before putting him in Alia Prison, where he suffered the worst kinds of torture, before they issued a death sentence within the executions campaign led by Jamal Pasha against the Lebanese Resisters, after prolonged suffering he managed to escape and joined the Arab revolution in the desert, which was launched from the Hijaz in 1916, led by Sharif

Hussein; he led several military attacks against the Ottoman forces in Arab areas, until he reached the limits of Beirut . (Tanoos 1994:72-74)

Sami Asim did not live to achieve his dream and died in the battle of Arab forces on the outskirts of his village, but before his death, he had an epiphany that Arab nationalism was born at that glorious moment, in the heart of the battlefield, so he says to his companion Shafiq in what looks like a national sermon: "Today the true Arab nationalism was born, the mother is this revolution in which I am the Arab Christian walking by your side you are the Arab Muslims, to fight a common enemy of our country, that is the Turks".(Awwad 1939:207)

### **3. Conclusion**

#### **3.1. Micro-history and Macro-history**

The novel seeks to monitor the effects of war on the Arab world, through the village which is a mini-society. "Saqiat Al-Misk" represents the Arab world that had been living in peace and tranquility, and had been enjoying the bounties of its town despite scarcity. But with the beginning of the Great War its conditions changed, its inhabitants became obliged to search for their daily bread and starve.

What is intriguing in this novel – and this arguably makes it a good novel, in the vein of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), is the co-existence of micro- and macro-history. Indeed, the intricate interplay between micro-history (life histories of starvation and deprivation) and macro-history (the history of Arab nations during the Great War) is reminiscent of Rushdie's subtle interwoven narratives in the novel quoted above, i.e. the micro-history of Saleem, born on the same night as the independence of India:

I was born in the city of Bombay ...once upon a time. No, that won't do, there's no getting away from the date: I was born in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1947. And the time? The time matters, too. Well then: at night. No, it's important to be more ...On the stroke of midnight, as a matter of fact. Clock-hands joined palms in respectful greeting as I came. Oh, spell it out, spell it out: at the precise instant of India's arrival at independence, I tumbled forth into the world. There were gasps. And, outside the window, fireworks and crowds. (Rushdie 1981:9)

Quite intriguingly, the protagonist's fate is inextricably linked to that of his country, as is the fate of the Arab protagonists in the novel under scrutiny here. The juxtaposition thereof is redolent of the ideological passion behind the narrative.

#### **3.2. Diachronic Consequences. Now and Then**

The refugee and immigrant disaster nowadays in the Arab homeland and Europe brings to mind the suffering and privation of Arabs at another time of great turmoil: in the Great War and after its end and the ensuing agreements.

In terms of migrants and modern migration, it is again Rushdie who has something to say – as his preoccupations are not merely literary, but critical as well: in his volume of critical essays, *Imaginary Homelands* (1991), he argues,

The effect of mass migrations has been the creation of radically new types of human being: people who root themselves in ideas rather than places, in memories as much as in material things, people who have been obliged to define themselves – because they are so defined by others – by their otherness; people in whose deepest selves strange fusions occur, unprecedented unions between what they were and where they find themselves. The migrant suspects reality: having experienced several ways of being, he understands their illusory nature. To see things plainly, you have to cross a frontier. (Rushdie 1991: 124-125)

What is relevant here is the eclectic nature of the migrant's psyche that Rushdie reveals, i.e. this new type of human being, whose relation to the – ever-shifting – world around him is ever more complex and quite extraneous to that of sedentary populations. The operative vectors of the migrant's personality – as they emerge from Rushdie's analysis – are both ontological (what they were, past ontology, mind you) and topographically-informed (where they find themselves – note the Present Tense here). This makeshift combination, between past ontology and present *locus* is what renders complexity and uniqueness to the modern migrant. Equally relevant, it is only by crossing frontiers, as Rushdie puts it, or, in other words, by transgressing boundaries, be they imaginary or real, can one experience epistemological awareness ( i.e. truly know things, or see things plainly, in Rushdie's words). Consequently, albeit driven by warfare or famine, migrants are complex protagonists of history and literature.

The history and literature of the First World War both help the readers realize how that cruel past was responsible one way or another for the present chaos in the Arab homeland. On the one hand, writers and historians have attempted to cover the great devastation brought about by the Great War in the West, on the other hand, there are many in Europe and other places in the world who do not acknowledge the amount of devastation and turmoil it perpetrated in the Arab homeland. The casualties in the Arab homeland were astounding: the relentless combat did not only devastate the countries and decimate military forces; it equally devastated entire economies and communities. So we can safely say that the effect of the Great War on the Arabs is not dissimilar to the aftermath of the Second World War in Europe. The economic, psychological and social consequences were profound and destructive .

The First World War brought about extra political turmoil to the area. In Europe, the conflict consolidated and created national identities. But when we look at the Middle East, it devastated the totalitarian Turkish system which, in spite of all its faults, had allowed for a diversity of identities living together for a long time. In 1916 during the First World War, the Sykes-Picot Agreement was drawn, which separated the area into fields under the authority of Britain and France: forcefully, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine were under the authority of Britain, whereas Syria and Lebanon were under the authority of France, and this would happen only if Britain and France won the war. The controversy that no one of the Arab representatives of these areas was informed about the agreement, which was negotiated secretly and was against all values of self-determination that was the centerpiece of Wilson's "14 Points" plan for the world peace at the end of the war. In 1923, the Turkish rule was replaced by the French Mandate as a new foreign ruler to Syrian and Lebanese people and they had no say in this or they could do nothing regarding their new government. So the area was deceived in the new framework of totalitarian domination, and the bases were established on permanent reciprocal distrust. It is always tricky to tackle hegemony – and this hegemony was not to be taken lightly.

The present refugee disaster is just a consequence of the mistakes made one hundred years ago, which entailed the First World War, which brought about an aftermath of conflict and ensuing misery.

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## CULTURAL TRANSLATION AS REPRESENTATION IN PAUL BOWLES' *THEIR HEADS ARE GREEN AND THEIR HANDS ARE BLUE* (1957)

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**Abstract:** *This paper is premised upon the American writer, Paul Bowles, and his journey into Morocco as a liminal topography. In his *Their Heads are Green and their Hands are Blue* the traveller-writer crosses borders, moving from the metropolis to the colony as a far-flung territory, a process which is faced with a sense of unrepresentability of the Other and its culture, leading to a sense of dislocation on the part of the traveller. The latter lives on the edge of two starkly different cultures, civilizations, religions and societies. His peregrination produces weird feelings which are associated with the liminal and the threshold, and which oscillate between the homely and unhomely, the ordinary and the mysterious.*

**Keywords:** cultural translation, identity, Otherness, Paul Bowles, representation, travel writing,

### 1. Introduction

Translation studies came to birth in the 1980s with the publication of Susan Bassnett's book, *Translation Studies* in 1980, an era wherein postcolonial studies got momentum as an area of study. Before the emergence of cultural studies and postcolonial studies, translation was subsumed within two different disciplines: Linguistics and Comparative Literature. Hence, translation came to mean the transaction and negotiation between two languages, but the proliferation of postcolonial studies and cultural studies, translation has adopted a new phase; translation as a complex negotiation between two different cultures. Cultural translation as a catchphrase came into existence only in the nineties of the last century, and it is concomitant with postcolonial and postmodernist discourse. In this vein, cultural translation is a new trope and it is used metaphorically to mean the process of movement from one culture to another and the different significations that emerge from it. This movement involves the crossing of borders; indeed, mobility is an intrinsic hallmark of cultural translation. This mobility happens both at the level of signification and space. The traveller/ the anthropologist moves from the metropolis to the colony or the periphery, a process which is faced with a sense of incomprehensibility or unrepresentability of the Other and its culture, leading to a sense of dislocation on the part of the traveller. The latter, hence, settles and lives in the borderline, so to speak. He/ she is a mediator between two cultures. In the main, cultural translation involves Bhabha's trope of in-betweenness, liminality or the third space.

Within the context of post-colonialism, translation can be deemed as a discourse and a site wherein problems of power and representation hold sway. Indeed, translation becomes the ground where there is confrontation of different identities, personal and cultural. Crossing the borders, the translator tries all the harder to impose his identity on the translated subject. So,

translating/representing the Other's culture is conditioned by historical and cultural differences and cannot be discussed outside that framework.

The purpose of this paper is threefold. First, it brings into sharper focus the concept of representation and how it is used in the field of travel literature as a discourse. Second, it casts light on cultural translation as representation in the light of the American expatriate, Paul Bowles' assembled essays *Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue*. The final part will be devoted to dealing with the process of exoticization as a kind of cultural translation and representation deployed by Bowles as a belated traveller.

## 2. Representation

Representation of other peoples, their cultures and places is one of the main features of travel narrative. The concept of representation, to rephrase the cultural theorist, Raymond Williams' well-known definition of the concept of culture, is one of the most complex words in the human sciences. It is deployed in many social fields such as art, philosophy, culture, politics, social sciences, human geography and literature. That's why "its semantic richness and complexity is due to the cross-fertilisation in history of its meanings in these different worlds. It is, in other words, a 'boundary notion', and therein lies still today... its innovative potential" (David Sibley et al. 2005:22). In this regard, the issue of representation has been of paramount significance as it has been weighed as part and parcel of the western colonial discourse. The latter's aim is to "make the Orient visible (and) clear" (Said 1978:22). For Said, the concept of representation has brought about many interrelated things onto the surface:

In the age of Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud, representation has thus had to contend not only with the consciousness of linguistic forms and conventions, but also with the pressures of such transpersonal, transhuman, and transcultural forces as class, the unconscious, gender, race, and structure. What transformations these have wrought in our notions of formerly stable things such as authors, texts, and objects are, quite literally, un-printable, and certainly unpronounceable. (1989: 206)<sup>1</sup>

The upsurge of academic study of travel writing today is usually associated with the influence of different current theories: (1) poststructuralist theories of mobility and displacement; (2) postcolonial and gender theory. The aim of postcolonial studies is to comprehend, and to contest, the pernicious consequences of the vast European empires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and to cast light upon the inequalities that exist between the Self and the Other. Postcolonialist scholars have accordingly sought to understand the processes that first created, and now perpetuate, these inequalities, and they have also concerned themselves more generally with questions relating to how cultures regard and depict each other, and how they interact and encounter. These are research agendas for which travel writing is an immensely useful resource; (3) the culture of travel which subsumes theories of globalization, tourism, postmodern geography, simulation, and the

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<sup>1</sup> As portrayed in Said's study, the rise of Orientalist learning, institutions, and literature coincided roughly with the expansion of Western colonialism and imperialism: that is, the period between 1815 and "1914 when European colonial dominion extended to 85 percent of the earth's surface". Pondering the close linkage between academic learning and colonial power, Said in his study was led to associate Orientalism with a quasi-Nietzschean "will-to-knowledge" or "will to- power"; seen from this angle, Orientalist discourse reflects not a serious engagement but rather a social "imaginary" or mode of "representation" imposed for purely strategic ends.

commodification of space; (4) and finally, writing travel as a representational practice can be related to post-structuralist theories of presence/absence and the decentred subject.

Representation presupposes the existence of a certain concrete reality, there in wait for representation and not as an imagined one (Johannes Fabian 1990:753). This means that there is a strong relationship between text and reality; one shapes the other. Debbie Lisle posits that this formulation, that is, texts shaping reality and reality shaping texts, “is that it reproduces a ‘correspondence’ understanding of representation. In other words, it assumes that there is a single, incontrovertible reality awaiting documentation by travel writers, and each travelogue can be judged for how accurately it represents this reality” (2006:11).

Edward Said, the progenitor of the postcolonial discourse, rightly asserts that knowledge on the Orient as a representation of an imagined world exists only in the mind of the Orientalist; it is an invention. Such representation is devoid of transparency and mediated by biases on the Orient and Orientals. This means that travelogues not only disseminated particular ‘facts’ about the Orient, that is, economic, political, religious, cultural and scientific knowledge, but also offered a much more encompassing ‘way of knowing’ the Orient delivered by more popular ‘fictional’ strategies. There is a combination of factual statements and fictional descriptions. In this manner, Said says that

The real issue is whether indeed there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations, because they *are* representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions and political ambience of the representer. If the latter alternative is the correct one..., then we must be prepared to accept the fact that a representation is *eo ipso* implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the “truth” which is itself a representation. (1978:272, italics original)

A more fruitful approach is the one that sees travel writing as occupying a space of discursive conflict. Travel narratives, in this context, are examples of what Hayden White calls “fictions of factual representations” (1976:21); they claim validity by referring to actual events and places, but then assimilate those events and places to a highly personal vision. Travel writing hence charts the tension between the writers’ compulsion to report the world they see and their often repressed desire to make the world conform to their preconception of it. Indeed, while some travel writers claim documentary status for their work, it is clear that most travel narratives are infused with the traveller-writer’s subjectivity. In the main, this self-perception of the traveller/ reporter/ representer leads to a dichotomous relation between the Self and the Other. As Said notes,

[t]he increasing influence of travel literature, imaginary utopias, moral voyages, and scientific reporting brought the Orient into sharper and more extended focus [. . .] But all such widening horizons had Europe firmly in the privileged centre, as main observer [. . .] even as Europe moved itself outwards, its sense of cultural strength was fortified. From travellers’ tales, and not only from great institutions like various India companies, colonies were created and ethnocentric perspectives secured. (1978:177)

Said posits that Orientalist texts consist of representations “as representations” which by no means depict and portray the truth of the Orient; rather, they employ “various Western techniques of representation that make the Orient visible, clear, ‘there’ in discourse about it. “These representations rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, agree-on codes of understanding for their effects, not upon a distant and amorphous orient” (23)<sup>2</sup>. Travellers

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<sup>2</sup> Travellers tend to project their existing opinions about the cultures they encounter in their writing. James Duncan discusses this dynamic in the preface to *Writes of Passage* by manifesting that “representations often reveal more about the culture of the author than that of the people and places represented”(1999:1).

tend to project their existing opinions about the cultures they encounter in their writing. European disciplines such as anthropology, ethnography, sociology, philosophy, history, fiction, and non-fiction (travelogues) captured the non-European subject within European frameworks. The Other/ the Orient is constructed in a representation that is then transmitted from text to text, with the result that Orientalist writing always reproduces its own unchanging stereotype of an unchanging Orient. Orientalism as a discourse constitutes a linguistic repetition structure of representation that draws its reality from the authority of textual repetition rather than any truth-value in relation to what they claim to represent. In a well-known passage, Said suggests that the things to look for in representations of the Other are “style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, not the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original” (1978:231).

The concept of representation is achieved and mirrored by means of language. The latter is the central ‘medium’ through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture. Representation through language is therefore cardinal to the processes by which meaning is produced. In Stuart Hall’s take,

representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our mind through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the “real” world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional; objects, people and events. (1977:17)

Hall manifests that language in this sense is a signifying practice: “representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people” (ibid.:15). Bill Ashcroft and others manifest that language is a cardinal site of struggle for postcolonial discourse as the colonial process itself begins in language. The latter is the most potent instrument of cultural control. Indeed, language exerts a great power as it is the method through which we name the world; “to name reality is therefore to exert power over it, simply because the dominant language becomes the way in which it is known” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1995:283). Language is the carrier of significance, and it is loaded with many important issues that postcolonial trend tries to come to grips with like identity and other outcomes of the transcultural encounters and interactions between different people who wield different aspects of coercion on each other.

Travel as a discourse is essentially entwined with other discourses; the travel accounts that were written and recorded during the turn of the nineteenth century are almost analyzed as part and parcel of the colonialist enterprise and expansion. In *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, Roy Bridges, critic on the approaches to travel writing, comments on the significance of the genre:

Travel writing [. . .] has a complex relationship with the situations in which it arose. It is taken to mean a discourse designed to describe and interpret for its readers a geographical area together with its natural attributes and its human society and culture. Travel writing may embrace approaches ranging from an exposition of the results of scientific exploration claiming to be objective and value-free to the frankly subjective description of the impact of an area and its people on the writer’s sensibilities. (2000:53)

Indeed, travel writing cannot be read as a simple account and record of a journey, a country and a narrator, but must be seen in the light of discourses circulating at the time. According to Tim Youngs travel writing is not a literal and objective record of journeys undertaken. It carries preconceptions that, even if challenged, provide a reference point. It is influenced, if not determined, by its authors’ gender, class, age, nationality, cultural background and education. It is ideological. And it is a literary form that draws on the conventions of other literary genres. Narrators, characters, plots and dialogue are all moulded accordingly (2006:2-3).

### 3. Cultural Translation as Representation

The concept of representation is a cardinal term in cultural translation. The representation of the other is so difficult to the extent that we talk about unrepresentability of the other. In cultural translation, representation is ambivalent, liminal and situated in the third space, where both the representer and the represented are effaced and forged. The concept of representation is of paramount importance in the assembled essays (*Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue*)<sup>3</sup> of the American expatriate, Paul Bowles, who spent more than fifty-two years in Morocco. Bowles left New York in the 1940s and headed for Tangier, the city with which he indelibly identified. Bowles is a composer, a translator, a novelist, an autobiographer and a traveller. His choice of expatriation is attributed to the sense of staleness, aggravation and malaise he felt in the Western world by dint of the aftermath of the Second World War. What's more, Bowles is in constant movement and mobility as he spends most of his life moving in search of the pristine, the mysterious, the queer, the exotic and the atavistic: "when I meet people fellow Americans travelling about here in North Africa, I ask them "What did you expect to find here?" Almost without exception the answer, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense of mystery" (1984: 23-24). This sense of mystery and constant movement is deeply entrenched and expressed in his works, especially his autobiography, *Without Stopping* (1972).

Paul Bowles looked for illiterate Moroccan story-tellers in Tangier, especially Mohammed Mrabet, Ahmed Yacobi, Laarbi Laayachi and others, and translated their stories into English for the Western readership. In this manner, we can position Bowles within the anthropologists of the late nineteenth century and the outset of the twentieth century for whom anthropology was perceived as a science that sought to 'preserve' the traditions of societies that are on the verge of disappearance. Like other diasporic expatriates, Paul Bowles is a "translated man", to use Salman Rushdie's phrase, because he crossed the border from America to North Africa.

Bowles' escape from the grip his civilization had on him took the form of unrelenting movement between cultures and within spaces, but also a movement between the Moroccan oral tradition and the written Western one. This state of life makes him live in a liminal space, a hybrid and in-between space. In the main, Bowles is a mediator and a negotiator between cultures because this new state of life gives him the freedom to translate other cultures. In his influential book, *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha demonstrates that "we should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and renegotiation, the *in-between* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (1994: 38). The question that should be posed here is that how does Paul Bowles translate Moroccan culture?

In his writings, Paul Bowles textualizes the Moroccan culture. Writing/translating the Other becomes a means whereby Bowles comes to terms with strangeness of the Moroccan culture and language. Bowles adopts an anthropological approach to the writing and translating of the Moroccan culture. He aspires to possess, know and control the Other. For Bowles, the salvage of the Other and his tradition can be maintained textually. The latter, Bowles deems, is disappearing because of the advent of the process of Europeanisation and the mushrooming of the Moroccan nationalists, who adopt the Western values. In G. D. Caponi's take, "Bowles's interest in ethnography was a clear extension of his romanticism, which led him to pity and nearly despise the Western educated Moroccans who were

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Bowles. *Their Heads are Green and their Hands are Blue: Scenes from the Non-Christian World*. New York: The Echo Press, 1984 (first published in 1957). The title is taken from Edward Lear's poem, "The Jumblies": "Far and few, far and few, /are the lands where the Jumblies live;/Their heads are green and their hands are blue,/ And they went to sea in a sieve."

changing what the first loved about the country” (1994:177). In this vein, in his assembled travel accounts, Bowles remarks plaintively, thus: “My own belief is that the people of the alien culture are being ravaged not so much by the by-products of our civilization, as by the irrational longing on the part of the members of their own educated minorities to cease being themselves and become Westerners” (1984:viii).

Bowles sets himself as the warden of the Moroccan oral culture because, to his belief, it is weak and in need to be represented. He is to speak on behalf of them. ‘Them’ here refers to the illiterate people and the masses because they epitomize the different and the strange, not the Westernized Moroccans. In a conversation with a westernized Moroccan friend, Paul Bowles writes the following:

“Why don’t you write about the civilized people here instead of the most backward?” [Asked a French-educated man]. I suppose it is natural for them to want to see themselves presented to the outside in the most “advanced” light possible. They find it perverse of a Western to be interested only in the dissimilarities between their culture and his. (1984:32)

In the postmodern period, the demarcation between disciplines is blurred. In these assembled essays, Paul Bowles has the power of language and by the same token he is the one who is capable of representing/translating the other and speaking on his behalf; lacking the capacity to speak and to write in the language of the master, the native is easily manipulated. He is directed to say what the writer wants him to say. Also, the native’s identity is undermined and subsumed within the anthropologist’s. Even as a translated subject, he is there as a narrative catalyst; he is there to serve the purpose of narrativization and exoticization; hence, the confrontational and representational aspect of translation. Bowles exoticizes the Other. The example of Abedsalam, a character in the accounts, is a good instance:

Abdesalam is not a happy person. He sees his world, which he knows is a good world, being assailed from all sides, slowly crumbling before his eyes. He has no means of understanding me should I try to explain to him that in this age what he considers to be religion is called superstition, and that religion today has come to be found to be a desperate attempt to integrate physics with science. Something will have to be found to replace the basic wisdom which has been destroyed, but the discovery will not be soon; neither Abedslam nor I will ever know of it. (1984:82)

By translating the other’s culture, Paul Bowles creates his own place neither that of the metropolis nor that of the periphery, but a place in-between, a third and a liminal space from which he articulates his own self. In the same vein, Paul Bowles, I deem, is virtually ambivalent in his relation to what he writes; he does not write from a Eurocentric perspective nor does he write from an exotic one, but rather he writes from a liminal position. Bowles adopts an anthropological approach to the description of the other, and since there is no much exotic left, he resorts to the technique of the exoticization as a technique that helps him to live in the marginal, the liminality and the third space. For instance, Bowles resorts to exoticisation when he makes company with Abedslam to Istanbul. He exoticises Abedslam to meet his own desires, for the exotic is on the wane.

#### **4. Exoticism and Exoticization as a Mode of Translating the Moroccan Other**

Paul Bowles can be subsumed within “belated travellers”, to use Ali Behdad’s own expression (*Belated Travelers* 1994). For Behdad, many travellers at the end of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, especially with the spread of the *fin de siècle* malaise and the complete change of the Victorian perception of values and traditions, headed for the Orient and they bore in mind one primary motive: to look for the exotic among the Orientals. Victor Segalen, who travelled and lived in the Pacific Islands and China, would

write a book posthumously published called, *Essai sur l'exotisme: Une esthétique du divers* (1904). He defines exoticism as the candidate, so to speak, best suited to protect contemporary life from the relentless dullness wrought by the transformations of capitalism into mass-society imperialism and colonialism. Segalen's definition of exoticism as the "aesthetics of diversity" is appropriate to a travel narrative that frequently depoliticizes the objects of its study, and that seeks to capitalize on anesthetized myths of cultural difference. For Ali Behdad,

Travelling in the Orient at a time when the European colonial power structure and the rise of tourism had transformed the exotic referent into the familiar sign of Western hegemony, these Orientalists could not help but experience a sense of displacement in time and space, an experience that produced either a sense of disorientation and loss or an obsessive urge to discover an "authentic" Other. (1994:13)

Writing from Jerusalem in 1830, Gustave Flaubert, a nineteenth-century traveller and Orientalist, and in a desperately urgent "invitation au voyage", expresses acutely the sense of belatedness late nineteenth-century orientalists felt toward the exotic Other in relation to earlier European travellers. Flaubert writes, "It is time to hurry. Before very long the Orient will no longer exist. We are perhaps the last of its contemplators" (663). Late nineteenth-century intellectuals thus encountered the predicament of how to become travellers-cum-writers of the exotic in an age of colonial dissolution. In this context, following the trail of Gustave Flaubert and other predecessors, mainly the French ones: Gérard de Nerval, Pierre Loti, Lady Anne Blunt, Isabelle Eberhardt, *inter alia*, Paul Bowles undertakes the Orientalist exoticist project, and an exoticist desire for disappearing Other. This desire is deeply rooted in the Orientalist tradition, a desire which Nerval calls "*Le désir de l'Orient*", (a desire for the Orient)<sup>4</sup>. Since there is no exotic left, the traveller resorts to the rhetoric and trope of exoticization, a representational strategy that is deeply seated in the colonial discourse and it is enhanced through the process of narrativization. When we read Bowles' assembled essays, we infer that his travel discourse is virtually ambivalent and "aporia displaces Orientalist pseudoscientific certainty here, allowing for the emergence of a schizoid discourse that simultaneously affirms and exposes the ideological discrepancies and political predicaments of colonial hegemony"(Behdad 1994:14). Paul Bowles finds it difficult to get rid of an authority that contributes to his shaping of a specific vision about the Orient, but at the same time he tries to produce a new discourse of the other that is exotic. For Behdad,

The representation of these belated travelers thus do not close on an exotic signified but practice an open deferment of signification; they are elliptic discourses, uncertain about their representations and melancholic about their inability to produce an alternate mode of writing about the desired Other. (1994:15)

Exoticism constantly resorts to antecedent and ancillary European generated imagery in order to represent differences between *us* and *them*, *here* and *there*, or *home* and *abroad*. Hence, frequently, perhaps in most cases, these differences are not particularly surprising or unfamiliar. Exoticism relies on nostalgia that longs for the past, dwells upon it, and phantasmatically inserts the past into narrations of the present. Strangely, nostalgic yearning for something familiar is mistaken as a desire for something exotic. However, that longed-for past often refers back to "home".

Many postcolonial critics - Edward Said, Arac and Rivot, Graham Huggan, Christopher Miller, among others - have attempted to show that exoticist colonialist expression creates, differentiates, and ultimately vilifies the colonized *other*. In their introduction to a collection of essays, *Exoticism in the Enlightenment*, Rousseau and Porter

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<sup>4</sup> A desire for the Orient (*Le désir de l'Orient*) is an expression firstly used by the French traveller, Gérard de Nerval in his book *Voyage en Orient*. 2 vols. Paris: Garnier- Flammarion, 1980.



argue that exoticist discourses have alternately served as critical weapons directed against “universal monopolies in religious truth and legitimate authority” (1990:12) and as subterfuges for the colonial interventions of a civilization that “increasingly assumed the right to define [and differentiate] human values and conduct in their highest expression” (ibid.:6). According to Graham Huggan,

exoticism describes, rather, a particular mode of aesthetic *perception* - one which renders people, objects and places strange even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery. The exoticist production of otherness is dialectical and contingent; at various times and in different places, it may serve conflicting ideological interests, providing the rationale for projects of *rapprochement* and reconciliation, but legitimizing just as easily the need for plunder and violent conquest. (2001:13, italics original)

Exoticism as a project and as an aestheticizing process conceals more than it reveals. Its politics is often concealed, hidden beneath the layers of mystification. It stemmed mainly from ceaseless overseas exploration and economic expansion and its accompanying quest for new sources of raw material, markets and cheap labor. This exoticism “followed the itinerary of capitalism as it migrated around the globe and often masked the violent seizure and colonial expropriation that was at the heart of its law of movement” (Harry Harootunian 2002: ix). In Deborah Root’s take, exoticism is self-empowering and self referential even, insofar as the objects of its gaze are not supposed to look back (1996:45). For this reason, exoticism has proved over time to be a tool and instrument of imperial power and hegemony. The ultimate project of exoticism is to recapture a lost time, to recover what modernity has erased, obliterated and effaced. Indeed, what exoticism constructed was the loss of something, an immense nostalgia for an experience that never existed and that was now made to appear prior to its narrative.

In this narrative, the old, precapitalist cultures signifying difference, mystification and value have been rediscovered precisely in those colonial sites where the violent process of deterritorialization was proceeding unchecked. Indeed, in his discussion of the Colonial Exposition<sup>5</sup>, the postcolonial writer, Christopher Miller suggests that the colonial exoticism of that event involved a larger project to represent and invent the colonies as Eurocentric fantasies. This reiterates one of the key arguments launched against exoticism - that colonial exoticism constitutes artificial and phantasmatic perceptions of colonial life in order to gloss over harsh realities that the colonial administrations carefully hid from the public’s view (Miller 1990:77-88). So the main critics of exoticism stress upon the fact that the exoticist project has contributed to the imperialist enterprise in terms of conquering and grabbing new lands; indeed, it

signified the primacy of the spatial dimension of capitalist expansion at the expense of its temporal workings and thus managed to displace and often efface the baneful effects of the actual deterritorialization and reterritorialization of land, labor, and capital that transformed and destroyed received cultures of reference to make them little more than outposts of Western civilisation. (Harootunian 2002:ix)

The encounter and interaction with the Other is not that historical coincidence; it is a historical necessity. In this vein, we can say that via narrativization as a discursive strategy

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<sup>5</sup> Miller addresses the rejection and resistance to colonial exoticism promoted by events such as the famous *L’Exposition Coloniale* that took place outside of Paris, in Vincennes in 1931. The Colonial Exposition was an enormous state sponsored fair, and Miller (and others) argues that it served as hegemonic, colonial, and exoticist propaganda.

exoticism has itself been re-appropriated and redeployed by the colonialist project. Christopher Bongie is one of the most prominent and distinguished in this field of exoticism and exoticization. Bongie writes in his ground-breaking study *Exotic Memories: Literature, Colonialism, and the Fin de Siècle* that exoticism is a “nineteenth-century literary and existential practice that posited another space, the space of an Other” (1991:4-5). He continues on to posit that

imperialist exoticism affirms the hegemony of modern civilisation over the less developed, savage territories, exoticizing exoticism privileges those very territories and their peoples, figuring them as a possible refuge from an overbearing modernity [...] What needs underlying here, however, is that they are both grounded in a common belief; namely, that there still exists places on this earth that are Other than those in which modernity has come to hold sway. The autonomy of alternative cultures and territories, their fundamental difference from what might call “the realm of the same,” is the one requisite condition of exoticism: only given this difference can individual hope to exercise – be it for imperialist or exoticizing ends – that heroic sovereignty denied him in post- revolutionary Europe. (ibid.:16-17)

The wonder and allure perceived in exotic peoples may precede their violent subjugation and colonialism. What’s more, the magnificence of newly colonized lands may disguise the brutal circumstances of their gain. The exoticist rhetoric upon which these travellers depend to represent the fetishised otherness “masks the inequality of the power relations without which discourse could not function” (Huggan 2001:14). In the same vein, in their co-authored book *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing*, Graham Huggan and Patrick Holland denote that exoticism is a kind of subterfuge utilized by the traveller to hide his voyeuristic predilection over other cultures:

Travel writing tends to function this way, expressing itself through exotic registers that allow for often voyeuristic appreciation of “different” places, cultures, and peoples while reserving the right to judge them according to narrowly ethnocentric tastes. The roving “I”s of travel narratives, like those of ethnographies, seek out difference; but they are less likely than their ethnographic counterparts to relativize their findings, to analyze the local systems through which cultures shape and reshape meaning. Instead, they are often drawn to surfaces more particularly, to bodies onto which they project their fears and fantasies of ethnicized cultural “other”. (1998:32)

As an exoticist mode, European travel writing risks being seen as tacitly imperialist. Jonathan Arac and Harriet Ritvo define imperialism as the “expansion of nationality”, so in the same vein exoticism is “the aestheticising means by which the pain of [imperialist] expansion is converted into spectacle, to culture in the service of empire” (13). For Edward Said, exoticism and exoticization function in a variety of imperial contexts as mechanism of aesthetic substitution which

replaces the impress of power with the blandishments of curiosity – with the imperial presence so dominating as to make impossible any effort to separate it from historical necessity. All these together create an amalgam of the arts of narrative and observation about the accumulated, dominated, and ruled territories whose inhabitants seem destined never to escape, to remain creatures of European will. (1978:159)

Paul Bowles exoticizes Moroccans through the process of narrativization. When we peruse his assembled essays, we find out that there is the concealment of imperial authority and the Self’s supremacy through exotic spectacles and scenes. The insertion of scenes which reflect those come across in the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* is not that innocent at all, because behind each exoticized scene there is an ideological tendency towards the inferiorised “Other”. Abdesalam, for instance, is rendered as the purveyor of the *exotica* through narrativized scenes: “This is the man from whom to learn of love and fighting, of beautiful

women and hairbreadth escapes, the whole on the model of the "Thousand Nights and a Night," of which versions more or less recognizable may now and again be heard from his lips" (Bowles 1984: 139). So, highly unreliable in his portraiture of foreign environments and characters, the exoticist author creates characters based on colonized subjects who often fluctuate between states of unreal god-like divinity and sickly melancholy. Indeed, the unreality of such creations suggests that exoticized characters are sheer figments of the author's imaginations: obscure invented creations.

The exoticist discourse is mainly based upon the subtle strategy that starkly brands the 'fascinated' and the 'strange' Other as exotic depending upon the Self's own determining criteria. To quote Graham Huggan, "exoticist discourse is complicit with the essentialist labelling of marginalised racial/ethnic groups. Exoticism effectively hides the power relations behind these labels, allowing the dominant culture to attribute value to the margins while continuing to define them in its own self-privileging terms" (2000: 24). The people being exoticized via narrativization are at the first sight perceived as being the source of the atavistic, the different and the fascinated, but these exoticized and narrativized Other is marginalized as well.

This narrative strategy or approach is reminiscent of what Derrida calls the "violence of the letter" imposed by one culture over the other, a violence "of difference, of classification, and of the system of appellations" (1976:107). Jacques Derrida regards the anthropological approach that the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss - and implicitly travel writers, ethnologists, historians, journalists, politicians and students of law, among others - undertakes in his studies of Indians of Western Brazil and other Latin American peoples as a kind of anthropological war made against societies who are perceived as inferior, uncivilized and far from the advanced stage of development that Western societies have reached. This anthropological and epistemological war wreaked upon the "inferiorised" people leads to the domination of those societies, for knowing means appropriating the other.

In *Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue*, the third space of representation is created, a space wherein the representer and the represented are mingled and forged with each other. Cultural translation is a nascent field that makes use of negotiation between cultures. This negotiation takes place in the third space or the "contact zone". In this context, in her recent book, *Imperial Eyes*, Mary Louise Pratt introduces the concept of the "contact zone" to refer to "the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, racial inequality, and intractable conflict" (1992:6). The "contact zone" is dealt with in terms of "co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power" (ibid.: 7). For Pratt, a "contact" perspective blurs any distinctions between separate spheres of coloniser and colonised, foregrounding instead the hybrid constitution of the "contact" subject's formation: victimiser and victim, representer and represented, coloniser and colonised. The "contact zone" becomes the scene of struggle over the power of representation.

The encounter of the Self with the Other, in Bhabha's eyes, serves as a location of fissure within a hierarchy of established significance, ripping apart the very ability of colonial discourse to give meaning and validity to the untranslatable, untamed meaningfulness of the Other. The latter is characterised by its untranslatability, incompressibility and unrepresentability. So, Paul Bowles finds it difficult to represent, translate and comprehend the other, not the impossibility of doing so. Bowles's journey to Tangier, "The Interzone", the third or the liminal space, is very reminiscent of Joseph Conrad's character-narrator's journey into the innermost darkness of Africa. Bowles journeys from the metropolitan city of New York to the periphery of Africa, but he finds it hard to translate the other's culture, to

understand the foreignness of Morocco. So he lives in “the midst of the incomprehensible”, to use Bhabha’s own phrase.

## **5. Conclusion**

Paul Bowles’s career in these assembled essays is to preserve and bring into focus the Moroccan oral culture which is on the wane and on the marginal. This project can be attributed to the fact that Bowles is in search for the exotic and the primitive. He has to speak for the natives who are exoticised and narrativised to meet the writer/ the translator’s urgent needs. For Bowles, Morocco is an exotic and liminal space, a space that caters for his desires. The Other/ the Orient is a site of some lost aspects that have been disappeared from the West - spirituality, love, beauty and rejuvenation. Although Paul Bowles tries all the harder to seek the exotic, which exists in the third space of representation, he feels schizoid as a decentred, fragmented and displaced self that is on the move, a fact which evokes the limits of representation itself.

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## THEMATIC COMPOSITION AND IDIOM VARIATION

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**Abstract:** *The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) has been studied to retrieve variant forms of semantically decomposable idioms that have no thematic composition for the purpose of determining whether thematic composition is a necessary criterion for idiom variation as claimed by Horn (2003). The syntactic variants searched for include passive, raising, tough-movement, relative clauses and wh-questions. Horn's (2003) hypothesis is not fully confirmed, as some variation has been found.*

**Keywords:** *decomposability, idioms, syntactic variation, thematic composition*

### 1. Introduction

Idiom variation studies have produced a number of theories concerning the properties that determine the flexibility of idioms. One of the hypotheses proposed by Horn (2003:248-249) uses the property of thematic composition, as well as transparency, as a predictor of idiom variability. As he explains, “[a]n expression has thematic composition if the thematic structure of the verb in its literal sense and that of the verb in its idiomatic sense are identical” (Horn 2003:249). Thematic structure is defined as “the set of semantic roles that a verb assigns to its NP arguments” (Horn 2003:249). An expression that has thematic composition is *break the ice*, where both in the literal and idiomatic senses there is an idea of the removal, or breaking (down), of a rigid entity (Horn 2003:249). *Break the ice* can therefore undergo certain syntactic transformations such as passivization. In contrast, *grasp the nettle* has no thematic composition and cannot therefore vary syntactically. Horn (2003:249) suggests that grasping in its literal sense involves taking hold of an object, but “confronting something does not involve the same sort of action”. Both types of idioms share the property of decomposability, (metaphorical) semantic composition in Horn's (2003:247) terminology, which enables speakers to assign idiomatic senses to the individual idiom components after the metaphorical meaning is known. Thus, *break* means ‘break down’ and *ice* means ‘a fragile/rigid barrier to social interaction’ (Horn 2003:247). The purpose of this paper is to find corpus evidence that confirms or refutes Horn's (2003:248-249) claim that thematic composition rather than semantic composition is a necessary condition for syntactic variation.

### 2. Idiom Variation and Thematic Composition

#### 2.1. Semantic composition and thematic composition

Horn (2003) distinguishes three major types of idioms based on the properties of semantic composition and thematic composition (see Figure 1). Some idioms lack

metaphorical semantic composition; in other words, the idiom components do not carry meaning, such as *kick the bucket* or *shoot the bull*. They are claimed to be fixed (Horn 2003:247). There are expressions that have both semantic and thematic composition, and a subdivision is made within this type on the basis of transparency.

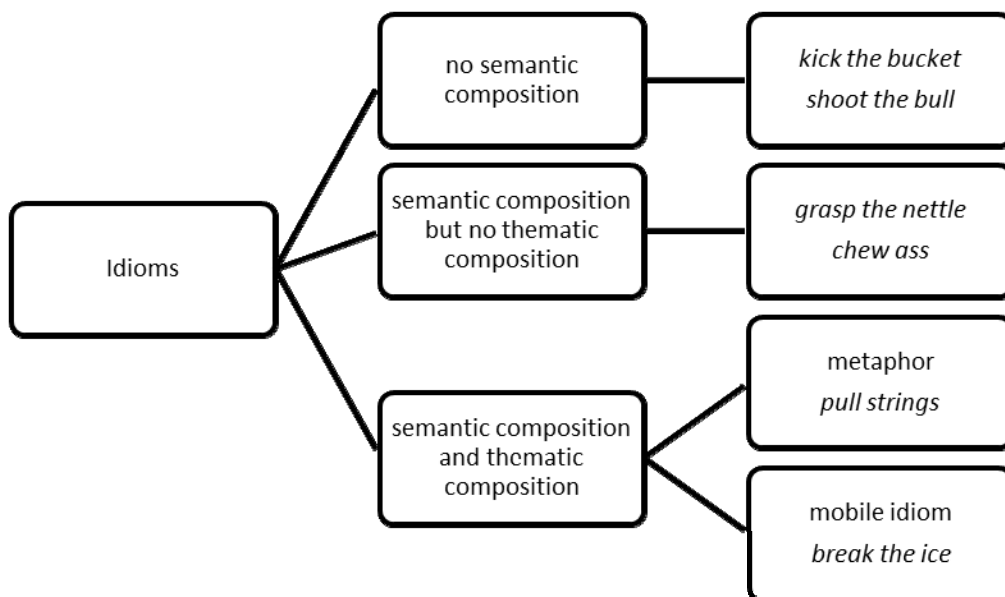


Figure 1. Types of idioms distinguished by Horn (2003)

Transparent expressions are called “metaphors”, and they can undergo several syntactic operations such as passivization, raising, *tough*-movement, relativization and *wh*-question (Horn 2003:261-262). All these syntactic changes affect the surface position of the idiomatic noun phrase by moving it before the verb, as can be seen in the examples below taken from Horn (2003:247, 261-262).

- (1) After a few beers, the ice was broken.
- (2) Strings seem to be pulled every time he applies for a promotion.
- (3) The bandwagon was easy to jump on.
- (4) Bill pulled the same strings that Joe pulled to get the promotion.
- (5) Which bandwagon will Fred jump on this week?

Sentence (1) illustrates the passive, example (2) shows raising, (3) is a case of *tough*-movement, while (4) and (5) illustrate relativization and *wh*-question, respectively. Note that raising necessarily involves passivization, since the object noun phrase has to be moved to subject position during passivization before this subject can be raised.

In addition to metaphors, there are semantically and thematically compositional idioms that are more restricted. They are labelled “mobile idioms” and can undergo only three of the aforementioned five operations according to Horn (2003:262-263): passive, raising and *tough*-movement. As a result of these transformations, the idiomatic noun, which is an internal argument of the verb, ends up in an external argument position as subject. Since these three types of syntactic operations are possible with the most restricted thematically compositional idioms, the same transformations are used as tests to distinguish thematically compositional expressions from those that have semantic composition but lack thematic composition (Horn 2003:247-248). These idioms are claimed to be recalcitrant to the three syntactic operations. To illustrate his point, Horn (2003) gives invented example sentences based on native speaker intuition. His claim is examined here using naturally occurring

language data in a large corpus. If Horn (2003) is right, no instance of passive, raising and *tough*-movement is expected to occur with idioms of the latter type.

Horn's (2003:248-249) suggestion concerning the significant role of thematic composition is meant to be an improvement on previous claims that attribute a key role to the property of (metaphorical) semantic composition in determining the flexibility of idiomatic expressions. However, thematic composition is supposed to explain only some types of variation selected by Horn (2003) as test cases, whereas semantic composition has been proposed to account for more variation types, including the premodification or postmodification of the idiomatic noun.

## **2.2. The corpus and the idioms**

Idioms occur relatively infrequently; therefore, a large corpus is necessary to study variation. The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) has been selected, because it contains about 520 million words (Davies 2008–). It is a modern, balanced corpus of American English that contains five genres: spoken, fiction, popular magazines, news and academic English.

The idioms that have semantic composition but no thematic composition have been taken from Horn's (2003) discussion. All the V (Det) N expressions are included, while two prepositional idioms (*give the lie to*, *make a great show of*) are ignored. Table 1 shows the expressions. Horn's (2003:251, 271) discussion in the main body of the article gives *blow one's cool* but his appendix lists the same phrase with the verb *lose*. Both versions have been included. Idioms having no semantic composition are ignored, as the central issue addressed here is Horn's (2003:248-249) claim that semantic composition is not sufficient for syntactic variation and thematic composition is a better predictor of flexibility.

blow one's cool	keep one's cool
catch hell	kiss ass
chew ass	lose one's cool
drop a bomb	lose one's mind
eat one's words	make a face
grasp the nettle	raise hell
hit the hay	screw the pooch

**Table 1. List of V (Det) N idiomatic expressions**

Queries were made online using the query syntax supplied with the corpus. The texts were searched for the noun in the singular or plural form within the maximum span of 9 words to the left or right of the verbal constituent. Separate searches were performed to collect solid or hyphenated compounds. Since *make a face* had a very high frequency, only a sample of its occurrences was examined. It was decided to study all instances of the form *made* in combination with *face/faces*, because two of the three syntactic tests proposed by Horn (2003:247-248) – passive and raising – require the past participle form of the verb. Searching for *make*, *makes* or *making* to retrieve passive or raising would have been futile. The expression *grasp the nettle* is a British English idiom; therefore, in addition to COCA, the 100-million-word British corpus BNC was also checked through the same web interface (Davies 2004–). If the British and American varieties of *grasp the nettle* are considered to be



separate expressions, and *blow one's cool* and *lose one's cool* are also regarded as different, then a total of fourteen idioms have been studied.

The decision was made to extract all occurrences of the idioms in preference to retrieving only forms which exhibit the syntactic operations in question. The methodology adopted here enables us to see the total occurrence of an idiom and what proportion of its occurrences instantiate the given variation. The search query included both the idiomatic verb and noun, as a result of which pronominalization could not be systematically retrieved. Some instances were found in the expanded context where the idiomatic noun was replaced by a pronoun, but they were ignored.

### 2.3. Results and discussion

The number of variant tokens and the total number of occurrences for each idiom are provided in Table 2. The low frequency of *blow one's cool* cannot help us assess its flexibility. For this reason, it will be ignored in the discussion below. *Screw the pooch* is also rather infrequent, which means that the data for this idiom has to be interpreted with some caution.

Most idioms occur predominantly in their unvaried form. The passive can be found with four of the idioms but with one of them only one instance is attested. A single occurrence is not usually regarded as firm evidence for the acceptability of a variant. Passive forms of *make a face* are not common, but *drop a bomb* and, in the British corpus, *grasp the nettle* are more common in the passive. Only finite passives are shown in Table 2, but one nonfinite passive also occurs (*and there were no faces being made*), and two instances of *get/want one's N Ved* are attested with *chew ass* and *kiss ass* each, as in (6).

(6) ...and now he was going to get his ass chewed.

Idiom	Total	Passive		Raising		Tough-movement		Relative clause		Wh-question	
			%		%		%		%		%
blow one's cool	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
catch hell	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
chew ass	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
drop a bomb	149	3	2	0	0	0	0	8	5	0	0
eat one's words	87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
grasp the nettle AmE	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	0	0
grasp the nettle BrE	54	6	11	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0
hit the hay	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
keep one's cool	223	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
kiss ass	133	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.8	1	0.8
lose one's cool	218	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
lose one's mind	1022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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make a face	812	3	0.4	0	0	0	0	24	3	0	0
raise hell	409	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	3	0.7	2	0.5
screw the pooch	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2 Total occurrences of idioms and variants

Raising does not occur. The only example that comes close to it is (7). As the finite verb is missing, it has not been classified as raising.

(7) He puts his hands out in front of him like a nervous salesman fearing the kibosh, calming things, the pooch about to be screwed.

Horn's (2003) third syntactic test, *tough*-movement, is not attested. While the absence of raising and *tough*-movement supports Horn's (2003:248-249) claim that thematic composition is a prerequisite to these transformations, passive forms can be found. The original claim is not fully confirmed.

Horn (2003:261-263) views relative clauses and *wh*-questions as grammatical only with the most flexible idiom type: metaphors. He does not use these operations as tests for thematically noncompositional expressions, but it is logical to assume that if relative clauses and *wh*-questions are unacceptable with non-transparent thematically compositional idioms (mobile idioms), they are also unacceptable with idioms that lack thematic composition. Furthermore, Horn's (2003:261-263) treatment of syntactic variation in metaphors and mobile idioms, discussed in Section 2.1, suggests that if an expression permits these operations, it should also permit passive, raising and *tough*-movement, but not vice versa. Neither claim is supported by corpus evidence. Relativization and *wh*-questions are found with some of the idioms in Table 2, though not with all. If we ignore single instances of a variant, relative clauses occur with six of the thirteen expressions, while *wh*-question is attested with one idiom. Some examples are given below.

(8) ...and the hell he would catch from Master Trevant for letting Saturn escape.

(9) This is the nettle that the president doesn't want to grasp...

(10) Whose ass do you have to kiss to get a deal like that?

Relative clauses also occur with *catch hell*, *grasp the nettle* (AmE) and *kiss ass*, though only one example is found of the latter, but the same idioms are not attested in passive, raising or *tough*-movement, which are all claimed to be more common. The corpus data reveal that with the exception of *grasp the nettle* in the British corpus, relativization is actually more common than the passive. Horn's (2003:261-262) relative clauses all contain the relative pronoun *that*, but the zero pronoun is much more common in the corpus. It outnumbers *that* by 36 to 5.

Ignoring low-frequency *blow one's cool* and instances where a single occurrence of a variant is found, of the thirteen expressions six exhibit some type of variation thought to be ungrammatical by Horn (2003). It could be argued that while thematic composition is not a necessary condition for syntactic variation of the type studied by Horn (2003), it is a slightly better predictor than semantic composition, because it accounts for the data of the remaining seven idioms in Table 2. However, in the pertaining literature, semantic composition is not claimed to be a sufficient criterion for flexibility. Nunberg (1978:127) states that semantic composition does not necessarily ensure the passivizability of an idiom. Nor is it claimed to be the only factor affecting variability. Transparency and discourse function are also proposed to be significant (Gibbs and Nayak 1989:125; Nunberg et al. 1994:509). Therefore, the

absence of variant forms in several rows of Table 2 is not a decisive argument against the role of semantic composition. Furthermore, the above discussion assumed that Horn's (2003) categorization of the expressions in Table 2 as semantically compositional (but thematically non-compositional) is correct. It is with this background assumption that the corpus evidence has been examined. A closer look on the expressions casts some doubt on this assumption. *Chew ass* and *kiss ass* lack semantic composition, despite Horn's (2003:248) meaning paraphrases: [administer/deliver] [a reprimand] for *chew ass* and [curry] [favour] for *kiss ass*. Semantic composition does not simply reside in attaching the verbal idiom meaning to the verb and the nominal chunk of the meaning to the noun. It should be based on metaphorical correspondences. Chewing ass as a painful physical act is metaphorically mapped onto a psychologically an emotionally painful experience, but ass does not correspond to reprimand. Similarly, kissing ass can be regarded as a hyperbolic act of currying favour with a person, perhaps as a subtype of the act of ingratiating oneself, but ass is not mapped onto favour. It metonymically stands for the person. The frozenness of these idioms can be satisfactorily explained by their lack of semantic composition. Any reference to thematic composition is unnecessary. Given its lack of semantic composition, what is remarkable is that *kiss ass* is not completely frozen. Altogether six semantically compositional idioms occur in some variant form and six idioms are frozen, if we ignore *blow one's cool* (due to its very low frequency), *chew ass* and *kiss ass* (due to their lack of semantic composition) and single occurrences of a variant. The variation that has been found for a given idiom is undoubtedly not very common, most tokens occur without any syntactic operations.

Horn (2003:267) himself notes that sentences like (11) and (12) seem to be counterexamples to his hypothesis. The idioms in these examples lack thematic composition but exhibit *tough*-movement.

(11) Humbe pie is never easy to eat.

(12) One's words are never easy to eat.

However, he dismisses (11) and (12) as conclusive evidence, as neither *eat humble pie* nor *eat one's words* undergo other syntactic operations he uses as diagnostic tests (Horn 2003:267-268). Interestingly, perhaps because of these counterexamples, he later modifies his claim: "all expressions that lack the property of thematic composition display, at most, severely limited mobility" (Horn 2003:271). This is more in line with the corpus evidence, but note that it is not *tough*-movement that tends to occur with the idioms in Table 2. To what extent the variation is limited can only be judged if data about the same syntactic operations of thematically compositional idioms is examined, but this is outside the scope of the paper.

### 3. Conclusion

This corpus study of the syntactic variation of semantically compositional but thematically noncompositional idioms has been conducted to find natural language evidence for Horn's (2003:248-249) hypothesis that thematic composition is a necessary condition for certain types of syntactic variation in idioms. Five types of variation have been examined: passive, raising, *tough*-movement, relative clauses and *wh*-questions. A total of fourteen expressions have been subjected to analysis, of which one (*blow one's cool*) is so infrequent that the corpus data cannot be regarded as informative, and two idioms (*chew ass*, *kiss ass*) seem to be semantically noncompositional. Of the remaining twelve idioms, six exhibit some sort of variation, though the proportion of variant tokens is often very low. The evidence suggests that Horn's (2003) hypothesis of the significant role of thematic composition is not fully confirmed. Future research should include a larger sample of idioms to explore the issue more deeply.

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## METAPHORS OF SADNESS IN QUOTATIONS

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**Abstract:** *The paper studies metaphors used in common people's passages about sadness on the internet site [www.searchquotes.com/search/Sadness](http://www.searchquotes.com/search/Sadness). The paper also investigates which sadness metaphors listed in Kövecses (2000) and Esenova (2011) are applied in sadness quotations on the site and finds only a small number of them. However, the quotations instantiate a number of other metaphors not listed by the two authors. The difference may be explained by the fact that linguistic expressions in Kövecses's and Esenova's corpora describe what people feel when they say they are sad, whereas sadness quotations present what people understand by the concept of sadness.*

**Key words:** *cognitive view, conceptualization, emotion concept, metaphor, sadness*

### 1. Introduction

Emotions have been studied by a number of different fields of science. Psychology is mainly interested to investigate how emotions come about, what components they comprise of (Atkinson et al. 1997) and what people actually feel when they say they are happy or sad (cf. Davitz 1969). Following Darwin (1965/1872) Ekman et al. (1972) claim that there are six universal basic emotions (happiness, anger, fear, sadness, surprise and disgust) that are accompanied and can be distinguished by universal facial expressions and physiological reactions. Linguistics investigates the language of emotion. Cognitive linguistics claims that the language we use reveals a lot about our emotion concepts, that is, about the way we conceptualize our emotional experiences (Kövecses 1990).

The present paper focuses on sadness. We usually feel sad when we lose or miss someone/something or we are not successful in achieving something. Often the bodily reactions accompanying sadness are not very easy to notice, however, a sad person may turn pale in the face area, become less energetic and slow down. A sad person normally assesses his/her situation as unpleasant, disappointing or hopeless. His/her body posture is drooping. His/her facial expression is typically a "long face" with drooping upper eyelids and a slight pulling down of lip corners (cf. <http://descriptivesfaces.blogspot.hu/2011/05/facial-expressions-sadness.html>). A sad person usually reacts with some kind of passivity including moving backwards, keeping away from other people, not speaking much, getting reserved and inactive (cf. Davitz 1969).

### 2. Metaphors in expressions of sadness

#### 2.1. The cognitive view of metaphor in the conceptualization of emotion

Cognitive linguistics claims that all human thinking is pervaded by the use of metaphor, a cognitive mechanism that enables us to understand very complex experiences and

abstract ideas in terms of simpler and more concrete experiences. It means that metaphor is a matter of thought rather than that of language. (Lakoff, Johnson 1980).

Research has found that the language of emotion also abounds in metaphors. In his seminal books *Emotion Concepts* (1990) and *Metaphor and Emotion. Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling* (2000) Kövecses surveys a number of different emotions, discusses conceptual metaphors (and metonymies) underlying linguistic expressions of emotions, outlines the prototypical scenario of emotion, focuses mainly on American English concepts of emotion and investigates questions of universality and cultural variation in the conceptualization of emotion.

In his *Emotion Concepts* Kövecses finds that the container metaphor EMOTIONS ARE FLUIDS IN A CONTAINER (Kövecses 1990:146) has a central role in the conceptualization of emotion, and it is especially true for prototypical emotions such as anger, fear and (romantic) love. He also claims that several other metaphors such as EMOTIONS ARE OBJECTS, EMOTION IS A LIVING ORGANISM, etc. (Kövecses 1990:160-181) play an important role in our understanding of emotions. In his *Metaphor and Emotion*. Kövecses surveys the metaphors of anger, fear, happiness, sadness, love, lust, pride, shame and surprise (Kövecses 2000:20-34).

Using Kövecses's findings in her corpus-based study Esenova (2011) surveys the metaphors of anger, fear and sadness in English. She points out that the container metaphor comes in several varieties in the conceptualization of the three emotions in question. Besides conceptualizing anger, fear or sadness as a fluid in a container, there is linguistic evidence that we also understand them as different kinds of substances or colours in a container. Esenova, too, identifies a number of other source domains for the conceptualization of anger, fear and sadness such as various animals, tastes, smells and so on.

## 2.2. Research questions

As can be seen cognitive linguistic literature claims that all human thinking uses metaphor as a cognitive mechanism and the language of emotions is metaphorical in nature. Therefore I hypothesize that speakers of English use a number of metaphors not only when they describe their emotional states and reactions but also when they tell what they mean by and what they think of certain emotions.

In the present paper, I look at the language of sadness used in quotations published on the internet site <http://www.searchquotes.com/search/Sadness>. I wish to investigate which of the sadness metaphors surveyed in Kövecses (2000) and Esenova (2011) are instantiated in the quotations and whether or not there are other emotion metaphors that are not discussed in either work.

## 2.3. Data collection and processing

For the aims of the present paper I retrieved ordinary peoples' passages on sadness from the first twelve pages of the internet site <http://www.searchquotes.com/search/Sadness> on 2016, February 02.

First, I read through the site and found that it contains two kinds of passages. There is an introductory passage presenting some introductory thoughts and there are numerous quotations listed on 70 pages. I selected the quotations containing the terms *sad* and *sadness*, *depressed* and *depression*, *grief* and *sorrow* from the first twelve pages of the site. (My quotations corpus contains 98 items.) The authors of the quotations are generally submitted, mostly common people, rarely poets, philosophers, and so on, however, there is a considerable number of passages with the note "unknown quotes". Below, I will only give names of internationally renowned authors.

Next, I attempted to arrange the quotations into groups according to the imagery used in them, then I identified the metaphors instantiated in the quotations and compared them with the metaphors in Kövecses's (2000) and Esenova's (2011) lists. Consider the following sadness metaphors listed in Kövecses (2000:25-26):

SAD IS DOWN: He *brought me down* with his remarks.  
SAD IS DARK: He is in a *dark* mood.  
SADNESS IS LACK OF HEAT: Losing his father *put his fire out*; he's been depressed for two years.  
SADNESS IS LACK OF VITALITY: This was *disheartening* news.  
SADNESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER: I am *filled with* sorrow.  
SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL FORCE: that was a *terrible blow*.  
SADNESS IS AN ILLNESS: She was *heart-sick*. Time *heals* all sorrows.  
SADNESS IS INSANITY: He was *insane with* grief.  
SADNESS IS A BURDEN: He *staggered under* the pain.  
SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM: He *drowned* his sorrow in drink.  
SADNESS IS A CAPTIVE ANIMAL: His feelings of misery *got out of hand*.  
SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT: He was *seized by* a fit of depression.  
SADNESS IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR: She was *ruled by* sorrow.

and in Esenova (2011: 97-111)

SADNESS IS A SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER.  
SADNESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER.  
SADNESS IS A DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER.  
SADNESS IS A COLOUR.  
SADNESS IS A CHILD.  
SADNESS IS A PURE SUBSTANCE.  
SADNESS IS A MIXED SUBSTANCE.  
COMPLEX EMOTIONS ARE MIXED SUBSTANCES.  
COMPLEX EMOTIONS ARE MIXED FOOD SUBSTANCES.  
SADNESS IS A SUPERNATURAL BEING.  
SADNESS IS A BLACK DOG.  
SADNESS IS A HIDDEN ENEMY.  
SADNESS IS A TORMENTOR.  
SADNESS IS A HORSE.  
SADNESS IS A SNAKE.  
SADNESS IS AN OLD SNAKE SKIN.  
SADNESS IS A BAD SMELL.  
SADNESS IS A BAD TASTE.  
SADNESS IS A GOOD TASTE.  
SADNESS IS A PLANT.

#### **2.4. Metaphors in the introductory passage**

The passage below gives an introduction to the internet site <http://www.searchquotes.com/search/Sadness>. It defines the concept of sadness, its cause and effects, and suggests that it should be avoided:

Sadness pertains to the state of being sad, gloomy or sorrowful. One feels sad and experiences sadness when everything is going against us, or one is dejected or neglected. Ample reasons and situations can cause sadness. But melancholy and sadness should be overcome in some manner or the other. Sadness only hinders progress and efficiency at work. A sad person cannot concentrate on anything because his mind does not work at all and is bothered with the cause of his sadness. Sadness makes one grave, serious and too dejected. It halts progress and forces us to see the negative side of things rather than the brighter side. So, kill sadness or if possible, stay away from it. In the words of Percy Bysshe Shelly, 'Change is certain. Peace is followed by disturbances; departure of evil men by their return. Such recurrences should not constitute occasions for sadness but realities for awareness, so that one may be happy in the interim'.

The first sentence identifies sadness as a state. In psychology sadness is clearly identified as an emotion, in fact, it is one of the six universal basic emotions (cf. Ekman et al. 1972). The following sentences suggest that sadness is associated with something negative. There seem to be two groups of expressions according to the imagery they use. Consider:

melancholy and sadness should be overcome in some manner or the other  
kill sadness or if possible, stay away from it

In these expressions melancholy and sadness are conceptualized as an opponent that can be overcome, killed or at least one can stay away from them. Therefore these expressions instantiate the conceptual metaphor SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT, which is an item in Kövecses's list (Kövecses 2000:26).

Sadness only hinders progress and efficiency at work.  
It halts progress and forces us to see the negative side of things rather than the brighter side.

These sentences present sadness as a power, which is stronger than the self and forces the self to do certain things and does not allow to do certain other things. Thus the metaphor SADNESS IS A POWER STRONGER THAN THE SELF. This metaphor is not mentioned either in Kövecses (2000) or in Esenova (2011), however, it seems to capture an aspect of the sadness experience that is easily associated with Kövecses's "SADNESS IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR: She was *ruled by* sorrow." The following sentences refer to the fact that sadness just like other intense emotions may disturb the normal functioning of the mind (and body):

A sad person cannot concentrate on anything because his mind does not work at all and is bothered with the cause of his sadness.

Thus the metaphor SADNESS IS DISTURBED MENTAL FUNCTIONING. At a more extreme case disturbance of normal mental functioning can result in some illness, consider Kövecses's (2000:25) examples:

SADNESS IS AN ILLNESS: She was *heart-sick*. Time *heals* all sorrows.  
SADNESS IS INSANITY: He was *insane with* grief.

## 2.5. Metaphors in quotations

In this section, I discuss the metaphors instantiated in the quotations found on the site <http://www.searchquotes.com/search/Sadness>. In a detailed analysis of my corpus I arranged the quotations into groups according to the imagery used in them, that is, the source domains applied in the underlying metaphors. I also realized that some of the metaphors have several varieties. Therefore I present the metaphors in groups giving the main metaphor first, then its varieties followed by their instantiations.

I have claimed above that the container metaphor has a central role in the conceptualization of emotions. Kövecses (2000) and Esenova (2011) prove that it is true for sadness, too. At the beginning of my research I expected to find a considerable number of linguistic expressions manifesting a variety of the SADNESS IS A FLUID/SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER metaphor. However, I have only found a small number of expressions applying the container source domain. Consider:

- (1) Through all those times I lived in sorrows, I learned that grief isn't the answer, but staying happy is what keeps life going.



- (2) Music is the only thing in the world that can block out madness and can be consumed in sadness, for it helps the soul survive even if only for a short time.
- (3) Can I see another's woe, and not be in sorrow too? Can I see another's grief, and not seek for kind relief? – William Blake
- (4) When love is lost, do not bow your head in sadness; instead keep your head up high and gaze into heaven for that is where your broken heart has been sent to heal.

The expressions above do not present sadness as a fluid or substance in a container but as a container itself. It is something in which one can be or live, thus the metaphor SADNESS IS A CONTAINER. The metaphor is a specific level version of the generic level metaphor EMOTIONAL STATES ARE CONTAINERS (Kövecses 1990:145).

Related to the container metaphor Esenova (2011: 100) identifies the metaphor SADNESS IS A DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER instantiated by *There's a corrosive sadness in her, because of that* and *Tears help get the poisonous grief out of your system*. In my corpus I find the following quotations manifesting the metaphor SADNESS IS A DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE:

- (5) Being sad corrodes happiness of your surroundings, but shows you the person who cares for you.
- (6) Good humour is the health of the soul, sadness its poison.

Sentence (6) implicitly contrasts health and illness and as can be seen Kövecses (2000:25) identifies the metaphor SADNESS IS AN ILLNESS, and gives the examples *She was heart-sick. Time heals all sorrows*. The following sentence in my corpus captures a similar aspect of sadness, too:

- (7) He that conceals his grief finds no remedy for it.

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (Hornby 1989) gives the example *He found a remedy for his grief in constant hard work* telling not only that grief is thought of as an illness but also what a possible remedy can be.

The following quotations instantiate the metaphor SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM:

- (8) With time the intensity and sharpness of my pain, my sadness my disappointments and my despair, slowly fades, but my heart is still broken and my eyes still cry for you.
- (9) Depression is nourished by a lifetime of ungrieved and unforgiven hurts.
- (10) Depression may bring people closer to the church but so do funerals.
- (11) We have no right to ask when sorrow comes 'why did this happen to me?' unless we ask the same question for every moment of happiness that comes our way.
- (12) Let your tears flow and where they go, let your sorrows follow.

Kövecses (1990:165-166) claims that the metaphor EMOTION IS A LIVING ORGANISM (PLANT, ANIMAL, PERSON) goes back to the metaphor EMOTIONS ARE OBJECTS, where there is a distinction between the animate and the inanimate. Furthermore, as can be seen from the examples above that show emotions as living organisms "emotions are capable of *doing* something on their own" (Kövecses 1990:166), e.g. *fade* in sentence (8) and "they are also capable of independent action such as leading a life independent of the self" (loc. cit.), e.g. *bring* something in sentence (10) and *come* and *follow* in sentences (11) and (12) respectively as well as "can be conceived of as living organisms that are TO BE TENDED" (loc. cit.), e.g. *be nourished* in sentence (9). We may think of such expressions as phrases instantiating several varieties of the same metaphor (living organism / animate object) and capturing a variety of aspects of the sadness experience.

In contrast to sentences manifesting the animate object metaphor, I found ample examples instantiating the metaphor EMOTIONS ARE INANIMATE OBJECTS. Sentence (13) instantiates SADNESS IS A MEASURABLE OBJECT, consider:

- (13) There is no greater sorrow than to recall in misery the time when we were happy.

The examples below use a similar imagery, however, they manifest the metaphor SADNESS IS A UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, consider:

- (14) The essential sadness is to go through life without loving. But it would be almost equally sad to leave this world without ever telling those you loved that you love them.  
(15) It is sadder to find the past again and find it inadequate to the present than it is to have it elude you and remain forever a harmonious conception of memory.  
(16) Of all the sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these: it might have been.

I found eleven quotations with one of the following: *sad*, *sadder*, *saddest*. One uses the positive, another the comparative form, and nine sentences use the superlative form of *sad*. Quotation (14) mentions two things and refers to the same intensity of sadness of the two experiences. Quotation (15) compares the relative measures of two experiences, while (16) refers to the extreme measure of sadness in the situation in question.

In example (17) another aspect of the object experience is captured:

- (17) Shared joy is a double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow.

It is interesting to note that sentence (17) instantiates the metaphor SADNESS IS A SHAREABLE OBJECT (*shared sorrow*) in combination with the instantiation of the metaphor SADNESS IS A MEASURABLE OBJECT (*half a sorrow*), too. Therefore we can say that the sentence is an instantiation of two metaphors in one sentence.

The following quotations highlight that one can learn from their sadness:

- (18) I'm just human, I have weaknesses, I make mistakes and I experience sadness; But I learn from all these things to make me a better person.  
(19) Sometimes being sad is an important lesson in life.  
(20) Sorrow is better than laughter: for by sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. (Ecclesiastes 7:3)

In our culture there is a widely shared view that we become better persons by gaining experience in different fields of life. Often we also think that the worse or more painful the experience is the more important the lesson is and the greater the change is in our character. The metaphor underlying examples (18) to (20) is SADNESS IS A BENEFICIAL THING (or SADNESS IS AN EXPERIENCE THAT MAKES ONE BETTER).

I found thirteen quotations instantiating the metaphor SADNESS IS A THING HAVING A CAUSE. Consider the following three of them:

- (21) ... whenever I start feeling sad, because I miss you, I remind myself how lucky I am, someday I'll be with you.  
(22) Attempts at kindness that compromise your heart cause only sadness.  
(23) There is only one reason for sadness, and that is the lack of ability to find happiness in everything.

The passages not presented here identify a wide range of causes of sadness, such as memories, worrying, disappointment, mistakes, failure to do something, saying goodbye, etc. The following quotation does not only name the cause of sadness but also tells how to avoid it, which in turn is a recipe of happiness and contrasts the two emotions at the same time. Consider:

(24) One of the simplest ways to stay happy is by letting go of the things that make you sad.

I found five more quotations that contrast happiness and sadness and show that the two emotions do not exist or cannot be identified without each other, thus the metaphor SADNESS AND HAPPINESS FORM A DICHOTOMY, consider the following three examples:

- (25) Some days are just bad days, that's all. You have to experience sadness to know happiness, and I remind myself that not every day is going to be a good day, that's just the way it is!
- (26) Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness. (Carl Jung)
- (27) Life is a circle of happiness, sadness, hard times, good times. If you are having hard times have faith that good times are on the way.

The examples below demonstrate that sadness and happiness are contrasted through the idea of having and not having certain things. The following quotations are instantiations of the metaphors HAPPINESS IS HAVING THINGS, SADNESS IS NOT HAVING THINGS, consider:

- (28) There's nothing more depressing than having it all and still feeling sad.
- (29) The saddest part isn't that with each passing day I feel like I need you more, but it's the fact that you don't need me at all.
- (30) If happiness always depended on what we had, then the richest would always be glad, not sad.

The examples below contrast happiness and sadness to each other in a special way:

- (31) Some people look at your exterior and all they see is happiness but they don't know that your interior is full of sadness.
- (32) Every human walks around with a certain kind of sadness. They may not wear it on their sleeves, but it's there if you look deep.

Quotations (33) and (34) instantiate the metaphors HAPPINESS IS A THING OUTSIDE THE SELF and SADNESS IS A THING INSIDE THE SELF.

### **3. Conclusion**

In the discussion above we have seen that the language of quotations on sadness is very rich in metaphors, which goes hand in hand with the cognitive view on the metaphorical nature of human thinking in general. However, my second hypothesis expecting the same metaphors in the language of sadness quotations as in the language of happiness has only partly proved to be the case. The metaphors SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT, SADNESS IS A CONTAINER, SADNESS IS A DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE, SADNESS IS AN ILLNESS, SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM are found to be instantiated both in the language of sadness according to Kövecses (2000) and Esenova (2011), whereas the metaphors SADNESS IS A MEASURABLE OBJECT, SADNESS IS A UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, SADNESS IS A BENEFICIAL THING, SADNESS IS A THING HAVING A CAUSE, SADNESS AND HAPPINESS FORM A DICHOTOMY, SADNESS IS NOT HAVING THINGS and SADNESS IS A THING INSIDE THE SELF are not covered in either Kövecses (2000) or Esenova (2011). It is worth noticing that the language of sadness mainly describes what we feel and how we behave when we are sad, while the language of happiness quotations is mainly concerned with what happiness means, how it comes about, how it can be overcome and so on, that is, it has a rather theoretical approach to the emotion. Therefore I assume that the difference in the range of metaphors can be explained by the difference in the approaches of the two areas.

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**EXPLORING NOMINALIZATION IN THE INTRODUCTION AND METHOD  
SECTIONS OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS RESEARCH ARTICLES:  
A QUALITATIVE APPROACH**

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**Abstract:** *One of the most distinctive linguistic characteristics of academic writing is the high frequency of nominalized structures. The present study explores how nominalization was used as an approach to making knowledge claims in applied linguistics research articles. Data comprised the introduction and method sections of 16 empirical papers featuring the IMRD (Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion) format, drawn from the most recent issues of 10 journals, with a total of 40,122 running words, from which 3,150 instances of nominalization were drawn. Analyzing these nominalized structures in the co-text of their local spans revealed 15 patterns, with the preference for some of the patterns varying across the introduction and method sections of these articles. Results showed a higher concentration of nominalization in the introductions. The study also identified the more prevalent nominal expressions in each section. The fact that each of these sections serves different purposes appears to justify the use of a contrasting range of nominal expressions. Based on the findings of this study, some pedagogical implications for academic writing and reading, ESP/EAP courses, and researchers are proposed.*

**Keywords:** *Academic Writing, Introduction, Method, Nominalization, Research Articles, English for Academic Purposes*

## **1. Introduction**

Research articles are recognized as one of the most valuable scientific genres and a key medium for generation and distribution of new knowledge in the academic community. Research articles (RAs) represent a valuable resource for genre studies as evidenced by their continued use as data for investigating the writing conventions, social practices and values of a discipline and research community (Bondi and Hyland 2006). They demand meticulous academic requirements in terms of both textual organization and linguistic choices (Lim 2006). Within the framework suggested by Swales (1990) for the organization of RAs, in terms of Introduction, Method, Result, and Discussion (IMRD), introductions and methods sections constitute two major components. The fact that in the introduction section “writers of RAs compete for the acceptance and recognition” sheds light on the importance of this section within the academic communities in which they operate (Swales and Feak 1994:174). In their introductions, writers contextualize their own research by situating it within a discipline and in relation to a body of theory or research, using this as a platform for the construction of an argument for their own study (Hood 2004). In the method section, the research writer describes their approach to the study being reported – the methodology, materials, and procedures - which is seen as an important move in the argument, since it makes it possible

for other researchers to replicate the study (Swales and Feak 1994:165). The importance of the method section is due to its function as the connector of “a particular research method with previous research procedures”, or “the section itself with other key sections, especially the Introduction and Results” (Lim 2006:283). Through the method section, the writer will be able “to convince the readership of the validity of the means employed to obtain findings” (Lim 2006:283).

Motivated by the need to become aware of textual organization of RAs, the purpose of the present study was to investigate how knowledge is claimed in the introduction and method sections of RAs in applied linguistics by incorporating nominal patterns. The findings of this study showed that nominal expressions in the introduction and method sections of Applied Linguistics RAs create a pattern in their co-text, and the use of nominal expressions can identify each section and indicate the way that knowledge is claimed in each section. The results of this study are likely to enable researchers as well as novices to gain insights into how nominal expressions correspond to the macro-structure organization of each section.

Over the last decades, a large number of studies have been conducted in the realm of academic writing. A number of these studies are devoted to the analysis of academic writing from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics (SFL). Some of these focus on microstructural aspects such as ideational grammatical metaphor types and functions; nominalization types, frequency, and density of this genre (e.g. Davtgari Asl and Shahab 2015; Jalilifar, Alipour and Parsa 2014; Kazemian, Behnam and Ghafoori 2013; Sayfour 2010). The relevance of the SFL approach for pedagogical studies is related to its “functional-semantic approach to language which explores both how people use language in different contexts, and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system” (Eggins 2004:21). It interprets language “as interrelated sets of options for making meanings” (Halliday 1994:15).

From the perspective of SFL, the notion of grammatical metaphor provides valuable insights into areas of practical application, such as textual studies, questions of language development and literacy, and the processes of semiosis (Ravelli 2003). According to Ravelli (2003:43), one central reason for being interested in the processes of grammatical metaphor is its relation to comprehension of written texts, and thus to processes of literacy. Halliday and Martin (2005:87) define grammatical metaphor as the “substitution of one grammatical class, or one grammatical structure by another”. Grammatical metaphor “adds a further dimension of depth to semantic construal of experience” (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999:291). It involves a type of metaphorical movement from a process as clause to a process as noun phrase (Taverniers 2004).

One of the most distinctive linguistic characteristics of academic writing is the high frequency of nominalized structures (Biber and Gray 2013). Nominalization, as a repository of creating grammatical metaphor (Halliday 1994), is connected “with the texts that require language economy and high information density” (Susinskiene 2010:142). Its critical role is to construct knowledge, organize text, enable evaluation, and facilitate information flow (Martin 2008). Maintaining cohesion in academic texts, revealing writer stance, and contributing to an impersonal academic tone are among the functions of nominalizations (Baratta 2010). By nominalizing, verbs and adjectives are construed metaphorically as nouns (Halliday 1994), giving any phenomenon of experience “the maximum potential for semantic elaboration” (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999:265).

There have been numerous investigations in recent years into the functions, frequency and use of nominalization in oral and written scientific discourse. A review of recent research suggests that most studies have focused on written texts, including verb-based nominalizations in 1, 892 pages of history texts (Susinskiene 2009) or in political discourse (Sarnackaitė 2011), in undergraduate writing (Baratta 2010), in discussion sections of medical

English papers (Wenyan 2012), in IELTS writing test papers (To, Le and Le 2013), in Applied Linguistics and Biology textbooks (Jalilifar et al. 2014), in an English applied linguistics textbook and its corresponding Persian translation (Shirali 2014), and in the abstract section of English medical articles (Mahbudi, Mahbudi and Amalsaleh 2014).

The studies listed above suggest that the tendency of text analysts is to study the crucial role played by nominalization in building the logical structure and the organization of scientific discourse (Bloor and Bloor 2004). Nevertheless, the relationships between genre specificity, academic text organization, and nominalization have yet to be adequately empirically examined. There has been little work into how nominalization is realized in the different sections of RAs that serve different purposes, leading to different linguistic and rhetorical structures in these sections (Swales and Feak 1994). For instance, the method section is said to have an expository character (Martinez 2003), whereas the introduction section is claimed to be argumentative in nature (Hood 2004). Given the potential implications for the study of academic writing, therefore, it is unfortunate that we know very little about the distribution and the patterns of nominalization use in these sections, and this calls for further research on nominalized expressions in RAs, the findings of which could be fed into research writing courses.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 The analytical framework

The current study followed a qualitative approach to analysis. The method of analysis was top-down, applying the models presented by Halliday (1998) and Halliday and Matthiessen (1999). They have classified grammatical metaphor into 13 types of which four types are categorized as nominalization. Among the types of grammatical metaphor, the shifts from quality (e.g. unstable => instability; quick(ly) => speed); process (e.g. transform => transformation; will/going to => prospect; can/could => possibility, potential, try to => attempt; want to => desire); circumstance, relator, and prepositional phrase to an entity (e.g. with => accompaniment; to => destination; (dust is) on the surface => surface dust ), conjunction (e.g. so => cause, proof) and a shift from noun to noun modifier were regarded as nominalization in this study.

What we are labeling ‘nominalization’ in this article primarily applies to the Thing or Head noun in the nominal group. The nominal group expands lexically by modification; it encompasses a functional structure: “Deictic–Numerative–Epithet–Classifier–Thing–Qualifier” (Halliday 1985:279). In nominal groups, the Deictic function is realized by determiners, for example demonstratives (e.g. *this*, *the*), by possessive nouns or pronouns (e.g. *Sony’s* in *Sony’s latest model*; *your* in *your home*), and by non-specific items such as the indefinite article (e.g. *a/an*, *some*, *each*, *neither*, *all*). Numeratives can be realized by numerals such as two or second or by expressions such as *many*, *several*, *few*, and *lots of*. The function of a Classifier is to identify a subcategory of the modified item (Bloor and Bloor 2004). For example, in *bus station* the Classifier *bus* puts the item *station* in a subclass of stations, distinguishing it from *train station*, or more broadly from such things as *gas station*. The function of Epithet is to define the scope of the term it modifies, but does not identify a subcategory of it. For example, in *noisy station*, *noisy* indicates features of the station that do not put it into a subset of types of station. Thing functions as the Head of the nominal group and can be modified. The sixth function in the nominal group is *Qualifier*, the experiential label for the Postmodifier. Very frequently in English, the Qualifier function is realized as a prepositional phrase.

## 2.2 Data

For the purposes of this study a list of 60 high-impact ISI (Institute for Scientific Information) journals (with the impact factor above 0.7) were distributed among applied linguistics experts in Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, and they were asked to select 15 journals to which they might choose to submit their manuscripts. Ten journals, having being selected with the highest frequency, were then chosen for the study (see Table 1 below). The most recent issue of each journal was chosen, altogether forming a corpus of 62 articles (among which 53 articles reported empirical investigations), 36 book reviews, 7 reviews, 4 forum samples, 9 book notes, and 6 commentaries. As the analysis was focusing on empirical RAs featuring the IMRD format, only the introduction and method sections of the RAs were selected and analyzed for the study. In separating the two sections for analysis, we found that some articles followed variations of the IMRD (e.g., ILMRDC) structure. To guarantee the consistency of selection, all the sections prior to Method were regarded as Introduction. Likewise, the sections that fell between Introduction and Results or an alternative - such as Findings, Data Analysis, or Analysis – were regarded as Method sections. The data selection and analysis were simultaneous and continued until no more new patterns emerged. The articles were first numbered from 1 to 53; the sections considered as introduction or method were then coded as I and M respectively.

Name of Journals	The Impact Factor Value	The Number of Empirical Papers
Applied Linguistics	1.5	3
Discourse and Society	1.4	5
English for Specific Purposes	1.14	8
Journal of English for Academic Purposes	0.97	8
Journal of Pragmatics	0.8	7
Journal of Second Language Writing	1.13	5
Language in Society	0.92	1
Modern Language Journal	1.11	7
Second Language Research	0.7	5
Studies in Second Language Acquisition	1.8	4

Table 3. Selected ISI Journals and the Number of Empirical Papers

## 3.3 Procedure

Analysis began by careful reading of the coded texts several times. They were then scrutinized in order to identify tokens of nominalized expressions used by the authors. Coding reliability was guaranteed by a second analysis after about a two-month interval, and any discrepancy in distinguishing nominalizations was recorded and resolved. To calculate the amount of intra-coder reliability, Cohen's Kappa coefficient, a statistic suited for nominal categories, was employed, and the obtained index was 0.91. Kappa values can range from -1 to +1; a value of 1 represents perfect agreement, and a value between 0.80 and 1 implies very good agreement.

Furthermore, a portion of the data was selected and analyzed by the second researcher of this study to check the accuracy of recognition of nominal expressions and help maximize the dependability of the analyses and the findings. Cohen's Kappa coefficient indicated an index of 0.80. The rest of the data was analyzed by the main researcher of the study and then, in all cases where there were ambiguities in identification of nominalized structures, we



negotiated the differences until complete consensus was reached. The corpus finally investigated for this study comprised the introduction and method sections of 16 articles totaling 40122 words.

Determining nominalization depends on discerning the congruent rewording for all of the extracted grammatical metaphors. However, sometimes the metaphor cannot be unpacked to yield a more plausibly congruent form, and this distinguishes a grammatical metaphor from a technical term (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999). When a wording becomes technicalized, a new meaning is construed which has full semantic freedom (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999:286). Almost all technical terms appear as grammatical metaphors which can no longer be unpacked. The following examples extracted from the articles illustrate these kinds of technical nominalisations:

- [1]: ... is analysed using the methodology of *conversation analysis* (CA) ... (6-I)
- [2]: ... calculate both the average and the *standard deviation* values. (27-M)
- [3]: ... performance changes regarding learners' use of *incomplete endings* ... (34-M)

The above italicized utterances were not regarded as nominalizations, since they are fixed expressions that refer to phenomena which cannot be changed. For instance, in example 1, *conversation analysis* refers a set of methods for studying social interactions. In examples 2 and 3, *deviation* and *endings* do not refer to the process of deviating and ending something and cannot be replaced by a congruent form.

In addition to technical terms, a host of other nouns, known as 'agent' in linguistics (e.g., actors, analyst, claimants, consumers, critics, editor, employees, expert, hearer, indicator, instructors, interlocutor, interviewer, participants, , proponents, rater, researcher, respondents, reviewers, scholars, sociolinguists, etc), were not regarded as nominalized structures since, semantically, they do not crystallize phenomena into abstract, non-agentive entities the way nominalizations do and they could not be realized as incongruent forms of words, hence not "unpackable".

In the following stage, the texts were examined to decipher the patterns in which the nominalized structures were used. Assigning nominalized expressions to appropriate patterns was not a straightforward process and involved complications. For instance, note the following utterance extracted from the corpus:

- [4]: ... expresses the author's **incredulity** at the critics' **inability** to follow the author's **argument** ... (46-M)

It was not feasible to assign the above example into one pattern; the sentence was thus described using a number of patterns. For example, three patterns were detected in example 4: [the author's *incredulity* at the critics' *inability*] (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization; [the critics' *inability* to follow the author's argument] (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Infinitive; and [the author's *argument*] Deictic + Nominalization.

Here it was not wise to merge these patterns into one, e.g. (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Infinitive, since this pattern did not show any trend utilized by writers. The analysis revealed many other such complex phrases embedded in one another.

The function of Premodifier can be realized by various word classes, most frequently by determiners, numerals, adjectives, and nouns that function as classifier (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p. 139).

A further complication was that in many instances nominalizations were connected through conjunctions (*and, or*), as noted in the following examples:

- [5]: ... participants' trouble in **speaking, hearing** or **understanding** ongoing **speech**. (3-M)  
[6]: ... early work has focused on a **selection** of strategies and features as well as important **descriptions** of some pragmatic phenomena ... (34-I)

Three nominalizations in example 5 were identified under one pattern (Preposition + Nominalization + Noun Phrase):

[participants' trouble in *speaking* ongoing speech],  
[participants' trouble in *hearing* ongoing speech], and  
[participants' trouble in *understanding* ongoing speech].

In example 6, *descriptions* together with its surrounding words make recognition of the pattern for this nominalization a little ambiguous. To put it another way, the related pattern for the phrase [*important descriptions of some pragmatic phenomena*] would be Premodifier + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase, while considering the phrase as [*has focused on important descriptions of some pragmatic phenomena*] changes the pattern into Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase as Qualifier.

### 3. Nominalization Patterns

This section presents the patterns in which nominal expressions appeared in introduction and method sections of applied linguistics RAs. A list of the most prevalent nominal expressions in each section is also provided. The following table depicts the patterns and their order in terms of their frequency of occurrence in the two sections as a basis for comparison. The most frequent and functional ones are then explained and illustrated by examples.

Order of Patterns in Introduction	Patterns	Order of Patterns in Method
1	(Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + (Nominalization)	4
2	Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization	1
3	Premodifier + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase	2
4	(Deictic) + (Epithet) + Nominalization	3
5	(Deictic) + Classifier + Nominalization	6
6	Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase (Qualifier)	5
7	Nominalization + Noun Phrase	7
8	Nominalization + Nominalization	11
9	(Premodifier) + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase (Adjunct)	8
10	Numerative + Nominalization	12
11	Nominalization + Relative Clause	10
12	Nominalization as Classifier + Noun	9
13	(Premodifier) + Nominalization + Participle Clause	13
14	(Premodifier) + Nominalization + Infinitive	14
15	Nominalization + Adjective as Postmodifier	15

Table 4. The Nominalization Patterns in Introduction and Method Sections

#### 3.1 Analysis and discussion

As can be seen in the Table 2 above, fifteen patterns were deciphered of which the six most frequent and functional ones are introduced below. Scientific writing is characterized by the way in which meanings are organized and worded. The order of the words in the nominal group dominates the construction of meaning; thus, the nominal expressions obtained from the analysis were examined in their context of use to extract the patterns realized in introduction and method sections.

**1. (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + (Nominalization)**

This pattern, illustrating a nominal group complex, or a prepositional phrase complex where the first nominal is preceded by a preposition, was the most complex in the corpus in the introduction sections. The pattern demonstrates that “often a prepositional phrase postmodifying a Head noun in a nominal group contains within itself another prepositional phrase postmodifying a Head noun” (Bloor and Bloor 2004:145). In fact, postmodifiers themselves contain a nominalization which allows for further modification. This recursive property of the modifying relation represents the nominal group as a regressive bracketing and elucidates its elasticity which enables academic writers to produce long and complex nominal group strings (Halliday 1994). These long nominalized structures, characterizing expansion of the lexicogrammar of a text, generate a high lexical density which is associated with the degree of text formality (Ure 1977 as cited in Wenyan 2012). Such cases in which more than one item in a clause is a metaphorical realization, i.e., the meaning of more than one item is construed in a different way by means of a different grammatical construction, are referred to as syntagmatic plurality, in which one occurrence of grammatical metaphor is syntagmatically dependent on another process of metaphor (Ravelli 1999 as cited in Taverniers 2003). Accordingly, academic writing relies heavily on phrases, embedded in noun phrases, rather than clauses to add information (Biber and Gray 2010).

Table 2 above also reveals that pattern number one was the fourth most common pattern in method sections; the full pattern (with three nominal structures) occurred seven times more frequently in introductions than in methods, which may indicate that more simple structures are prevalent in methods sections since researchers are expected to provide a clear-cut and concise description of how an experiment was conducted. Note the following examples extracted from both sections:

- [7]. As an **illustration** of the **difficulty** of **acquiring** definiteness in languages without articles ... (44-I)
- [8]. ... in the **interpretations** of **findings**. (29- M)
- [9]. ...Brown and Levinson’s **representation** of the **transition** from face-threatening **act** to **choice** of politeness strategy... (47-I)
- [10]. ... specific **interest** in students’ **displays** of **knowledge** in classroom **interaction**. (3-I)

Examples 9 and 10 indicate three stages of embedding, nesting “one inside the other up to a considerable length” (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004:279) and packing more information in more complex constructions. Findings reveal that the more complex version exemplified in examples 3 and 4 was the ones only found in the introduction.

**2. Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization**

This was the second most frequent pattern in the introduction and the most dominant one in the methods sections. Most of the nominal expressions in this pattern were preceded by premodifiers which account for the counting, specifying (e.g. this), describing (e.g. high localized), and classifying (e.g. metaphoric) of things (Eggins 2004). Consider the examples below:

[11]. ... to identify stretches of text with high localized metaphoric **density**. (5-M)

[12]. Coupled with this **volatility** is the intercultural and multilingual nature of the workplace ... (29-I)

The congruent form of example 11 (i.e., to identify stretches of *highly dense* text which are expressed using localized metaphors) implies that nominalization has enabled the author to encapsulate more information in fewer phrases, while in number 12, the nominal expression *volatility* refers back to the information expressed in the preceding text.

Instead of reiterating the information in the previous sentence as (i.e., *the inability to distinguish workplace and personal space as a result of the emergence of small office/home office (SOHO) and flexi-time at work*), the author distils and re-labels the whole phrase as a nominal expression, *volatility*, which functions as the theme and the given information of the clause, and evaluates the conditions at the same time. This use of nominalization as encapsulation facilitates smooth transitions between clauses and helps to construct texts economically and maintain cohesion in texts. In many cases, it also allows authors to retrospectively introduce evaluative stances into their arguments.

### 3. (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase (Qualifier)

Deictic, numerative, epithet, and classifier function as Premodifier in this pattern. The structure exemplified by Deictic + Numerative + Epithet + Classifier + Thing is called a “multivariate structure: a configuration of elements each having a distinct function with respect to the whole” (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004:331). The analysis revealed that prepositional phrases functioned as postnominal phrasal/clausal modifiers (prepositional phrases, infinitives, participle clauses, adjuncts, and relative clauses). This tends to support the claim (e.g. by Biber and Gray 2013; Bloor and Bloor 2004) that prepositional phrases constitute the most common type of postnominal Qualifier. This pattern, in Bhatia’s (1993) terms, represents a complex nominal phrase, with the syntactic structure (Modifier) + Head + (Qualifier), where (Modifier) is realized primarily in terms of a series of linearly arranged attributes. The most significant characteristic of this type of phrase is the degree and the complexity of modification of the noun head (Bhatia 1993). This is clearly demonstrated in examples 7 and 8, in which the nominalized head noun is modified by deictic, epithet, classifier, and prepositional phrase. Examples 8 and 9 show that nominalization converts processes into concepts and utilizes the potential of the nominal group’s logical expansion to produce long noun phrases and a lexically dense style. The following examples illustrate this pattern.

[13]. ... the growing functional **importance** of promotional strategies in RA Introductions. (4-I)

[14]. Clearly, many corpus-based comparative **studies** on NS/NNS essays ... (1-I)

[15]. Many students need teachers’ **guidance** on how to work together constructively. (21-I)

In example 15, for example, [*need teachers’ guidance*] may be represented congruently as [*need their teachers to guide them.*] Nominalizations of this pattern can usually be unpacked as verb forms that endorse the claim that academic writers rely on noun phrases rather than clauses to present information (Biber and Gray 2010). In the pattern (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Prepositional Phrase (Qualifier), nominalization takes advantage of the meaning potential and the elasticity of the nominal group to assemble and compact meanings, giving the text an elevated style.

### 4. Nominalization + Noun Phrase

A considerable number of nominalizations were followed by a noun phrase. These nominalizations are almost verbal in effect, thus performing the functions of condensation, conciseness, objectivity, and formality. Note the following instances:

[16]. ... it constitutes a channel for **transferring** selected data ... (47-I)

[17]. ... classroom exercises and activities were devised for the programme through **selecting, editing** and **presenting** appropriate real interactions ... (29-I)

In a number of cases, the noun phrase that followed the nominal expression encompassed a verb derived nominal expression itself, reducing longer clausal constructions, thereby making scientific language more compact, synthetic, functional and direct to the expert (Briones, Fortuny, Sastre and Pocovi 2003). To clarify the point, two examples are provided:

[18]. ... an indirect method for **correcting** students' erroneous **productions** or grammatical mistakes. (6-I)

[19]. ... **blending** the **results** of three types of qualitative analysis ... (27-M)

The above examples can be congruently represented as *an indirect method to correct what students have produced erroneously* and *we blended what resulted from three types of qualitative analysis*, showing that both of the nominalizations are verb derived. Through the use of the pattern Nominalization + Noun Phrase (containing a nominalization), two clauses are packed in one nominal group to perform the functions of conciseness, formality and semantic expansion.

In some instances, nominalization assists in maintaining a more impersonal academic tone by deleting the human agent within the sentences. A considerable number of the instances of this pattern incorporate the preposition *by* as indicated in the following examples:

[20]. ... the CSs were identified by **studying** the surrounding discourse ... (35-M)

[21]. The diversity of the corpus was assured by **selecting** articles written by scholars with different seniority and affiliation. (46-M)

In the congruent rewording of example 21, *we selected articles written by scholars with different seniority and affiliation to assure the diversity of the corpus*, the focus is shifted to agent. If it is rewritten as *articles written by scholars with different seniority and affiliation were selected to assure the diversity of the corpus*, the focus will be shifted to the rheme of the incongruent form.

In several cases, the nominalized structures of the pattern Nominalization + Noun Phrase were preceded by verbs that are usually followed by gerunds, and half of these gerunds constituted the nominal expression *using*. This pattern was mostly prevalent in methods rather than in introductions sections. The following examples illustrate this pattern showing that nominalizations (*creating* and *using*) are gerunds preceded by the verbs *requires* and *transcribed*.

[22]. ... identifying relevant indexes requires **creating** a posteriori categories ... (27-I)

[23]. The interviews were transcribed **using** NCH Express Scribe software ... (12-M)

Paraphrasing nominalizations as *we should create*, and *we used* shows that nominalization in this pattern both reduces the number of clauses and produces "a greater concentration of the experiential meaning and a smaller incidence of interpersonal elements, such as personal pronouns and modal verbs, thus presenting information in a less personalized way" (Briones et al. 2003:132). In the congruent paraphrase of some instances of this pattern (as in example 23), the order of presenting information is altered, resulting in the shift of focus to the agent or the rheme of the incongruent form, depending on whether it is reworded as an active or a passive voice. Another possible way of recasting the instances of this pattern is to use passive voice in order to avoid mentioning the agent (e.g. NCH Express Scribe

software was used to transcribe interviews), confirming that nominalization provides writers with the ability to construe the world in a different way, or to conceptualize experiences from a different angle (Kazemian 2013).

### 5. Nominalization + Nominalization

Two nominalized expressions may happen to be adjacent as illustrated below:

[24]. ... a method that can contribute to **understanding learning** ... (6-I)

[25]. The ways of **expressing disagreement** ... (46-I)

The first nominal expression is a gerund most often preceded by a preposition. Nominalizations and gerunds are perceived to be markers of conceptual abstractness (Biber 1995). The congruent rewording of example 24 would be *a method that can help us understand how language is learned* in which two clauses are downgraded to a nominal group by nominalizing the verbs *understand* and *learned*. This is also true for other instances of this pattern, illustrating the nature of downgrading achieved by recourse to nominalization. This feature corresponds to the characteristic of academic discourse that uses fewer words to express more information.

There were other cases in which the first nominalization functioned as the classifier of the second nominalization (see examples 26 and 27 below).

[26]. ... the embodied noticings serve as a kind of preamble to the ensuing **correction initiation** ... (3-I)

[27]. The same has been done for **clarification requests**, where the clarification of “anything in the preceding written or oral discourse” has been included ... (35-M)

[28]. ... their focus is on generic language skills rather than **workplace communication competence**. (29-M)

Other possible ways of expressing examples 26 and 27 would be *the embodied noticings serve as a kind of preamble to situations in which students initiate to correct each other* and *the same has been done for situations where the speaker requested that anything ... be clarified* respectively. Through nominalization two clauses are reduced to a nominal group, making the discourse seem more condensed, refined, sophisticated, and semantically and syntactically loaded. The nominalizations functioning as the classifier emerge as verbs in a relative clause or an infinitive clause in the congruent rewording. In fact, the relative or infinitive clause can be reconstructed into the nominal group functioning as classifier. Furthermore, by eliminating the reference to people (e.g. *students* and *the speaker*), the authors of scientific texts show the tendency toward focusing on ideas, effects, and processes all encoded by nouns rather than human agents and their actions.

Example 28 is the typical instance of the rare case in which this pattern is expanded into three adjacent nominal expressions. Halliday (1985) refers to such strings of classifiers as univariate structures, generated by the recurrence of the same function. The scarcity of this pattern may be due to the fact that tightly packed lexical items (content words) increase the density of information and the complexity of the text, which corresponds to its readability. As claimed by Galve (1998:367), a passage of text consisting of “strings of lexical words without any grammatical words in between, especially when the strings are made up of nouns only” is the most difficult one to process, creating “typically dead sentences” (Zinsser 1980:109).

A univariate structure corresponds to compound nominal phrases which carry more content words and less function words than their congruent realizations (Briones et al. 2003). This is more obvious if example 28 is reworded as *whether they are competent to communicate in the workplace*.

The first nominal expression in example 29 below is the nominalization of preposition. In this type of nominalization, the prepositional phrase which often concerns information about time and place in the clause is metaphorically realized as a noun in a noun phrase. However, when the prepositional phrase changes into a noun metaphorically, it becomes the classifier of the nominal group. In example 30 below, the word *everyday* expresses the time that metaphorically changes to the classifier of the nominal expression *conversation*. Similarly, in examples 29 and 31, the words *workplace* and *group*, showing location in the clause, are also expressed metaphorically as the classifier in the nominal phrase, giving a more formal tone to writing and making it acceptable in academic discourse.

[29]. ... preparing them specifically for **workplace communication** ... (29-I)

[30]. ... a second language is used to a considerable extent in **everyday conversation**. (12-I)

[31]. ... using **group discussion** to reach a consensus in cases where there was disagreement. (5-M)

## 6. (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Participle Clause

The final pattern discussed in detail here shows co-occurrence of nominalizations with participle clauses in integrated and informational texts.

[32]. ... the **effort** put into preventing misunderstanding ... (35-I)

[33]. ... **assistance** provided to the students ... (47-M)

Chafe and Danielewicz (1987) have shown that the high frequency of participles is a distinguishing feature of academic writing. Participle clauses indicate abstraction and complexity in written language. They are a major means of syntactic compression, facilitating the development of a more compact, integrated style (Granger 1997). Participle clauses syntactically function as nominals, adverbials, and postmodifiers. In all the instances of their occurrence in this study, participle clauses function as the post modifier of nominalizations and specify their meanings as exemplified in 32 and 33 above.

## 3.2 Dominant nominal expressions in introductions and methods

The dataset that constituted the introduction sections of RAs included 23482 running words (total tokens), from which 2069 words were considered instances of nominalizations (i.e., one per 11.3 running words). In contrast, the method sections contained 16640 tokens from which 1081 were instances of nominalization (i.e., one per 15.4 running words). That is to say, the high frequency of nominalization in both sections indicates the strong use of a 'nominal style' in these texts, corroborating with the expectations of scientific discourse as outlined in the literature. Nevertheless, nominalization was found to be a more frequent linguistic phenomenon in introductions than in methods sections. A logical corollary of this difference is that the purpose of the method section is to describe the researcher's actions in a clear and precise way to avoid confusion and ambiguity, hence the lower proportion of nominal expressions. It could also be the case that the difference can be characterized more objectively in terms of micro-genres. Narrative micro-genres are more typical of the methods sections and more grammatically congruent.

Table 3 below presents the 25 most frequent head words of nominal expressions in the introduction and method sections in the order of their frequency. It should be mentioned that in the table, the lemma *variation*, for instance, is considered as the canonical form for all of its inflected noun forms such as *variation*, *variable*, *variety*, and *variability*.

Introduction	Method
--------------	--------

Study	Distribution	Study	approach
Use	Description	Analysis	Reason
Research	Example	Use	Difference
Learning	Acquisition	Research	Transcript
Function	Development	Function	Finding
Analysis	Interaction	Identification	Interpretation
Variation	Result	Variation	Evaluation
Communication	Interest	Occurrence	Presentation
Finding	Choice	Discussion	Purpose
Comparison	Correction	Comparison	Proficiency
Production	Difference	Learning	Result
Understanding	Need	Interaction	Classification
Contribution		Error	

**Table 5. 25 Most Frequent Nominalizations in Introduction and Method Sections**

The five most frequent instances of nominalization in the introductions were the lemmata *study*, *use*, *research*, *learning*, and *function*, closely resembling the five most frequent instances of nominalization in the RA method sections (i.e., *study*, *analysis*, *use*, *research*, and *function*). *Analysis*, *research*, and *function* were among the 100 most frequently-occurring lexical items in Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word List (AWL), and in the Applied Linguistics Research Articles Corpus (ALC) found by Vongpumivitch, Huang, and Chang (2009). They also provided a list of 128 non-AWL content word forms that occurred at least 50 times in the ALC in which the word *usage* was given. In another study, Gardner and Davies (2013) presented a new Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) derived from a 120-million-word academic subcorpus of the 425-million-word Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (85 million of the 120 million words came from academic journals). The nominal expressions *study*, *research*, *use*, *analysis*, and *function* were among the top 500 words in the AVL.

Furthermore, our analysis demonstrated that some nominalizations prevail in both introduction and method sections, or they range from almost a negligible minority in one of the sections to a conspicuous majority in the other section. For instance, *communication*, *production*, *understanding*, *acquisition*, *development*, *interest*, and *need* were significantly more frequent in introductions than in methods sections. The method sections also comprised nominalizations which were characteristic of this section, namely *identification*, *occurrence*, *error*, *approach*, *interpretation*, and *purpose*. For instance, the words *identification* and *interpretation* are mostly utilized in the procedure and data analysis subsections suggesting that knowledge is claimed differently in introduction and method sections. This conclusion is of course suggestive only considering the size of the datasets in this study. Thus, more caution is required in making generalizations about the nominalizations that are representative of introduction or method sections of RAs.

Moreover, the introduction sections included nominalizations not employed in the methods sections (e.g., *contribution*, *choice*, *completing*, *assessment*, and *expression*) indicating the distinct type of information presented in each section. The introduction, in which the writers construct an argument for their study, is assumed to be argumentative (Hood 2004) while the method section tends to be expository (Martinez 2003). The function of expository texts is to inform, describe, analyze, and/or explain various issues whereas the function of argumentation is to present evidence to support an argument or assertion (opinion, theory, or hypothesis) or advocate a particular viewpoint. Being more intellectually and linguistically challenging, argumentative writing is the act of forming reasons, making



inductions, drawing conclusions, and applying them to the case in discussion. These different rhetorical structures entail utilization of diverse sets of words for structuring each section.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Informed by the need to become aware of the ways of using nominalization for structuring texts and gaining knowledge of the rhetorical structures, this study explored various nominal patterns and dominant nominal expressions used in the introduction and method sections of applied linguistics RAs. The study revealed that academic writers organize the content of the two sections, in part, through 15 primary nominal patterns, all occurring in both text types with the preference for the exploitation of some of the patterns varying across these two RA sections.

The results of the present study have demonstrated that the pattern (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization + Preposition + (Premodifier) + (Nominalization) plays an important role in the organization of the introduction sections: it significantly increases the general density of information using a specialized pattern of information packaging. The high frequency of this pattern in the introduction sections indicates a high level of abstraction and complexity. In addition, the analysis of the data revealed the prevailing use of Preposition + (Premodifier) + Nominalization in methods sections indicating the use of more simple structures in this section. The findings showed that the use of expanded noun phrases is more pervasive in the introductions than in the methods sections.

Thus, the study ascertained that the roles played by nominalization are in compliance with the specific requirements of each section, and that nominalization is realized somewhat differently in these two constructs. The high frequency of nominalization, the occurrence of the same four most frequent nominal expressions (see Table 3) and the same patterns in the two sections represented the consistencies in the organization of information in these constructs in RAs. This study concluded that the conventions of applied linguistics RAs have developed to employ nominalization as a means of adapting the discourse to the purpose of communication within the discipline, and to meet the expectations of scientific discourse in general.

The present research contributes to the understanding of nominalization usage in applied linguistics RAs. One of the main pedagogical implications of this study is that, for novice researchers who pursue chances of publication, such insight into the conventions of academic writing in scholars' disciplines is necessary for success. In this regard, the findings of the present study can equip academic writers with the required knowledge about the nominal patterns and expressions in the introduction and method sections, so that their written discourse is recognized as belonging to the discipline to which they hope to become members. The use of these patterns enables effective writing which entails the ability to pack several complex abstract ideas in a single clause, thus making the text more dense and formal. Some of these patterns contribute to removing human participants from the sentence, leading to a more impersonal academic tone. In his study, Xue Feng (2012:1659) found that "descriptive analysis of the grammatical feature of nominalization is not adequate to develop students' awareness of using this feature in their writing", hence "teaching the nominalized structure and developing students' skills of using this feature in their writing are essential". Therefore, there are pedagogical values in acquainting students with the nominal patterns that tend to recur in the introduction and the method sections of published academic articles.

When an action or a process is realized as nominalization, much of the lexical meaning will be left out or concealed, and obscurity often occurs. Accordingly, an understanding of the functional role and textual consequences of nominalization is required

for a full comprehension of the meaning of any text. The results of this study could serve as a platform for ESP/EAP courses, with special emphases on scientific precision, conciseness, and objectivity through nominalization. The findings of the present research can also sensitize researchers interested in disciplinary studies to open the path for cross disciplinary investigations.

The study enhances writers' awareness of the features of academic writing by identifying nominalized patterns employed in two different sections of research papers. However, it should be noted that the list of nominal expressions and the patterns presented in this study is far from being complete and cannot be generalized to other sections; thus, in order to provide a list of dominant nominal expressions specific to each section of RAs and to identify more idiosyncratic characteristics of these sections, a broader quantitative survey is deemed necessary. Assuming that our knowledge of nominalization use in other disciplines and cultures is very scanty, further research is required to explore the ways in which nominalization is realized in hard and soft sciences or across different cultures.

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## TRANSLATOR TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN HUNGARY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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**Abstract:** *This paper examines translator training programmes in Hungary and the USA. Programmes operated by different institutions reveal greater differences of structure and content in the US than in Hungary. Most US programmes offer training in Spanish–English translation/interpreting, with a number of European and Asian languages also available, whereas in Hungary the dominant foreign languages are English and German, with other languages having a relatively marginal role. The number of training programmes, relative to economic needs, seems adequate in Hungary, while in the US there are far fewer than would be needed, in view of employment growth projections.*

**Keywords:** *translation and interpreting profession, translation studies, translator training, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes*

### 1. Introduction

In this paper I survey and compare translator and interpreter (T/I) training programmes in Hungary and the United States. Such a comparison might be interesting in view of the fact that the two countries are very different in a number of aspects: size, population composition, economic situation etc. Also, there are significant differences between their higher education systems, which came to my attention during a study visit to the US in 2014 (International Visitor Leadership Program, Contemporary Challenges in Higher Education).

I seek to answer the following questions: What employment needs are served by T/I training programmes in higher education in Hungary and in the USA? Are training capacities adequate in terms of satisfying the needs of the job market? What sorts of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes are available? How are these programmes structured? What is the relative weight of practical elements compared to theoretical elements in these programmes? What languages are taught in T/I training programmes in the two countries? What are the general differences and similarities between T/I programmes in the two countries?

### 2. The Job Market

#### 2.1. The United State of America

According to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2016), in 2014 the number of people employed as translators and interpreters in the US was 61.000, with a projected growth of 29 percent from 2014 to 2024, which is much faster than the average for all occupations, resulting in an estimated 17.500 new jobs. In 2015 the median annual wage for interpreters and translators was USD 44,190. Wages depend on a number of

factors including the language, specialty, skill, experience, education and certification of the interpreter or translator, and also on the type of employer. In 2014, interpreters and translators were employed in the following sectors. Professional, scientific, and technical services: 29%; educational services (state, local, and private): 26%; healthcare and social assistance: 16%; government: 7%; and about 20% were self-employed.

Although interpreters and translators in the US typically need at least a bachelor's degree, currently there is no universal certification required of interpreters and translators, except for court interpreting exams offered by most states. There are, however, a variety of proficiency tests that can be taken optionally. The best-known example is the certification provided by the American Translators Association (ATA).

## 2.2. Hungary

To the best of my knowledge, there are no official statistical data available concerning the T/I profession in Hungary. What little can be known about the question can be gleaned from pieces of writings published here and there. Probably the most representative among these is a 2011 survey of the T/I sector published under the title *Fordítói körkép* [A panoramic view of the translation market] (Espell – fordit.hu 2011), according to which 42% of T/I professionals in Hungary only do translation, 32% mostly translates but also occasionally does interpreting; 20% does both on a regular basis; 5% only offers interpreting services; 1% did not provide information.

As for working languages (besides Hungarian), the survey shows that the market is dominated by English and German (Espell – fordit.hu 2011). Translators and interpreters work in the following language pairs and directions: English–Hungarian 69,8%, Hungarian–English 50,4%, German–Hungarian 29,5%, Hungarian–German 19,8%, French–Hungarian 14%, Hungarian–French 8,2%, while all the other languages (Italian, Russian, Spanish, Romanian, Slovak, Czech, Polish) are well below 10%.

There are no reliable data available concerning wages in the T/I profession. An article published in May 2014 on the fordit.hu web portal (Fordit.hu 2014) estimates that in 2011 the average earning of a translator was HUF 472.000 (ca. EUR 1520, calculated with a 310 HUF to EUR conversion rate) per month. In a 2011 article, the news portal hvg.hu (Hvg.hu 2011) wrote that the average daily rate for consecutive interpreting was HUF 45–50.000 (EUR 145–160) plus VAT, while the rate for simultaneous interpreting was HUF 60–80.000 (EUR 190–260) plus VAT. According to another source, the web page fizetese.hu (the word *fizetés* means *salary*), the current average monthly wage of a Hungarian interpreter is HUF 215.077 (EUR 694) (Fizetese.hu 2016b), while the average monthly wage of a Hungarian translator is HUF 277.835 (EUR 896) (Fizetese.hu 2016a). The truth must be somewhere in the middle, as usual.

As regards training and qualification requirements, under a 1986 regulation, still in force, T/I services can be performed only by people holding a qualification as a specialized translator or interpreter. Under another 1986 regulation, also still in force, such qualifications can be obtained in undergraduate or postgraduate training provided by higher education institutions, or in other institutions designated by the minister of culture and education. It is also possible for people holding a university or college degree to sit for a qualifying exam for specialized translators without taking a training course, and anyone with certification in specialized translation can sit for a qualifying exam in translation and revision. People with an advanced level language certificate can sit for a qualifying exam for interpreters, irrespective of their age or qualifications, people holding a higher education degree can sit for a qualifying exam for specialized interpreters, and those holding a certificate in specialized interpreting can sit for a qualifying exam for conference interpreters.

### **3. Translator and Interpreter Training Programmes in the USA**

#### **3.1. The history of translator and interpreter training in the USA**

Translator and interpreter training in the United States started with a programme founded at Georgetown University in 1949 (and then closed in 2001). This was followed by programmes established at Monterey (now Middlebury Institute of International Studies) in 1965, at Brigham Young University in 1976, Florida International University in 1978, the University of Delaware in 1979, San Diego State University in 1980, Kent State University in 1988 and the University of Hawaii in 1988. The first programmes in literary translation were established at Binghamton University in 1971, the University of Arkansas in 1974, and the University of Iowa in 1977 (Pym et al. 2012).

Based on information from the web portal study.com (Study.com 2016a), in the USA T/I training programmes on different levels of higher education include the following: undergraduate certificate, graduate certificate, associate of science/applied science, BA or BSc (also, in certain cases, minor programmes), MA, MFA or MSc, PhD. It is difficult to tell how many such programmes are running at the various institutions. With the help of a range of sources (American Translators Association 2016a, 2016b, Kwintessential 2016, Lexicool 2016, ProZ.com 2016) I compiled a list of T/I programmes at the different levels. I did not include American Sign Language (ASL) courses, of which a great number exists all across the US.

While it is very likely that my lists are incomplete, they provide an approximately precise view of the present situation. I have identified 79 certificate or minor programmes (in 53 different institutions), 4 associate programmes (4 institutions), 10 BA or BSc programmes (10 institutions), 32 MA, MFA or MSc programmes (25 institutions) and 4 PhD programmes (4 institutions) in the USA. According to these lists, altogether there are 68 institutions running some sort of T/I training programme. At the same time, according to the National Center for Education Statistics of the USA, in 2011–12 there were 4706 institutions of higher education in the country (National Center for Education Statistics 2015). Comparing this number to the previous 68 it seems quite obvious that the scale of T/I training is far below the level that would be made possible by the institutional background, and is well below the level that would seem necessary based on the market growth projections. All this may result in a shortage of T/I professionals in the US in the coming years and decades.

#### **3.2. Certificate and minor programmes**

An undergraduate certificate programme normally lasts for one year, and typically requires the student to collect 15–22 credit points. (One credit – SCH, semester credit hour – in the American system corresponds to one weekly contact hour through a semester, i.e. 15–16 contact hours per semester). A graduate certificate programme also typically last for a year, and students earn 15–30 credits. Most T/I graduate certificate programmes accept students with an undergraduate degree and require knowledge of at least one foreign language. Many such programmes operate as part of an MA programme, but independent graduate certificate programmes also exist. Programme contents are varied: several different languages and specializations are available (e.g. healthcare, IT, finances, economics, law etc.). Minor programmes in translation are rare; I have only found six of them. They last for one or two school years, during which students need to collect 15–24 credits.

### **3.3. Associate of science and Associate of applied science (AS, AAS) Programmes**

Associate of science/applied science programmes provide a qualification below the BA level, and credits earned here can be transferred if the student decides to work for a BA degree later. A typical associate programme takes two years and prescribes an aggregate credit value of 60–70. I have only found 4 such programmes.

### **3.4. BA/Bsc programmes**

An article on the web portal study.com (Study.com 2016b) says T/I training programmes on the BA/BSc level are few and far between in the US. I have identified 10 of them based on my sources. A typical BA programme lasts 4 years, and requires the student to collect 120 credit points. In some institutions students can compile a personalized T/I programme, tailored to their needs with the help of a student advisor.

### **3.5. MA/MFA/MSc programmes**

Relative to the size of the country, the number of T/I programmes at the master's level is rather small: I have only found 32, running in 25 different institutions. These programmes last for one or two years and require the student to earn 35–50 credits. There are various versions of master's programmes in the US. The most typical form is the MA (Master of Arts), but one institution, New York University runs an MS (Master of Science) programme. Most institutions offering a programme with literary translation in focus provide an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) degree. Besides these, the University of Denver has an MLS (Master of Liberal Studies) programme (MLS in Global Affairs with a Concentration in Translation Studies), with a strong interdisciplinary orientation. Finally, the University of Maryland offers MPS (Master of Professional Studies) degrees in translation and interpreting, with the focus placed on practical professional skills.

### **3.6. PhD programmes**

Doctoral programmes take 2–3 years (but earning the PhD degree often takes more, often even 5–8 years), and require students to collect 60–70 credits, including research and the dissertation. There are four intuitions running such programmes but, strictly speaking, only two of these offer genuine Translation Studies education (Binghamton University and Kent State University), the other two (University of California, Santa Barbara and the University of Texas at Dallas) are literary, cultural, interdisciplinary programmes, with an option to focus on translation.

### **3.7. General characteristics of these programmes**

As for the languages offered, besides the traditionally much-translated European languages (Spanish, French, German, Russian and, less typically, Portuguese and Italian) many schools also offer Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and some even Arabic. Programmes are typically bilingual: mother tongue (normally English) plus one foreign language, but there are also trilingual programmes (e.g. Middlebury Institute, University of Maryland).

In terms of specializations, literary translation is quite prominently present on the master's and doctoral level, and such programmes also exist on the certificate level. Among the various areas of specialized translation most schools run programmes specialized in business, law, healthcare and science translation and court and healthcare interpreting.



With the exception of literary programmes, course subjects focusing on practical skills have a far greater emphasis than theoretical subjects. This strong practical orientation suggests an approach in which focus on transferring knowledge and skills needed in the job market is more important than discussing theoretical questions of translation and interpreting. The value of theory in T/I education is a much-debated question, which is too complex to follow any further here.

#### **4. Translator and Interpreter Training in Hungary**

##### **4.1. The history of translator and interpreter training in Hungary**

The first T/I programme in Hungary was started in 1973 by the Translator and Interpreter Training Group of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest, first in Russian and English, then also in German and French. This was a postgraduate programme for students with a university or college degree and an advanced level of language proficiency (Klaudy 1997:177). Undergraduate level T/I training started in 1974, as a supplementary part of degree programmes in technology, science, agriculture, economics and medicine. The first such programme was launched by the University of Miskolc (Klaudy 1997:178). The dominant foreign language in this kind of training was Russian and the twofold aim was to raise the level of foreign language proficiency of would-be professionals and to train people who could act as mediators between Hungarians and their international business partners (Heltai 2002:10).

The most recent phase of Hungarian T/I education started in 2007, when a government decree regulating the educational and output requirements of master's programmes in translation and interpreting was issued. T/I training, according to this regulation, is dominated by practical courses (66%), with theoretical courses making up about one third of the programmes (34%).

Finally, the spectrum of T/I training in Hungary became complete when in 2003 the Doctoral School of Linguistics of ELTE started its Translation Studies Doctoral Programme.

##### **4.2. T/I Training programmes in Hungary**

There are T/I training programmes operating in 16 higher education institutions in Hungary. I have prepared a lists of these programmes based primarily on information published on the felvi.hu higher education web portal, supplemented by information found on the web pages of the different institutions.

###### **4.2.1. BA Specialization Modules**

Eight institutions offer T/I training as part of their English Studies or German Studies BA programmes. The University of Miskolc also operates a legal translation module for students of the Faculty of Law. Such specialization modules typically last for 4 semesters and require students to collect 20–50 credit points. (Hungary uses the ECTS credit system, where one credit corresponds to 30 hours of study.) The closest US equivalents to such modules are undergraduate certificate programmes.

###### **4.2.2. Postgraduate specialized studies**

Postgraduate specialized programmes are offered to people already holding a university or college degree, and roughly correspond to US graduate certificate programmes.

Such postgraduate programmes are run by 16 institutions. Most of them train specialized translators and/or interpreters, but some of them also offer training in translation and terminology or translation and revision.

Specializations include technology, IT, agriculture, economics, the European Union, law, religion, medicine, audio-visual studies, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and health sciences. Programmes are predominantly bilingual (mother tongue plus one foreign language), but some institutions offer trilingual training, and the Budapest University of Technology operates an international four-language conference interpreting programme. Foreign languages in these programmes mostly include English and German, complemented in some places by French and, even more rarely, Italian, Dutch, Japanese, Chinese, and Slavic and Baltic languages. Programmes last for 2–4 semesters, and students are required to accumulate 60–120 credits.

#### **4.2.3. Master's Programmes**

In 2016, out of the 66 state-recognized higher educational institutions in Hungary, seven operate T/I training programmes at the master's level. Such MA programmes last for 4 semesters and students are required to earn 120 credits. The training includes three languages: the mother tongue (A language, Hungarian), and two foreign languages (B and C languages).

The government decree regulating these programmes does not leave much room for institutional differences, which means that in terms of their structure and content master's programmes at the different institutions are rather similar. Specializations include law and economics; one notable exception is the University of Debrecen, where a literary translation sub-module is also part of the programme.

Where the different institutions can really exhibit their specific characteristics is in the actual contents of the various courses and the choice of foreign languages they offer. English and German are offered at every institution, of course. French is taught in five institutions, Italian in three, Russian and Spanish in two, Dutch and Chinese in one institution.

#### **4.3.4. PhD programmes**

PhD education in Hungary, according to the National Higher Education Act of 2011, lasts for 6 semesters, during which students earn 180 credits. PhD education in Translation Studies is only offered in Hungary in the Department of Translator and Interpreter Training of ELTE in Budapest. This programme considers Translation Studies as an interdisciplinary area of study, having an interface with a range of other disciplines including psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, text linguistics, corpus linguistics, contrastive linguistics, lexicography, terminology, sociolinguistics and communication theory.

### **5. Conclusions and Further Questions**

Although training programmes are practice-oriented in both countries, differences in terms of programme structure and content across institutions are more marked in the US than in Hungary. One essential reason for this is the fact that in Hungary the educational and output requirements of higher education programmes are regulated in a rather detailed way by the educational administration, while in the US no such centralized regulation exists. It is debatable, of course, which situation is more advantageous in terms of the quality of education, but the issue is far too complex to be treated in any sensible manner here.

The range of languages taught is obviously determined primarily by socio-economic needs. In the US the educational scene is dominated by Spanish–English T/I trainings, in

several programmes complemented by such traditionally important European languages as French, German and Russian, while Chinese, Japanese and Arabic are also becoming more and more significant. In Hungary, the most important foreign languages in T/I training programmes are English and German. In some programmes French, Russian, Italian and Spanish are also taught, while all the other languages have a marginal role. This might be seen as a possible source of problems in the future, considering the fact that Hungary is an open economy and seeks to build good relations not only with her traditional European and western partners but also with oriental countries.

As regards the number of T/I training programmes and institutions, in the US there are conspicuously few of them, far fewer than would seem to be justified by the size of the country and job market projections. This may lead to serious problems in the near future, as Kelly (2012) points out. In the lack of reliable statistical data concerning the job market, it is more difficult to judge the Hungarian situation. What is certain is that according to the admission statistics in the past few years of higher education institutions published on the web portal felvi.hu (Felvi.hu 2016), approximately 400–500 students would like to continue their studies in T/I master's programmes each year, and about 200 of them are admitted to one of the training institutions. This number of students, and possibly even more, can easily be served by the seven institutions running such programmes, which seems to suggest that, at least at this level, there is presently no shortage of training capacity in Hungary in this area.

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## DEVELOPING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES IN THE EFL CLASS: A STUDY ON ROMANIAN HIGHSCHOOL STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** *There is a close relationship between language and identity, and, consequently, any process of foreign language acquisition will exert a certain influence on the learners' overall sense of identity. In the case of English learning, the situation is even more complex, since this foreign language is commonly perceived as a key to global access. The paper will discuss the role played by the English instruction in the process of developing multiple identities in a multicultural Europe and beyond, taking into account research data based on both the input offered by the English textbooks meant for high school level, and the Romanian students' perceptions in this respect.*

**Key words:** "big C" culture, English instruction, "little c" culture, multicultural identity, textbooks

### Introduction

The very strong connection between foreign language learning and culture is widely acknowledged by both teachers and methodologists nowadays. As a consequence, the process of language teaching can never be a "neutral" one, because culture is dynamically crystallized in the manner in which a certain language presents and makes use of a particular concept.

In foreign language teaching, cultural elements do not have just the role of contributing to a better linguistic competence, but they also exert a certain influence on the learners' sense of identity. This happens because languages are considered to be symbols of identities, signalling a number of characteristics that define those who speak them. Additionally, languages give a sense of belonging to a certain social group, be it a family, a club, a nation, Europe, etc. Each group has its own language, dialect or jargon, and, consequently, speaking the correct linguistic variety represents an essential condition for individuals to be turned into "insiders", to become members of that group. Both the natural acquisition of languages and their formal study create, strengthen or weaken the links between languages and identities.

The starting point for the present paper is represented by the belief that, in the context of foreign language teaching and learning, the situation of English is somehow different and even special, because this language is commonly perceived as a key to global access. Therefore, the identities shaped and developed during the process of English learning do not have to do only with the English-speaking nations, but with a multitude of nations which use English as a common instrument. In my attempt to test this hypothesis in the context of the Romanian educational context, I conducted a research study which involves two different, but still inter-related, perspectives. On the one hand, I examined a few English textbooks used in Romanian high-schools, with a view to identifying the input that can be considered to contribute to the development of the learners' (multi-)cultural identities. On the other hand, I was interested in finding out the Romanian students' perceptions with regard to the (possible) influence exerted by the process of English instruction on their individual, European and even

world identity. The results of my research study will be discussed at large in the following sections.

## **1. On the multi-cultural dimension of some of the English textbooks used in the Romanian high-schools**

Even if everybody talks about it, “culture” is one of those concepts which are not very easily defined. This happens because the concept of culture is an extremely complex one, as it is also revealed by the manner in which it is defined in the dictionary. Thus, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2006: 382) defines culture as:

- a) (in a society) the beliefs, way of life, art, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society
- b) (in a group) the attitudes and beliefs about something that are shared by a particular group of people or in a particular organization
- c) (art/ music/ literature) activities that are related to art, music, literature, etc.

For many years, the cultural aspects of the foreign language textbooks referred to history and artistic products, that is to aspects covered by definition (c). More recently, methodologists have started to recommend a concept of culture understood as the ways in which the society constructs the meaning of the people’s lives and gives it expression, which is covered by definition (a). It seems that the meanings rendered by definition (b) have been more or less ignored by the English language courses, although they refer to aspects of great importance for any competent user of a foreign language, especially if he/she intends, for example, to study abroad or to become member of an international organization.

In order to identify the kind of cultural and multi-cultural input offered by the English textbooks used in high schools, I analysed the upper-intermediate and advanced levels of three types of textbooks: *Upstream*, *Gold* and *Click On*. I want to stress that my intention is not to draw a comparison between these textbooks or between various levels of the same type of textbook. My purpose is to identify the incidences of cultural learning revealed by these textbooks and to discuss them from a qualitative perspective, with a view to identifying, on the one hand, the kind of “culture” that they refer to, and, on the other, their multi-cultural dimension.

### **1.1. Types of cultural occurrences in the English textbooks**

In my approach to the type of cultural components in the textbooks under analysis, I will rely on the widely-used distinction between the “big C” culture and the “little c” culture (e.g. Chastain 1988, Lee 2009, Kramsch 2013, Raigon Rodriguez and Larrea Espinar 2015). The “big C” culture is the one that has been traditionally taught with standard national language, covering topics such as arts, history, geography, religion, education, festivals and customs of a foreign language society. Although useful and interesting, the knowledge specific to the “big C culture” is considered to contribute only indirectly to the students’ ability to function linguistically and socially in the foreign language culture. The communicative approach to language teaching has brought with it a more pragmatic concept of culture as way of living, which is referred to as “little c” culture. The topics discussed here refer to everyday cultural practices and customs that give a group its identity, such as family life, daily routines, eating, good manners, money, leisure activities, earning a living, humour, folklore or specific non-verbal communication. These topics involve a functional knowledge of the foreign-culture system, similar to the knowledge of the foreign language system.

As a very general comment, I must mention that all the textbooks that I have analysed contain numerous instances of cultural material. *Upstream Upper Intermediate* and *Click On*

4 have special sections in this respect: Culture Clip and Literature Corner in the former, and Culture Clip and Literature Clip in the latter. These sections deal with iconic elements from the British and American cultural space, such as great literary works (e.g. *Great Expectations*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Little Women*, *Jane Eyre*, *Moby-Dick*), emblematic figures in various fields of activity (e.g. Amelia Earhart, Florence Nightingale), specific cultural and institutional manifestations (e.g. Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Quebec Winter Carnival, Sign Language theatre interpreters in America, the St. John Ambulance Brigade), and various other elements that are considered to be symbolic of the target context (e.g. traditional British thatched houses, the tartan kilt, traditional British jobs, Millenium Seed Bank, the Millenium Stadium).

It is obvious that all the cultural occurrences discussed above represent manifestations of the “big C” culture. However, “big C” cultural topics are not restricted to these special sections, since the textbooks under analysis make use of a wide range of materials with cultural implications not only in the sections devoted to the development of reading, listening, writing and speaking, but also in the context of the grammar activities. Thus, in *Going for Gold Upper Intermediate*, *CAE Gold Plus* and *Upstream Advanced*, which do not have sections specifically devoted to culture, we find reading and listening texts which refer to important historical and literary figures like Isaac Newton, Marie Curie or Shakespeare, to famous names of the present time, like David Beckham, Christopher Reeve, Steve Jobs, or to interesting places in the world, like Machu Pichu, the Pyramids, or Antarctica. Additionally, these textbooks reveal instances of grammatical contexts characterized by cultural content, for example a correct-form-of-the verb exercise based on an extract from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, or a question-building exercise referring to Ricky Martin and Enrique Iglesias.

Even if the manifestations of the “big C” culture represent a very high percentage of the total of cultural occurrences in the textbooks under analysis, the “little c” culture is also present. Thus, all textbook types include sections devoted to teaching students a series of practical aspects meant to help them use English not only correctly, but also appropriately in a series of communicative contexts. These aspects regard, on the one hand, the elements and the conventions that students must pay attention to when they produce various types of writing (e.g. a good report, a letter of invitation, a transactional letter, an article). On the other hand, the textbooks contain activities that practise language functions, such as apologising, giving advice, making assumptions or expressing frustration. The “small c” culture nature of some of the reading, listening or use-of-English texts in these textbooks is also signalled by the topics they propose: spending and saving money, effects of consumerism in society (*CAE Gold Plus*), maintaining work – life balance (*Upstream Advanced*), significance of gestures and smile (*Upstream Upper Intermediate*, *CAE Gold Plus*), travelling in various parts of the world (*Click On 4*, *CAE Gold Plus*), a comparison between the British and the American education (*Upstream Upper Intermediate*).

It must be stressed that the manifestations specific to the “little c” culture are clearly not as well represented as those of the “big C” culture, which means that textbooks contribute to the general culture of the students, but do not help them so much with regard to the practical information and skills that they need in various types of real-life situational contexts. This entails increased responsibilities on the part of the English teachers, who are supposed to supplement the textbook input in such a way as to transmit their students a set of skills, behaviours and attitudes which are of real help in reducing the effects of the culture shock that normally accompanies the process of an individual’s acclimatizing and adjusting to the new way of life.

### **1.2. The multi-cultural dimension of the textbook input**

With regard to the multi-cultural character of the input offered by the English textbooks I have analysed, the numerous examples offered so far create a relatively accurate image. As illustrated above, there is an obvious predominance of the cultural references to the British and American cultures, which can be labelled as the “target cultures” for the English language. However, as various researchers point out, the concept of culture understood as “the culture(s) of the target language” is considered to be limited, because, in this globalized era, students need to relate to the whole world. Shin, Eslami and Chen (2011: 266) comment in this respect that “mass-produced textbooks presenting a single target culture no longer meet the needs of students learning an international language”.

The multi-cultural input in the textbooks under analysis is presented under various forms. There are texts and exercises which familiarize students with places in different parts of the world (e.g. Mexico, Pamukkale or the great Wall of China in *Click On 4*, Tasmania in *Upstream Advance*), or with international personalities, either from the past (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton in *Going for Gold*), or from the present (e.g. the referee Pierluigi Collina in *Upstream Advanced*). The topics of the texts used for reading, listening or grammar activities may also turn these texts into multi-cultural input. Thus, topics like gadgets and their inventors, rites of passage in different cultures (*Going for Gold*), Feng Shui, environmental problems (*Upstream Upper Intermediate*) or historic medical breakthroughs (*Upstream Advanced*) represent issues of interest for all the people, irrespective of their nationalities.

Unfortunately, the problem mentioned in my approach to the types of cultural occurrences is valid here, too: few of the materials with a multi-cultural dimension can be said to really help students in their contact with a multi-cultural world. Most of the cultural input has an informative character and is meant to raise the students’ awareness with regard to the existence of a multi-cultural world, without contributing directly to their integration into it.

## **2. Developing multiple identities in the EFL class: the Romanian high-school students’ perceptions**

At a time when the role of learning a foreign language is that of preparing the students for living in a multicultural world, it is obvious that intercultural understanding represents an important goal of language education. Consequently, irrespective of the support offered by the English textbooks in this respect, teachers are supposed to help their students get familiarized with various facets of the culture in which they want to function as competent foreign language users. But which are the perceptions of the Romanian learners of English with regard to the effect that the process of instruction has on their cultural identity? In order to find out some answers in this respect, I conducted a mini-research study among students from two different high-schools in Timisoara. My subjects were 68 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders, who, on the one hand, have long experience as English learners, and, on the other, are mature enough to be able to reflect on issues of identity. As data collection instrument, I used a questionnaire with open-ended questions. Since my intention was not to make statistics, but just to reflect a certain reality, the research data was analysed only from a qualitative perspective.

My research study was focused on three aspects: the subjects’ main reasons for studying English, their perceptions of the influence exerted by learning English on their identity as citizens of Europe and/ or of the world, and the extent to which their formal English training contributed to their preparation for the real contact with a multi-cultural world. In what follows, I will briefly present the most important conclusions resulting from the analysis of the data provided by my subjects:



## **2.1. Motivations for learning English**

Due to the close inter-relation between identity and motivation, I was interested, first of all, in the reasons underlying my subjects' desire and interest in learning English. Just as I somehow expected, the reason that was mentioned by the vast majority of the respondents referred to the status of English as a "universal language" nowadays. In this way, even if they are not fully aware of that, my subjects are motivated by the desire to develop their identity as members of the international English-speaking community.

The students offered various explanations for their motivation: from the blunt assertion that English must be learnt because "everybody speaks in English" to more elaborate formulations such as: "We are living in the era of globalization: as nations and cultures are brought together, the English language is the one to unite them.", or: "The whole world revolves around communication and ... the English language is the main provider in this respect, being the most used language worldwide."

In addition to this very general motivation for learning English, which is related to the fact that "it makes it easy to communicate everywhere in the world", the respondents mentioned various other related reasons, which, in their turn, reflect a desire to acquire a certain type of identity.

Thus, many of them mentioned the usefulness of English when they are tourists abroad: "If you go in a foreign country, you will be able to talk with someone even if you don't know their language. Nowadays, we can talk to someone from Asia, for example, and we can learn about their culture." This is only one illustration of the fact that the English learners do not perceive this language as being of help in the English-speaking countries, but all over the world. Another subject even says: "If you know English, you can go to other countries, like Egypt, Canada, Russia and so on, and manage very well."

It is interesting that one student even considers the positive subjective impression of a touristic experience as being dependent on the ability to speak English: "If you go to a foreign country and you can't say a word in English, you won't be able to enjoy the country so much."

Another reason mentioned by many of my subjects was related to the important role played by English for their future career. "It makes you more employable", says one student, while another one gets into more details: "You can have a great shot on going in other countries for work just with English as a known language, even if you are in Germany, Poland, Hungary, or other European countries."

It is not at all surprising that, in addition to these more "serious" motivations, my subjects mentioned those interests which are characteristic of their age and of the modern era, too: the Internet, the electronic devices, movies, songs, and – why not? – establishing relationships with people from other countries. In all these cases, knowing this foreign language is essential, because, as a student explains, "English surrounds us".

## **2.2. Identity and English language learning**

In the case of the relationship between learning English and the shaping of their identity as citizens of Europe or even of the world, the answers offered by my subjects fall into two big categories. On the one hand, some of them referred to an evolution they have undergone at mental level, to having gained a deeper understanding of how things are in the world they live in. In describing this process, the students confess, for example, that the study of English had the effect of developing the brain and of helping them understand other foreign people, that it changed their perspectives regarding other cultures, and that it even taught them how to appreciate the non-Europeans.

On the other hand, some subjects consider that a good knowledge of English is an instrument for acquiring all sorts of benefits that people from other countries normally have. One of them comments in this respect: "Knowing English is the first step. Everything else comes after".

What exactly do they expect to come later? Several things, as their answers indicate. For example, you can become a student in any European country, or you can get a well-paid job abroad. Moreover, one student hopes that he/she can hide their Romanian identity behind a perfect use of English: "Once you know to communicate well in English, people might forget about your nationality and the bad reputation it brings along."

Sometimes, the advantages brought by a good competence in English are the only ones that matter, as it is the case of a subject who said: "I have to admit that I do not care about being a citizen of Europe or of the world, I only care about my career, and, for my career, it is vital to learn English."

Anyway, this is just an isolated situation, while, in the vast majority of cases, my subjects pointed to the essential role played by English for the concept of "one Europe": "Before learning how to speak English, we are just the citizens of our countries, because our mother tongue separates us from people in other countries. Speaking English lets us ... work together in order to make Europe one strong community."

In this context, a student considers that knowing English is "a kind of duty to Europe", it is the way in which we can contribute to the maintenance of this community. His/ her opinion is actually in line with one of the provisions of European Commission's White Paper on Education and Training: "Languages are also the key to knowing other people. Proficiency in languages helps to build up the feeling of being European with all its cultural wealth and diversity and of understanding between the citizens of Europe." (European Commission, 1995: 47).

### **2.3. Formal instruction and the creation of multiple identities**

The third aspect of interest for my research study refers to the students' perceptions with regard to the role played by their formal instruction – mainly, their English teachers, and the textbooks – for their becoming self-confident citizens of Europe/ of the world.

In this case, students generally agree that both the textbooks and the English teachers represent reliable sources of input in this respect. They even give examples of lessons which help them understand the specific of other cultures, and stress the contribution made by their teachers, who always complete the information in the textbook with useful and interesting details. There are, however, subjects who express their concern that the cultural knowledge they have received during the English classes might not be enough in the case of the real-life contact with another community, when the individual has to adjust to a new social context. One student said: "Even if I speak English very well, this does not mean that I know exactly what to say, and, especially, how to say it best, in a particular situation.", while another one stressed the fact that "the cultural information about the history and the art specific to a country or region is important, but does not help you very much in your daily interaction with the people living there".

I must also mention one subject, who considers that the role played by the teachers and by the textbooks should not be overrated, because, as he/ she explains, "it all depends on you, on how much you learn it, and how much you work for improving it." I think this is a very realistic observation, because, after all, the individual's desire and ability to adapt from one social situation to another represent valuable assets in the context of today's multicultural world.

## Conclusion

About two decades ago, Graddol (1999: 57) prophesied that, in the future, English “will be a language used mainly in multilingual contexts as a second language and for communication between non-native speakers”. It is obvious that, today, this prediction is a reality, because English is used most often as an instrument of communication between speakers of other languages.

The question that my paper has tried to answer is whether the English teachers and the textbooks really prepare students for the contact with a multi-cultural world. The subjects of my research study seemed to be satisfied with what they have received so far during the English classes, but this does not mean that they will have no “cultural shocks” when they are faced with a new cultural context. A solution in this respect might be the concept of Multicultural Awareness Through English (MATE), which has been put forward as a new mission for the English Language pedagogy in an era of globalization (cf. Kostoulas 2011). The MATE-informed pedagogy is characterized by the equal use of cultural elements from a great diversity of sources, that is from communities where English is used as a first, second or a foreign language. This type of pedagogy also suggests that the multicultural identity can also develop more naturally by means of social interaction among learners from different cultural backgrounds. It might be quite difficult to be put into practice, but, interestingly enough, a similar idea was also suggested by one of my subjects, who said: “I believe we can never be prepared well enough to meet a different culture until we actually get to have a conversation with someone who lives there.”

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## PROFILING THE CAMBRIDGE PRELIMINARY CANDIDATE. A BRITISH COUNCIL OPEN CENTRE CASE STUDY IN WESTERN ROMANIA

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**Abstract:** *The study analyses the profile of the potential candidate sitting the Cambridge Preliminary Test. It joins a research trend focused on understanding the role of and attitudes to the Cambridge examinations in Romania.*

**Key words:** *profile, candidate, EFL, testing.*

### 1. Introductory remarks

An interesting development could be observed over the last decade in Romania, when it comes to the most popular EFL external examinations, namely the suite offered by Cambridge English Language Assessment (in short CELA). This development refers to the growing popularity of the Lower Main Suite (Key and Preliminary) exams. At least in the south-western region allotted to the Timisoara open centre, this growth comes at the expense of the Upper Main Suite exams, First and Advanced (Proficiency no longer being organized in the open centre for some time now). Added to that, one can also notice the growing interest in CELA Young Learners' exams (Starters, Movers and Flyers) which are by and large, organised by close centres (state and private schools). The increasing demand for these latter exams is illustrated by the number of centres opened in Timisoara over the last decade. If ten years ago there was only one such centre, now there are twelve (nine state schools and three private ones). Moreover, two years ago the open centre started organizing YLE, two sessions per year for the schools which are not (yet) closed centres. The evident query popping into one's mind at this point is what might lie beneath this tendency. It is precisely what the present paper aims to discuss.

One possible overarching, underlying, reason is provided by the following:

...languages have become a fundamental basic skill to boost employability, particularly among young people, which in turn leads to economic growth and better living standards. (Gutierrez Eugenio, E., Saville N., 2016: 3)

It is no secret that **the** foreign language referred is English, which undoubtedly is the lingua franca of these days. A claim strongly supported by the study discussed by Gutierrez Eugenio and Saville (2016) which revealed that out of the 28 European states investigated, 26 have English as the first foreign language studied (Romania obviously included among them) (Gutierrez Eugenio, E., Saville N., 2016: 6)

In other words, it is in every (particularly young) person's interest to learn to speak (at least) English as a foreign language, if pursuing a better life.

Additionally, it might be that the 2012 *Rethinking Education* European proposal had some effects, too, even if it is not quite clear what unifying policies and strategies were identified and applied within the European Union. Anyway, what is clear is that this proposal suggested two main goals for 2021:

- at least 50% of 15 year-olds attain the level of independent user or above of a first foreign language
- at least 75% of pupils in lower education study at least two foreign languages besides their main language of instruction

Whether and how realistic these goals might be, and whether they will be achieved or not, is still to be seen, researched and then discussed elsewhere.

As concerns the query mentioned above, another way of dealing with it is by looking at things in a more regional way also by trying to profile the candidates for the exams mentioned above. It might prove equally useful to try and understand some of the factors and reasons associated with this phenomenon. It is what this study aims to do in particular.

Attempts at researching the status of Cambridge examinations have been done before in the Romanian contexts. For example Goşa and Frenţiu (2008) explored reactions to the Advanced level examination (CAE) in relation to the English component of the Romanian Baccalaureate and they discovered that the student-respondents investigated favoured the Cambridge exam to the detriment of the English language component of the *Bacalaureat* (the Romanian school leaving exam) which they perceived to lack validity and reliability, especially by being too easy. Another attempt was put forth by Goşa and Gherdan (2009) with reference to the fairly recently introduced Teaching Knowledge Test in Romania. The study conducted in the western part of Romania and concluded that the test-takers had positive reactions to the test considering it, valid, reliable and very useful.

The present paper joins this research trend of understanding the role of and attitudes to the Cambridge examinations in Romania.

## **2. The Study**

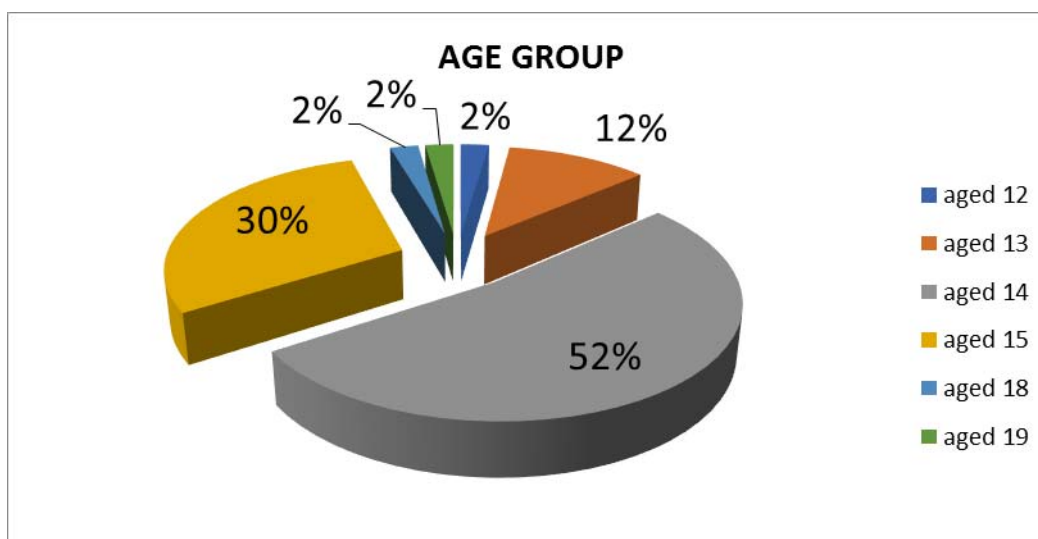
The study will be conducted in several stages, having targeting both diversity and chronological dimensions. The first stage, reported here, investigated the Preliminary candidates of the 2017 March session in Timisoara. It was based on the analysis of two questionnaires. One was the official Candidate Information Sheet (CIS) issued by CELA and administered to all Main Suite candidates. This questionnaire is entirely close-ended and the questions are all of a demographic and factual nature. This standardized questionnaire is generally administered before the first paper of the exam. The second questionnaire discussed here was designed by the authors of this paper and administered at the end of the examination, face-to face, on a voluntary basis. This latter questionnaire was meant to complement and validate the first compulsory, official, entirely close-ended questionnaire and for this reason it contained open-end questions. The CELA, CIS questionnaire was completed by all the candidates (sixty two), forty four candidates agreed to fill in our questionnaire.

We present and discuss the results obtained after analysing the two questionnaires, beginning with the CIS, factual close-ended one, followed by our open-ended complimentary variant.

## 2.1. Results of the CELA CIS questionnaire

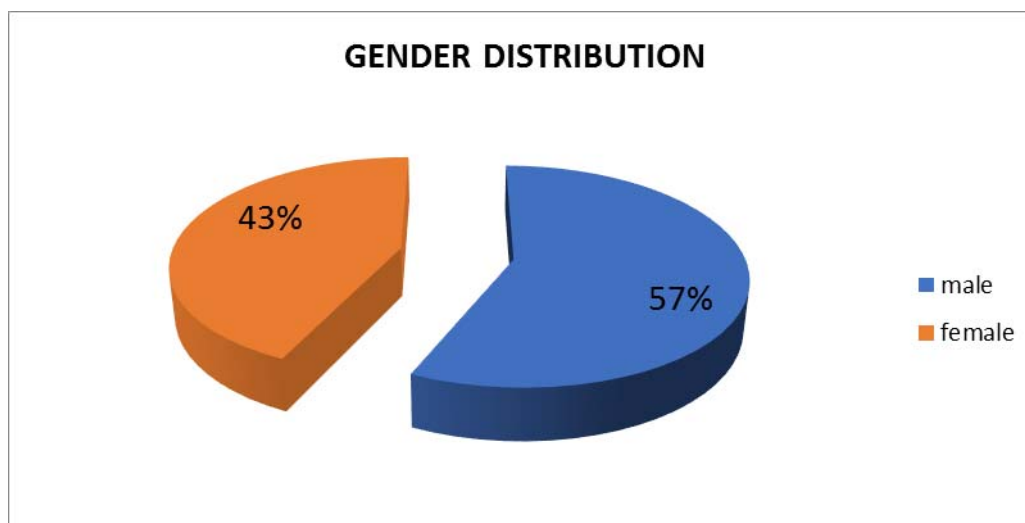
As mentioned before, the official Cambridge questionnaire elicited information of a factual nature. The questionnaire has six close-ended questions, two of them referring to the nationality and first language of the candidates. All the 62 candidates were Romanian and had Romanian as their first language. The remaining four questions are discussed as follows.

**Figure 1 The age groups the Preliminary candidates belonged to**



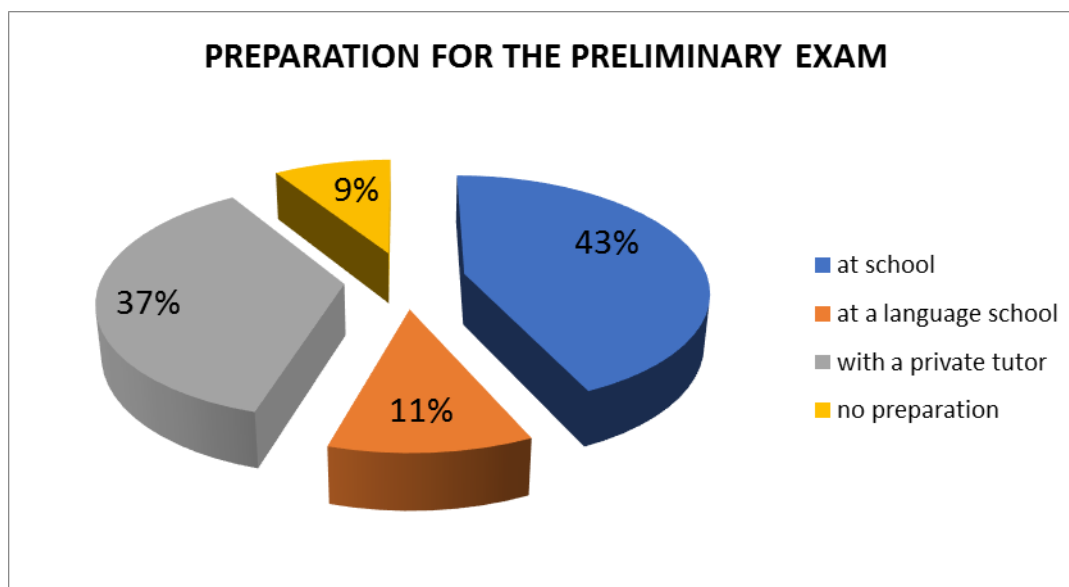
While most were in their teens, the candidates displayed a surprisingly wide range of age groups, from twelve to nineteen. However the overwhelming majority of the candidates were aged fourteen and fifteen. It is a clear indication that Preliminary targets mainly adults and CELA has a similar exams tailored for the needs of schoolchildren (Preliminary for Schools), the typical candidate in our study is a young teenager. It will be interesting to see whether the typical age group of the Preliminary for Schools candidates is similar to or different from the present one. This finding does seem to show that the Preliminary candidates are getting younger.

**Figure 2 The gender distribution of the Preliminary candidates**



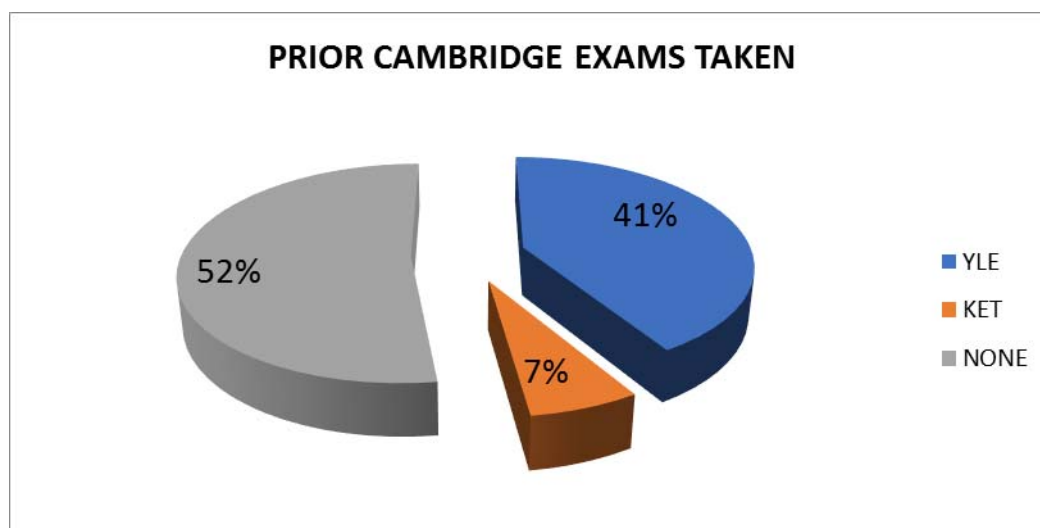
It was somehow unexpected to see that the majority of the test-takers were males, since it is generally believed that the female population in Romania is slightly more numerous on the one hand, and, on the other, girls are better equipped, more interested and more efficient when it comes to foreign language studies.

**Figure 3 The candidates' choices to prepare for the Preliminary exam**



As can be seen, the preparation took place predominantly at school, which undoubtedly shows the teacher's preoccupation with the success of the candidates, followed by preparation with a private tutor. It is also interesting to note that quite a small percentage of the candidates did not prepare for this exam.

**Figure 4 Other Cambridge exams taken by the Preliminary candidates**



The majority of the candidates investigated sat a Cambridge exam for the first time, however quite a number (41%) had sat the Young Learners exams prior to the Preliminary one, added to that a small number sat Key. This finding can be seen as an indication that the



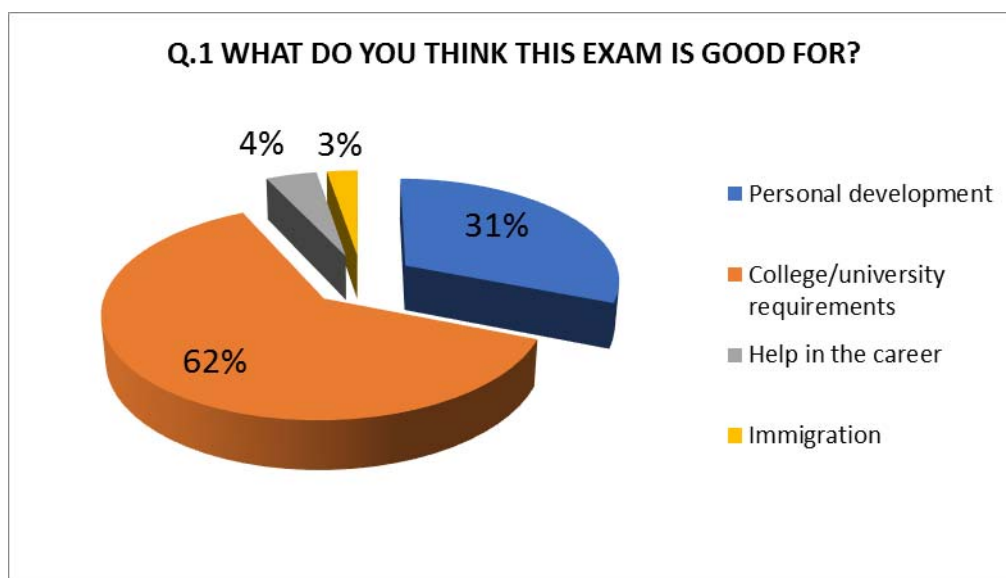
interest in Cambridge external examinations starts at an early age. It is also reasonable to surmise that the interest is rather due to the parents or the teachers of these candidates.

In short, as far as the official CELA standardized Candidate Information Sheet is concerned, the typical Preliminary candidate (at least in the case the March 2017 Timișoara open centre is a Romanian native and citizen, he is a young teenage male (fourteen or younger), has attended preparation classes at school and or/privately, has barely missed sitting previously other Cambridge exams and has had some contact with Cambridge exams as a young learner.

## 2.2 Results of the open ended questionnaire

The questionnaire we designed comprised only open-ended questions which, we believe serve the purpose of both complimenting and validating the responses elicited by the standardised CIS. Qualitative means were used to analyse the answers given by the forty four Preliminary candidates who agreed to participate in our study. As follows we present the analysis of these answers which take the form of both the categories we identified in the process of analysis and their quantification.

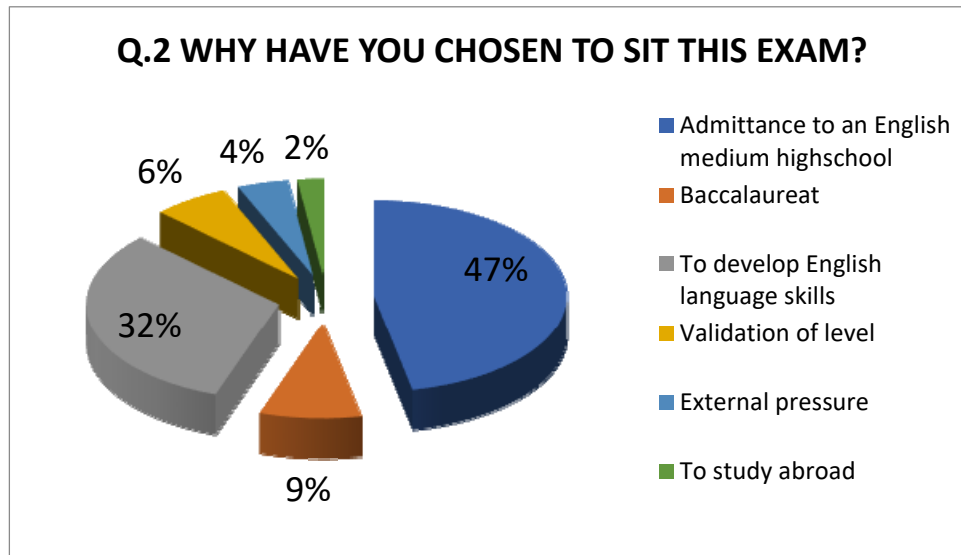
Figure 5 Exam usefulness



A large majority think that the exam will help them to use it for gaining free way to secondary schools or universities, as well as passing the Romanian school leaving exam, the *Bacalaureat*. The candidates are most certainly aware that Preliminary is on the recognition list of exams issued by the Romanian Ministry of education. Nonetheless we were pleasantly surprised that the next choice of our respondents referred to personal development, at the same time immigration being the last with a very low percentage. Can it be interpreted as a sign of unexpected maturity for persons so young? It is a difficult question to answer. It is equally possible that the respondents were barely ventriloquizing their teachers' or parents' voices. Whatever the reason, the Preliminary candidates do seem to display an interesting mixture of pragmatism and maturity of thinking. None of the respondents gave answers suggesting that they did not see the use of the exam, an encouraging finding, indicating a definite positive attitude towards the exam, however to be expected since the respondents chose to sit the exam anyway.

The next question presented in Figure 6 below personalized the question discussed above and also sought to validate it.

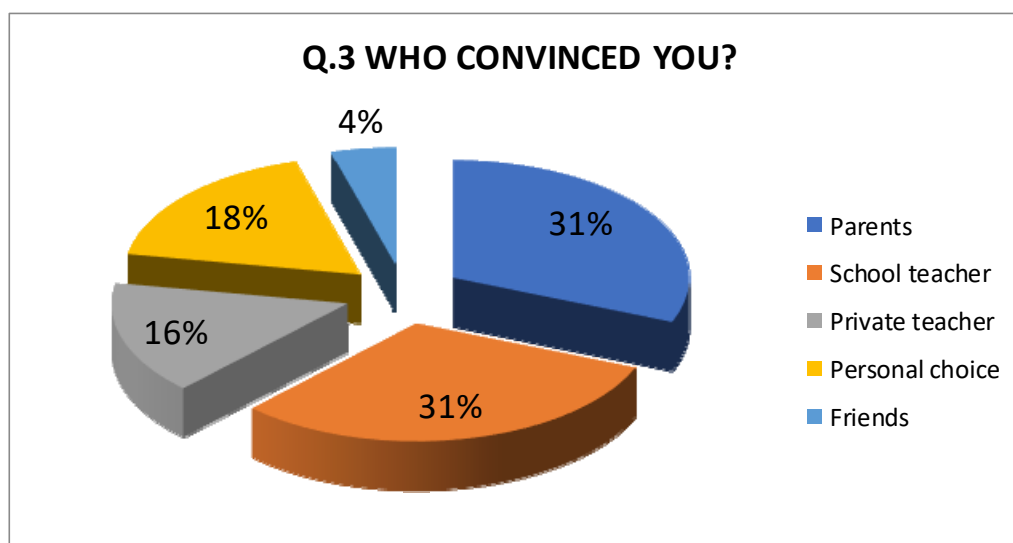
**Figure 6 The candidates' reasons for sitting Preliminary**



The largest portion of candidates gave as main reason for sitting the exam the admittance to an English medium school. This result is consistent with the age group of the typical candidate shown before. In addition, the third largest portion had to do with the replacement of the English component of the *Bacalaureat*. The fact that the second largest portion represented the desire to develop English language skills while preparing for this exam is not only another sign of the candidates' maturity when deciding to invest in their future, but it is also indicative of the trust the candidates' (and possibly their advisors') have on the validity and the worth of this exam.

The following chart shows what kind of advisors might be instrumental in the candidates' decision to sit and prepare for the exam under scrutiny.

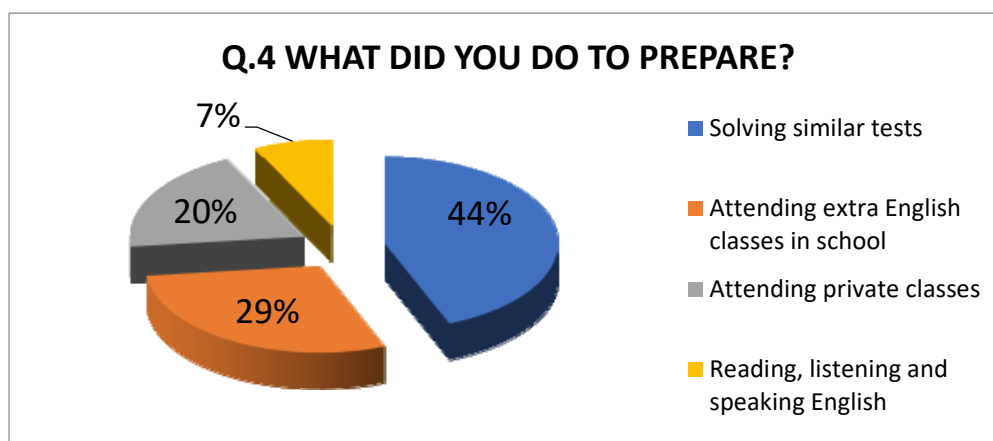
**Figure 7 The Preliminary candidates' advisors**



Though parents and school teachers appear as equally important in the candidates' decision to sit the exam, it is without any doubt that teachers are most influential as the school teachers and the private ones outnumber all the other factors referred to by the Preliminary candidates. It is slightly intriguing that the influence of friends is the least mentioned by the candidates. One would have expected that within the age group of the majority of the candidates the influence of friends would be much more potent.

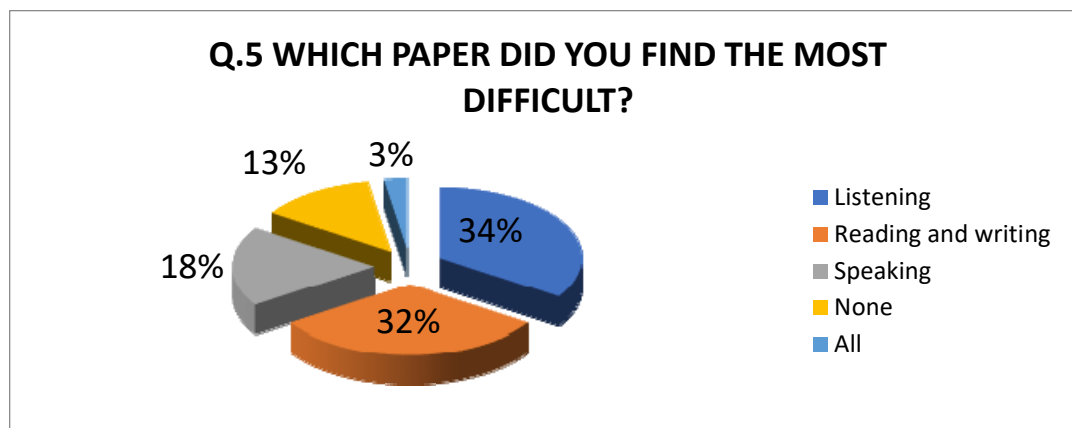
The next question in our open-ended questionnaire tried to elicit answers related to the way in which the candidates prepared for the exam. The answers were categorized and counted as shown by the chart below.

**Figure 8 The Preliminary candidates choice of preparation exam strategies**



If in the answers given to other questions the candidates (or their advisors) seemed to display a certain maturity, the preferred way of preparation chosen shows that this maturity as well as appropriateness when it comes to what counts as good practice in language teaching and testing do seem to fade away. Barely solving similar tests can promote a certain routine and familiarity with the test structure but definitely not the acquisition of language skills. Unfortunately the questionnaire was not clear enough for establishing who recommended this preparation strategy. Can this be a reminiscence of deeply engrained practices in the Romanian educational system where rote-learning was (and still is) seen as paramount? This is indeed a question worth exploring in the future.

**Figure 9 The candidates' views on the difficulties of the Preliminary papers**

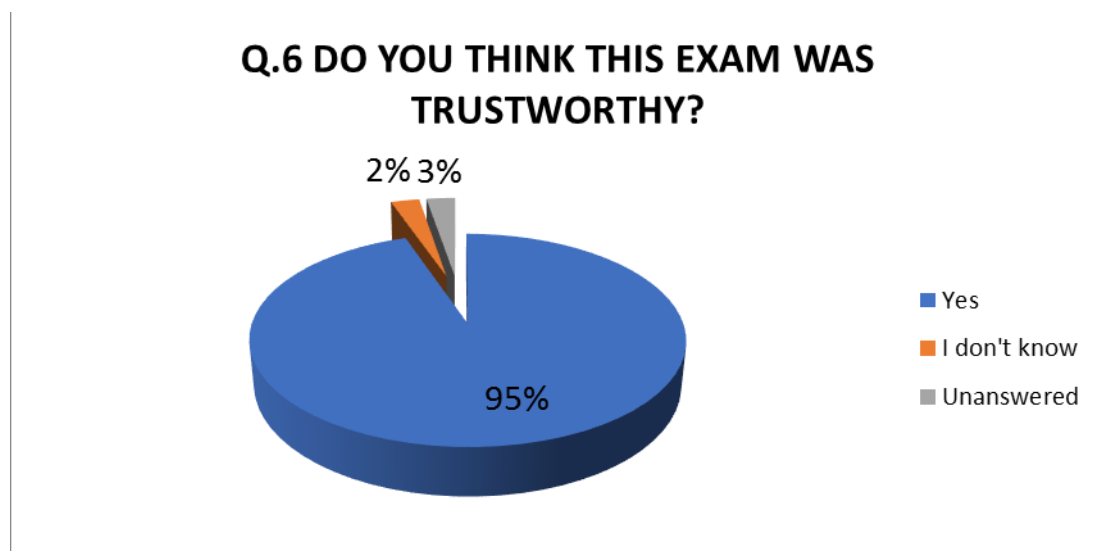


As the chart shows, the respondents found the listening and the reading and writing papers the most difficult, and in a similar percentage. This finding is somewhat surprising

because receptive skills are generally seen as being easier to deal with than the productive skills. And students in general favour close-ended items to the open-ended ones. Two possible reasons might lie at the bottom of this unexpected result, both having a technical connotation. The listening paper, on the one hand, relies on the use of equipment which is often blamed for poor results by some of the test-takers who just assimilate faulty equipment with test difficulty. On the other hand, when viewing the Reading and writing paper as difficult, the respondents might actually refer to the writing component of this paper. It would have been much more useful to particularly formulate the questions in such a way that the answers provided refer to the two skills separately.

The last question of our open-ended questionnaire sought to find answers that would indicate the attitude towards the test as such, in a similar way questions 1 did.

**Figure 10 The candidates' views on the trustworthiness of Preliminary**



The answers provided by the respondents do seem to indicate an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards the exam. Even though, one could argue, the fact they decided to sit Preliminary is a sign that the respondents (or their advisors) must find it trustworthy, the results are self-evident. After all there are quite a number of exams in Romania which are not seen as trustworthy and still students sit them. The results shown after analysing this question do confirm, along with the results rendered by other questions, that Preliminary is an exam that produces mainly positive feelings both when it comes to its usefulness and its trustworthiness.

The respondents were given the possibility to add any comments they might find relevant, however none of them chose to do so. Most probably their age in addition to the time of the face-to-face completion of the open-ended questions (a task that in general respondents find rather daunting) provide a reasonable explanation for this absence.

In the final section of our paper we try to pull the strings of this endeavour together and come up with the profile of the typical candidate for Preliminary.

### **3. Conclusions**

The study discussed in this paper offers a cross-sectional angle of the typical candidate for the Cambridge Preliminary exam in a close centre in Western Romania.

The profile emerged once we analysed two complementary questionnaires, an official, standardized, entirely close-ended one completed by all the test-takers and an open-ended questionnaire designed by the authors of this paper voluntarily filled in by a number of respondent test-takers.

The analysis showed that the typical Preliminary candidate is a mid-teenager (fourteen to fifteen), male (not representative for the gender structure of the Romanian population, neither in accordance with the popular belief that females are more interested/god at language learning than males). He has not sat another Cambridge exam before, and if he did, he favoured Cambridge Young Learners. The typical candidate prepared for this exam at school by solving similar tests. His best advisor in the decision to sit this exam was a teacher, most often the school teacher, but also the private teacher played an important role in this respect. He found the most difficult the listening paper and the reading and writing one. Considering that these papers mainly elicit receptive skills (thought to be easier to acquire), this findings is quite surprising. However it is not clear whether the writing component of the reading and writing paper is not more likely to blame for their belief. Being familiar with what other students and teachers said after sitting other paper-based Cambridge exams, it is not too much of a speculation to consider that test-takers fear bad sound in the listening paper.

The typical attitude of the typical candidate toward this exam is almost entirely positive, confirming the findings of the other two studies conducted in Romania mentioned earlier in this paper. Thus the typical candidate thinks Preliminary is a trustworthy exam and one that will help him primarily in his personal development, even though the main reason for choosing it is quite pragmatic: secondary school or university requirements, or, in other words the desire to replace other Romanian designed English language exams with the Cambridge one.

To sum up, by conducting this study we may have not discovered what underlies the decrease in Cambridge Upper Main suite candidature in Romania, or in our region for that matter, and the increase of the Lower Main suite volumes, but we managed to construct the profile of the typical candidate for the Preliminary exam. Our findings, nevertheless due seem to indicate that the policies Ministries of education encourage trends, but the most important factor in encouraging people to sit exams are their teachers. Extended research into this area for understanding exam related phenomena is sorely needed.

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## CORPUS-BASED TRAINING TO BUILD TRANSLATION COMPETENCES AND TRANSLATORS' SELF-RELIANCE

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**Abstract:** Among well-established standard operating strategies and methodologies aimed at improving students' multi-layered translation competence, corpus linguistics has given impulse to new inter-disciplinary standpoints. Plugging in cutting edge toolkits, corpus use envisages real-life translation training in compliance with current market demands. The paper underpins specialised corpus design, using MAXQDA as an interactive tool meant to build translators' functional autonomy.

**Keywords:** corpus linguistics, multi-layered translation competence, translation training

### 1. Introduction

Within the context of the contemporary market-driven society, governed by a steadily interplay of demand and supply, Translation Studies has witnessed a paradigm shift from the descriptive and normative approach of the 1960s towards a more dynamic outlook to open up cooperative strategies that bridge societies and cultures.

*Formal correspondence*, as labelled by Catford (1965:20), prescribing that equivalence needs to be observed mainly at the syntactic and lexical levels, has been reshaped by Nida (1984:13), who highlights the dynamic nature of translation by advocating that "anything that can be said in one language can certainly be said in another language". Likewise, Newmark (1988) regards translation as *A dynamic reflection of human activities*, relevant in terms of real-life purpose intercultural communication. Under the circumstances, target text-oriented perspectives impact on the outcome.

Chartering new territories within the composite landscape of contemporary translation practice, Toury (1995:201) advocates that by adopting a target text-oriented perspective, translators resort to the social function of translation, assigning paramount importance to cultural variables in the production of target texts.

Subsequently, translation-training programmes focused on the development of translator's competence, while also boosting trainees' self-reliance and decision-making. Special attention has been paid to a growing awareness of the translators' role as intercultural mediators. The key role that translators play within the professional and social landscape is revealed by the fact that tailor-made curricula and programmes emerged as a response to the increased demand for this profession. This phenomenon is pinpointed by Baker (2014):

... from food chains to the film industry, and from news reporting to networks of political resistance, the world has become a dense web of interrelations that are continually being reshaped through various forms of linguistic and cultural mediation. (Baker 2014:19)

In what follows, we aim to put forward an interdisciplinary training framework designed to build translation trainees' functional autonomy. By challenging trainees with real-life translation tasks, we seek to develop both the translation competence in compliance with current quality requirements and further transversal competences via corpora design methods and computer-assisted tools.

## **2. Input Data**

Preparing future translators to adhere to the contemporary translation market effectively and responsibly, we shall indicate how corpus linguistics and CAT tools (MAXQDA software) contribute to the development of translation trainees' competence. Thus, we underpin an integrative approach to translation training as a "viable and fruitful perspective within which translation and translating can be studied in a novel and systematic way." (Laviosa 1998:1)

### **2.1 Meeting the contemporary translator**

A preliminary stage of our training framework is devoted to raise students' awareness with regard to the contemporary translator's profile. Hence, students are familiarised with the joint-efforts carried out at the European level to improve translator training programmes. Special attention is paid to the European Masters' in Translation (EMT) network, launched in 2009 by the EC Directorate-General for Translation. Accordingly, students grow aware of some core strategies adopted in order to establish current quality benchmarks and develop effective translation study programmes at Master's level.

In line with the recommendations endorsed by the EMT expert group, students come to understand the concept of *multi-layered translation competence*, incorporating several particular dimensions:

- The interpersonal (i.e., interaction with clients as purpose-oriented) and production dimensions;
- Language competence, activating both L1 and L2 mastery to provide a natural and error-free translation of the source text;
- Intercultural awareness;
- Information mining competence (coupled with critical thinking skills);
- Thematic area competence;
- Technological competence.

(adapted from Chodkiewicz and Curie-Sklodowska 2012:39-41)

Beyond the particular dimensions of the *multi-layered translation competence*, further interdisciplinary dimensions are introduced to students. Under the circumstances, we highlight the importance of the intercultural competence as an integral component embedding linguistic and social awareness, essential for a translator to detect and compare culture-related translation units. Alongside the information mining competence and technological competence development via corpus analysis, trainees will get acquainted with the organisation of thematic maps, widening their specialised terminology.

### **2.2 Corpus linguistics and translation training**

Among the first scholars to highlight the importance of corpora encompassing both source and translated texts, Baker (1993:243) postulated that translators would come to better perceive "the nature of translated text as a mediated communicative event" through a systematic corpus-based investigation. Even though the approach envisaged by Baker was



aimed at developing interpreting competences, it was later adapted for the written dimension of translation. Other prominent scholars have placed corpus-based research at the heart of novel translation research directions. The main objectives of general or specialised corpora introduced to translation training programmes are related to an increased awareness of source and target texts different socio-cultural settings so as to secure a natural and error-free end product. Almost two decades ago, Laviosa (1998:1) argued that the corpus-based approach would evolve “through theoretical elaboration and empirical realisation”, resulting into “a coherent, composite and rich paradigm” relevant for theory and practice.

Special attention is paid to the advantages brought by corpus-based analysis, such as the deeper comprehension of authentic texts and, implicitly, an increased natural language flow in target text production, as well as a better identification and a more appropriate application of translation norms, strategies and procedures. Also, the investigation of authentic texts and their comparison to translated versions in parallel corpora will enable students to chart and further re-use general and specialised terminology.

Digital corpora and computer-assisted tools are now at the touch of a button-distance to generate different types of frequency lists in terms of text typology, lexical particularities, specialised terminology or translation procedures applied. Such outcomes can be further applied and incorporated in larger software packages and environments for advanced developments of CAT tools.

### **3. Corpus-based Training as an Added Value**

Sharing Baker’s (2014: 23) perspective in that cutting-edge technology and, especially, computer-assisted tools are essential to the contemporary job of a translator, acting as “participatory culture that makes many of the challenges posed through translation and interpreting possible”, we designed and implemented a corpus-based analysis of parallel specialised corpora. The setting up of our experiment consists of three stages, combining contemporary corpus design recommendations, translation theoretical insights and practical corpus-based assignments.

#### **3.1 Corpus design**

The first stage of our experiment concerns the operational knowledge of corpus design. Thus, the first task for the trainees is to compile a parallel specialized corpus, i.e. a bilingual corpus comprising 10 cooking recipes from *Jamie’s 30 Minute Meals*, authored by Jamie Oliver and available as an interactive electronic book at <http://www.jamieoliver.com>, and their Romanian translated version *Gătește în 30 de minute cu Jamie*, available at [www.tvpaprika.ro](http://www.tvpaprika.ro). Students are asked to search the internet and organise both the original texts and their translated version in two pdf-format documents, to increase usability.

The theoretical and practical recommendation put forward by Lüdeling and Kytö (2008) underpin students’ corpus design procedures serving to answer specific research questions. Students not only design a reliable corpus in accordance with the key criteria of representativeness and balance, and they are also given the opportunity to handle authentic texts, dealing with particular cultural rituals and artefacts, hence the intercultural component is prevailing.

#### **3.2 Achieving theoretical insights**

Before embarking upon the practical assignments, students are required to review previous resources regarding the functionalist approach to translation in terms of text typology and language functions as put forward by Reiss (1981/2000), Newmark (1988) and

Hatim and Munday (2004). Admittedly, students are asked to identify and feature recipes linguistically and culturally, providing arguments with reference to the dominant and secondary text functions and their effect on the target readership. Further theoretical insights are directed at the cultural intertraffic strategies.

### **3.3 Computer-assisted simulation for corpora use**

Having designed the electronic coups and established the theoretical framework in terms of language functions and text typology, the students are required to investigate the corpus by means of computer-assisted tools.

First we set the research tasks:

- to upload the parallel specialised corpus in MAXQDA 12, a qualitative data analysis software;
- to mine the parallel corpora in order to determine terminology frequency and translation procedures incidence, and their interconnection;
- to design and develop thematic maps by means of the options provided by the software, which can be further re-used for other translation assignments.

Using the options available in MAXQDA 12, students are divided into three groups, as follows:

- Group 1 members will carry out a corpus-based analysis in order to identify specific ingredient-terms and their counterparts, alongside the translation procedures;
- Group 2 is in charge of a corpus-based analysis to identify measurement units used in the source texts and their equivalents in the target texts, as well as the translation procedures applied;
- Group 3 is concerned with a corpus-based analysis to identify kitchen tools, appliances and cooking procedures terms and their equivalents in translation, and the corresponding translation procedures.

While training corpus-design skills applied to translation, our experiment will also enable the students to network, hence developing interpersonal competence via a real-time virtual interface. The applications provided by the software will allow the students to access the two sub-corpora simultaneously. Selecting the colour-based labelling option, the students can mark different text excerpts in terms of *ingredients*, *measurements* and *kitchen tools*, *gadgets*, *cooking procedures* to which they can further add comments related to the most appropriate translation procedures.

As illustrated in Figure 1 below, by selecting the Code System option, a different colour is assigned to each group and then each group has the autonomy to assign a different colour to each translation procedure identified while investigating the corpus.

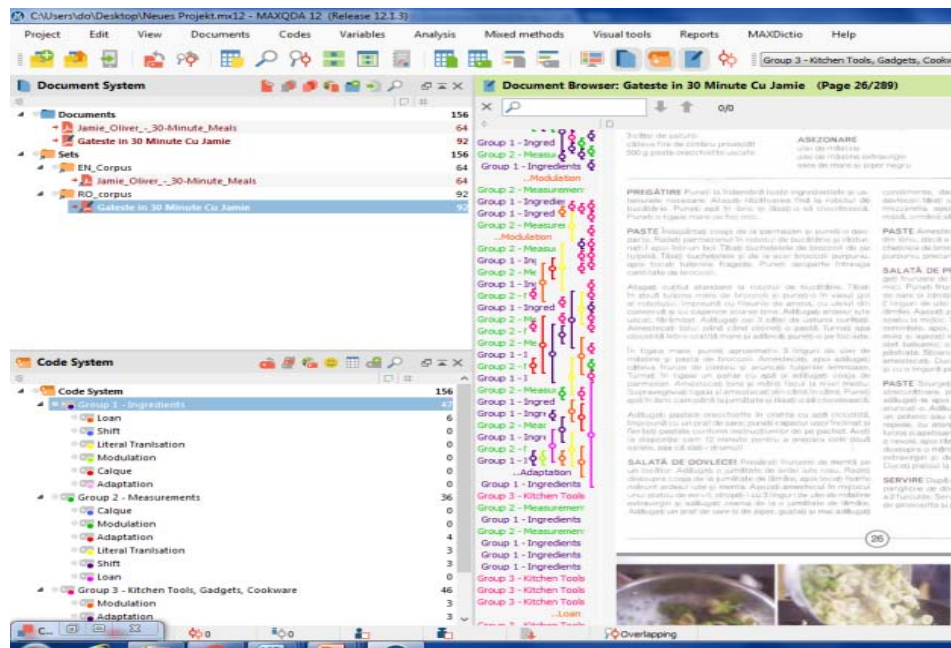


Figure 2. Text encoding in MAXQDA 12

After developing and applying computer-assisted research methods to identify and label translation-related particularities in terms of terminology frequency and translation procedures incidence, each group selects the option *Dictionary* and the software will generate word frequency lists as well as thematic lists, related to their research topic.

To complete their corpus-based research study, students are asked to display and interpret the results achieved via digital tools.

The generated outcomes are listed below:

- diagrams highlighting terminology frequency;
- document portraits indicating translation procedures incidence in relation to the specific terminology items labelled;
- word clouds associated with thematic maps encompassing the most relevant (bilingual) terminology.

Figure 2 illustrates a document portrait generated to establish translation procedures incidence in relation to the specific terminology items labelled.

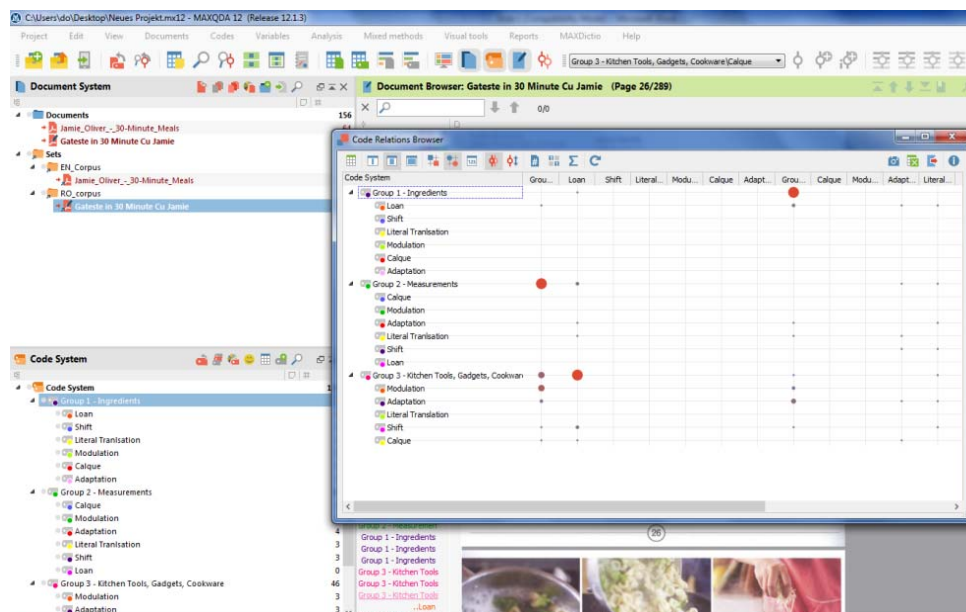


Figure 3. Document portrait: procedures incidence in relation to the specific terminology

#### 4. Considerations on the Experiment

By carrying out this experimental research we sought to develop students' awareness with reference to the outcomes that computer-assisted corpus investigation brings to translation practice.

Our experiment envisaged the design of an electronic corpus, a simulated computer-assisted corpus analysis and a digitalised representation and interpretation of the results that can be further applied to larger scale translation tasks.

Using corpora to develop and train translation competences will also assist students in the long term to better identify and to investigate source text and/or target text variations, both diachronically and synchronically. Special importance is paid to cultural variables and localisation strategies, as trainees are assigned to identify and evaluate particular authentic examples of culture-related items or specific social context patterns.

Such corpus-based analysis is also effective in training students' research skills, both quantitative and qualitative analysis being involved. Moreover, digital corpora design and analysis may enable students to use and organise extensive linguistic information, document, organise, analyse or compare corpora.

In the long run, valuable translation-oriented routines as driven by computer-assisted corpora investigation can be applied to a whole range of texts and tasks, preparing trainees for a better insertion to the labour market and boosting their professional recognition.

#### 5. Conclusion

We advocate that computer-assisted investigations of corpora can develop the students' multi-layered translation competence, and enhance self-reliance. Consequently, we consider that the central achievement lies in the production of a target text that meets the expectations/requirements of a target readership/client while also allowing the translator to develop.

Last but not least, the paper highlights the need for constant tailoring and re-tailoring of translator training programmes at the academic level. Some practical suggestions as to how

raise students' awareness with regard to the digital processing of specialised corpora in translation may act as a springboard.

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## INITIATIVE FOR EFL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN ROMANIAN SCHOOLS

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**Abstract:** *The aim of the present teacher development initiative is twofold: to help EFL teachers develop critical reflection skills through various means such as video recording, journal writing, peer observation and a support group and to create what Hargreaves (cited in Johnston 2009) calls a “culture of collaboration”. It is believed that teachers, students and the educational institution as a whole would benefit from such an initiative.*

**Keywords:** *collaboration, critical reflection, EFL, self-awareness, teacher development.*

### 1. Introduction

The lack of opportunities for EFL teacher development in Romanian schools, such as talks, workshops or travel grants for conference attendance, perpetuates the use of a routinized repertoire of teaching practices. This lack of opportunities combined with a rather short period of teaching practicum determines the teachers to teach as they were taught - the “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie cited in Bailey et al. 1996). My awareness of the need for an EFL teacher development initiative in Romanian schools was raised by my experiences teaching English in a high school, a prestigious educational institution but at the same time a site where English teachers were professionally isolated from one another in a competitive, individualistic culture.

The initiative proposed here is intended to take place for one school semester and to include all the EFL teachers in the English department of a school. At the end of the semester, questionnaires consisting of both closed and open-ended questions will be given to the teachers, the students and the principals in order to determine the impact of the initiative. The questions will be holistic: they will be linked with the aim of the initiative - critical reflection and collaboration.

In order to achieve the aim stated above, a combination of various elements will be used. The main focus of the initiative will be on critical reflection, which will be achieved through different procedures: video recording, journal writing, peer observation and a teacher support group. The teachers’ critical self-reflection process will first take place through video recording of their lessons and journal writing. The teachers will watch the videos of themselves teach and identify areas for improvement, as well as strengths. Then, they will write the reflections emerging from the videos in journals. The teachers will also describe and reflect on critical incidents in their journals. Next, the teachers will observe a colleague of their choice in a non-evaluative manner in order to gain insights into areas of teaching that they would like to improve in their own classrooms. The observed colleague will receive feedback in a nonjudgemental way. In turn, the observed colleague will observe his/her peer. In the teacher support group, the teachers will discuss the insights gained by watching the videos of themselves teach and critical incidents taking place in their classrooms, which are



recorded in their journals. They will also discuss journal articles and books that contain practical teaching ideas (activities and techniques). The four procedures will be repeated cyclically until the end of the semester.

## **2. Rationale and Procedure**

As stated above, the present initiative aims to help teachers become critically reflective practitioners. The key word is reflection, which is defined as “the process of critical examination of experiences, a process that can lead to a better understanding of one’s teaching practices and routines” (Richards and Farrell 2005:7). Thus, Richards and Farrell view reflection as a critical process which can result in enhanced self-awareness. With regard to the relationship between reflection, experience and expertise, Tsui (2003:13) states that:

“Experience will only contribute to expertise if practitioners are capable of learning from it. To learn from experience requires that practitioners constantly reflect on their practices”.

Tsui thus draws attention to the essential role that reflection plays in turning teachers’ experience into expertise.

### **2.1. Video Recording**

The professional development process will start with the use of videos as a means of critical self-reflection. The teachers will only watch the videos of themselves teach, not their colleagues’ videos. The teachers’ task will be to identify areas for improvement, as well as strengths by watching themselves teach in the videos. In order to make the most of the video recording procedure, each teacher will video record lessons focusing on different language skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing.

An interesting study which highlights the use of videos as instruments for professional development is Gun’s (2011) study. The author investigates ways of developing EFL teachers’ critical reflection skills and their effectiveness through training. Through reflection training, teachers can improve their classroom practices by becoming more self-aware. The study was carried out in an intensive ELT programme at a Turkish university. The participants consisted of four teachers, who were also colleagues, four students and three teacher trainers. The four teachers were observed by their colleagues, the trainers and the students, and they received feedback on their teaching from these different sources. They also received feedback by watching videos of themselves while they were teaching. Interestingly, Gun found that, although the teachers learned from all the feedback sources, they perceived the videos of themselves teach to be the most valuable and powerful type of feedback that they received. The reason was that, by watching the videos, they became more aware of their teaching behaviour and, implicitly, of the areas that they needed to improve. The main implication of Gun’s study is that videos raise teachers’ awareness on their teaching behaviour. Gun (2011: 133) mentions that:

“(...) the teachers (...) stated that they were able to transfer their critical reflection into ‘on the spot’ strategies in their classroom”.

In other words, by critically reflecting on their lessons, teachers are more likely to develop effective strategies that lead to an improvement in their teaching.

Another interesting project which used videos as professional development practice is the project conducted by Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (1998). Bailey, Curtis and Nunan were experienced teachers, teaching EFL in Hong Kong, when they engaged in the professional

development initiative described in the article. The authors report on a collaborative professional development experience which consisted of three procedures: videotaping, teaching journals and teaching portfolios. As far as videotaping was concerned, Bailey and Curtis were video recorded while they were coteaching, and they subsequently watched the video of themselves teach. Both of them acknowledged the value of “the visual support of the video” (Bailey et al. 1998: 552), which stimulates a more vivid recall than audio recording. Bailey and Curtis stated:

“it led to vivid recall of what we had done as teachers and even of how we had felt during that lesson” (Bailey et al. 1998:552).

Thus, Bailey and Curtis describe videos as a powerful tool which not only reminds teachers of what they did during the lesson, but which also reminds them of how they felt while teaching that particular lesson. Another significant gain was the fact that, by watching the video, the two teachers were able to make connections “between what was revealed ... by the video, and other aspects of the lesson” (Bailey et al. 1998:553). By making such connections, teachers engage in critical self-reflection.

## **2.2. Journal Writing**

The next procedure for critical self-reflection is journal writing. As far as writing is concerned, Burton (2009:303) points out that “(...) writing has the potential to function as a uniquely - effective reflective tool”. Therefore, Burton highlights the value of writing as a tool for self-reflection. As mentioned above, the teachers will use journals for two purposes, the first one being to record the reflections stemming from watching the videos of themselves teach. It is believed that the writing process will raise the teachers’ awareness on the identified areas for improvement, as well as on their strengths.

As stated previously, Bailey et al. (1998) used journals as one of the procedures for their professional development project. In her account of her journal writing experience, Bailey emphasizes the benefits of keeping a teaching journal:

“Making (...) entries in (...) journals can help us as teachers see (...) what procedures seem to work well for the students, which activities are less successful (...). (...) Writing (...) reflections in a teaching journal provides a place for questions to accumulate (...)” (Bailey et al. 1998:548-549).

Bailey highlights the fact that journals can help teachers to become more aware of what works well and what does not work well in their classrooms. Most importantly, by writing in their journals, teachers critically reflect on their teaching practices by asking questions. Teachers may ask questions about why certain activities were successful and why others were not effective, and the visual support provided by videos can help teachers find answers to such questions.

There were other benefits of journal writing reported by Bailey (Bailey et al. 1998). For instance, she mentioned that, when she became aware of an ineffective practice by writing in her journal, she made a conscious effort to change that particular practice in her classroom. Thus, critical reflection is extremely valuable for teachers as it can lead to changes in classroom practices, which in turn can lead to better student outcomes.

In addition to recording insights gained through video watching, journals will also be used to describe and reflect on critical incidents. Writing about critical incidents is a form of critical reflection and, as such, it is beneficial for language teachers’ professional development. Learning reflectively by analysing critical incidents involves raising teachers’ awareness and getting them to rethink certain events in their classrooms. Furthermore, critical incidents are a form of what Tsui (2003) refers to as “personal practical knowledge”, defined



as “knowledge that is constructed and reconstructed as we live our stories and retell and relive them through processes of reflection” (Clandinin cited in Tsui 2003:48). According to Clandinin (cited in Tsui 2003), it is through reflection that teachers “reconstruct” the stories which take place in their classrooms.

In his article, Farrell (2008) focuses on a critical incidents study which was conducted in an ELT education programme in Singapore. The participants were eighteen Singaporean trainee teachers who spoke English as a mother tongue. Each participant needed to report on two critical incidents that had taken place during his/her teaching in a secondary school. The trainee teachers described and reflected on the critical incidents in a journal that they kept during the study. The findings of this case study suggest that reflecting on critical incidents can be helpful for language teachers. By analysing the critical incidents which occurred in their classrooms, the trainee teachers engaged in critical reflection. Consequently, they became more aware of the complexity of issues involved in the teaching and learning of English and, implicitly, of the fact that there are no simple solutions to such problems.

Although Farrell’s (2008) study was conducted in the context of an ELT training programme, the procedure can easily be adapted and put into practice at any educational institution as part of a professional development initiative. One of the problems mentioned in Farrell’s study is that a large number of incidents that trainee teachers reported in the study were negative rather than positive incidents. According to Farrell, teachers should be encouraged to focus on both positive and negative incidents. Thus, the procedure will be put into practice as follows. In their journals, teachers will describe two critical incidents (a positive and a negative one), telling what happened in detail. Then, the teachers will reflect on the incidents, analysing and interpreting what happened.

So far, the focus has been on two procedures for professional development: video recording and journal writing. Both procedures were included in Bailey et al.’s (1998) project. With regard to their professional development project, Bailey et al. (1998:553) stated that, despite the fact that the project was time consuming, it was perceived as a natural process since it “grew out of and complemented” their teaching. Moreover, the project was rewarding “in terms of information, knowledge, and satisfaction” (Bailey et al. 1998:554). Bailey et al. (1998) stress the importance of such procedures for teachers’ professional development, implying that teachers should take full advantage of such learning opportunities.

### **2.3. Peer Observation**

The third procedure for professional development proposed in this initiative is peer observation. Since “the walls of classrooms become boundaries that separate teachers” (Lortie cited in Bailey et al. 1998:554), peer observation is one of the forms of teacher development which encourages teachers to collaborate and, hence, to overcome professional isolation. Johnston (2009:241-242) argues that “... overcoming professional isolation is of benefit not just to the individual teachers concerned, but to the entire context in which they teach”. With regard to peer observation, Richards (1998:147) states:

“Peer observation should be approached as an opportunity for teachers to develop a critically reflective stance to their own teaching” “rather than (...) as an evaluative procedure (...)”.

In other words, Richards points out that, for peer observation to be truly effective, observers need to be critical towards their own teaching and reflect on it rather than to be critical towards the teaching of their observed peers. Therefore, peer observation will be conducted in a non-evaluative manner.

Cosh (1999) converges with Richards’ (1998) view on peer observation as she also proposes a reflective approach to peer observation. According to Cosh (1999:25), the aim of

such an approach is “to encourage self-reflection and self-awareness about ... teaching”. She argues that such an approach prevents observed teachers from feeling threatened or judged by the observers. Cosh also states that, for peer observation to remain reflective and non-evaluative, the focus should always be on what the observer can learn from the peer observation experience. In other words, by using a reflective approach, peer observation becomes a learning vehicle rather than “a vehicle for the judgement of others on the basis of our own assumptions” (Cosh 1999:27).

One of the studies which used peer observation as a professional development tool is Vo and Mai Nguyen’s (2010). The authors report on a professional development project in Vietnam, which focused on peer observation as part of a Critical Friends Group (CFG). The study was carried out for one semester, and four Vietnamese EFL teachers participated. The participants worked in pairs, observed each other teach and gave each other feedback. Observations and interviews were used to collect data. The interviews revealed that all the participants had positive attitudes towards the peer observation experience.

According to the teachers in Vo and Mai Nguyen’s (2010) project, one of the reasons why they enjoyed peer observation was that it gave them the opportunity to learn from their colleagues. The participants improved their teaching skills by observing their colleagues’ strengths and weaknesses. As for strengths, one of the teachers stressed the benefits of learning from her colleagues’ effective teaching techniques. This particular teacher tried to use her peers’ successful techniques in her own teaching, stating that it is truly helpful to watch a teacher put good teaching into practice and to see its positive effects.

As far as reflection is concerned, it is worth noting that both the peer observations and the feedback meetings stimulated reflection since the participants reflected on their own teaching. The teachers became more aware of their weaknesses and of how they could make improvements by watching and reflecting on effective teaching techniques. Consequently, the participants’ motivation to teach increased, and they were able to change some of their teaching practices. This implies that the students also benefited from the professional development project by being taught by more motivated and creative teachers.

The findings of Vo and Mai Nguyen’s (2010) study revealed that not only the teachers and the students benefited from the professional development experience but also the educational institution as, by learning from each other and helping each other develop professionally, the participants’ work relationship improved. Vo and Mai Nguyen found that the peer observation experience enhanced a sense of professional community among the four teachers. This finding is especially significant since the study was conducted in a context in which EFL teachers “seem to work in isolation from one another” (Vo and Mai Nguyen 2010:206). Thus, despite the fact that the participants in the study acknowledged that it requires a certain amount of time, peer observation is worthwhile as it involves several benefits.

It is important to note that all the participants in Vo and Mai Nguyen’s (2010) study were so pleased with the professional development project that they expressed their interest in participating in other similar professional development projects in the future. The main reason for their willingness to do so was their shared belief that the improvement in their teaching skills leads to better student outcomes. Therefore, by experiencing the benefits of the professional development project for their teaching skills, which resulted in better student outcomes, the teachers were more open to future professional development projects.

Based on Richards’ (1998) and Cosh’s (1999) reflective peer observation approaches and Vo and Mai Nguyen’s (2010) study, peer observation will be carried out as follows. The observer will identify a specific area of his/her teaching that (s)he would like to improve. Before the observation, the observer will talk to the observed teacher about that particular area, and they will decide on a day and a time that is convenient for both of them. Before the

lesson, the observer will show the observation sheet to the observed teacher. While observing the lesson, the observer will collect information on the area that (s)he would like to improve in his/her own classroom. The information will be collected in the observation sheet. There will be a post-observation discussion/feedback meeting during which the observer will share factual information with the observed colleague. The feedback meeting will give the observed teacher the chance to critically reflect on his/her teaching. After the feedback meeting, based on the information collected during the observation, the observer will reflect on the area that (s)he wants to improve in his/her classroom, and (s)he will “record what he or she has learnt from the observation” (Cosh 1999:26). The process will be repeated with the observed teacher playing the role of the observer.

#### **2.4. Teacher Support Group**

The teacher support group will now be discussed as the last constitutive element of the teacher development initiative proposed here. Like peer observation, the teacher support group will provide an opportunity for collaborative reflective learning. As Valli (1997: 86) points out:

“If left unsocialized, individual reflection can close in on itself (...). Because reflection is not an end in itself, but for the purpose of action, communal dialogue is essential. Many different voices are necessary”.

As mentioned above, the teacher support group will provide the teachers with the opportunity to talk about and reflect on the insights gained by watching the videos of themselves teach and critical incidents occurring in their classes, which are recorded in journals. The teachers will also learn from one another by discussing articles and books that contain practical teaching ideas.

It is believed that teachers will greatly benefit from taking part in a collaborative environment such as the teacher support group. Underhill (1992) discusses the important role that groups play in professional development, with a focus on their beneficial effects on self-awareness. He argues that a “facilitative climate” within the group is essential for the development of teachers’ self-awareness. Underhill (1992:77) also points out that the main obstacle which stands in the way of a facilitative group atmosphere is a judgemental attitude on the group members’ part, a “(...) tendency to judge, to evaluate, and to approve or disapprove of the behaviour or viewpoint of others (...)”. Thus, the author conveys the idea that it is crucial for group members to have a non-judgemental attitude towards one another in order to create a supportive atmosphere in the group, an atmosphere of trust, honesty, empathy and respect. Such a climate can lead to enhanced self-awareness and, implicitly, to changes in teaching practices.

The benefits related to teacher groups are also emphasized in Smith’s (2001) article on the social construction of knowledge in teacher education programmes. In an attempt to shift from a transmission model to a social constructivist one in the TESOL Master’s programme she directed, Smith used various means: literacy instruction, portfolio assessment and cooperative learning. As far as cooperative learning was concerned, the teachers in the programme worked in small groups to complete the same task or different tasks. When completing small group work, teachers engaged in large group discussions or group presentations. The author found that cooperative learning helped teachers to achieve a better understanding of their feelings and experiences. Smith (2001:227) concludes with the idea that a social constructivist perspective, which consists of models such as cooperative learning, draws teachers “(...) into the rich, complex (...) community of (...) students and professional peers”. It can be inferred that, by being part of a professional group, teachers feel that they

belong to a professional community. Moreover, participation in teacher groups can be an incentive for teachers to enhance a sense of community in their classrooms.

As for the insights emerging from watching the videos, which are recorded in journals, teachers will first share them by working with a partner. After pair work, the teachers will have a whole group discussion on the insights offered by the videos. They will focus on what they have learned by reflecting in their journals on the strengths and weaknesses revealed by the videos.

Next, the emphasis will be placed on the critical incidents recorded in journals. In his study, Farrell (2008) mentions that the trainee teachers discussed the critical incidents with their colleagues when the period of teaching practice finished. During the discussions, the trainees reflected on different issues related to the incidents, expressing thoughts and questions generated by such classroom events. With regard to critical incidents, the discussion in the support group will follow the suggestions in Farrell's study. Thus, the teachers will work in pairs or groups of three, and they will read the description and analysis of their critical incidents to their partner or group members. The partner or group members will reflect on and offer their own interpretations of the incidents. Eventually, there will be a discussion involving the support group as a whole, during which the teachers will critically reflect on the incidents together, adding new meanings to them (Farrell 2008).

The last group activity will focus on a discussion of useful journal articles and books which contain practical ideas for teaching. As Bartels (cited in Fenton-Smith and Stillwell 2011:251) points out, "(...) teachers value practical connections to classroom instruction (...)". Therefore, reading discussions in which teachers share and reflect on practical ideas found in books and articles are another valuable learning opportunity. The teachers can become more aware of the importance of reading about teaching ideas and discussing them with colleagues. As a result, it is more likely that the teachers will make time to read such books and articles not only during the professional development initiative, but also when the initiative ends.

### **3. Conclusion**

There is a twofold aim as far as the present initiative is concerned: to help teachers become critically reflective practitioners, as well as to create professional cohesion through collaboration. First and foremost, such an initiative requires teachers' willingness to develop professionally. As Underhill (1992:79) points out, "no one else can do it for us (...)". Teachers need to be willing to engage in procedures such as video recordings, journal writing, peer observation and teacher support groups in order to improve their critical reflection skills, become more self-aware and enhance a collaborative culture. Such a professional development initiative requires teacher resources in the form of time and energy (Johnston 2009), but it is only with the support of the institution that teacher development projects can flourish (*ibid.*). Teachers need to be supported to embrace their roles of learners and put time and energy into developing as teachers. As shown above, the teachers, the students and the whole institution will benefit from the initiative. The teachers will become more self-aware, creative, knowledgeable and motivated. As Tsui (2003:82) argues, "it is when they refuse to get into a rut and seek new challenges (...) that their performance becomes exemplary". As a result of teachers' professional growth, there will be an improvement in student outcomes. The institution will also have various gains from the initiative. Although there are costs involved - the institution would need to invest in purchasing video cameras - it is believed that the benefits will far outweigh the costs. Firstly, the teachers' professional relationship will improve, creating a collaborative, mutually supportive atmosphere within the department. Secondly, the professional development initiative in the EFL department can serve as a

springboard for professional development projects in the other departments in the school. Thirdly, an improvement in teachers' teaching skills implies that there will be more students who will want to attend that specific school. It is for these reasons that the present initiative should be put into practice in Romanian schools.

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**DEVELOPING LITERARY TRANSLATORS' COMPETENCE.  
A MULTI-LEVELLED APPROACH**

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**Abstract:** *Just as one's foreign language skills may be assessed on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference, so may literary translators' competences be evaluated following the criteria listed in the PETRA-E Framework of Reference for the Education and Training of Literary Translators. The article reports on the results obtained on the basis of a small-scale investigation aimed at diagnosing the competences of 1st year Translation Studies MA students at the West University of Timișoara, where the authors teach. The investigation covered one month of the fall semester, during which the students were asked to translate a short story (O. Henry's The Gift of the Magi, 1906) and perform a number of other tasks set in accordance with the PETRA-E descriptors for early career translators' competences. The paper rounds off with the conclusions of the investigation, which may prove useful in outlining directions in literary translators' training.*

**Keywords:** *PETRA-E framework, The Gift of the Magi, translation competence*

## **1. Introduction**

*Translation competence* has been a key concept in Translation Studies ever since the discipline was born. It has been approached from various angles and simpler to more complex models of how it should be defined have been created based on them.

In the 70s, Harris and Sherwood (1978), for example, viewed translation competence as a cognitive faculty, a sum of innate linguistic abilities closer to bilingualism that could not be taught. His perspective has been rejected starting with the early and mid-90s, when understanding translation competence in terms of performance within a particular context started to get contour.

Thus, Toury (1995) suggested that, unlike bilingualism, which is a given, translation competence develops by following the norms peculiar to the culture and society in which the process takes place. It is the very perspective that the success of a translator's work and, consequently, his/ her competence in doing the job should be measured by taking into consideration, among other things, how well it resonates with the culture and society that receive it and how successfully it remains anchored in the source culture and society at the same time that prompted the presence of culture-related elements within more recent models of translation competence. Neubert (2000) lists cultural competence (with a focus on the cultural background of the source text, in his case) next to textual competence (the ability to define textual features), subject competence (familiarity with the topic of the text), and transfer competence (the ability to resort to appropriate translation strategies and procedures). Schäffner's model heavily relies on Neubert's, the German scholar adding (re)search competence (the ability to resolve problems that may be triggered by the transfer of a text

from one culture into another) to it. As Šeböková (2010) points out, Fox's (2000) suggestions follow track – based on her pedagogical experience which enabled her to place emphasis on the areas where students seem to have been more prone to making translation mistakes, she designed a translation competence model made up of six components: communicative competence (the awareness of the purpose of the translation task and the ability to produce an adequate target text), socio-cultural competence (the awareness of the socio-cultural context in which the source text emerged and the ability to comprehend texts in the source language and the target language culture), language and cultural awareness (the awareness of how language(s) work and convey(s) meaning and the ability to produce target texts that meet the linguistic and cultural expectations of the target audience), learning-how to learn (the ability to work with different resources and to record one's observations), problem-solving goals (the awareness of situational, linguistic, cultural or textual problems and the ability to solve them).

Šeböková (2010) further notices that the psychological and attitudinal dimensions of translation competence have been brought into the picture by scholars such as Campbell (1991) and the members of the PACTE group. The former proposed a concise description of the concept in question, part of which is, according to him, disposition (attitudes and psychological qualities that the translator activates while performing the task, that may be placed along two axes: risk-taking versus prudent and persistent versus capitulating) and proficiency (the ability to appropriately encode meaning at the lexical level, a global target language competence and the ability to transfer a source text into a target text). The PACTE group (2003), on the other hand, considered translation competence a system of knowledge needed to translate, made up of interrelated, hierarchical sub-competences: linguistic competence (the ability to communicate successfully in the two working languages) and a number of extra-linguistic pieces of knowledge and competences: knowledge about the world in general and about its specific areas, instrumental/ professional knowledge (ability to use documentation resources and new technologies, knowledge of the market and of the profession), psycho-physiological competence (the ability to use psychomotor, cognitive and attitudinal resources) and strategic competence (including “all the individual procedures, conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal used to solve the problems encountered during the translation process (2003: 7)).

These are by no means the only suggestions made in terms of how translation competence may be perceived, but the models selected hopefully suffice to give an indication of both the complexity of the matter and the amount of attention that has been dedicated to it. They also hint at the fact that translation competence has been defined so as to have a wide coverage and not necessarily with reference to translators working in particular fields, those dealing with literary texts thus included. To our knowledge, the first framework dedicated exclusively to pinpointing the competences required of literary translators was designed in 2014. This will constitute the basis of the experiment reported on here.

## **2. The Framework**

A recent tool provided by the Erasmus+ European programs of academic mobility and communication is the PETRA-E Framework of Reference for the Education and Training of Literary Translators ([www.petra-education.eu](http://www.petra-education.eu)). This instrument was designed and perfected in partnership with eight European universities from Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Hungary, as well as with CEATL (the European Council of Literary Translators' Associations). The framework was created considering the declared premise that “no one becomes a literary translator overnight”, but after a lengthy training process. This process takes into account the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills and techniques that transgress the boundaries of the translation process per se, and the experience of applying

them. Unlike the past centuries, when the literary translator was usually a writer, a critic, or a literary theorist, recent developments have favoured the articulation of the literary translator's profession, taught in academic and non-academic contexts, at courses, workshops, and summer schools. The designers of the PETRA-E framework have taken into consideration the fact that the literary translator's career is "unpredictable", that is to say, it may start at various moments in their professional development, it may refer to one or several source and target languages, one or several literary genres, authors, publishers, it may be of a freelance nature or not. Though the literary translators' careers are varied and complex rather than "monolithic", one framework for all types of careers and all European languages or language varieties can be propositioned, which is the case of PETRA-E.

Designed on the unifying model of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, focusing primarily on competences and the levels they may reach, PETRA-E is the most complex set of descriptors for the process of literary translation that has been developed so far. Thus, competences are distributed at five levels: the beginner level (LT1), the advanced learner level (LT2), the early career professional level (LT3), the advanced professional level (LT4), and the expert level (LT5). Eight competences are associated with these five levels: transfer competence, language competence, textual competence, heuristic competence, literary-cultural competence, professional competence, evaluative competence, research competence. First of all, transfer competence "consists of the knowledge, the skills and the attitude needed to translate texts into the main language at a required level. It comprises the ability to recognize problems of textual understanding and text production and the ability to solve these problems in an appropriate way, and to account for the final result." Language competence "refers to the grammatical, stylistic and pragmatic mastering of the source language and the target language especially in the domains of reading and writing." Textual competence consists of "the knowledge of literary genres and styles and the ability to apply this knowledge in the analysis of source texts and the production of target texts." Heuristic competence "covers the ability to gather in an efficient way the linguistic and thematic knowledge needed for translation, the ability to develop strategies for an efficient use of (digital) information sources, the ability to apply textual criticism and to differentiate between text editions." Literary-cultural competence is "the ability to apply knowledge about the source and target literature and culture while making a literary translation; it also includes the ability to handle cultural differences and the ability to distinguish between literary movements and schools, periods and styles." Professional competence "is the ability to gather knowledge about the working field and to show the appropriate attitude expected by the working field." Evaluative competence is "the ability to assess and evaluate translations, the proficiency of translators and the translation process." Finally, research competence describes "the ability to conduct methodical research in order to inform translation practice." (all quotes in this paragraph taken from the PETRA-E framework).

The fact that this framework is inspired by the CEFR is not accidental, since the translator's competences go hand in hand with his/ her language skills and, especially at the lower levels, the mastery of certain elements of the foreign language/s is more important than the "extra" skills. At higher levels, the literary translator's expertise is measured less in terms of his language skills and more in terms of his/ her ability to transfer knowledge and manage more complex tasks than the mere translation of texts, such as finding financing for the translated project, managing their relationship with publishers, managing their own business, etc. Thus, the descriptors refer not only to skills in broad terms, but also to attitudes, mentality, trans-disciplinary opening, and many others. How generalized competences may be depends, to a certain extent, on the local or national culture where a literary translator is integrated, as well as on the institutional setting in which his/ her competence is implemented. We may also note that the extreme levels, LT1 and LT5, require the most reduced number of



descriptors, in the former case because the abilities to be proved by the trainee and the expectations of their performance are modest, while, in the latter case, because the expert level is somehow self-explanatory and the expert professional needs very little guidance, even from a tool like the PETRA-E framework.

The framework starts from the assumption that academic programs at Bachelor's level provide students with competences described at LT1, while a Master's degree, especially if we refer to a professional Master's program, aims at equipping the student with skills going from LT2 upwards. A translator who has been working as a professional for several years should identify himself/ herself with the last two levels. The descriptors stipulate, sometimes in great detail, what a translator should know and do at each level, with more emphasis on the first levels, where constant input is necessary, and more freedom at the upper levels, where descriptors and sub-competences are kept at a minimum.

Universities and schools can use this framework prospectively, "as a tool to define the level of the programmes they offer and to design their curricula" (PETRA-E), but also as a tool for assessing the current situation, that is, as a checklist of the objectives and skills targeted by the subjects they offer, as guidelines for updating the topics taught and for taking an interdisciplinary approach to the training process. As such, the framework may be considered an open document, which may be added to according to developments in time and space of the process of training and educating literary translators all over Europe.

### **3. The Task**

Starting from the assumption that the students enrolled in a Master's program of professional translation should aim at developing skills beyond the LT2 level, against the backdrop of the LT3 level – the early career professional – we decided to set a group of these students a task whose realization and the subsequent interpretation of the results were meant to verify this hypothesis. Thus, over a month's period, during a course of literary translation offered to the first year Master students in the program entitled "The theory and practice of translation" at the West University of Timișoara, Romania, we encouraged them to approach a literary text, having in mind a number of factors and activities that were inspired by the competences and descriptors grouped around the LT3 level. The following tasks and questions were offered for consideration:

1. Translate the text. Edit your translation so as to render it suitable for publication.
2. Comment on the difficulties you encountered, referring to at least two descriptors for competences 1-3.
3. Have you used any resources to help you cope with the difficulties you mentioned? Yes/ No? Give details.
4. Have you activated knowledge or abilities in the areas mentioned in connection to literary cultural competence? Yes/ No? If yes, which competence/ ability? Provide details.
5. To which three Romanian publishers would you submit your translation? Why? Give reasons.
6. Provided the publisher does not cover publication expenses, identify two funding sources for your project. Explain how you have identified and selected these sources.
7. What legal and ethical aspects should be taken into consideration when preparing your translation for publication? (You may consider, for example, other published translations of the same text.)

Since, as we mentioned above, the third and fourth levels are the densest in descriptors, representing the core of the literary translator's development, the tasks were designed so as to contain, in an active and creative manner, as many aspects implied by these competences as possible. Our evaluation of the students' translation and the self-evaluation of

their work, with emphasis on the difficulties encountered, was supposed to illustrate the trainees' capacity to internalize the descriptors of competences 1-3. At this level, they imply, for the transfer competence: a detailed understanding of the source text, strategies for solving translation problems and making choices independently, meeting publication standards; for the language competence, where the acquisition of foreign language skills has already stipulated a C1/C2 level one step before, at LT2: adopting an appropriate literary style and language variety; for the textual competence: making translation-relevant analyses of literary texts, handling specific genres, evaluating stylistic features, applying literary techniques, being creative.

Another task, targeted at the heuristic competence, involved using resources knowledgeably in order to cope with the difficulties of the text (reference materials, text editions). The students' attention was drawn on the importance of becoming sensitive to how useful cultural competence is in the making of a successful literary translation, where the awareness of the time and place where a text is set, as well as the identification and correct interpretation of various intertextual references are essential. In what concerns professional competence, they were encouraged to identify and discuss local and national publishers whom they considered eligible for the type of literary text they translated (in terms of criteria such as author, period, genre, style, content, etc.), but also to design a mini-application for funding that may be submitted to national/ international organizations/ institutions which would include such projects on their agenda. Familiarity with and strict adherence to legal aspects such as avoiding plagiarism and obeying the provisions of copyright laws are equally important elements of professional competence. It goes without saying that translators-to-be should take these into consideration as well. The group discussion of their findings upon submitting their papers occasioned the activation of the last two competences – evaluative and research competence, the students discussing the success of their peers' translation solutions and answers to the tasks set and getting creatively involved in the professional debate.

#### 4. The Text

The time interval during which the students were encouraged to carry out this set of tasks was December 2016 – early January 2017, a period including the winter holidays. Therefore, we thought it appropriate to choose *The Gift of the Magi*, a text about the magic of Christmas, of medium difficulty in terms of language variety, style and genre. This is a short story by American author O. Henry (his original name, William Sidney Porter), famous for its subject and the message about generosity and love that it conveys.

O. Henry sought inspiration in his vast life experience, reflected in the various, colourful, complex characters, who struggle to make a living in the changing décor of multicultural New York, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The author was immediately acclaimed as a talented writer, whose craft, humour, realism, irony, and self-irony placed him close to a more influential 19<sup>th</sup> century American writer, Mark Twain. He soon became quite popular and many of his short story collections sold well in the first two decades: *Cabbages and Kings* (1904), *The Four Million* (1909), *Options* (1909), *Roads of Destiny* (1909), *The Trimmed Lamp* (1910), *Strictly Business: More Stories of the Four Million* (1910), *Whirligigs* (1910), *Sixes and Sevens* (1911), *The Gentle Grafters* (1919) and *Rolling Stones* (1919).

The story in question here first appeared in *The New York Sunday World* in December 1905 and was later published in O. Henry's collection *The Four Million*, in 1906. It is the tale of a young couple of modest means, living in a rented flat in New York, whose only fortune in the world consists of Jim's gold watch, an heirloom from his father, and Della's beautiful, long, auburn hair. A comparison with the legendary couple of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba shows exactly how irrationally proud of these things the young couple was,

imagining themselves as the wealthiest (Jim) and the prettiest (Della) people in town. On Christmas Eve, when the family has only \$1.87 left after paying the bills and buying some food for the festive dinner, they try to follow the tradition and exchange presents, but they cannot afford even the most symbolic gifts. The story is told from Della's point of view and describes her tribulations until she sells her hair to a French salon and, with the money, buys a chain that would match Jim's beautiful watch. It is only at the end of the story that we find Jim's schedule for the day, when he offers his wife a pair of silver combs for her hair. Both presents turn out to be completely useless since they were meant as appendices to the spouses' most prized possessions, now gone. After they recover from their shock, Jim and Della put their presents aside, as tokens of love, and focus on a more mundane activity: eating their dinner. The story ends with a Biblical reference to the magi and the tradition of gift-giving initiated by the three wise men upon the birth of Baby Jesus. With irony, but also with sympathy and delicacy, the author concludes that this American couple must be "wiser" than the magi, since their gifts, materially useless, are emotionally and even spiritually gratifying:

The magi, as you know, were wise men—wonderfully wise men—who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the magi." (Henry 2008:13)

This story represents a classical example of the use of irony in literature. It plays with the expectations of the characters and the readers, the availability (or its absence) of knowledge and information in the same characters and readers, ill-timings, surprising or frustrating outcomes. Expecting to make each other the greatest surprise, Jim and Della end up by being frustrated and frustrating each other, as "two foolish children". The irony works here at two levels, a practical one, emphasizing the financially reckless ambitions of the Dillingham couple, but also their desire to impress each other with a gesture which is out of their reach and beyond their means. Eventually, the gift's reality is annulled – the second level of irony – since the gift cannot be used. However, what Jim and Della acquire is something just as unexpected, but in a positive sense this time: a proof of their love for each other, intense enough to make both of them want to sacrifice themselves.

We must also add here that, although not considered a "classic" like other American writers, O. Henry is not completely unknown to the Romanian public, due to a number of translations: Al. Hallunga and I. Peltz for Editura pentru literatură universală in 1965, Veronica Focșeneanu for Agora in 2004 and Radu Tătărucă for Cartier in 2004. The text, written in a realistic style, with an alert, classical narrative line, and an accessible American-English variety, does not pose severe problems to the translator, in lexical and stylistic terms, and can be rendered faithfully into an urban, modern Romanian language, which also capitalizes on humour and has a dynamic character. The culture-specific elements (U.S. currency, grocery products, New York street and shop names, lady's accessories, clothing items, etc.) are usually accessible and comprehensible, while the colloquial choices of vocabulary, few subtleties, the short exchanges in the dialogue, the plain style make this short story easy to translate by any standards.

## **5. The Findings**

### **5.1. Difficulties encountered in translating the text**

With this in mind, we may conclude that the students' translation task was not very difficult and they acquitted themselves of it quite well. A few observations, however, can be made.

In syntactic terms, O. Henry's text stands out with its unconventional emphatic inversions (e.g. "Three times Della counted it", with the adverbial preceding the subject and predicate, or "white fingers and nimble", where the second epithet appears after the head noun), which cannot be foregrounded as such, when rendered in a language with loose word order like Romanian. This is correctly pointed out by some of the students in their analysis of the text.

As far as the characters' idiosyncrasies are concerned, some of them (e.g. Sophronie, the "modiste" with a French-sounding name and reputation) speak with a Cockney accent (in this case, meant to emphasize the discrepancy between the lady's pretence and the reality of her ethnic and social background), which must be capitalized in translation, given its meaningfulness as an ironic comment on the character's hypocrisy. While some students completely missed this subtlety, others tried to come up with Romanian equivalents: e.g. *douăj' de dolari* (lit. *tw'nty dollars*). The solution for semantically charged verbs in the source text, such as "howl" instead of the more neutral "cry", "whirl" instead of "turn", or "wriggle" instead of "jump", was found in paraphrases like *plângea în hohote* (*was crying her eyes out*), *sări ca o pisicuță luată prin surprindere* (*jumped like a cat taken by surprise*), or in more or less fortunate verbs inspired by the animal world, *miorlăi* (*whimpered*), *urla* (*was howling*), *zbiera* (*was crying out*).

A more complicated issue turned out to be an early reference to a rather obscure body, or American institution, the "mendicancy squad". According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *mendicancy* is "the practice of begging, as for alms; the state or condition of being a beggar" (at oed.com). In the text, it refers to the practice of police in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century big cities like New York, arresting beggars and homeless people. The sentence where it is employed is meant to be ironic, because of the evocation of the word "beggar", even if, in the text, this is a pun, with "beggar" used as a transitive verb, reminiscent of the expression "her beauty beggars all description", meaning that even the most talented writer finds himself at a loss for words when trying to evoke her beauty. In O. Henry's paragraph, "it [the flat] didn't exactly beggar description" ironically suggests that it could take one very little effort to describe the flat. At the same time, the presence of the word "beggar" suggests the rented apartment inhabited by Jim and Della was in a very poor state, comparable to that of poor houses, so the distance between respectability and vagrancy, for the Dillinghams, was very small. The students came up with various solutions for the translation of the "mendicancy squad". Some chose rather uninspired explanatory paraphrases such as: *agenția de căutare a cerșetorilor* (lit. *the agency for looking for beggars*), *agenții de urmărirea cerșetorilor* (lit. *the agents for following beggars*), while others chose an administrative equivalent in the Romanian society: *Direcția de Ordine Publică*, a police agency which investigates, among other things, the criminal activities of homeless people.

Last but not least, an element which was understood and translated with some degree of difficulty by the students was the very name of the character, James Dillingham Young. While "Young" is used here as an apposition, with the meaning "Junior, the Son" and would, therefore, have an equivalent in Romanian (e.g. James Dillingham Jr.), most of the students interpreted "Young", because of capitalization, as a proper noun and preserved it in its original form, James Dillingham Young, while others, somewhat awkwardly, translated the apposition as *T/tânărul*.

## 5.2. Use of resources for translating the text

In terms of the resources the students used in the process of translation, monolingual dictionaries ranked the highest, followed by English-Romanian dictionaries. Previously published Romanian translations (mentioned above) were also consulted and considered useful, as terms of comparison. For culture-specific elements, some students used historical papers, in order to validate the linguistic choices they made. For example, the “electric button”, featured in the description of the Dillinghams’ lodgings, was translated as *interfon* by one student, after doing some research and finding that early 20<sup>th</sup> century apartment buildings in New York already had a rudimentary intercom system. Perhaps the most original answer was a student’s idea that “time” is the most valuable resource in the translating process, since research into culture-specific terms, as well as the effort of phrasing and reviewing the work can prove time-consuming, making literary translations impossible to deliver in a rather short amount of time.

### **5.3. Submission of the translated text for publication**

Ranking high among the publishers mentioned by the students are Polirom, with its well-sold “Fiction Ltd.” collection, Humanitas and the equally popular, romantic collection “Raftul Denisei”, or ART, known for favouring American writers, such as William Faulkner, Alice Walker, and others. Smaller publishers are not to be ignored either, as one student rightfully points out that the two extant Romanian translations of this story come from such institutions, Agora and Cartier. Given that it is a Christmas tale, the students did not rule out the possibility that publishers of children’s literature may be eligible, such as Arthur, or the children’s collections of the big publishers, Polirom Junior, Humanitas Junior, Corint Junior, etc. Since *The Gift of the Magi* is only a few pages long, an issue the students could have identified is whether the translated story should be submitted for publication alone or within a collection of short stories by O. Henry. In the international book industry, several versions are available: the story alone, with lavish illustrations, two stories by O. Henry sharing the holiday mood (such as the version quoted in the present study, where *The Gift of the Magi* is joined by *The Cop and the Anthem*, another short story set in New York in the days just before Christmas), or the story included in a larger collection. This choice would also influence the cost of the publication.

### **5.4. Identification of publication funding sources**

Most students did minimal research to identify funding options for their translation. Many thought of identifying a publisher who would take all the costs upon themselves. Others considered personal funds or joining efforts with other translators. Some considered the most eligible lines for funding, both at a European, national, and at a local level. At the European level, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) supports publishing translated fiction, but, in this particular case, since the author is American, such a project would not be considered eligible. Many national funding agencies would also consider such a project ineligible since they rightfully tend to favour, the translation of Romanian authors into an international language. Other eligibility issues to be taken into consideration would be the need to co-fund the project, the need to join an organization, as funding is not offered to individuals, etc. One student thought that, in case no publisher is available and no funding obtained, a solution would be seeking publication in a journal or literary review, though even this option would have to take into consideration the history of the tale’s publication and translation. While some students identified several cultural NGOs which have previously funded similar projects (ArtPromo, Dignitas, etc.), others planned to submit a project for funding as part of the cultural agenda of the Timiș County Council. Whether the

institutions or project calls the students identified would consider their project eligible or not is, eventually, less important for our present purposes than the opportunity this search gave the trainees to grow more aware of the variety of options they might have as freelance professional translators.

### **5.5. Consideration of legal and ethical aspects**

When discussing legal or ethical aspects, one has to bear in mind that, while, on the one hand, a translation is based on an original text, protected by international copyright laws, on the other hand, a translator's work is also a creative, original material. As such, the translation itself is protected by copyright laws, this being the reason why the CIP description of a book published in a language other than the original includes, beside the author's name, the translator's (and even the editor's) name. Cases of plagiarism in translation are not, unfortunately, unknown of, as the history of the Romanian book industry has sometimes indicated in the less strictly regulated 90s. In the case of *The Gift of the Magi's* Romanian translation, with three versions already published and not entirely obscure to the general public, the new translator, while being expected to consult and be familiar with Hallunga and Peltz's, Focșeneanu's and Tătărucă's works, would have to offer (and, indeed, most of our students did) an original, albeit informed, material.

## **6. Conclusion**

All in all, this exercise indicated a very important element in our positioning of the Master's translation program within the PETRA-E framework: while the PETRA-E developers considered the objectives of academic programs suitable for inclusion among the descriptors of LT1 and LT2 levels (learner's stages), we encouraged the students taking part in this experiment to measure their competences against the exigencies of the LT3 level. We thought the "early career professional" an adequate label for the students enrolled in a professional Master's program and the success in the students' completion of the given tasks bore our hypothesis out. The quality of their translations, in terms of language proficiency and cultural sensitivity or subtlety, the amount and consistency of their research in consulting reference materials, seeking information about funding and copyright regulations, etc., constitute substantial evidence of the students' acquisition of competences in a variety of areas which situate them above the aims and preoccupations of trainees, at the level of budding, informed and responsible professionals.

On the other hand, the students' flaws in fulfilling the tasks set, though minor, gave us indications of the areas in which the teaching process should be oriented more efficiently towards developing particular sub-domains of translation competence.

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## EFFICIENCY IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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**Abstract:** *The objective of this paper is to formulate an acceptable definition of teacher quality based on effective use of time during the teaching process. Assessing teacher quality is hampered by the complexity of intersecting criteria in teaching profession. Quality is often defined broadly and in general concepts isolated from the actual classroom processes. Society, politicians, parents, educators proclaim that the quality of teachers matters, but it is difficult to come to a consensus, which markers of teacher quality can be measured reliably and which of these elements do have crucial impact on teaching. The major goal of this paper is to clarify what efficiency means in the teaching-learning process if time is taken as the main criterion; how knowledge can be defined and how teacher efficiency can be used as an objective marker of quality in teaching profession.*

**Keywords:** *efficiency, teacher training, quality, time*

### 1. Concepts of Teacher Quality

There are multiple explanations of teacher quality in available literature partly because of the complexity of the field and partly because of the interdisciplinary character of the teaching profession. This paper concentrates only a very narrow segment of language education – teaching English as a foreign language and accepts the fact that different authors emphasize different areas in teaching processes, which results in an eclectic explanation of the concept of quality too. Depending on the point of view of the analyzer an ‘effective teacher’ can be an educator, who *always* produces high achievers and is evaluated positively by the controlling authorities and by the school administrators (Stronge 2007). Others suggest that a good teacher is somebody, who is able to provide information to students in a way that is clear, understandable, and motivating. As Kennedy (2010:2) points out there are at least two areas which hinder objective evaluation of teacher quality: “One is that teacher assessments routinely overlook the role that students play in their own learning” and the fact that “the task of teaching is not well understood.” It leads to the situation where quality of teachers is assessed from a variety of subjective standpoints and is greatly dependent on the assessor’s approach, experience, and prejudices regarding the teaching profession. As Kennedy underlines:

“For some, it [teaching] is simply a matter of imparting knowledge... For still others, it is a matter of skillful behaviors.... We argue about whether the qualities that lead to successful teaching lie in teachers’ knowledge, actions, character traits, or beliefs and values, and the reason we argue about this is that we really do not know how these different qualities influence student learning and consequently are not sure which qualities should be assessed” (2010:2).



Others (de Vries et al. 2015) see teacher quality as a focal point in which different 'effective teaching behaviors' intersect and the quality of these interacting behaviors define teacher quality. The six behaviors include the ability of the teacher to create a safe and stimulating environment, the ability to effectively organize lessons, the use of clear and structured instruction, the ability to activate students, the ability to adapt instruction to students' abilities and the ability to teach thinking and learning strategies. The authors also underline in accordance with other researchers (Fenstermacher 2005:465) underline that "effective teaching and good teaching should not be confused with each other". The contrast between good and effective teaching reflect the differing view over the teaching activity as such. One has to differentiate whether the results of any teaching activity are products or teaching is a process. The first view emphasizes measurability of knowledge and the ability to apply this knowledge at the highest possible level in standard objective environments – tests, whereas the second view underlines the educational character of the teaching-learning process and introduces humanism, tolerance and allows for subjective evaluation, where the benchmark is not an external scale but the individual development of the learner from an earlier level to the actual state. The first approach uses rigid tests of knowledge and compares the learners' knowledge and skills among each other, whereas the second approach compares the learners' earlier knowledge to the achieved new level. Since the first publication of E. L. Thorndike: *The Principles of Teaching Based on Psychology* in 1916, however different pedagogical approaches come and go, we still can accept that at the bottom-line, the overwhelming majority of student assessment is tests of knowledge, which observe the educational results as products. This allows us to assume that the most important requirement that teachers have to fulfill is *imparting knowledge*. However, by accepting this assumption two questions emerge:

One problem is connected with the duality of teaching-learning process. Quality of teaching cannot be assessed without a thorough analysis of the quality of learning (Thomas J. Lasley II 2006). Almost always, achievements of the students, not the personal qualities of the teacher(s), play a crucial role in assessing the teachers' quality. Therefore, tests of knowledge designed to assess teachers, which are commonly applied in the Anglo-Saxon countries, predominantly in the USA, cannot guarantee the quality of teacher-learner interaction neither the learners' success, since these tests are designed to test only one side of the teacher-learner interaction. Encyclopedia Britannica describes Tests of Teaching Knowledge as "any of various tests used to assess teachers' knowledge before, during, and after teacher preparation programs" (Encyclopædia Britannica 2015).

"Tests of teaching knowledge are designed to identify an individual's degree of formal teacher preparation ... and to predict teaching success...there are three types of tests used to measure teacher knowledge: tests of basic skills, tests of content knowledge, and tests of professional knowledge." (Encyclopædia Britannica 2015)

Tests of basic skills usually test reading comprehension, mathematical reasoning, verbal reasoning and logical reasoning so they should provide an overview about how "intelligent" a teacher is. While content knowledge tests are typical general knowledge tests that measure the teachers' knowledge about facts. These tests are designed to map how the candidate teacher is informed about the fields of knowledge such as culture, language, history, knowledge of basic mathematical operations, geographical data, constitute. Professional knowledge tests are tests designed to measure the candidate's factual knowledge about pedagogical areas such as student development and learning, instructional planning and management, as well as professional environment. These tests are designed to measure the candidates' knowledge and preparedness in connection with teaching techniques and methods as well as management issues such as classroom work or curriculum planning. We may define

these tests as tests of professional jargon, and as situational judgement tests that are supposed to answer the question to what extent is the candidate aware of the theories of learning, their application in the classroom and the issues connected with planning and curriculum design. Tests of basic skills answer the question how 'clever' the teacher is; tests of general knowledge show how is the teacher 'informed about the world and the cultural realm of a certain society', and professional knowledge tests measure to what extent is the teacher able to remember facts about the profession and apply acceptable or recommended procedures in the teaching process. The candidate teachers therefore are required to remember a number of facts and present these facts in a standardized and professionally acceptable way. Do these tests, however, tell us how good the teacher is in building relationships with other people; whether a teacher is an introvert and morose person or a cheerful, open-minded character? Do we learn anything about the teacher's values, ideas, hopes and dreams? Do these tests reveal what are the motifs, traumas, joys and priorities in the teacher's life that may influence his or her decisions? It is beyond doubt that general knowledge, intelligence and professional knowledge are necessary for a well-prepared professional, but these seem not to be sufficient indicators of teacher quality. Consequently, it is required to find some other marker of teacher quality that is not influenced neither by IQ nor by EQ.

## 2. Definition of Knowledge

To obtain an objective overview, it is unavoidable to examine the question of teacher quality from the student's point of view as teacher quality is often judged by the academic results of the students (Milbery W. McLaughlin 2006). It is possible to assume that the quality of a teacher can also be measured in relation to the growth of students' knowledge, skills and competencies, however it is crucial to highlight that the *concept* of 'knowledge' needs further clarification. It is necessary to underline that the concept of knowledge as we use it in everyday context is not compatible with the concept of knowledge that is used in pedagogical work. Let us build our argument with the statement that knowledge is any piece of information stored in the memory of a person, which can be utilized in any moment without any external help. There are certain limitations to this statement: One problem is connected with the fact that knowledge is hard to define as a 'single' piece of information since it always manifests itself as a set of phenomena in the complexity of the human mind. There is connection among the facts, feelings connected with these facts, the attitudes of the individual towards these facts that make it almost impossible to isolate knowledge as a single piece of information, but for the needs of the present work we consider the definition sufficient to work with.

The second element, utilization of knowledge, also needs clarifications since memories are not isolated elements in the brain but mostly stored in a complex fabric of a subjective consciousness built by our brain from conscious and unconscious elements. Consequently, recalling of any memory cannot appear isolated from other memories and experience so there must always be 'some help' that contributes to the recollection of knowledge at the psychological level. The suggested definition therefore does not intend to ignore the importance of psychological processes, but underlines that any piece of information that manifests as knowledge in a teaching-learning environment must have the characteristic that the individual is able to recall it from his or her memory without the use of external means such as books, dictionaries, Internet-based search engines, etc.

To further clarify what knowledge means in this paper we would like to draw a parallel between our definition and Bloom's (Bloom 1977) explanation of learning. We would like to point out that Bloom's lower-level knowledge correlates to the behaviorist understanding of learning and training. Lower-order questions are aimed at testing facts. It is

striking in modern pedagogical streams how little importance is assigned to testing facts about the world. It is a general trend that our school practices tend to overemphasize the ability of the learners to perform high-level cognitive processes such as analysis, evaluation and creative activity, whereas factual correctness is taken as obvious. If we accept Bloom's view over knowledge, however, it is important to underline that higher cognitive processes cannot produce usable output without the ability to remember key facts about the surrounding world – which is manifested in language learning as the ability to remember meaningful units: words, idiomatic expressions, collocations, phrases, etc.

We assume that the above described tendency of ignoring lower-level (factual) elements of knowledge may be in connection with the digital boom in our society that is characterized as knowledge-based and information-oriented, which mainly manifests itself in the form of the easy access to electronic information databases. This, however, is also able to create the false feeling that the learners 'know' facts, which are required for correct use of higher-cognitive processes, but in reality they 'know only the procedures' how to obtain these facts via more and more sophisticated search engines of the World Wide Web, but these facts are not stored in the learners' mind. We are living in the age of digital amnesia when we use more our gadgets to obtain information from the global database than our brain to store data in our memory (Kaspersky Lab. 2015). Thus, our view of knowledge can be further refined by accepting the statement that we can consider a piece of information stored in the learner's mind knowledge when the learner is able to persuade us that he or she is able to recall the given piece of information without external help (without looking up in a book, dictionary, on the Internet, etc.).

### **3. The Concept of Knowledge in TEFL**

In the context of foreign language learning, learners are required to know words, phrases, and acceptable language patterns in a wide range of communication situations. If the learner is able to reproduce these units in spoken or written form, we can accept that he or she knows them according to the above-described model. According to Bloom (1977), this level is the necessary first level of knowledge but not sufficient to understand all aspects of low-level knowledge, since humans are able to imitate almost any pattern of aural or visual input that may, but not necessarily must represent words (meaningful utterances) in a given language. We may assume that every learner of English can produce patterns of sounds or signs such as dog, ogd, dgo, and god, but only some of these patterns have meaning for us.

The second level of knowledge, suggested by Bloom, includes comprehension – the ability to mentally (re)organize information. When the learner understands the concept, this means that the produced pattern appears in the learner's mind as a meaningful unit through a series of associations (part of which may also be translation). Thus, from the above, overtly simplified list, the learner will probably choose dog and god as meaningful words and ignore ogd and dgo as useless patterns at the second level of Bloom's scale.

This is still not sufficient to consider the information represented by the patterns dog and god knowledge in the TEFL environment. Bloom's taxonomy further suggests that the learner should be able to apply the patterns (in our case the words dog and god) in a complex system let it be the target foreign language. This level requires the learners to connect new patterns with previous knowledge, experience and patterns already present in their minds and create various contexts. The sentence 'The dog bit the postman yesterday.' is a pattern, which possibly produces a picture in the mind of a learner that may recall feelings of sorrow or a picture of a comic situation depending on the actual setting.

To conclude, the word dog can be considered a piece of knowledge from the point of language learning only when the learner can recognize the pattern that represents the concept,

understands this word fully and is able to associate the sound pattern or the written symbols with the actual object (in our case with the picture of the animal) and can use it in a meaningful context so is able to correctly place it in a structure of concepts.

Higher-order, cognitive processes do not test the learner's ability to simply remember, understand, and use a given piece of information, but require from him or her to interact with the given piece of knowledge and develop a personal attitude towards the problem in question. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation appear at this level, which actually enable the learner to formulate a relationship with the subject of learning. Here we assume that the learner knows the information, i.e. is able to perform the lower-order procedures and expect that the given information will be utilized for further use. The learner will be able to answer questions for example 'Why did the dog bite the postman?' Was it the fault of the postman or the dog's owner? What should or can be done to avoid similar accidents? Is it possible and necessary to discuss this question in public and come to a reasonable solution? For these processes, the learner must compare and contrast complex sets of information, analyze the available sources and formulate a personal attitude to the question. These processes require more than the bare lower-order functions of remembering, understanding and usage of any information.

Therefore, the above described cognitive processes are not connected with the concept of knowledge which can be tested by classical tests of knowledge but require a more complex evaluation system, which is naturally more time consuming and demanding also for the teacher. The key area, which is predominantly analyzed in higher-level cognitive processes, is the quality of presentation of the concepts; their logical structure, harmony with the generally accepted norms, the aesthetic value of the presentation and the overall impression the learner is able to make on the assessor, just to mention a few. Consequently, assessment of higher-order cognitive processes is more subjective and less reliable, however in learning practices highly preferred and required.

#### **4. Time Management as an Objective Quality Marker**

Teacher quality and teaching quality is a complex realm and we cannot avoid a certain level of oversimplification when analyzing it. We argue that professional quality of any teacher can be more precisely measured when we emphasize the term efficiency in the teaching profession. *Efficiency in pedagogical work may mean achieving maximum productivity (acquiring of knowledge) at a minimum wasted effort, time or expense.* Thus we suggest that the key measurement for teacher quality should be the ratio between the invested time and effort and the quantity and (at higher levels of cognitive processes the quality) of production on the learner's side. Using this method of measurement, may be possible to eliminate obstacles that would lead to subjective and therefore not universally applicable procedures in assessing teacher quality.

If we make an effort to clarify what efficiency is meant to be in teachers' work, we have to discuss the role of time in teaching profession. Time is a 'universal currency'. Since there is no way to obtain more of it, we should consider ways of better utilizing it. Activities of any teacher include a series of tasks from classroom instruction, through curriculum design, lesson planning and actual teaching, preparation for lessons as well as test design, correction and assessment of students' work and the obligation to continuously train him- or herself professionally. This myriad of tasks is supposed to be done during a working day, which should not be longer than eight and a half hours. This requires a high level of logistics and precise planning to avoid stress and to fulfill the requirements. It is not the objective of this paper to analyze efficiency in everyday activities, but we would like to concentrate primarily on efficiency on a teaching lesson by providing a simple teaching procedure.

The below presented teaching procedure is inspired by the data collected during a five-year-long term observation and analysis of learner teachers, who are preparing for the teaching profession at the Department of British and American Studies at the Pavol Jozef Safarik University in Kosice. The learner teachers are required to produce observation sheets and comment real-life English language lessons at the schools where they are doing their obligatory practice teaching. By analyzing the observation sheets it is possible to discover certain tendencies that hamper effective teaching. The major problems may be summarized as follows:

- Learners often do not know what is the goal of the lesson. Because of the lack of clear lesson objectives, the activities done by the learners (which should ensure variety and should enable the learners to practice in different context) often confuse the learners and are counterproductive.
- The four skills are not connected in the teaching process logically: listening with speaking for example, but often practiced isolated or in a sequence that hamper learning.
- Frontal teaching still dominates the teaching process and more effective forms of work, for example teaching others or practice by doing are mostly not included in the learning process.
- Writing and reading dominates over speaking and doing.
- Learning during the lesson is replaced by doing activities; memorizing is considered equal with rote learning and is deliberately avoided.
- Homework is over dimensioned and fundamental parts of school work are shifted to homework.
- Time management and effective lesson organization leaves much to be desired.
- There is no observable method used on the lesson, but a mixture of many different methods often originating from conflicting approaches.

To answer these problems a teaching-learning model is offered to the learner teachers at our department in which effective time use is emphasized and synergy effect of different activities is utilized for developing knowledge that reflects Bloom's definitions. The following model represents just one segment of a unit of work that is composed of five to six forty-five-minute-long lessons. The presented sequence of activities is not taken from any course book.

## **5. Classroom Management and a Case Study for Developing Knowledge**

The forty-five-minute-long period that is called lesson is often considered sufficient for learning one subject a day, but if we analyze the distribution of activities during the lesson, we may discover interesting aspects that reveal a lot about the quality of the teachers' work. Practicing teachers are required to perform a series of tasks during a lesson: let it be administrative tasks, testing, practicing, assessing or teaching. The classical distribution of tasks follows an 'ancient' pattern: the teacher arrives in the classroom and performs administrative tasks – marks the missing students and gives basic instructions; it is then usually followed by oral testing of some student/s while the rest of the class is working on some written assignment. These activities last at least 10-15 minutes. The active part of the lesson: learning and practicing new knowledge must be done in 25-30 minutes if we consider the last five minutes of a lesson suitable for recapitulation and assigning home assessment. How to be effective in such a short time is a contentious question. If we accept that the primary goal for language learning is to learn speaking, we may design a lesson plan that could be effective in a very short time. The following example shows a lesson that may be usable.

Let us assume that the objective of our lesson is to teach a short dialogue that contains five to ten sentences about the topic 'health'. Let it be a description of the symptoms of flu. We would like to concentrate on the development of listening and speaking skills in a group of lower-intermediate students.

The warm up activity in our case would be the *first* listening of the dialogue that may take maximum two minutes right at the beginning of our lesson to take advantage on the primacy effect together with the initial prime-time period (Sousa 2005). After the first listening the students should answer close questions (yes/no answers), for example: 'Is the given dialogue about health?' 'Is headache mentioned in the dialogue?' and so on. This way the students have a chance to get acquainted with the topic of the lesson and discover the target text. It is desirable not to waste too much time with too long warm-up activities and a general mistake made by practicing teachers is that an activity is chosen for warm up that utilizes different skills than we hope to develop: for instance, speaking about illnesses precede listening about the same topic.

Listening for warm-up should be followed by at-least one more listening session where the students will have the chance to further discover the elements of the dialogue used. After the second listening the students are supposed to answer open questions such as 'Why did the speaker visit the GP?', 'Which were the symptoms of her illness?' The second listening with the answers should take approximately two to five minutes. Open questions may, but not necessarily have to precede the listening activity. All the answers should be in spoken form utilizing the natural connection between the listening and speaking skill.

During the second phase (via open questions), the teacher has the opportunity to discover unknown vocabulary. The teacher is supposed to teach the new expressions first providing a pronunciation practice, later a translation and finally providing the visual picture of the expression on the blackboard, i.e. write the new word on the blackboard. When teaching speaking a teacher should always start with an aural input since speaking is connected with listening and represents a natural language acquisition procedure. We may utilize the effect of imitation and achieve better performance in a shorter time.

The second, most important phase of this sequence of activities is learning, more precisely memorizing. Unfortunately, right this phase is almost completely missing from our schools as memorizing is generally considered a manifestation of rote learning – which is naturally not. Practice shows that memorizing of meaningful utterances in a logical, predictable situation (for example in a dialogue in a predictable context) boosts active vocabulary development. Drills – based on audio-lingual method and its variations – provide a reliable and usable activity for fast and effective learning of dialogues. There is, however, little help for learner teachers how to do drilling correctly and effectively. In this model, the teacher should choose one student from the class and, while the rest of the classroom concentrates on the activity, should drill the sentences and teach the student the short text which is supposed to be the outcome of the lesson. Neuroscience proved that repetition contributes to the speed of learning so the correct way of drilling should follow a pattern in which the teacher first produces a chunk of an utterance which is subsequently repeated by the learner. Then the first chunk is repeated by the teacher and a further chunk is added, which is then repeated by the learner. The teacher repeats the two chunks and expands the text with a further chunk, which is repeated by the learner. Such way the learner is able to absorb considerable amount of vocabulary in a meaningful context at a relatively short time. The amount of vocabulary (number of sentences/chunks) depends on the ability of the learner to remember and reproduce the sentences. By time and practice, the amount of vocabulary that is possible to absorb this way can be surprisingly big. We should not forget that during this face-to-face teaching the rest of the class is concentrating on the learning procedure and, however is not directly involved in the drilling process, the learners do learn the dialogue in a passive

way, which will be utilized in the following phase of the learning process where the concept of gradual release is applied when the first student who successfully learned the dialogue with the teacher is required to teach the dialogue to his or her partner. The teacher gradually involves further learners in the learning process and the students, who successfully master the dialogue, will continue to teach their classmates too. Such way, the learning process will be dramatically effective, short and provides the maximum involvement of learners. The whole activity is possible to realize in the first (20-minute-long) prime time period of a forty-five-minute-long lesson. Further practice and expansion on the learned task can be done during the down-time period as well as in the final prime-time. This way the teaching-learning process is multiplied and because the rest of the classroom has the chance to hear the target text repeatedly the learning process gains on efficiency. In a very short time, approximately ten minutes, we are able to get from one-to-one teaching to pair work than to total activation of the whole class.

Finally, when the class has reached the required level of proficiency in the target text the teacher can apply role-play activities, simulations, etc. The learning process is very intensive and follows the gradual release model (Murray 2011:4). The whole process fits in the 45-minute long lesson scheme, actually it is possible to do it in 20-25 minutes, and shows maximum efficiency utilizing the best practices of language teaching.

## **6. Conclusion**

It was demonstrated how difficult is to describe teacher quality and the complexity of the intersecting areas that influence the teaching-learning process makes it almost impossible to formulate a universally applicable definition. There is great effort, mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries to test the quality of teachers by standardized tests, but these efforts almost completely ignore the fact that teaching-learning is an interactive process and the teachers' quality is not assessed according to his personal qualities, intelligence, knowledge about the world, neither on his or her social intelligence, self-sacrifice or loving attitude. One element that may be considered as a reliable marker of teacher quality is efficiency. Efficiency is defined as the ability (or proficiency) of the teacher to provide the maximum amount of knowledge in the shortest period of time and at the lowest possible price or energy. Knowledge is understood as the ability to recall stored information from the memory without any help and correlates with Bloom's understanding of lower-levels of cognitive processes in learning: remembering, understanding, and the ability of using the information in a meaningful context. Finally, an effort was made to provide a working and applicable scheme that may be adopted in the time-limited classroom environment and can be applied in the teaching-learning process with maximum efficiency.

The provided model has many limitations and possibly needs fine-tuning, but it can be utilized efficiently in a classroom and fulfills many requirements that language teachers have to meet in modern teaching-learning procedures.

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## QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TRANSLATION. A PROCESS-ORIENTED APPROACH

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**Abstract:** *The paper underpins a process-oriented approach to translation with a view to quality assurance at the internal level, i.e. raising translation trainees' awareness of the recurrent problems associated with referential, grammatical and lexical accuracy and, last but not least, compliance with stylistic conventions (text/discourse specificities, pragmatic use, etc.). Therefore, we advocate feedforwarding instead of feedback, acting prospectively rather than retrospectively.*

**Keywords:** *process-oriented, quality assurance, translation competence*

### 1. Introduction

Translation quality assurance and assessment seems to be a still underexplored field in spite of the fact that translation as a profession and translation studies have grown considerably. Epistemologically, we also witness a gap between (exact) sciences and humanities – in the latter case, to my best knowledge, no performance indicators are related to translation competence in a psychometrically controlled way.

The fact that translation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, whether we envisage it as a process or product, may explain why it is so difficult to validate and reliably measure translation quality and the translator's competence. In other words, the question may be crudely put as “how to tell that a translation is good or bad” (House 2012:534) by using well-defined criteria. Ardelean (2016:103) is fully aware of the necessity of relying on objective criteria in translation evaluation quality, advocating that quality “must result from the observance of a system of specific professional and ethical values”, although she mentions the divide between subjective criteria (quality seems to also lie “in the eyes of the beholder”) and objective criteria (as more or less flexible benchmarks rather than a yardstick).

On the other hand, other scholars (notably, Pym 2001, Suojanen et al. 2015) see translation quality as a transactional process – user-oriented approaches to translation quality assurance assimilate it to the client's satisfaction as resulting from the (perfect) match between expectations and product, although the translator as service provider will exclusively undertake the responsibility of safeguarding the translation overall functionality and quality.

Undoubtedly, both translating (a term that describes the process of translation in a more specific way, but which is not consistently used in mainstream literature) and translation (i.e., a rather loose term referring to the product and process indiscriminately) show norm-governed behaviour linguistically and socio-culturally alike. Furthermore, the macro-perspective should be closely linked to the micro-perspective in telling that a translation is good or bad; translation underpins a complex relationship between the source language text and the target language text, a constellation of (communicative) circumstances shaping the

translator's choices in a functional and operational way. A translation, especially in the making, will not stand alone, enjoying an independent status; on the contrary, the translator will move back and forth between the original and the target language text, interconnecting them so as to secure re-contextualisation.

## 2. Triangulating the Translator's Competence

Drawing on Anderson's (1983) distinction between *declarative knowledge* (*know what/that*) and *procedural knowledge* (*know how*), Schäffner and Adab (2000) argue that this twofold awareness will enhance the translator's conscious monitoring of the process of translation and the impact on translated texts.

Likewise, Alves and Gonçalves (2003) see these types of knowledge as directly linked to the dynamics of inferential processing (generating contextual effects since the translator acts as a communicator) and decision-making in translation, and, implicitly to the general translator's competence, varying cognitively and operationally. More specifically, in terms of knowledge management, they are equated to effective task management. Mainstream literature postulates that experienced translators are much more likely to make conscious decisions, to adopt a reflective approach all the way long, whereas inexperienced translators tend to rely on automatic processes.

However, one should bear in mind that translator's competence may prove more or less advanced according to different degrees of experience in particular knowledge domains. Depending on the demands and specificities of a translation task, cognitive changes may affect the performance of an expert translator, rendering certain tasks more challenging and effortful than others. (Alves and Gonçalves 2007: 52)

## 3. Awareness of Decision-making in Translation Quality Assurance

### a. The dynamics of close reading and translational action

House (1977, 1997) proposes and further refines a far-reaching interdisciplinary model of translation criticism in which a successful translation is primarily seen as a semantically and pragmatically equivalent replacement of the source language text, i.e. one fulfilling the same function in a particular context of situation in the very Hallidayan sense (Halliday 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004): the text is embedded in the socio-cultural matrix in conjunction with the ideational and interpersonal levels; therefore, the context of situation may be analysed by breaking it into linguistically documentable and manageable parts – field, mode and tenor. Genre is a later addition to this formula (House 2009, 2012) in order to better capture the macro-context and the double linkage between textual features and human agency (author(ship), translator(ship) and reader(ship)). The process unfolds as follows: the translator reads the source text in order to produce a target text based on his/her comprehension of the source text, in turn determined by the translator's language competence, text analysis skills and cultural and background knowledge. The choices that he or she makes should be understood as meaning negotiation and are justified by the need to convey as closely as possible the multi-dimensional meaning of the source text in an appropriate form of the target text. Definitely, the lexical and grammatical resources of the two languages involved are not the same and work differently – the translator needs to decide which aspects of meaning are most relevant considering the local/micro- and global/macro- contexts that determine the register of the target text.

Cumulatively, House endorses that the “relative match” of the translation and original textual profile (an aggregate of structural characteristics and expressive potential) and

function is a measure of success or quality. The established continuum between a faithful translation adhering closely to the original and a less subservient one (rather than House's dichotomy *overt* vs. *covert translation*) reinforces the idea that there is no yardstick, and it enshrines tolerance for ambiguity.

On the other hand, we should acknowledge that nowadays translation is demand-driven, commissioned and that the translator is expected to meet the client's specifications. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the translator as a professional will not activate knowledge and conduct further research – in point of terminology, language evolution, cultural values, social and ethical questions, etc., refer to workbenches and show ideological and axiological affiliation with a certain direction of Translation Studies in order to secure quality. The dialogue between research and practice is supported by the development of the translator's analytical and strategic skills, by his/her deriving insights into ever more complex issues.

### 3.2 Determing *skopos*

Reader- or meaning-oriented perspectives are encountered not only in Translation Studies, as heavily theorised within the functionalist approaches, but also in a whole body of regulations shaping the translator's activity and the translation usability at the European level.

*Skopos theory* (notably, Reiss and Vermeer 1984; Nord 1997; Schäffner 1998) as well as *theory of translatorial action* (Holz-Mänttari 1984; Witte 2000), which seem to inform the work of standardising bodies, bring to the fore the question of translation quality by marking the passage from text reproduction to text production, and framing the complex network translator – client – writer of the source text – target readership in which the translator is empowered as a cultural mediator whose main duty is to make the source and target text “logically and culturally compatible for the specified purpose” (Schäffner 2003:97).

The *EN-15038, European Quality Standard for Translation Services*, effective since August 2006, is a bottom-up one, devised from within the translation industry (involving all the stakeholders – translators, translation companies, professional associations, academia, customers and standardisation bodies) with a specific direction, i.e. making reference to the translation process and assigning separate roles for translators and revisers on the grounds that every translation must be revised first by the translator and then by a second person. This means that the standard prospectively envisages an increased demand for translation revision while claiming to qualify as an objective metric to benchmark the overall execution of translation and translation quality of language/translation service providers.

Launched in 2015 and superseding the *EN-15038*, *ISO 17100* lays down the general principles of translation quality assurance making up the International Standard, irrespective of the translation type (literary translation, legal translation, technical translation, etc.). Under section 5.3.1, the process-oriented perspective is in focus:

Throughout this process, the translator shall provide a service conforming to this International Standard as regards: a) compliance with specific domain and client terminology and/or any other reference material provided and ensuring terminological consistency during translation; b) the semantic accuracy of the target language content; c) the appropriate syntax, spelling, punctuation, diacritical marks and other orthographical conventions of the target language; d) lexical cohesion and phraseology; e) compliance with any proprietary and/or client style guide (including register and language variants); f) locale and any applicable standards; g) formatting; h) the target audience and purpose of the target language content.

It is obvious that the main concern lies in fully meeting the client's requirements and target language conventions at the expense of the translator's subjectivity and creativity in providing adequate solutions to more or less frequent translation problems.

In the same line of approach, the Directorate-General for Translation (DGT), European Commission, acting as a management authority for the translation market and translation training programmes, puts forward the *DGT Translation Quality Guidelines* (2015) as intended to enhance communicative fitness for purpose with respect to “the expressed or implied needs and expectations” of “direct customers”, “the end-users, and any other relevant stakeholders”. DGT also makes specific provisions for drafting in different publications (for instance, *How to write clearly* 2015) aiming at a broader category of language users: drafters of the original texts, translators and revisers, while admitting that drafting conventions may be language – or text type-dependent. Although not stated explicitly in the first part of the document, the quick references to text typology (EU law, political documents, working or internal documents, etc.), practical information sheets for translation quality control and risk management prove the immediate and rather limited relevance of these guidelines.

At the same time, DGT professes that there is no error-free translation and that translation quality assessment is basically concerned with risk management, i.e. the impact of the errors and the likelihood of errors occurring monolingually (in reviews) and bilingually (within the scope of revision). These claims are worth considering as broader with respect to text type and readership expectations.

The paramount importance of quality control ‘as an added value’ is visible in the above mentioned documents in the active encouragement of translators to globally re-read and self-assess the output during a separate workflow step, besides checking for accuracy and fluency while translating.

Florea (2016) draws our attention that translation quality assurance at the DGT is a three-stage process: pre-, while- and post-translation. At the first stage, the source text is drafted and translators undertake preparation work (including the “How to write clearly” campaign). During the second phase, cooperation with experienced translators, terminologists, etc. and reliance on available resources (technology included – CAT tools, MT, multilingual databases, etc.) become vital. The last stage joins the efforts of translators (with respect to editing) and language administrators (ensuring proofreading, feedback provision, etc.).

From a more detail-oriented perspective, we shall provide the translation assessment grid applied by DGT (also used to give feedback) as exemplified by the DGT's *Guide for external translators* (2006, 2016) and Buzdugan (2016):

- Completeness - no additions and omissions are permitted;
- Transfer of meaning in a faithful, accurate and consistent manner;
- Check of reference material and EU-specific terminology/usage;
- Coherence of terminology throughout the text, i.e. internal coherence;
- Spelling and grammar (accuracy);
- Style and register;
- Clarity of expression (naturalness, included);
- Layout and formatting;
- Meeting the deadline.

Needless to say, this code of (institutional) practice incorporates aspects of language administration and resource management, pointing out to the complex role and expertise of the professional translator. Furthermore, errors fall into two categories: high relevance and low relevance ones, their seriousness being assessed according to the extent to which they affect the accurate and natural delivery. The descriptors of translation quality range as follows: Very Good – Good – Acceptable (new) – Below standard – Unacceptable; starting from the Acceptable value, all translations are subject to significant revision or upgrading to be performed by the external translator (contractor) himself/herself or by the DGT staff.

#### 4. Conclusion

The holistic approach to the translator's competence and translation quality assurance from a process-oriented perspective highlights the need for “optimisation and harmonisation of translation strategies and of quality standards with respect to experiential learning and professional development, and individual accountability, translated as (self-)monitoring, (self-) assessment and strategic planning.” (Vilceanu 2013:198)

Translation quality assessment in the 21st century, when globalisation and multilingual text production have brought about tensions between cultural specificity and universality, between domestication and foreignising strategies, when the English language impact is ever stronger beyond the lexical level, affecting discourse patterns and practices and resulting in hybrid structures, is still striving to determine whether the translator's subjectivity or readership orientation should become the overriding principle.

Moreover, in my opinion, translation evaluation should become a genuine research focus in order to assess translation systematically, determine its scope, design its conceptual and methodological toolkit more precisely and achieve a unified theory going beyond empirical considerations and codes of practice.

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