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Dr. Walid's address to the conference

Dear participants, each by his/her due title and name.
Dear attendants, guests, colleagues, and students.
Assalam Alaikom waRahmat Allah Wa barakato
I feel extremely privileged to address the Opening Ceremony of this important educational event, the first organized in the Gaza Strip.
On behalf of the faculty of Arts at the Islamic university of Gaza, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all participants and paper presenters at the 1st international conference of linguistics and literature 2012.
As you are no doubt aware, this conference is held here at the Islamic university of Gaza for the first time to provide a forum for researchers studying language, linguistics and literature to promote discussion and the exchange of ideas and knowledge: to gather and present working papers in multidisciplinary areas: and to provide researchers and scholars with an opportunity to learn from each other and to exchange ideas on matters of methodology and theory.
This conference includes researchers and scholars from several universities, including universities from America, Europe, Asia and Africa. Altogether we have 37 presentations reporting research in discourse analysis, language teaching and learning, sociolinguistics, translation, theoretical linguistics, syntax and literature.
Excellence in research is becoming more and more important in academic life, and in the business of promoting quality research. Professor Noam Chomsky, our Keynote speaker from MIT, will definitely be enlightening us with fruitful information in different distinctive trends.
*The university insisted to hold this very important event here in Gaza while the Zionist occupation is still blockading the Gaza Strip by land, sea and air in an attempt to break the will of steadfastness and challenge of our patient and cleating Palestinian people. The university insists to challenge the blockade and to present a normal academic life for its students and all seekers of knowledge here in Palestine and elsewhere despite the Israeli barbaric siege, which subjects all of our people to a collective punishment policy.
The university managed to hold this distinguished conference despite the Israeli blockade which has been blamed for a multitude of problems facing the population here: malnutrition, unemployment, limited access to electricity and potable water.

We in the university managed to hold this conference despite the Israeli siege which is behind complicating the Palestinian life tremendously. Academically, it made it so difficult to bring in books so people were forced to resort to , this limited supply of original books has driven up costs, making them difficult for most Gaza students to afford.

Therefore, thanks to the tunnels which are key for supplying the needs for educating 500,000 students in Gaza.

Economically, Israel tightened its siege on Gaza, closed its crossings, canceled its customs revenue code, declined businessmen/and women permits to travel abroad, stopped material needed for industry, tightened its grip on banks and reduced the amount of currency (New Israeli Shekel NIS) getting into Gaza, sanctioned banks, closed trade crossings, and halted import and export – all of which led to worsening the economic status. This comes along with the remarkable increase of unemployment and poverty, which led to more anxiety, despair and the feeling of absence of any political solution.

Despite all these crises we managed to hold this conference.

Despite the fact that fuel and electricity shortage to Gaza's people is a daily occurrence, and its negative effect on all activities and all types of life is clearly visible we here in the university managed to hold this conference.

The Israeli occupation authorities changed Gaza into a large Ghetto and bombard it almost every day committing several holocausts against us. Despite this the university managed to hold this conference.

Our thanks and appreciation are therefore due to the conference sponsors:

The Islamic university board of trustees represented by its chairman Mr. Jamal Naji Alkhodary
The Palestinian ministry of higher education
And Bank of Palestine

Our thanks and appreciation also due to the conference committees for all their hard work. I would especially like to thank Dr. Mosheer Amer the head of the organizing committee,
and Dr Akram Habeeb the head of scientific committee and all members of these committees for their efforts in organizing the conference and making it possible. Finally, I hope you will find this conference a valuable and rewarding experience. I wish our guests a very nice stay in Gaza and I wish you all a successful conference.

Dr. Walid Amer
Conference president
Dean of the faculty of Arts
An Intercultural Email Project for Developing Students’ Intercultural Awareness and Language Skills

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Abstract
This Study explores the overall outcomes of an intercultural communication email project between Palestinian English major students and American native speakers. Using qualitative content analysis, the study investigates how email exchange with native speakers may develop students’ cultural awareness, intercultural communicative competence (ICC), and language skills. Analyzing data from participants’ email discussions over a whole spring semester and final reflective papers, the study revealed that both groups gained knowledge about a foreign/target culture and reflected on native culture. The email exchange project was regarded as a positive experience.

The study also unveiled that both groups involved in the intercultural email exchange project reported development in their attitudes towards the “Other” and destabilizing stereotypes, biases, and prejudices. Palestinian participants described their American email partners as being friendly, supportive, and helpful. The Palestinian learners showed some progress in language and intercultural communication skills. However, students in both groups illuminated that their intercultural telecommunication experience was never easy.

Keywords: email, cultural awareness, intercultural communicative competence, language skills, TEFL, native speakers

Introduction
Rapid evolution of communication technologies has apparently changed language pedagogy and language use, enabling new forms of discourse (Kern, 2006) and creating online opportunities for EFL teachers to maximize learners’ language skills, intercultural communicative competence (ICC), and
intercultural awareness. Amongst the various forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in language teaching is the electronic mail (email), which has been so far one of most prevalent and useful tools for foreign language teachers (see Chen, 1998; Itakura, 2004; Liao, 2000; Liao & Johnson, 2001; Muller-Hartmann, 2000a; O’Dowd, 2003; Shang, 2007; Singhal, 1998). Therefore, foreign language learners in the expanding circle (Crystal, 2003), can communicate directly, inexpensively, and conveniently with native speakers of the target language 24 hours a day (Hoffman, 1994; Shang, 2007).

Despite the plethora of descriptive research about email projects, little appears to be known about what learners’ actually learn from their peers in other culture (Kern, 1995; Muller-Hartmann, 2000a). Research regarding the applicability of email exchange within the English as a foreign language context in Palestine seems to be scarce. The present study probes into the overall impact of email exchange between Palestinian English major students and American native speakers on the development of intercultural awareness, ICC, and language skills.

**Literature Review**

A growing body of scholarly literature in the field of EFL has paid due attention to exploring how access to authentic materials and real people can develop and promote social relationships within and across classrooms, leading to collaborative meaningful human interactions generated in cyberspace (Liu et al., 2003). The intercultural learning is often assumed to be an automatic benefit of email exchanges; however, little research anchors on whether online intercultural collaboration does actually embark learners’ understanding of the cultural practices and world views (O’Dowd, 2003). This process is also known as tele-collaboration, which signals the use of online communication tools to connect language learners in different countries in order to develop collaborative projects and intercultural exchange (ibid).

This field apparently covers a wide range of activities of online communication tools including email, web-based
messages board, and video conferencing. However, this project, specifically, examines the use of email in intercultural communication between two groups of Palestinian and American university students. Allright (2005) maintains that involvement in a project-based collaboration between foreign language learners and native speakers can, inarguably, be rich in learning opportunities including intercultural learning and the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Further, communication asynchronous allows each participant to compose messages at their own time and pace (Warschauer & Healy, 1998). An overarching emphasis has been placed on the significance of integrating language skills and technology in order to combine authentic language, learners’ autonomy, and communication (Belz, 2004; Liaw, 2006).

Conversely, the belief that contact between cultures automatically leads to intercultural learning and to the development of positive attitude towards the target culture has been challenged by many scholars (Coleman, 1998; Fischer, 1998). For example, Richter (1998) argues that the Internet brings about the contact of cultures, but this does not automatically entail cultural understanding (as cited in O’Dowd, 2003). This study explores the overall development of intercultural awareness, ICC, and language skills in an email discussion project between Palestinian university students of English and American native speakers.

**Theoretical Framework**
The theoretical framework of this study has in essence an educational disciplinary orientation, and therefore the concepts, vocabulary, and theory address the field of English as a foreign language (EFL). Intercultural communication theories have proved to be effective means for intercultural learning (Belz & Throne, 2006; Corbett, 2003, Byram, Nichols & Steven, 2001; Furstenberg et al., 2001), particularly for helping students to promote their linguistic and intercultural competence by active interaction with native speakers.

This study draws on Byram’s (1997) model of ICC and intercultural awareness. Intercultural awareness is a slippery and
contested concept; nevertheless, in this study it involves awareness of native culture and a target culture. It basically signifies the ability of standing back from own point of view and becoming aware of own cultural values and perceptions as well as those of other cultures (Baker, 2012). Cultural awareness lies at the heart of intercultural communication when someone communicates with people from other cultures (ibid).

**Intercultural Communicative Competence**

There are several intercultural competence models; nonetheless, Byram’s (1997) model seems to be the most generally accepted and widely used in foreign language education (Deardorff, 2006; Liaw, 2006). ICC emphasizes explicitly the ability to change one’s knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors so as to be open and flexible to other cultures (Alred & Byram, 2002). In a multicultural world, ICC has become a key issue in the globalized society of the 21st century. It highlights fundamentally “the meeting between people from different cultures and languages across the political boundaries at nation-states (Krämsch, 1998, p.128). According to Byram and Zarate (1997) the concept of ICC encompasses the following:

- **Attitudes:** curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about
  - other cultures and belief about one’s own.
- **Knowledge:** of social groups and their products and practices in one’s
  - own and in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of
  - societal and individual interaction.
- **Skills of interpreting and relating:** ability to interpret a document or event
  - from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s
  - own.
- **Skills of discovery and interaction:** ability to acquire new knowledge of a
  - culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge,
  - attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.
• Critical cultural awareness/political education: an ability to evaluate
  o critically and on the basis of explicit criteria
  perspectives, practices and
  o products in one’s own and other cultures and
countries (Byram, 2000, p.10).

Byram (1997) argues that intercultural competence implies ability to interact effectively with people from another country in a foreign language. This means to be able to overcome stereotypes, prejudices, and pre-conceptions. This study uses qualitative content analysis to investigate the overall development of intercultural awareness, ICC, and language skills in an email discussion project between Palestinian university students of English and American native speakers.

Research Question
The study attempted to answer the following general question:
1. How would an intercultural email exchange project between Palestinian University students of English and American native speakers impact the Palestinian students’ overall intercultural awareness, intercultural communicative competence, and language skills?

Methodology
The study used qualitative content analysis method to analyze participants’ email discussions and final reflective papers. Specifically, it wanted to gain insights into how such email exchanges between Palestinian EFL learners and American native speakers might develop learners’ overall intercultural awareness, ICC, and language skills. The focus was on Gaza participants as the primary learners under observation for language skills and both for evidence of cultural learning.

Participants
Participants in this study were 13 pairs of Palestinian English major freshmen and American under graduate and graduate students. The Palestinian group was comprised of 7 female and 6 male students enrolled in an intermediate academic reading class at a major university in the Gaza Strip, Palestine, while the
American students were enrolled in an intercultural communication class at a north eastern university in Massachusetts, USA. All the names used in this research are pseudonyms.

**Data gathering**
The study, primarily, used data from students’ email discussions over a whole spring semester and final reflected papers. Students were expected to send at least one email per week, and they were free to choose any of the enlisted topics. However, they discussed many topics, for example, life experience, university life, foreign language experience, politics, food, marriage, values, traditions, polygamy, funerals, divorce, clothes and fashion, travel, family, religion, gay marriage, cultural differences, intercultural communication, tolerance, and many other cultural issues. At the end of the semester, all participants were required to write reflective papers summarizing their intercultural experience. It is worthy to note that students’ emails and reflective papers were part of credited assignments for both groups.

**Analytic procedures**

**Organizing data**
The analysis process was ongoing and overlapping, and it started on day one after receiving each forwarded email. Note cards were used to organize and clean up the data gathered from emails and reflective papers. This process was very helpful in stimulating the researcher’s analytic thinking through writing down hunches and analytic ideas throughout the study. The data were grouped and organized into categories based on the theoretical framework constructs, e.g., cultural knowledge, attitudes, skills, cultural awareness, etc.

**Familiarity with data**
After reading all emails and reflective papers many times and analyzing all the notes, the researcher started familiarizing himself with the data through reading and rereading over again. During that process, he felt as if the data were speaking to him and this led to more data analysis, insights, and analytic
thinking. He reflected on his data for possible categories and themes all the time.

**Generating categories and themes**
The study started with some preliminary categories to focus data gathering and analysis. These categories depended mainly on grouping data based on the theoretical framework constructs. After gaining deep familiarity with the data, themes started to emerge from the different categories. Those themes were expressed overtly by the participants themselves, and the study discovered them through inductive analysis of the participants’ email discussions and reflective papers.

**Searching for alternative understanding/perception**
To search for other possible explanations and sound interpretations, the study asked participants, a critical friend, and community of practice whether they agreed with the study interpretations or had different understandings. The researcher’s critical friend and community of practice played significant roles at different phases and helped in identifying the *blind spots* and suggesting various ways of seeing the data. The analyses conducted in this study are by all means exploratory. It is hoped that the research results can help Palestinian educators as well as teachers of English in general to better understand the impact of the email applications in foreign language classes and more effectively plan their classroom activities.

**Results and Interpretations**
Through analyzing students’ emails and reflective papers, the following themes emerged:

- **a. Learners gained knowledge about the target culture and reflected on native culture.**
  Several participants from both groups indicated that they gained cultural knowledge about the target culture and own native culture. For example, Omar noted that he learned many cultural facts about the target culture “I learned a lot about the American culture, for instance, college system, fireworks, camp fire, Halloween, Christmas, Easter, Independence Day, marriage, gay marriage, divorce, food… etc”. Palestinian participants
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illuminated that during email discussions, they realized that cultural differences exist and impact intercultural communication. Besides learning about the target culture, Palestinian participants talked passionately about their political/cultural beliefs and interests.

   i. Email exchange allowed Palestinian learners to convey their passion about political/cultural beliefs and experiences.

Due to the severe siege on the Gaza Strip and lack of opportunities to meet with native speakers face to face, many Palestinian participants found the email as a window to the outside world to reflect on their political situation and daily suffering under the Israeli occupation. For example, Zeina pointed out that although she learned many new facts about the American daily life and major cultural events, she introduced her email partner to many aspects of the Palestinian culture as well as historical facts about the prolonged struggle against the Zionist occupation “the process of exchanging knowledge about our cultures was not from her side, but also from my side. I told her about our national and Islamic events like ‘Eid Al Fitter’, ‘Ramadan’, and the disaster of 1948 etc.

   On the other hand, Jacqi, an American student, indicated that she learned about Islamic religion and its role in Muslim lives “religion is a very important part of Islamic life and “Ameera” stressed this during our communication. She explained to me that Islam is a way of life; the Quran helps Islamic followers to know the difference between right and wrong and governs daily activities”.

Further, Alice in Boston was overwhelmingly impressed by the information she learned about Palestine and Palestinians, especially their struggle with the Israeli occupation “I was almost a little overwhelmed by ‘Nada’s passion, especially when she ended her emails with sentences like “We will fight till we get our freedom. We will sacrifice our lives for Palestine, Freedom costs blood!!!” It is interesting to note that while American students wanted to talk about daily routine and fun
activities, Palestinian students seemed to have different interests such as politics and the role of religion. Cultural awareness becomes central when we have to interact with people from other cultures. Cultural awareness involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions (Baker, 2012).

**ii. Email exchange encouraged the Palestinian and US learners to reflect on their cultural artifacts and beliefs.**

Many participants noted that involvement in email exchange project helped them to learn and reflect on their own native culture. Ameera, a Palestinian student, argued that the email project helped her to conduct research to learn more about her own native culture “I learned about my own culture, for example, talking about heritage was interesting, and it gave me a push to know about my heritage to see the old tools and get introduced to the styles of wearing in the old times”. Haneen, another Palestinian student, showed similar ideas about learning about her native culture:

Because when my pen pal asked me about my own culture and I didn’t know the answer, I used to search about my culture and benefited a lot. When she asked me about the conflict in Palestine, I felt scared of misrepresenting my people; it was a great responsibility, but with the help of my dad, who is a good spectator of news, I succeeded to present my case and made her sympathize with my people.

On the other hand, Alice, an American student, expressed certain feelings towards her culture which was fostered through her email discussions with her Palestinian email partner:

One thing that I already knew about my culture, but definitely instilled my belief is that we are known to be a little larger in America, and definitely less “healthy” than most other countries…It was a wonderful experience being able to not only learn about her culture but also reflect on my own culture as well.
It is clear that intercultural email project helped students to learn about a target or foreign culture and reflect on their own native cultures. I think before communicating with their email partners, students in both groups took all these cultural aspects for granted, and presupposed that all people behave in the same way.

It is worth noting that through email discussions, many Palestinian participants noted cultural differences in many cultural aspects and daily routine, especially in family, religion, marriage, dating, living on campus, cuisine, role of religion, and personal interests. Parra (2011) argues that one of the goals of using intercultural email projects is to help students recognize cultural differences and realize that most behavior is culturally conditioned. This resonates with Greenfield’s (2003) ideas about exposing students to international email communication. He asserts that participants become better informed about each other’s culture. Participants tend to be more open in sharing information which widens their cultural knowledge and promotes their intercultural awareness (Muller-Hartmann, 2000a). Furcsa (2009) concords with the above findings in that intercultural email based university projects promote development in cultural knowledge and development in cultural awareness in the target as well as native culture. To sum up, it can be noted that the intercultural email project helped students to gain knowledge about the target/foreign culture and reflect on their own culture.

Email interaction promoted positive attitudes towards the “Other” and destabilized stereotypes and biases. Several Palestinian and American participants involved in the intercultural email project expressed change in their attitudes towards each other. They highlighted explicitly the idea of destabilizing preexisting negative stereotypical images. The following excerpts may serve as illustration:

Although whenever I picture the Middle East, I often envision deserts and camels. I was surprised when I saw pictures of Gaza city skyline. It was a city similar to Boston with skyscrapers and bustling business. Occidental views of Western world that may have had were broken immediately
by speaking to my email partner realizing she was a person like me (Nina).
These e-mails taught me a lot about the Palestinian culture that I had been once someone obvious to ‘Nada’ “de-stabilized” the stereotypical Middle East person and showed that they truly are good people from every decent (Carol).
My email partner and I discussed different aspects of Palestinian and American cultures. I learned a lot about the American culture, and I changed some false stereotypical images, ideas, and concepts about it. For example, I was expecting that all American people are against the Palestinians, but I discovered that many people are pro-Palestinians (Ameera).
I used to have specific stereotypes about Americans that they are terrorists, they don’t like Palestinians, they consider us as uncivilized, savage and extreme people, but after I have known my email partner, I changed this image especially when I told him about Palestine and the conflict in Palestine. He sympathized with us (Abedallah).

The sentiments of the participants comport with similar observations of scholars. Hartmann (2000a), for instance, argues that email interaction across cultures can promote multiculturalism awareness of the other cultures, the development of tolerance and better intercultural awareness, as well as the reduction of stereotypes and prejudices. Further, many intercultural email exchange projects adopt objectives targeting the development of tolerance, better intercultural awareness, as well as reduction of stereotypes and prejudices (Meagher & Castanis, 1996; Sakar, 2001). For example, Itakura’s (2004) study showed that the intercultural email project was effective in promoting more sensitive and complex views of the target culture in modifying existing stereotypes as well as encouraging the learners to conduct their own research on cultural phenomena.

Palestinian learners described their American email partners as being friendly, helpful and supportive.
A notable number of Palestinian participants asserted that their native-speaker-email partners were friendly, helpful, and
supportive. Because they were worried about making syntactic and semantic mistakes, many Palestinian participants were delighted to receive supportive and encouraging remarks:

Don’t worry at all about writing mistakes. I have spent more than three years in Europe and South America, some of which was spent in teaching English. As such, I am familiar with both the challenges of learning a new language and difficult parts of English grammar. I will help you the best I can…Your hard work and high grade point are paying off! Your written English is excellent (Jeff).

Similarly, Lina, a Palestinian student, expressed similar ideas about her American email partner.

My partner is very friendly. I don't remember that she made me feel strange at all. She used to tell me about herself, her friends, her family, and her college…. I remember when she told me about her journey to Italy and Florida…She is very sweet! She isn't only friendly, but also supportive and willing to help. I asked her to teach me English in the summer and she agreed immediately and encouraged me. I remember at the beginning when she told me, “I am impressed by your English; it is very difficult to learn a new language”. She gave me a push up!

I think to overcome negative emotions towards cultural differences, students are required to recognize that these differences exist first, and then make it a positive feeling, i.e., to tolerate cultural diversity, develop interest in other cultures, and try different ways of doing things.

The interaction developed Palestinian learners’ intercultural communication and language Skills.

Many Palestinian participants indicated that their intercultural communication as well as language skills improved during email discussions with American native speakers. Wafaa’, a Palestinian student, found out that in order to avoid intercultural misunderstandings and communication failure, discussions
about religion and political situations should be avoided as much as possible:

    We talked also about the impact of differences between cultures in intercultural communication. Therefore, I noticed that there are some issues that are sensitive to Americans to talk about such as religion and political situations; that was something new for me. She said, “It’s hard talking politics or religion with people, just because it is one thing that a lot of people feel strongly about. Conversations get heated and it can potentially ruin relationships. I know it’s hard to talk about”.

One of the Palestinian students articulated certain aspects of successful intercultural communication such as respect, open-mindedness, tolerating cultural differences, and using expressions to show that:

    I noticed some development in my intercultural communication skills. For example, I learned that my pen pal and I have different cultures; however, we should respect each other’s opinions and cultures. I started using expression that shows respect and “open-mindedness”, e.g., “thank you for sharing your culture”, “it is interesting to know”, and “I’m impressed by all these cultural facts (Sanaa’).

    Sally, an American student, gave her Palestinian email partner some tips in order to have more successful intercultural communication with the ‘Other’, such as tolerating cultural differences and not expecting others to act in the same way “You should act like yourself. But just be mindful that not everyone else is going to act the same as you”. Sally learned that respecting cultural difference and other cultural values can be a key to effective intercultural communication.

    Furthermore, several Palestinian participants indicated that the intercultural email project developed noticeably their vocabulary and writing skills. This was fundamentally achieved by imitating the writing style of native speakers and practicing writing in email discussions:
I have learned a group of new vocabularies. These words are: hired, cheerleading, barrier, gypsies, immersion, comfy, moccasins, fleece, and haunted…another thing that I have learned is related to the sentence structure. I was facing some problems of how to begin a sentence, or what are the appropriate expressions to use, so it was my opportunity to check my mistakes in writing and to enrich my knowledge. Moreover, some of the vocabularies I used were from the dictionary and the Internet. Generally, I learned lots of things from her including writing skills and culture (Ameera).

In some email discussions, Palestinian participants asked their American email partners to comment on their writing and give them some tips. Although the feedback they received was not professional, the Palestinian students pointed out that it was helpful. Monica advised her email partner to use punctuation and capitalization properly in her writing “I believe it is a good idea to use the proper punctuation and capitalization even in emails. It keeps the message very clear for the reader…Your English writing is very good and flows naturally”.

Through analyzing Palestinian participants’ emails and reflective papers to examine development in writing (compared to their early emails), the study noticed some progress in their writing in general and the use of new vocabulary and speaking expressions in particular. For instance, learners used expressions to make compliments about major and family, making and accepting apologies, extending condolences. Some of these expressions were: I totally understand how busy you are!, don’t worry about being late, I hope you enjoyed your spring break, I hope you’ve done well so far in your project, I am sure you’ll do a wonderful job, thank you for commending my family, get better soon, good for you, talk to you soon, and I wish you the best!. Moreover, the study noticed the use of signal words such as first, second, moreover, however, additionally, etc.

Although the study noticed development in the Palestinian participants’ writing, it couldn’t confirm that the progress was due, exclusively, to the intercultural email project because they were taking simultaneous courses during the spring
semester, including reading and writing. Likewise, Warschauer’s (1995) study showed resembling results about learners’ use of formal and more lexically and syntactically complex language in electronic discussions than in face-to-face communication. Belisle (2002) argues that in email discussions, shy students can express their opinions more openly without fear; therefore, this can give them self-confidence and eventually develop their writing ability. Online email communication has become essential as it allows learners to have meaningful and authentic conversations with others in the target language (Liu et al., 2003).

Learners can also master language output and reflect on what others say. Kupelian (2001) maintains that email discussions represent authentic communication with a delay which allows students to think and compose a message. This delay, however, can reduce anxiety that students may feel in other forms of communication, thus can be face saving (Beauvois, 1994; Hoffman, 1994; Kupelian, 2001). Email has been a commonly used tool to teach L2 writing and to encourage language and cultural learning across national borders (Barson, Frommer & Schwartz, 1993; Leahy, 2001; Liaw, 1998; Liaw & Johnson, 2001; Stockwell & Levy, 2001; Tella, 1991; Warschauer, 1995). In a similar study conducted by Leppene and Kalaja (1995), results showed that email partners gave each other a great deal of different kinds of feedback and demonstrated a reasonable sense of responsibility.

The intercultural telecommunication experience was never easy.
Intercultural email projects are prone to many major problems. Besides organizational problems, one key problem is non-responses (Kupelian, 2001). It is noteworthy that a notable number of Palestinian and American participants expressed frustration due to the interruption of emails and discussions. This was essentially due to students’ busy life in both groups and power crisis in the Gaza Strip. Kareema, a Palestinian student, indicated that her native speaker email partner did not respond promptly to her emails “She had a busy semester and didn’t have plenty of time to reply to my messages quickly,
while I am in my first year and I am enthusiastic to know everything about her culture”. While analyzing students’ emails, the study noticed many expressions of apology from both groups for not responding promptly. For example, “Sorry for not responding to your email earlier, it was a very busy two weeks! I have a lot of homework and examinations coming up”.

Further, during the email exchange project, the Gaza Strip had faced acute fuel shortage due to the Israeli siege; therefore, many regions in the enclave suffered from frequent power outages. Hassan said, “The problems that we faced as Palestinian students were the power outages which often stood as an obstacle in the way of our inter-cultural communication”.

In their reflective papers, many Palestinian participants suggested using synchronous tools of communication, especially with video and audio facilities such as skype, MSN, oovoo, facebook, etc. They believed that face-to-face communication with native speakers could improve speaking and pronunciation skills:

I believe that using other audio/video programs would have been more effective on many levels. First of all, having a live conversation with the pen pal would help to make a continuous flow of ideas which would bring out much more topics to discuss. Second, having a vocal conversation would widely improve our listening and speaking skills by listening and talking directly and actively to a native speaker, which in its turn will upgrade our pronunciation skills. Although I know that this may be hard to apply because of different time zones, I hope that this idea would be taken in consideration for the improvement of the project (Reem).

Despite the benefits of email that allow people to exchange knowledge, thoughts and ideas with each other, I think video and audio programmers if used, they will do better job than email. By using video you can see your friend face to face. You can listen to her and she can hear you, and this will help you to improve your language as a student studying English. You can listen to
her pronunciation as a native speaker of English, and also she can listen to your English and correct you where necessary (Nada).

These comments make us believe that many Palestinian participants preferred synchronous communication tools because they thought it might help them to develop not only writing and cultural knowledge but also speaking and pronunciation skills as well. Poncini (2004) articulates a strong relationship between face-to-face communication and socializing progress. However, some scholars disagree with Poncini. The use of email in collaborative email projects represents authentic communication with a delay which allows students time to think and compose a message (Kupelian, 2001; Warschauer & Healy, 1998). In my opinion, using video/audio communication tools can be promising; however, it can be inhibiting to some learners with less speaking fluency. Moreover, besides time difference between the USA and Palestine, it requires endless organization effort, and learners in some cases may end up in frustration and demotivation.

**Learners enjoyed the experience of intercultural email project.**

It is interesting to note that several Palestinian and American participants expressed positive feelings towards the intercultural experience and described it as an enriching learning opportunity: Overall, the experience of emailing with a Palestinian college student was very positive. My email partner was very nice and inquisitive about American culture. We talked about literature, music, sports, marriage, funerals, and traditional food; the basics of any culture. I learned quite a lot from her about Palestine culture (Cathy).

Due to the situations that we have here in Palestine in general and in Gaza in particular, we do not have the chance to go to other countries and meet with native speakers of English face to face, so using the email to have an inter-cultural communication with native speakers was definitely efficient to evolve our linguistic and other language skills especially that we used written
forms. That surely helped to make an advanced progress of our language as non-native speakers of English (Abeer).

Mona, a Palestinian freshman, expressed similar sentiments towards her intercultural experience “Absolutely, I was so enthusiastic to communicate with a native speaker. All my friends are Palestinians and Arabs… However, my email partner added a lot to my personality and knowledge about her culture, life experience, and ambitions”. Some participants noted that involvement in the project added new dimensions to their lives in terms of knowledge, personality, and way of thinking “I think that email is a good way to develop ourselves, the way we think, the way we write, and the way we communicate with others.

Nada was further sentimental in her experience as having a profound impact on life experience and linguistic proficiency “I spent a wonderful time with my American pen pal, and I was eager to know more and more about her culture. The project sharpened my life experience, helped me to learn new words, developed my intercultural communication skills, and helped me to spend special and enjoyable time”. Similarly, many native speakers voiced similar feelings. Sharon, a graduate American student, noted “I enjoyed writing back to her and it almost lost the feeling of an assignment and became keeping in contact with a friend”.

Many Palestinian and American participants agreed to keep in touch after the email project. For example, Maurine invited her Palestinian email partner to continue writing to each other “Would you like to keep in touch and continue talking about our countries and writing to each other to keep practicing your English, feel free to write to me! I would love to continue writing to each other”. Shang (2007) concords with the above findings in that learners who participate in intercultural email projects enjoy the email activity because it provides more practices in writing, communication, vocabulary learning, and self-monitoring.
Pedagogical Implications
The present study highlighted the use of email as an educational tool to develop students’ intercultural awareness, ICC, and language skills. It was surprising to find out that both Palestinian and American groups were reluctant at the beginning to communicate with each other; however, after destabilizing stereotypes and biases some of them decided to continue their communication after the end of the project.

To better conduct and control intercultural telecommunication email projects, teachers may choose participants enrolled in their classes, and project’s assignments should contribute to those classes. Although all Palestinian participants showed extreme enthusiasm at the beginning of the project, 4 senior students stopped at a certain point and withdrew completely before the end of the project. However, freshmen participants enrolled in the researcher’s academic reading class reflected more commitment and interest in the project.

The study would recommend email as a useful learning tool to develop students’ intercultural awareness and ICC. Further, teachers may emphasize the importance of ICC and intercultural awareness as new objectives in foreign language education (Corbett, 2003; Guilherme, 2007; Sercu, 2006). Nowadays, the focus is not on whether to integrate technology in foreign language classes; rather it is well-centered on how to effectively maximize its use in EFL education (Liu et al., 2003). Based on the observations of the study, many participants from both cultural groups developed cultural awareness/knowledge, positive attitudes, and destabilized stereotypes and biases. Further, Palestinian students showed some development in their writing as well as vocabulary skills. In the future, the researcher may modify his syllabi for the oral communication and writing classes to encompass intercultural email projects in order to develop students’ authentic cultural knowledge and language skills. This can also help learners to acquire genuine speaking expressions such as phrasing apologies, condolences, requests, compliments, salutations, etc.
Further, the researcher would invade on the spontaneity of learners’ email exchange by further planning and careful guidance to achieve specific objectives. The present study had exploratory generic goals such as exploring impacts of email exchange on cultural awareness, ICC, and language skills. However, teachers may design a whole intercultural telecommunication email project to investigate a certain skill such as writing, reading, or speaking. Teachers may also need to use email projects with junior and senior students. Although Palestinian freshman participants did very well in the project, some of them found it rather challenging to talk about certain cultural and national issues. Moreover, the Palestinian participants expressed concern about age differences with their email partners. For example, some American participants were graduate students in their forties while Palestinian participants were only 18 or 19 years old.

Several Palestinian and American participants recommended other social media such as MSN and skype for future intercultural telecommunication projects, especially for conversation and pronunciation classes. However, this can be used with great caution in pronunciation and speaking classes. Such media tools require enormous organization due to time differences and technical complexities. The teacher might also have less control on such social media tools, and this might result in cultural misunderstandings.

Through teacher’s full control and guidance, participants can avoid cultural misunderstandings. One striking cultural misunderstanding took place when an American participant thought that her email partner was a male student. She didn’t feel comfortable as her email partner at certain point addressed her as “oh my dear”. Then the researcher explained to her that her email partner was a girl and not a boy!

**Study Limitations**
Although the findings of the study are to a large extent positive, many limitations should be addressed here. The participants of the study were 13 pairs of Palestinian English major freshmen and American graduate and undergraduate students. The
findings are limited to the participants and the two university contexts, and therefore the study cannot make generalization about the use of email in different EFL classes. The study also understands that it cannot claim any generalizability or conclusiveness based on its findings (Marshall & Roseman, 1999). Moreover, that limitation derives from the conceptual framework and design of the study. However, it can be useful to give inspiring insights about other contexts.

In future research, it can be suggested that the intercultural telecommunication email project should be carried out involving specific writing, reading, or conversation tasks. Different variables such as learners’ language proficiency levels and individual differences such as attitudes, age, and gender can also be taken into consideration in future research in foreign language classes. Additionally, the use of synchronous social media tools such as Skype, MSN, and Facebook can also be investigated to unveil their potential impact on the development of pronunciation and conversation skills. The present study was about the overall outcomes of email intercultural telecommunication email projects on students’ cultural awareness, ICC, and language skills.

**Conclusion**

Within the context of globalization and sophisticated technology of communications, foreign language educators constantly seek to connect their students with target language native speakers to enrich and solidify their language skills, ICC, and intercultural awareness. The purpose of the study was to explore the overall impact of the email in an intercultural email project between Palestinian university students and American native speakers. The study used qualitative content analysis to analyze participants’ email discussions and final reflective papers. The participants were 13 pairs of Palestinian freshmen in a major university in the Gaza Strip, Palestine and American graduate and undergraduate students from a north eastern university.

The study revealed that both groups developed intercultural knowledge of the target/foreign culture and reflected on own native culture. The participants in both groups
enjoyed the email-exchange project, which was regarded as a positive experience. The participants, further, reported development in their attitudes towards each other and destabilizing stereotypes, biases, and prejudices. Additionally, email exchange allowed Palestinian students to convey their passion about political/cultural beliefs and experiences. The study also unveiled that Palestinian learners showed some progress in language and communication skills. Nevertheless, both groups complained about some problems related to peers’ non-responses, and power outages in the Palestinian context. It can be concluded from the study that email communication creates an intercultural space in which pairs of people or groups of people interact. Email also originates a context in cyberspace in which human relationships can unfold in many aspects of life, namely, personal experience, intercultural awareness, acquisition of ICC, and foreign language learning.
References


Palestinian University Writing Professors' Feedback Practices and their Students' Reactions towards them

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Abstract
The purpose of the current study is to identify feedback practices Palestinian university professors frequently use and the extent to which they are aware of the soundness or unsoundness of these practices. The study also investigates Palestinian university students' reactions towards their teachers' feedback practices. For this purpose the researchers prepared two questionnaires to gather the data; the first addresses teachers' use of feedback practices and their soundness or unsoundness and the other is assigned to collect information from students on the frequency of their teachers use of feedback practices and if they like or dislike them. Two different samples, i.e. 26 university professors and 310 English majoring students from different universities in Palestine are included. The results of the study showed that Palestinian university writing professors are aware of the educational soundness and unsoundness of the majority of feedback practices and use sound ones quite often. Their students mostly agreed with their teachers' responses; however some discrepancies occurred between teachers' responses and their students' reactions towards certain practices. Moreover, students indicated their liking of most of their teachers' practices, particularly the sound ones. Surprisingly, students sometimes showed their liking of certain unsound practices. Regarding students gender role in the students' preference or approval of teachers' feedback practices, a number of differences existed, particularly in nine items; five items were in favor of males and the other four items were in favor of female students.

Introduction
Feedback is generally defined as "the information given to someone about something s/he has done or made which tells him/ her how good or successful it is" (Oxford Word Power 1999: 272). Longman Dictionary for Contemporary English
(2001: 510) also defines it as "advice or criticism about how successful or useful something is". In the educational process, particularly in L2 or FL classes, feedback is best referred to as substantial comments the teacher feels he must provide on the students' work to make them improve and to justify the grade they have been given (Hyland, 2003). Feedback whose resources are either the teacher, the learners themselves or the machine can be positive or negative and may serve not only to let learners know how well they have performed but also to increase motivation and build classroom skills.

Feedback to writing is teacher's written or oral response to the students' writing in order to improve the contents of their writing. Traditionally, feedback to writing is given in a written form on the draft or orally. Providing the students with feedback about their written work is one of the essential tasks of English Language teachers in the classroom. Feedback, whether generated by the teacher, peer or learner has been given a respectful status in approaches to L2 writing pedagogy due to the important role it plays in developing the composing skills and self-confidence of L2 students. Teacher's awareness of the importance of feedback on the students' writing is arising for it provides supporting teaching environment (Hyland, 2006).

Feedback constitutes an essential part of process writing approach. So it has been widely and extensively studied by writing educators in all its aspects. It is studied under the rubric of responding to student writing. The significance and usefulness of feedback given to students on the writing tasks they attempt made writing scholars believe that it is highly important that pupils receive feedback as soon as possible on their writings (Kailani and Muqattash 2009).

The purpose of the current research is to highlight feedback practices used by Palestinian university professors on their students' writings and whether and to what extent the latter like these practices.

**Problem Statement:**
Being instructors at different universities in Gaza Strip, the researchers observed that their colleagues teaching writing courses though not specializing in writing, do not frequently
provide their students with feedback on their writings. Those are either specialized in linguistics, literature or ELT methodology, in general. The researchers also noticed that the instructors' feedback is sometimes negative either in the form of error identification, underlining, or error correction. It is worth noting that they rarely follow up students' work, checking whether they benefited from their comments or not.

**Research Questions:**
This study addresses the following major question:

**What are the Palestinian university English writing professors' feedback practices and their students' reactions toward them?**

The following minor questions emanated from the above major question:
1. What are the principles of feedback in education in general and in writing in particular?
2. What is the reality of Palestinian university writing teachers' feedback practices?
3. What are the educationally sound writing feedback practices as perceived by Palestinian university writing professors?
4. What are the educationally unsound writing feedback practices as perceived by Palestinian university writing professors?
5. What are the feedback practices students like?
6. What are the feedback practices students dislike?
7. Are there any statistically significant differences in Palestinian English majoring students' approval of their writing teachers' feedback due to gender?

**Significance of the study:**
The research may prove to be useful for the following parties:

1. University English writing professors as it may provide them with insights of the feedback practices and their students' reactions toward these practices. This may have the potentiality of creating a friendly understanding and promoting educational classroom environment.
2. Palestinian university administrations as the current research may motivate them to recruit a faculty that is
specialized in writing rather than assigning writing courses to professors specialized in linguistics and literature.

3. University writing courses designers as this research hopefully will raise their awareness of the points that concern the university English majors when receiving feedback from their professors on their writings.

Limitations:
The study findings should be interpreted in the light of the following limitations:

1. The researchers used a questionnaire as a data collection instrument where the respondents may take it lightly and respond to its items carelessly.
2. The sample of writing professors is so limited, i.e. 26 if compared with that of students, i.e. 310.
3. Some of the spaces provided for teachers to explore their awareness of the soundness or unsoundness of teachers' practices were left unanswered. This may be attributed to the fact that the questionnaire's form is new where there are seven columns or spaces beside each item.

Research Objectives:
The current research aims to achieve the following:

1. To design a list of writing feedback practices,
2. To explore how far Palestinian university English writing professors make use of these practices when giving feedback to their students on their writings,
3. To investigate the Palestinian English writing professors' awareness of the educational soundness of these practices,
4. To inquire how far these practices are implemented by Palestinian English writing professors as perceived by their students,
5. To examine the university students' reactions toward these practices,
6. To assess how far these feedback practices conform to the principles or criteria of providing educational sound feedback as perceived by experts on educational psychology.
Procedures:
The following procedures were followed throughout the different stages of the current research:
1. Researching the related literature in order to gather the writing feedback practices,
2. Putting these practices in the form of a 5-point Likert scale,
3. Refereeing the scale,
4. Piloting the study: the instruments were distributed to six teachers and 30 students. Those were excluded from the sample,
5. Administering the scale to a group of Palestinian university English writing professors,
6. Requiring a group of educational psychology professors to judge the educational soundness of these practices,
7. Administering the scale to Palestinian University English writing teaching professors,
8. Comparing the students' responses with their professors' responses in order to draw a clear image of the amount of feedback the students receive, and accordingly

Literature Review:
Teacher feedback
Teacher feedback is teachers’ evaluation of the student response (Cook, 2000). Providing feedback to learners on their performance is an important aspect of teaching. It can be given by means of praise, by any relevant comment or action, or by silence (Richards and Lockhart, 2000). Weinstein (1989) elaborated that children learned how ‘smart’ they were mainly from teacher’s feedback in the form of marks, comments, and the degree and type of praise and criticism. Children report differences in the frequencies of teacher interactions with different types of learners, with high achievers seen as receiving more positive feedback from the teacher, as well as being given more opportunities to perform, to be challenged and to serve as leaders. By contrast, low achievers are reported to receive more negative feedback, more direction, and help giving as well.
Teacher feedback is considered one of the most powerful instructional variables in terms of enhancing student achievement (Hattie 1993). Then, instructors will need to consider: the timelines of feedback, specifying the nature and extent of feedback, the effective use of comments on returned work, the role of oral feedback, either on group or individual basis as a means of supplementing written feedback and when feedback may not be appropriate (Quality Assurance Agency, 2000, cited in Lillis and Swan, 2003: 102 – 103).

Teachers provide feedback on their students' writing to: support students' writing development, teach specific academic writing conventions, indicate strengths and weaknesses of writing in relation to a group of standards, explain or justify a grade and to suggest how a student can improve in his next writing task (Lillis and Swan, 2003: 104).

Smittle (cited in Abdelraheem and Jahjouh 2012) argues that prompt feedback is a principle of effective teaching. But this feedback should not include criticism because Hall (2011) maintained that lack of criticism is essential for effective teaching as avoiding embarrassment and maintaining learners' face is an important consideration for learners. Likewise, Iwanicki (1996) and Johnson (1997) cited in Stronge et. al (2004) assert that effective educators establish a climate of trust where praise is authentic and criticism is constructive.

The importance of feedback in the learning process is well established. For example, in a mita-analysis of over 250 studies, Black and William (1998) cited in Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick (2010) examined a wide range of educational settings and the evidence suggests that significant benefits in learning are accrued from feedback.

More importantly, feedback interacts with motivation and self-beliefs. Research shows that feedback both regulates and is regulated by motivational beliefs. Educational feedback has been shown to influence how students feel about themselves
(positively or negatively), and what and how they can learn (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick’ 2006).

Sadler (1998:119-144) identified three conditions necessary for students to benefit from feedback in academic tasks. He argued that the student must know: (1) what good performance is (That is the student must possess a concept of the goal or standard being aimed for); (2) how current performance relates to good performance. This means that students must be able to compare current and good performance; (3) how to act to close the gap between current and good performance.

**Forms of Teacher Feedback**

To achieve the aforementioned purposes, writing teachers may provide feedback on their students’ writing in different forms. In this study the researchers will be confined to presenting the most important ones, i.e. handwritten feedback, word-processed feedback, oral feedback, group feedback and individual feedback. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that what teacher feedback looks like will definitely have a bearing on how students receive it.

1. **Written comments:**
   Giving students written comments about their writing is the most widely used system of responding to their written work. The following are the advantages of written comments:
   1. They can be exhaustive and analytical.
   2. They direct attention to specific problems and offer suggestions for eradicating the problems.
   3. In correcting errors, they enable students better their understanding of the functions and limitations of various grammatical structures.
   4. When acted upon and internalized, written comments can provide learners with a logical and pragmatic writing process.
   5. They are logistically simple as the teacher can mark papers at almost any time or location.

2. **Group feedback:**
Teachers feel that there is need to include an element of group feedback. This type of feedback can be enhanced by producing and distributing guidance sheets based on common errors. In assessing a particular assignment, a group of general comments may be provided to the whole group with individual feedback focusing on specific issues related to a student's work. Lillis and Swan (2003:112) state that including an element of group feedback: (1) saves teachers' time by avoiding repetitions of similar points in individual feedback, (2) group discussion may also allow students to raise issues where there would be no time to consider individually; (3) students may feel comforted by seeing that others' experience is similar to theirs. (4) Byrne (1997: 101 ) asserts that group feedback enables writing instructors to remind their students of something covered in class but not implemented well in the writing assignment. Nevertheless, students may not be always able to link teachers' group feedback comments to their own writing because teachers comments by their very nature will tend to be expressed at a general level.

3. Conferences:
Conferencing with students individually or in groups is a major innovation in writing practice. This technique presupposes that students and teachers meet regularly. In typical conferences, a few students meet with their instructor for 15 – 30 minutes to discuss writing progress they have made. Research on writing conferences concentrates on two things: the evaluations of both teachers and students after conferences, and the nature of teacher-student interaction in teacher-student conferences.

Findings from research on teacher and student evaluations patronize the belief that students get more focused and comprehensible feedback during conferences than they do through written feedback. By the same token, the line of research on the nature of teacher-student interaction shows that conferences differ greatly in the extent to which they are beneficial in improving student written performance. Evidence suggests that conferences in which students share actively are more powerful than those in which students listen passively to teacher comments.
Conferences have certain obvious advantages. These are as follows:

1. The teacher is able to work with students intensively, on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

2. The teacher gets a better personal knowledge of his students.

3. Students get a friendly atmosphere in which they can ask without feeling embarrassed.

4. Students get more immediate and more detailed feedback than they would through extensively written feedback comments.

5. Teachers and students can work carefully and thoroughly through important stages for furthering student performance at all stages of writing process.

6. Students feel they are better motivated by the personal attention they receive.

7. The instructor can help the students to set clear and effective goals for writing assignments and for overall writing improvement as well. (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996).

8. Students enjoy their peers' ideas because they can learn from others' problems.


10. Conferences lessen the repetition of mistakes.

11. Conferences remove the need for the teacher to mark every paper completely or to deal with every error.

12. Conferences lead to more advanced class discussions on writing, with students displaying greater liking to volunteer constructive criticism about their writing and their peers'.

13. More feedback can be provided in the same amount of time it takes to write comments on students' papers.

14. Conferences promote active participation by the student allowing the instructor to identify precisely what the student understands and what he does not.

15. Conferences help students build their self-esteem, reassure them, and provide them with the confidence they need to write well. Quible (1997).
Types of teacher Feedback

Feedback on the students' written work has different types. Those are: teacher's underlining (identification of) errors, underlining of errors with correction, commentary, correction with comments, correction using prompts or students' self correction, peer correction, teacher-student conferencing.

1. Error correction: Teacher correction means that the teacher corrects all the surface (mainly grammatical) errors by crossing out perceived errors and providing correct answers. Teachers need not correct all the mistakes in learners' work. Total correction is not time-effective for the teacher and discouraging for the learners particularly when the latter see the papers full of red ink. Teachers sometimes need to indicate mistakes so that learners can correct them. Teacher's use of the same list of editing symbols makes learners attempt to identify and correct some if not all the mistakes for themselves. Learners believe that error correction is a key part of the teacher's role (Jonson cited in Hall 2011:17).

According to Van Lier (cited in Hall 2011:13), the activity that most characterizes language classroom is correction of errors. Yet, the issue of error and how errors are treated in the classroom provokes strong opinions from the teachers and learners alike.

2. Commentary: The teacher provides feedback by making written comments or questions on the margin or in between sentences. No error corrections are made.

3. Error identification: The teacher indicates the place where a perceived error occurs by underlying or circling it. But no corrections are made.

4. Teacher-student conferencing: The teacher and student discuss a piece of student writing individually during the writing of a composition, and after it is finished.

Advantages and disadvantages of teacher written feedback
A. Advantages:
1. They can be exhaustive and analytical.
2. They direct attention to specific problems, and offer suggestions, for eradicating the problems.
3. In correcting errors, they enable students better their understanding of the functions and limitations of various grammatical structures.
4. When acted upon and internalized, written comments can provide learners with a logical and pragmatic writing process.
5. They are logistically simple as the teacher can mark papers at almost any time or location.

B. Disadvantages:
1. Teachers find written comments not time-effective and discouraging.
2. Research points out that such feedback is either non-functional or actually counter-productive.
3. Students may perceive most instructive commentary as judgmental and punishing.
4. Teachers find it easier to recognize and mark violations of writing conventions and standards than to recognize and comment on the absence of these violations.
5. Students are not likely to make full use of the written feedback on their essays unless they are urged to revise their work.
6. Written comments are generally considered by students to be the least useful type of writing feedback.
7. Students often become confused, discouraged, and even overwhelmed by teachers' written feedback (Quible 1997).

Principles of good feedback:
The literature review is brimful of different principles of good feedback practice. However, the researchers will limit themselves to the most common ones. In accordance with Nicole and Macfarlane-Deck's 2006 self-regulation theory, those are sevenfold:
1- Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);

Students can attain learning goals if they understand these goals, undertake some ownership of them, and if they can assess progress. This, undoubtedly, requires teachers to set reasonable goals for students' learning, besides informing them of these goals and helping them, through various strategies, to work hard to achieve these goals. In case students do not have this information they will not be able to work to achieve these goals which ultimately makes the two parties involved in the teaching-learning process lack mutual understanding concerning the goals. This, unfortunately, undermines the whole process. This principle helps tutors and students have the same or similar conceptions about goals and criteria. One way of clarifying task requirements (goals, criteria, standards) is to provide students with writing documents containing statements describing assessment criteria and standards explicit via written document or through verbal description in class.

2- Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;

Students should be trained in self-assessment so that they can understand what they must do to achieve formative assessment. Revisiting the territory, Assessment in Education, maintains that self-assessment is an inescapable feature of feedback. In order for students to make sense of tutor feedback they must understand it and be able to evaluate its relationship to current performance. It is argued that we should therefore strengthen self-assessment early in students' education as it is a core skill in professional practice.

There are several approaches to developing self-assessment skills. One of these is to provide students with opportunities to evaluate and provide feedback on each other's work. These peer processes help develop the skills needed to make objective and well-informed judgments against standards which are skills that can be transferred when students turn to producing and regulating their own work.
3- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning:
Teachers are essential in developing their students' own capacity for self-regulation. Teacher's feedback is a source against which students can evaluate progress and check out their internal constructions of goals, criteria, and standards. Importantly, teachers are much more effective in identifying errors and misperception in students' work than peers or students themselves. Teacher feedback can help substantiate student self-regulation.

Good quality teacher feedback is defined as information that helps students troubleshoot their own performance so that they are able to take action to close the gap between intent and effect. Strategies that increase that quality of this type of feedback include:
1- Making sure that feedback is provided in relation to pre-defined criteria;
2- Providing feedback sooner after submission;
3- Providing corrective advice not just information on strengths and weaknesses;
4- Limiting amount of feedback so that it is used;
5- Prioritizing areas for improvement.

4- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning:
A research finding shows that great deal of feedback given to students is not of good quality as much of it may be delayed, not relevant or informative or overwhelming in quantity or too critical or judgmental. In order for external feedback to be effective, it must be understood and internalized by the student before it can be used to make improvements. However, in the feedback literature there is a great deal of evidence that students do not understand the feedback given by tutors and are consequently not able to take action to reduce the disparity between their intentions and the effects they would wish to produce.

A way of increasing external feedback effectiveness and likelihood the information provided is understood by students is to conceptualize feedback more as dialogue rather than as an
information transmission which means that the student not only receives initial feedback information but also has the opportunity to engage the teacher in discussion about feedback. Discussions with the teacher help students to develop their understanding of expectations and standards to checkout and correct misunderstanding and to get an immediate response to difficulties. Some useful strategies that make use of this principle include:

1- Providing feedback in class using one – minute papers.
2- Having students give each other feedback before submission.
3- Reviewing feedback in tutorials where students are asked to read the feedback comments, discuss with peers and develop strategies for improvement.
4- Asking students to find one or two examples of feedback comments they found helpful and explain how they helped.

5- Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;
Motivation and self-esteem play an essential role in learning and assessment. Research has shown that feedback can have both positive or negative effects on students' motivational beliefs and self-esteem. Butler 1998 (cited in Nicole and Macfarlane-Deck 2011) has shown that feedback comments alone had more effect on students subsequent learning, compared to those situations where marks alone or feedback and marks were given. He argued that students paid less attention to the comments when giving marks and did not use them to make improvements. He also maintained that grading student performance had less effect than feedback comments because it lead students to compare themselves with others rather than focus on where they were having difficulty.

Useful strategies belonging to this principle might include: 1- providing marks on written work only after students have responded to feedback comments; 2- allocating time for students to rewrite selected pieces of work as this would help change students' expectations about purpose; 3- automated testing with feedback; 4- drafts and resubmissions.
6- Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance;
Two questions might be asked regarding external feedback. First, is the feedback of the best quality, and the second, does it lead to changes in student behavior? External feedback provides an opportunity to close the gap between current performance and the performance expected by the teacher. Unfortunately, in reality, most students in higher education have little opportunity to directly use the feedback they receive to close the gap. The most directly use would be where they resubmit assignments after feedback has been given but this is unusual as students normally move on to the next task. The result, quite expectedly, is that students may not actually read or use feedback.

The following are useful strategies: 1- providing feedback on work in progress and increasing opportunities for resubmission; 2- introducing two-stage assignments where feedback on stage one helps improve stage two; 3- teachers might model strategies they would use to close a performance gap in class; 4- specifically providing some action points alongside the normal feedback provision; 5- involving students in groups in identifying their own action points in class after they have read the feedback on their assignments.

7- Provides information that can be used to help shape teaching to teachers.
To produce relevant and informative feedback, teachers themselves need good data about how students are progressing. They, moreover, need to be involved in reviewing and reflecting on this data in taking actions to help close the gap. Good feedback practice does not only provide accessible and usable information that helps students improve their learning, but also provides good information for the teachers. Yorke 2003 (cited in Nicole and Macfarlane 2006) says the act of assessing has an effect on the assessor as well as the student. Assessors learn about the extent to which students have developed expertise and can tailor their teaching, accordingly.
Previous Studies:
Whether students like or dislike teacher's comments or feedback on their writings or not seems to be a controversial issue since this depends on many different factors. Those will be highlighted in the following section.

Zacharias (2007) revealed that generally teachers and students have a marked preference for teacher feedback; the high preference for teacher feedback was mainly the result of the respondents' positive attitudes towards teacher feedback. In addition, student preferences of teacher feedback stemmed from their awareness that teachers control grades. Student also preferred teacher feedback that was specific since this kind of feedback would facilitate students' revision process. Ferris (1997) found that 76% of teacher's suggestions were incorporated into students' revisions and that students showed a high preference for feedback which focused on language. Compared to feedback on content, feedback on form was considered to be more helpful. Students often complained that teacher feedback on content tended to be general and sometimes, contributed to students' ideas. Moreover, the interview data illustrated that teacher feedback contributed greatly to students' emotional states particularly their motivation and attitudes towards writing (Zacharias 2007). Similarly, Ashwell (2000) found that content feedback followed by form feedback is not superior to the reverse pattern or to a pattern of mixed form and content feedback. To students, it did not matter which order they received form or content feedback, nor did it matter to them whether the form and content feedback were separated. The results also showed that giving feedback assisted the subjects to improve the accuracy of their writing more than if they got no feedback. The post –hoc analysis of changes made by the students demonstrated that three-quarters of the form feedback and a smaller proportion of the content feedback was acted upon.

Regarding the effect of teacher's written comments on the students' revision of the first or pre-final versions of their writings, Hyland's (1998) results showed that the students not only said they valued feedback, but also demonstrated this
through their action in response to it, therefore they attempted to use between 86% to 94% of the total usable feedback offered. Nonetheless, some revisions appeared to be not related to the written feedback at all. The motive for such revision might have come from the students themselves. Chandler (2003) found that the students' writing improved significantly over the semester in terms of both accuracy and fluency. Students made significantly fewer errors on their revisions if the teacher had written in corrections. However, the next most explicit method of teacher response is underlining with description which produced the next fewest errors on revision.

Thus, teacher correction of students errors is viewed to play a role in the students' writing. Bitchener (2008) revealed that written corrective feedback had a significant impact on improving accuracy in the two functional uses of the English article system, and that this level of accuracy was retained for two months without additional feedback or instruction. Japanese learners' of English exposure to written corrective feedback helped them to use articles with greater consistency in subsequent writing and, in most cases, to show durable gains in accuracy. The effects of corrective feedback did not differ according to whether the feedback was focused or unfocused though there is more evidence to suggest that focused corrective feedback, i.e. giving corrective feedback to correct all the errors in learners' written work may be more effective in the long run (Ellis et al. 2008). Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005) found that combination of full explicit written corrective feedback and one-to-one conference feedback enabled student to correct the past simple tense and the definite article with significantly greater accuracy in new pieces of writing than was the case with their use of prepositions. They did not only find that direct oral feedback in combination with written feedback had a great impact more than direct written feedback alone on improved accuracy over time, but also found that the combined feedback option facilitates improvement in the more "treatable" rule-governed features, the past simple tense and the definite article than the less "treatable" feature "prepositions". However, Guenette (2007) who reviewed a number of studies of the effect of corrective feedback on the students' writing viewed that the
debate continues between those who believe in giving corrective feedback to students to improve their written accuracy and those who do not. He added that the results of the many experimental studies on written corrective feedback carried out over the last 20 years have been so contradictory that second language teachers looking to support their pedagogical options to correct, or not correct, the grammar of their students' written production are left in the midst of controversy.

Some writing teachers prefer involving students themselves in giving feedback on the latter's work. Pedagogically, this can be seen from different angles since there are supporters of such teacher's practices as well as critics. Min (2006) viewed that peer response/review had been found to help both college and secondary students get more understanding of their writing and revising processes, foster a feeling of ownership of the text, generate more positive attitudes toward writing, enhance awareness of audience, and easifying their second language acquisition. Nevertheless, students' lack of knowledge of skills for peer review and inability to provide concrete and useful feedback results in the fact that the majority of peer comments fail to be utilized in students' subsequent revisions. In this regard, Min's (2006) results demonstrated that 77% of the trained peer review feedback was incorporated into the students revision and this constituted 90% of the total revisions. This high percentage of peer feedback incorporation was in sharp contrast to that before their students received peer view training which was 39% which suggested that student writers found trained peer feedback helpful, so they were willing to incorporate it in their subsequent revision. The interviews with the group writers revealed that most of them found the trained peer review feedback helpful, especially in focusing their ideas and enriching the content by viewing things from different angles. Furthermore, some attributed their revision improvement to their peers' helpful feedback. Likewise, Miao, Badger, and Zhen (2006) revealed that peer feedback plays an essential role in Chinese EFL students' revision while writing. Most of the teacher feedback and more than half of peer feedback was incorporated, leading to successful revision in most cases, with the results that the final drafts being better than
the initial ones. In addition, the impact of teacher and peer feedback is different. More teacher feedback was incorporated than peer feedback and lead to greater improvements, but peer feedback seemed to bring about a higher percentage of meaning change revisions whereas most teacher-influenced revision happen at the surface level. Likewise, teacher initiated revisions are less successful than peer initiated ones. Moreover, the subjects valued teacher feedback more highly than peer feedback, but at the same time they recognized the importance of peer feedback. Most importantly, although peer feedback had less impact than teacher feedback, it did lead to improvements and appeared to encourage student independence. Therefore, it can be viewed as a useful adjunct to teacher feedback, even in cultures supposed to give great authority to the teacher.

Kurt and Atay (2007) found that the majority of their study subjects said that they liked peer feedback. In addition, fifteen of them reported that they found peer feedback helpful for revision while the remaining five found it useless. And when they were asked whether or not their peers were reliable feedback givers, fifteen responded positively, whereas five responded negatively.

Methodology
Participants:
The current study's population comprises all Gaza Strip university students majoring in English as well as writing teachers at the Palestinian universities. However, the study instruments were distributed to a convenient sample, consisting of 310 male and female students from Al-Aqsa University, Al-Quds Open University, Islamic University of Gaza, and Alazhar University-Gaza in addition to 26 writing teachers. Concerning the students' sex, the majority were females, i.e. (No=211, %= 67); whereas only 99, i.e. (33%) were males. Table (1) below shows the distribution of the students according to university and sex.

Table (1): Distribution of Students Sample According to University and Sex
As for teachers sample, they were 26 from seven different Palestinian universities in Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Those were 18, i.e. (69%) male and 8, i.e. (31%) female teachers.

**Instrumentation:**
Two questionnaires following the taxonomy of Likert scale in which opinions were graded {strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1)} have been used to collect the data for the present study. The first one which addresses students' views towards their writing teachers' feedback comprises 42 items and the second dealing with Palestinian university writing teachers' practices also includes 42 items. It is worth mentioning, students questionnaire includes two other columns beside each item inquiring about their liking or disliking of their writing teachers' feedback practices to test their reactions towards teachers' feedback practices. Furthermore, teachers questionnaire embraces two other
variables beside each item to identify to what extent teachers are aware of educationally sound and unsound feedback practices.

Validity and reliability:
Adopting Alpha Chronbach statistical method, both teachers and students questionnaires proved reliable, i.e. (Sig.= 0.872, 0.834 respectively ). To assure the previous results, the researchers also used Mann-Whetny, Kolmogrov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk to test efficiency and normality of both questionnaires items. Those were strongly correlated with each other, which is evidence that the study instruments were valid.

Analysis, Results and Discussion:
This section deals with analysis of data, presentation of results and discussion and interpretation of these results. It attempts to answer the research questions. The statistical tests adopted in this study are the percentages and frequencies. Results will be presented and discussed in the light of the research questions.

Research question 1: What are the principles of feedback in education in general and in writing in particular?
To answer this question, there are seven common principles which make teacher's feedback fruitful. Those are previously presented in the literature review.

Research question 2: What is the reality of Palestinian university writing teachers' feedback practices?
In this section, the researchers intend to know to what extent Palestinian university writing teachers use feedback practices. This can be achieved through comparing teachers' responses to
the frequency of using such practices with students' responses to the frequency of receiving these practices. To answer this question, frequencies and percentages were calculated. Table (2) provides the answer to the research question.

A thorough look on table (2) reveals that there are big differences between the writing teachers' responses and those of their students in 9 items. The teachers' estimates of their feedback practices are very much higher than the students'. These items are five where the teachers' estimates are as high as (84.44) whereas the students' are (66.64) with a difference of 17.8%. Likewise, the teachers' responses on item (17) scored as high as 71.78%, and the students' were 31.3% with discrepancy of 20.84%. Here the teachers denied that they were sarcastic of their students' writing but, unfortunately, nearly half of the subjects asserted that their teachers were sarcastic. Regarding item no (18), the majority of the respondents, i.e. (70.3) asserted that teachers used a red pen when providing comments; nearly 60% of the students' responses asserted the use of red pen. Additionally, 19 writing teachers claimed that they devoted an extensive amount of time for giving feedback to their students. They assigned 87.34% to this practice. However, the students viewed things unsurprisingly differently as they assigned only 62.32% to this item with difference of 24.82%. Regarding item (27), the teachers asserted that they used mitigated language when they provided feedback to their students. They gave themselves 86.68% on this item. Conversely, the students assigned 69.48% to this item with a difference of (16.86) which is, indeed, a big difference. This meant that students did not feel that language of feedback they received was mitigated.
Table (2): Teachers and students' responses to the frequency of the use of feedback practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Students' Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Educ.sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I provide oral as well as written feedback on student's composition.</td>
<td>84.46</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I always tend to have a good rapport with the students which improves their abilities in writing.</td>
<td>83.62</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I read the entire composition the student makes, then I make my comments on it.</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>My comments focus mainly on how to write.</td>
<td>73.26</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I offer specific suggestions or strategies for revision.</td>
<td>84.44</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>My feedback is very short (fewer than 10 words).</td>
<td>62.16</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I evaluate the ideas covered and evidence given in students' writings.</td>
<td>82.98</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I focus on the negative aspects in the student's writing.</td>
<td>47.94</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I pay attention to theme development.</td>
<td>74.82</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I compare a student's writing with others'</td>
<td>53.28</td>
<td>37</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I give the student chance for second and third revisions after getting my feedback.</td>
<td>74.74</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I give them feedback on a separate sheet.</td>
<td>45.14</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I make sure that they implement the feedback I have given them in their subsequent writing tasks.</td>
<td>73.26</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>My comments ask how ideas are related.</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I ask about the importance of some statements.</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I ask for an explanation if something the student stated was not clear.</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I am never sarcastic when I provide feedback on the student's writing.</td>
<td>71.78</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I use a red pen to provide students with comments on their writing.</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I devote an extensive amount of time to writing comments on students' compositions.</td>
<td>87.34</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I give marks on students' drafts.</td>
<td>50.32</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I personalize feedback, i.e. I compare the learner with himself -not with others.</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I provide them with corrective feedback on</td>
<td>77.04</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I discuss the errors they made.</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My comments on the student's work do not allow space for him to think on his own to improve his writing.</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My feedback on their paper makes them feel angry with themselves.</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My comments show dissatisfaction with student's work.</td>
<td>51.06</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My feedback on students' papers improves their writing.</td>
<td>84.44</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I Provide mitigated commentary, i.e. I provide commentary in such a way that doesn't disappoint my students.</td>
<td>86.68</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My comments are factual, i.e. I avoid mere differences of opinion and focuses on content, organization and purpose.</td>
<td>82.88</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The feedback I give on students' writings is honest.</td>
<td>85.94</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I give students specific directions on what to do concerning the writing task at hand.</td>
<td>76.96</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My feedback is informative, i.e. I tell students what to do then.</td>
<td>75.48</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their writings.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>students.</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>I concern myself with underlining students' errors without giving correction.</td>
<td>58.46</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>76.62</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>I use a mixture of correction with commentary and error identification.</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>I underline all students' errors in the composition not paying attention to their reactions.</td>
<td>45.14</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>65.22</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>I correct every single mistake the student makes in his writing.</td>
<td>46.62</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>I ignore many of students' errors and fallacies in their writings to maintain their self-confidence.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>66.06</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>I concentrate on their grammar and spelling mistakes.</td>
<td>68.82</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>55.36</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>I praise and encourage students as a reaction to their improvement in writing.</td>
<td>90.38</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>I adopt teacher-student conferencing, i.e. discuss students' writings in the class.</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>72.94</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>I train students to give feedback on their peers' writings.</td>
<td>76.96</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>68.52</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>I involve students in peer evaluation.</td>
<td>78.44</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>65.74</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding item (28) the teachers believed that the feedback they gave to their students improved the students' writing. So they assigned 84.44% to this feedback practice. Nonetheless, the students did not believe the case was so and they assigned this item 69.48% with difference of 14.96%. Concerning item (34), the teachers claimed that they used a mixture of correction with commentary and error identification and they assigned 77.7% to this item whereas their students did not recognize this claim and assigned only 53.6% to this item with a difference of 24.1%. As for item (38) which investigates whether writing teachers concentrated on the students' grammar errors and spelling mistakes, the writing teachers gave this practice 68.28% while the students gave only 55.36% with difference of 13.46%. Finally, item (42) which inquires if writing teachers involved students in peer correction, the teachers assigned 77.7% to this feedback practice while the students assigned only 65.74%. However, there are 6 items in which there were big different estimates when students gave higher values to the items than those of the teachers.

Interestingly, concerning item 29, the teachers gave it 66.6% whereas the students gave it 81.64%. This result is neither strange nor surprising if we know that the item inquires whether the feedback the teachers gave made the students angry. It is quite obvious the teachers denied such an accusation whereas the students felt that the feedback they received made them feel angry. Differently, Zakharias's (2007) subjects found their teachers' feedback comments motivating. The result obtained in the present study do not defer to the fifth principal of good feedback which states that teacher's feedback should encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem. Similarly, item (31) which inquires whether teachers' feedback comments left students with a space to think on their own to improve their writing, the majority of the writing teachers declined such practice as they assigned it only 40.7% while the students assigned the same practice 58.76% with a disparity of 18.06%. Regarding, item (33) which investigates whether writing teachers contented themselves with only underlining students' errors, the teacher gave the item 58.46% which means more or less they did not content themselves with error
underlining. However, the students assigned 76.62% to the same item which means that teachers content, to a large extent, themselves with underlining. The difference is 18.16%. Concerning, item (35) which investigate whether writing teachers underlined all the students' errors without heeding their emotional reaction, the writing teachers did not confess that they did so and assigned only 45.14% to this item while the students assigned 65.22% to this item with a difference of 20.08%, which means that students felt that teachers did not care about students' feelings.

Regarding item (36) which enquires whether writing teachers corrected every single mistake a student made, they assigned 46.62% which means, from the teachers' viewpoint, that they abstained from correcting every single mistake. However, the students assigned 60.3% with a difference of 13.68%. This means that the majority of the students felt differently and saw that teachers did so.

Perusal of the table uncovers an interesting fact which is namely that writing teachers' estimates of their writing feedback practices and those of their students were identical or nearly identical on 9 items where the difference did not exceed 5%. The items are no 6, 8, 9, 10, 14, 16, 22, 23 and 30. This, undoubtedly, highlights students' relative objectivity when appraising their teachers and made the researchers trust the students' estimates.

Regarding the remaining items, the disparity in the estimates of the teachers and the students ranges between 6% and 10%. This perusal, once more again, convinced the researchers of trustworthiness of the students' responses.

Research Question 3: What are the educationally sound writing feedback practices as perceived by Palestinian university writing professors?
A study of table (2) shows that the educationally sound writing feedback practices are (19) practices if we consider the sound feedback practice is the one that gets 70% and more of the writing teachers' estimates of the soundness of the practice.
Expectedly, the writing teachers' judgments of the feedback practice are extremely accurate if we assess these evaluations against the seven principles of good feedback and the literature written on writing feedback practices. Teachers' responses on items 31 and 37 uncover their lack of knowledge concerning the soundness of the practice. To elaborate, teachers' comments on the students' writing should leave a chance for them to think and improve as teachers are not expected to spoonfeed them and give them everything. We mean writing professors should leave students with something to do on their own. Similarly, writing professor must ignore many of the errors but not fallacies of the students only to maintain the students' self confidence. This response is specifically mistaken because the item asks about two contradictory things namely not correcting all the mistakes in order not to frustrate learners, which is an educationally sound practice and leaving students' fallacies without correction which is unsound. This analysis, definitely, shows the Palestinian university writing professors are highly aware of the literature on feedback. More importantly, it reveals that they are very qualified and knowledgeable as well. Their case is so because most of them hold M.A. or Ph.D. degrees which they mostly got from European universities.

Research Question 4: What are the educationally unsound writing feedback practices as perceived by Palestinian university writing professors? Table (2) shows that the number of the educationally unsound writing feedback practices which got less than 70% of the writing professors estimates are 23. They are items: 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 38. The researchers will divide these items which got lower than 70% into two groups: the first includes the feedback practices on which there is a consensus by educators and writing literature that they are not educationally sound; the second involves the practices which are sound but got less than 70%. The first group includes the following items: item (6) which
states that teachers' feedback is short, which is not an advantage. This item got 51.9%. Item (8) which inquires whether teachers focus on the negative aspects of students' writing which got 51.9% from the responses of professors who consider it unsound and 29.6% deem it sound. Item (10) which investigates whether the professor compares a student writing with his colleague's was considered sound by 37% and unsound by 48.1%. Similarly, item (18) on which 51.9% of the writing teachers admitted using the red pen and believed that this practice is educationally sound while 29.6% saw it unsound. Item (20) inquires whether teachers give marks on their students' drafts which is definitely unsound. 51.9% of the sample, i.e. teachers considered it acceptable while 29.6% deemed it unsound.

Item (29) investigates whether teachers' feedback irritates their students. 40.7% believed that this practice is sound while 44.4% believed that it is unsound. Item (30) inquires whether writing teachers showed dissatisfaction with their students' writing. 63% of the sample rightly considered it unacceptable while 22.2% saw it acceptable. Item (35) inquires whether writing teachers contented themselves with underlining all students' errors regardless of students' reaction. 55.6% considered it unsound whereas 29.6% considered it sound. Item (36) inquires whether all students' errors got corrected. 55.6% rightly believed that this practice is unsound because error correction is selective whereas 25.9% saw it sound. Item (38) investigates whether teachers concentrated on students' grammar and spelling errors. 51.9% of the respondents erroneously considered it sound while 33.3% considered it unsound.

The second group involves a set of items which are considered educationally sound but got less than 70% of the respondents views due to the fact that about 20% of the respondents, due to inattention, did not respond which ultimately, we believe, adversely affected the result. These items will be discussed as follows: item (4) which inquires whether teachers' comments focused on how to write. 63% considered it sound whereas a minority of 18.5% judged it as being unsound. Item (14) asks whether the comments asked how ideas were related. 66.7% saw it educationally sound which is
true whereas 14.8% saw it unsound. Item (15) inquires whether writing teachers asked their students about why a certain sentence was there and why it was important. This is related to coherence which is essential in writing. 55.6% agreed that this practice was sound where 22.2% did not recognize its significance. Item (17) inquires whether teachers were sarcastic. 59.7% saw it acceptable, while 34.5% saw things differently. Item (19) examines whether teacher devoted extensive time for giving feedback. 51.9% deemed it, undoubtedly, educationally sound while, surprisingly, fairly high percentage of 33.3 saw it unsound. Item (21) tests whether teachers personalized feedback. 63% perceived it sound and 22.2% saw it unsound. Item (22) inquires whether teachers provided corrective feedback. 66.7% saw it sound but 18.5% viewed it unsound. Bitchener (2008) stated that written corrective feedback had a significant impact on improving accuracy in the two functional uses of the English article system. However, Guenette (2007) who reviewed a number of studies of the effect of corrective feedback on the students' writing viewed that the debate continues between those who believe in giving corrective feedback to students to improve their written accuracy and those who do not. He added that the results of the many experimental studies on written corrective feedback carried out over the last 20 years had been so contradictory that second language teachers looking to support their pedagogical options to correct, or not correct, the grammar of their students' written production are left in the midst of controversy.

Item (25) inquires about the honesty of feedback given. 66.7% correctly perceived it sound while a minority of 14.8% saw it otherwise. Item (32) investigates whether teachers discussed common errors made by students, which is a normal and sound practice though it is not enough. 44.4% considered it sound while 37% considered it not sound. Item (34) investigates whether writing professors use a mixture of underlining and correction. 29.6% considered it sound while 55.6% saw it unsound.
Research Question 5: What are the feedback practices students like?
A thorough look at tables (2 and 3) reveals that students like 17 writing feedback practices if we take 70% as a criterion against which liking or disliking can be assessed. These are item 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 14, 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31, 32, 38, 39, and 40. There is a match between some practices students liked and those teachers considered educationally sound. This match appeared on 11 items namely item 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 16, 23, 24, 31, 39, and 40.

To illustrate more, item (1) examines whether writing professors provided oral and written feedback. Regarding this item, 85.2% of the teachers viewed it as being sound and an equal percentage of students expressed their liking of this practice. Similarly, item (2) tests whether writing professors were concerned with creating rapport between them and their students. 77.5% of the respondents saw it sound and 86% of the students liked it. Concerning item (5) which inquires whether writing professors gave specific suggestions and strategies for revision to their students, 81.5% asserted it as educationally sound and 70.6% of the students responded favorably. The result here agrees with Zakharias's (2007) who found that student preferences for teacher feedback stemmed from their awareness that teachers control grades. Zacharias also added that students preferred teacher feedback that was specific since this kind of feedback would facilitate it for students in the revision process. Item (7) is concerned with evaluating students' ideas and evidence they cited in their writing. 70.4% of the professors took it to be sound and 75.6% of the students liked it. Item (9) explores whether teachers payed attention to theme development 74.1% of the professors believed it was sound and almost an equal percentage, i.e. 76.8 of the students liked it. Item (16) asks whether teachers asked for clarification from the students in case some of what they wrote was unclear. 74.1% perceived it sound and 73.1% of the students responded positively.

Item (23) examines whether teachers' feedback is informative and tells students what to do then. 70.4% said that the practice is sound. By the same token, 79 of the students expressed their liking of this practice. Concerning item (24)
which enquires if the writing professors give specific directions on the writing task at hand, 77.8% perceived it as sound and likewise 70.6% of the students liked it. Regarding item (31) which states that teacher's the comments do not allow space for the student to think on his own to improve his writing, strangely, 80.7% of the students liked it though it is not a sound practice. Here students might have understood this item differently or responded to it carelessly. With item (39) which investigates whether teachers praise and encourage students as a result of their improvement, 81.5% of the professors valued this practice and 79% of the students looked at it favorably. Finally, item (40) concerning conferencing with students and discussing their errors inside class, 74.1 considered it educationally sound and 72.2% of the students liked it.

Regarding the remaining item, the researchers discuss them as follows: item (14) which enquires if the teachers comments ask how ideas are related, 66.7% of the professors considered it sound but 82.1% of the students liked it. Item (22) explores whether teachers give corrective feedback, 66.7% of the professors perceived it sound and 80.1 of the learners liked it. Item (25) enquires about the honesty of feedback given. 66.7% of the professors viewed it sound whereas 81.8 of the students liked it. Additionally, item (32) which investigates whether the discussion of common errors is a sound practice, 44.4% said it is unsound while 70% of the students liked it. Item (38) which assesses the educational soundness of concentrating on students' grammar and spelling mistakes, 51.9% said it is sound and 33.3% said it is unsound; however, 74% of the students liked it.

Research Question 6: What are the feedback practice students dislike?
Table (2) clearly shows that students disliked (25) writing feedback practices given by writing professors. These are items No.3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 41 and 42. To elaborate, a perusal of the table shows that students disliked 8 practices considered educationally sound by the writing professors. They are
discussed as follows: item (3) which enquires about the soundness of reading the entire composition the student makes before starting writing comments on writing tasks, 70.4% of the teachers assessed it as sound while 56% of the students liked it and 37.8% disliked it. Item (11) assesses the soundness of giving the student chance for second and third revision of getting feedback. 81.5% of the writing instructors perceived it as educationally sound whereas 68.6% of the students liked it and 24.1% disliked it. Regarding item (13) which assesses whether teachers made sure that the students implemented the feedback they received, 77.8% of the instructors asserted it as educationally sound whereas 66.4% of the students liked it and 23.8% disliked it. Hyland's (1998) results, however, showed that the students not only said they valued feedback, but also demonstrated this through their action in response to it; therefore, they attempted to use between 86% to 94% of the total usable feedback offered. In this regard, Min's (2006) results demonstrated that 77% of the trained peer review feedback was incorporated into the students revision and this constituted 90% of the total revisions. Item (26) appraises the educational soundness of providing factual commentary and avoiding mere differences of opinion besides focusing on content, organization and purpose, 77.8% of the instructors approved its soundness; conversely, 64.4% of the students disliked it and 30.3% liked it.

Item (27) is related to giving mitigated commentary that does not disappoint the students. 81.5% of the professors approved of its soundness. Yet, 66.9% of the students expressed their liking of it. Item (37) assesses the educational soundness of ignoring the students' fallacies and errors for maintaining the students' self confidence. 70.4% of the instructors judged it as being sound and only 51.3% of the students expressed their liking of it. Item (41) assesses the soundness of training students to give feedback to their peers. 85.2% of the professors, judiciously, considered it sound; however, 67.5% of the students liked it. Finally, item (42) inquires about the validity of involving students in peer evaluation. 74.1% of the instructors perceived it as sound but 63.9% liked it. Miao, Badger, and Zhen (2006) revealed that peer feedback plays an essential role in Chinese EFL students'
revisions while writing. Most of the teacher feedback and more than half of peer feedback is incorporated, leading to successful revision in most cases, with the results that the final drafts being better than the initial ones. Furthermore, Kurt and Atay (2007) found that the majority of their study subjects said that they liked peer feedback. In addition, fifteen of them reported that they found peer feedback helpful for revision while the remaining five found it useless. And when they were asked whether or not their peers were reliable feedback givers, fifteen responded positively, whereas five responded negatively. Besides, the students expressed their disliking of 16 writing feedback practices provided by writing professors. These were assigned low percentages of educational soundness by writing professors. These items are: 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 30, 33, 35 and 36.

**Research question 7:** Are there any statistically significant differences in Palestinian English majoring students' approval of their writing teachers' feedback due to gender?

This question will be answered with reference to tables (2) above and (3) below.

A profound look at table (3) reveals that there are some differences between male and female students in their preference of their teachers' feedback practices. The differences mainly existed in items 7, 8, 10, 12, 15, 18, 26, 35 and 41 and can be attributed to a number of reasons and justifications which will be explained below. Those were as follows: five in favor of males, namely items 8, 10, 12, 18 and 35 and the rest are in favor of females, i.e. items 7, 15, 26 and 41.

In their reaction towards item (7) whether the teacher evaluates the ideas covered and evidence given in their writing, female students liked such a practice with a percentage of 71.75 with a difference of over than 14%. The result here shows that both males and females liked evaluative feedback. With reference to table (2) teachers' estimates of this item were 82.98% and those
of students were about 76%. It is worth mentioning this feedback practice which was estimated by teachers to be educationally sound got a percentage of 70.4 and matches with the standards of soundness in the literature review.

For item (8) whether the teacher focuses on the negative aspects in the students' writing, the teachers whose estimates were 54% judged it as educationally sound, i.e. % = 51.9. Though such a practice does not match with soundness standards, it is usually frequented by teachers. In the students' reactions towards this practice, 55.46% mentioned that their teachers frequently adopt it (see table 2). For the students' responses whether they like this practice or not, there were differences due to their sex in favor of males. That is to say, 52.98% of males liked this practice whereas only 30.39% of female students liked it. The discrepancy here could be attributed to some psychological considerations where females are more sensitive than males and hence do not like to be criticized or their errors to be revealed. Strangely enough, the majority of male students liked this practice though it emphasizes the negative aspects in the students' product. This may be due to the fact that male students due to their low levels of achievement want to learn more or found nothing unusual about this practice.

Similarly, item (10) which inquires about the teachers' practice of comparing the student's writings with one another's, which is, of course, a negative practice and unsound according to Nicole's seven principles of good feedback. This is sometimes frequented by Palestinian university professors with a percentage of 55.28%. In the students' reactions towards this practice nearly 55% of the students showed their approval. Differences were found between students' reactions towards this practice. Whereas 70.07% of male students asserted that they like this practice, only 50.24% of female students showed their liking of it. The result here may be justified by the assumption that male students like to learn from their peers more than girls do.
Table (3): Gender differences in students’ preference of feedback practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item Writing teacher</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% Like</td>
<td>% Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>provides oral as well as written feedback on my composition.</td>
<td>88.97</td>
<td>11.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>tends to improve our writing abilities through developing his relationship with us.</td>
<td>89.70</td>
<td>10.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Makes his comments on the entire composition as a whole – not on its parts.</td>
<td>61.76</td>
<td>38.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>comments focus mainly on how to write.</td>
<td>72.38</td>
<td>27.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>offers specific suggestions or strategies for revision.</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>feedback is very short (fewer than 10 words).</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>evaluates the ideas covered and evidence given in my writing.</td>
<td>71.75</td>
<td>28.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Focuses on the negative aspects and sees nothing promising in my writing accordingly.</td>
<td>52.98</td>
<td>47.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>pays attention to theme development.</td>
<td>76.47</td>
<td>23.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>compares my writing with others’ writings.</td>
<td>70.07</td>
<td>29.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>gives me chance for second and third revisions after getting his feedback.</td>
<td>71.21</td>
<td>28.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>gives us feedback on a separate sheet.</td>
<td>74.80</td>
<td>25.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>makes sure that we implement the feedback he has given us</td>
<td>68.00</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in our subsequent writing tasks.

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>comments ask how ideas are related.</td>
<td>86.15</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>89.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>asks about the importance of some statements.</td>
<td>64.56</td>
<td>35.44</td>
<td>82.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>asks for an explanation if something I stated was not clear.</td>
<td>77.94</td>
<td>22.06</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>is sarcastic when he provides feedback on my writing.</td>
<td>38.34</td>
<td>61.66</td>
<td>34.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>uses a red pen to provide me with comments on my writing.</td>
<td>57.25</td>
<td>42.75</td>
<td>47.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>devotes an extensive amount of time to writing comments on my composition.</td>
<td>56.25</td>
<td>43.75</td>
<td>65.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>gives marks on our drafts.</td>
<td>63.07</td>
<td>34.93</td>
<td>60.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Personalizes the feedback he provides, i.e. he compares me with myself- not with others.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>68.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>provides us with corrective feedback on our writings.</td>
<td>82.22</td>
<td>17.78</td>
<td>85.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>feedback is informative , i.e. teacher tells me what to do then.</td>
<td>77.77</td>
<td>22.23</td>
<td>86.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>uses directive commentary, i.e. he gives us specific directions on what to do concerning the writing task at hand.</td>
<td>71.85</td>
<td>28.15</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>feedback he gives on my writing is honest.</td>
<td>82.57</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>90.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>comments are factual, i.e. he avoids mere differences of opinion and focuses on content, organization and purpose.</td>
<td>52.67</td>
<td>47.33</td>
<td>77.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Provides mitigated commentary, i.e. he provides his commentary in such a way that doesn't disappoint or</td>
<td>68.25</td>
<td>31.75</td>
<td>75.37</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>feedback on my paper improves my writing.</td>
<td>83.46</td>
<td>16.54</td>
<td>85.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>feedback on my paper makes me feel angry with myself.</td>
<td>35.33</td>
<td>64.67</td>
<td>41.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>comments show his dissatisfaction with my work.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>comments on my writing allow space for me to think on my own to improve my writing.</td>
<td>82.35</td>
<td>17.65</td>
<td>86.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>discusses common errors made by the students.</td>
<td>70.60</td>
<td>29.40</td>
<td>76.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>concerns himself with underlining my errors without giving correction.</td>
<td>43.80</td>
<td>56.20</td>
<td>37.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>uses a mixture of correction with commentary and error identification.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>underline all students' errors in the composition, not paying attention to our reactions.</td>
<td>52.27</td>
<td>47.73</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>corrects every single mistake I make in my writing.</td>
<td>69.56</td>
<td>30.44</td>
<td>61.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>ignores many of our errors and fallacies in our writings to maintain our self-confidence.</td>
<td>54.74</td>
<td>45.26</td>
<td>53.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>concentrates on my grammar and spelling mistakes.</td>
<td>81.88</td>
<td>18.12</td>
<td>75.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Praises and encourages me as a reaction to my improvement in writing.</td>
<td>81.75</td>
<td>19.25</td>
<td>84.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>adopts teacher-student conferencing, i.e. discusses our writings in the class.</td>
<td>76.74</td>
<td>23.26</td>
<td>79.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>trains us to give feedback on our peers' writings.</td>
<td>65.21</td>
<td>34.79</td>
<td>75.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>involves my colleagues in peer evaluation.</td>
<td>67.40</td>
<td>32.60</td>
<td>67.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By the same reasoning, male students' reactions towards item (12) inquiring whether writing teachers give feedback on a separate sheet were more positive than those of females. The former approved it with a percentage of 74.80 and the latter's estimates was 51.48%. No doubt, providing feedback on a separate sheet is an educationally sound practice, but frequented by teachers with a percentage of 45.14. It is apparent that females do not prefer receiving feedback on another sheet.

Item (35) inquires whether teachers underline all students' errors in the composition, a minority of teachers, i.e. 45. 41 confessed doing so. The same percentage of students agreed with their teachers. No doubt, this practice is educationally unsound since it misleads and frustrates students. An interesting point here is that 52.74% of males showed their liking of this practice while only 37.5 of females approved it. Boys seem to be interested in some practices in spite of being unsound. This may be attributed to the nature of boys who prefer challenging things.

Finally, item (41) which asks teachers if they train their students to give feedback on their peers' writings and which conforms to soundness is frequented by teachers with a percentage of 76. 96. Students' reactions towards this practice were positive in favor of their teachers' use of this strategy, i.e. %= 68.52. Both males and females assured that they like this practice whereas we find that females like it with a percentage of 75.88 and males' liking was estimated 67.40%. It can be concluded that females have more positive tendency towards collaborative or group learning than towards individual learning.

**Pedagogical Implications:**
**There are a number of implications needed to be discussed and considered:**
Firstly: The educational soundness of a writing feedback practice is to be judged as such if the target group of learners like it. This is important because feedback, by its very nature, is influenced by the social, educational, and cultural context. This means that a feedback practice is not inherently sound or unsound and what makes it so is the student's emotional reaction.
towards such a practice. Pennycook (2000: 89) rightly notes that "Classrooms, both in themselves and in their relationship to the world beyond their walls, are complex social and cultural spaces." This is a fact of which some writing tutors are, unfortunately, not aware as the study revealed. Moreover, the gender of the learner is to be considered when giving feedback as females are more tender and sensitive particularly when it comes to Palestinian university female students majoring in English as a foreign language and a demanding skill such as writing. Educators recognize that learning a foreign language is a difficult task that requires both time and energy. It is well known that in the context of hard learning tasks, feedback should be administered reasonably, understandably and carefully as well.

Secondly, writing teachers are unable to provide timely feedback to their learners as the analysis of the findings has already shown. Undoubtedly, the case is so even if the writing tutors declined admitting that. They are overburdened and overwhelmed by hundreds of students enrolled in writing courses. A tutor cannot give feedback to them on weekly and biweekly bases as a detailed and informative feedback on hundreds of scripts is not that easy. That is why the top management of Palestinian universities should reconsider their attitudes concerning the overcrowded writing classes. A class of more than fifty students is far from being an ideal learning setting to teach writing in a foreign language context.

Thirdly, Palestinian universities need to establish writing centres as is the case in European universities. Those help students to learn writing via giving and receiving feedback to and from their peers. These writing centres relieve writing tutors from some of their burdens.

A fourth implication of the study is to train writing tutors to give electronic feedback on the writings of their students. This practice has the potentiality of making personal conferences with individual learners and the virtual classes where writing teachers can dedicate extra time for giving feedback to their students. Here, writing tutors can comfortably allocate
additional time for helping, via electronic feedback, their learners to develop writing skills. Without adopting this kind of feedback, the researchers strongly believe that the Picture of writing and feedback on students' writings will remain gloomy in Palestine and the Arab World as well.

**Conclusion:**
The current study investigated a variety of issues pertaining to teachers' feedback. It was concerned with feedback practices Palestinian university professors frequently use and the extent to which they are aware of the soundness or unsoundness of these practices. The study also investigated Palestinian university students' reactions towards their teachers' feedback practices.

The results of the present study showed that Palestinian university writing professors are aware of the educational soundness and unsoundness of the majority of feedback practices and use sound ones quite often. Their students mostly agreed with their teachers' responses; however some discrepancies occurred between teachers' responses and their students' reactions towards certain practices, (see table 2). Moreover, students indicated their liking of most of their teachers' practices, particularly the sound ones. Surprisingly, students sometimes showed their liking of certain unsound practices.

Regarding students gender role in the students' preference or approval of teachers' feedback practices, a number of differences existed, particularly in nine items; five items were in favor of males and the other four items were in favor of female students. For the rest of teachers' practices male and female students agreed on their liking or disliking. Strange enough, male students revealed their liking of certain unsound practices such as teacher's use of red pen, focusing on the negative aspects in their writings, comparing their writings with those of their colleagues and underlining of all their errors. It is worth mentioning, differences in favor of female students' liking of teachers' feedback practices were all in those conforming to soundness.
The findings of the current study may have implications for FL teaching theory. The study mainly concentrated on 42 practices—not all, hence further research is still needed to investigate other teacher’s feedback practices in writing (such as the effect of peer and group feedback) as well as in other language skills.
References


Dictionaries

The Effectiveness of Using Computerized Educational Games on Developing Aspects of English Grammar for Sixth Graders in Gaza Governorates

Dalia Omar Abu Shaga

Study Background
Language is one of the most important things that we can give to our children. Almost all human beings acquire a language and sometimes more than one, to the level of native competency, before the age of five. The human brain is wired for language. It does not matter whether the language is spoken, signed, or otherwise.

Teachers often ask about the effective method in teaching grammar. Traditionally, many teachers teach grammar seriously, make the lesson dull and uninteresting. Students are not motivated to learn when teachers resort to traditional methods of teaching.

To enhance the students acquisition of English grammatical rules and to increase the students' motivation for learning English grammatical rules, the researcher attempts to examine the effectiveness of using computerized games to develop aspects of English grammar.

Statement of the Problem
The main intent of the current study was to examine the effectiveness of using computerized educational games on developing aspects of English grammar for the sixth graders in Gaza Governorates.

Study Questions
The problem can be stated in the following major question:
What is the effectiveness of using computerized educational games on developing aspects of English grammar for the sixth graders in Gaza governorates?
From the above major question, the following sub-questions were derived:
1. What are the suitable computerized educational games for developing aspects of English grammar for the sixth graders?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sixth graders mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post grammar test due to the use of computerized educational games?
3. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sixth graders mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post grammar test due to gender factor?

**Study Hypotheses**
Based on the questions, the researcher hypothesized the following:
1. There are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sixth graders mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post grammar test due to the use of computerized educational games.
2. There are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sixth graders mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post grammar test due to gender factor.

**Purpose of the Study**
The study aimed at achieving the following objectives:
1. Designing computerized educational games to develop aspects of English grammar for the sixth graders.
2. Examining the effectiveness of the computerized educational games on developing aspects of English grammar for the sixth graders after revising the result of the post test.
3. Measuring the changing degree of the sixth graders on developing aspects of English grammar as a result of using computerized games.
Significance of the Study
This study benefits:

1. **The sixth Students:** The study magnetizes the 6th students to join a new way in learning, their readiness and motivation will be increased through using computerized games.

2. **The Teachers of English:** This study contributes helping teachers for organizing an effective teaching and learning environment in the light of using computerized games.

3. **The Curricula Designers:** The study benefits curricula designers and English language educators to design curriculum depending on employing technology in teaching.

4. **The Designers of Computerized Educational Games:** this study introduces the basic principles which should be available in the software of the computerized educational games of the students.

Definition of Terms

1. **Effectiveness**
   It is the degree of the enhancement in using aspects of English grammar (present and past simple tense) for the 6th graders as a result of using computerized educational games in the classroom.

2. **Computerized Educational Game**
   They are digitally designed games with visual illustrations based on competition and reinforcement, combine between entertainment and learning which are designed to help the 6th graders develop aspects of English grammar.

3. **Aspects of English Grammar**
   A set of present and past simple tense rules that governs the composition of sentences, phrases and words in English language which are taught to help the students to use English language correctly.
Part One
Theoretical Framework

Computerized Games

Definitions of Computerized Games

- **Electronic Game:** is an activity using either a computer or other electronic interface that has rules, goals, and feedback (Young, 2009:32).

- **Computerized Educational Games:** are teaching aids based on multimedia, which combine between entertainment and learning. They designed according to certain procedures and rules to achieve the learning objectives (El-Harbi, 2009:116).

- **Computerized Educational Games:** are instructional activities that provide motivation, entertainment, competition and reinforcement while presenting a superficial or simulated reality (Li, 2007:12).

Furthermore, the researcher sees that computerized educational games are digitally designed games with visual illustrations based on competition and reinforcement, combine between entertainment and learning which are designed to help the 6th graders develop aspects of English grammar.

Elements of Computerized Educational Games

Prensky (2001:22) and Ang & Zaphiris (2008:80) ensure that computer games consist of six keys as structural elements which, when combine together, strongly engage the students which are:

- **Rules:** impose limits and they force students to take specific paths to reach goals and ensure that all the students take the same paths.

- **Goals / Objectives:** goals or objectives create duty sense.

- **Outcomes and Feedback:** are how to measure students' progress against the goals. Feedback comes when something in the game changes in response to
what students do. The different potential outcomes of the game are assigned different values.

- **Conflict, Competition, Challenge and Opposition:** are the problems in a game students are trying to solve.
- **Interaction:** has two important aspects. The first is the interaction of the player and the computer. The second is social aspect of games that students do with others.
- **Representation:** means that the game is about something.

**Types of Computerized Educational Games**

There are nine common types of computerized games which are categorized as the following:

**Exercise Games:** They are intended to be used in repeating the previously learned skills and knowledge in an interesting environment of game with an educational purpose and thus increase in persistence (Alessi & Trollip, 2001:54).

**Strategy Games:** require higher-order thinking skills and problem solving skills for successful completion. They require users to perceive the larger problem and to plan strategies to solve it (Jones, 1998:4).

**Simulation Games:** require active participation and this affords opportunities for the learning material to be integrated into cognitive structures, thereby aiding long-term retention (John & McFarlane, 2002:4).

**Adventure Games:** In these games there are very complex environments like micro worlds, with no deterministic problem representation (Bakar, 2007:69). The player solves some of the logic puzzles (with no time constraints) in order to progress through some described virtual world (Koster, 2005:12).

**Role-Playing Games:** where the players assume characteristics of persons or animals and behave as what they expect from these characteristics to do in some situations, during the game (Can, 2003).

**Deductive Games:** are specific games based on the deductive method which moving from the rule to the examples, basic
functions of the child's psyche and the need of playing. The utilization of the game is one of methods to make students more interested in English (Ratusinski, 2009:33).

**Inductive Games**: based on the inductive method which moving from the examples to the rule. In this method, students start from the point they want to prove, from the question which was put in the task. Answering the questions, formulate next questions, easier and easier, answers of which would lead them to the solution of the task (Ersoz, 2000:52).

**Characteristics of Computerized Educational Games**
In fact, not all the computer games appropriate the learning objectives so we as teachers should wonder why some computer games are effective learning means while some are not and what makes a successful learning game. Dempsey, et al. (1997:76) listing the following characteristics:

- Clear instructions and objectives should be available for the students.
- The game should be challenging which leads to the real learning.
- The students should have control over gaming options such as speed, difficulty, timing, and feedback.
- Aesthetics like screen design, graphics, animation and sound should be of appropriate quality.

Klopfer, et al., (2009:65) consider that one of the main characteristics of computer games is a freedom. So they explain the types of freedom as the following:

- **Freedom to Fail**: one does not actually fail at play, but one is free to do things at play that would look like failure in other contexts.

- **Freedom to Experiment**: this correlates closely with the freedom to fail, but suggests that within the play space the student has some room to invent new approaches to whatever task is at hand. Experimentation would be meaningless without the ability to fail.
- **Freedom to Fashion Identities**: at play, the student is not examining the nature of the physical and social worlds, but is also exploring those worlds.

- **Freedom of Interpretation**: one cannot learn from games without engaging in playing. The individual, social, and cultural motivations of a student affect what is experienced through play.

**Advantages of Using Computerized Educational Games**
The following are the advantages of using these techniques in learning:

**Challenge**: A good digital game moves at a rate that keeps the students at the edge of their capabilities, moving to challenges as mastery is acquired. (Quinn, 1997:3) ensures that broad experiences and practice opportunities continue to challenge the learner.

**Motivation**: Computerized games offer motivational challenges create competitive environments and affective experiences of fun in which learners can engage. There are two types of motivation which intrinsic motivation pushes students to do the task freely, and extrinsic motivation which pulls students to act due to factors that are external to the activity itself, like reward or threat (Dempsey, et al., 1997:76).

**Competition**: Competition is against oneself, opponents, chance or time. Which associates with electronic games and plays a crucial role as for the nature of games requires. Learners are excited by competition because the question of who will win or lose remains unanswered until the game is over (Gee, 2003:90).

**Engagement**: Students can spend hours playing a game and not be aware of the time they have spent. (ibid, 2003:76) points out the reasons to why computer games engage learners as the following:

- Computer games represent fantasies and follow a simple principle of winning or losing, with instant outcomes,
- They recognize features to engage the learners' attention by stimulating the learners enjoyment with visual feedback,
- They provide interactive playing environment and an experience,
- Furthermore, they open up different solutions of solving problems.

**Interesting Learning Environment:** Using computerized games in learning environment is predicted to be one of the ways to give students an authentic learning environment and this condition helps students to learn language better than the daily classroom context.

**Scaffolding / Contextual Bridging:** Digital games can close the gap between what is learned and its use. Neimeyer (2006:87) ensures that using computerized games are used to train the students' brains to tune out distractions, pay attention to what was useful information and let students obtain the knowledge then connect it in their own way with what they already have learned.

**Feedback / Reinforcement:** Computer games continually monitor progress so reinforcement or feedback should be clear, immediate and appears after the attempt of solving problems. Lewis & Hill (1995:89) confirm that electronic games show immediate feedback which helps students know when they get an answer right or wrong.

**Infinite Patience**
The teacher's impatience may intimidate a learner or influence how the learner perceives himself or herself. However, machines such as computers and its games do not lose patience, and offer learners innumerable opportunities to "Just try and try it again"(Norman, 1993:67).

**Student - Focused Activities**
Student-focused activities require active involvement of learners. They can be considered the best way for students to be responsible for their learning. According to the opinion of
Norman (1993) that learners and teachers change their roles and relations through games and learners are encouraged to take active role in their learning process.

**Procedures for Using Computerized Educational Games**

The teacher is the one who decides which game would be appropriate for students in a class. (Prensky, 2001) point out the following procedures:

- **About the Game Itself:** it is necessary to know the main aim of having a game to analyze perfectly the purpose of the activity. To establish the specific language skill to be achieved and the time for presentation, practice and production in which it should be presented and applied. Also, if the game is used for introducing a topic, for general practice or to reinforce any language skill.

- **About Students:** teachers should mainly take into account the student's level in language (beginners, intermediate or advanced), age, manners, if they are serious-minded or light-hearted, their situation towards the language, if they take English as a compulsory subject or are highly motivated in learning it, the size of the class and the cultural background.

- **About the Time:** when the game is used is important too. Student's motivation and interest in a game may be very different on a Monday morning from the last hour of class on Friday or, student's response to a game after a test or after a discussion lesson.

- **About the Preparation of the Game:** teachers should check if there is access to get the material and if it's available at school and examine the physical space in which the game will be applied. Norman (1993) advises the teacher to be aware of the following points when giving instruction for a game:
  - Tell the students "Why" they are going to play the game and how they will benefit from it. If learners are aware of what they gain from a game they will be more engaged participants.
Tell the students "What" are going to do while playing the game. This explanation should be done step by step.

Tell the students "How" to play the game.

Handing out photocopied rule sheets to each group is very helpful, as the learners can refer back to them and refresh their memories if necessary during the game.

Clarify what the "Outcome" will be. Students will pay their attention and therefore they will work more effectively if they know what they can expect at the end of the game.

The researcher confirms that the teacher should be aware that each one of the procedures requires a lot of considerations and arrangements to achieve the purposed objectives.

**Grammar**

* Definitions of Gramma

As well as grammatical features, the connections between grammar and meaning and grammar and social context, have been taken into account (Crystal, 2004:65)

- Yu (2005:10) believes that grammar is not only a set of grammatical forms, but also it includes grammatical meaning and use as a whole. That is, grammar deals with three dimensions; form, meaning and use.
- Crystal (2004:65) says that grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way we and others use language.

According to the above mentioned definitions, the researcher defines grammar as a set of rules governs the composition of sentences, phrases and words in English language which are taught to help the students to use English language.
The Importance of Computerized Educational Games in Teaching and Learning Grammar

There are three reasons for implementing computerized games in teaching and learning English grammar; grammar is usually taught by using traditional method and teachers always rely on blackboard and poster as teaching aids; grammar lessons seem complex to students and learning it is the challenge and most of students have negative experiences with grammar and have limited grammar knowledge.

Azar (2007:3) indicates that computer games are particularly useful in grammar learning because they provide a mechanism which give students an incentive to go on practicing a structure beyond the point where they will normally tire of repeating it.

In addition to the previous, the researcher thinks that using the computerized games for the presentation, explanation, and application of grammatical structures could be dedicated to real communication that focuses on expressing meaning.
Part two

Previous Related Studies

Related Studies Concerned with Using Computerized Educational Games in Teaching English Language.

Palmberg (1988) in his study tried to investigate the effect of playing computer games on learning English vocabulary for Swedish–speaking in elementary level and discuss the role of computer games as a technique used to teach English in Finland. The result indicated that computer games constituted a good example of material that satisfies the criterion of language needs relevant to young learning of English language and computer games allowing pupils to be motivated and work at their own pace.

The purpose of Lim's (2005) study was to examine the effect of English reading instruction with the application of computer games on achieving and interesting of reading for the 4th grade students compared with the traditional method in China. The sample was two classes with similar proficiency levels were chosen by a diagnostic test. In the experimental group, the students learned the lesson of English reading with computer games, while in control group the students learned through the traditional method which based on the English textbook. The study results were, the experimental group showed higher improvement of achievement in reading than the control group and the experimental group improved more significantly than the control group on interest of English reading.

Yu (2005) explored the effect of computer game-based grammar instruction on students’ motivation and classroom atmosphere. In addition, it explored that the use of game in practicing grammatical features may improve the students' rate of accuracy in Japan. The participants were (57) which divided into two groups, the control and experimental groups. The teaching program was the same for both groups. The difference consisted in the use of game-based practice for the experimental group, while the control group performed traditional grammar-based practice only. The findings of this study showed that the
class became entirely student-centered. The use of computer games improved students' rate of accuracy and developed practicing grammatical features.

To examine the effect of using computerized educational games on ESL students' achievement in China, Li (2007) selected randomly a sample consisted of (90) students. The sample was divided into two equivalent groups; the experimental group consisted of (45) students were taught by computerized games while the control group consisted of (45) students were taught by the traditional method. The results indicated that the experimental group did better than the control group in the post test. Also, using computerized educational games in learning English as a second language had a great effect on the fourth students' achievement level in English language.

Hamzah & Dourad (2009) carried out their study to examine the effects of using computer games in teaching grammar, particularly in the use of the present simple tense and past simple tense as well as to gain insights on students and teachers responses towards using computer games in teaching and learning grammar items in Malaysia. The sample consisted of (56) students which distributed into two groups; experimental group used games to learn grammar whereas no treatment was given to the control group. The results indicated that grammar games had a positive effect in learning the present and the past simple tenses. The students who learned grammar using computer games were motivated to learn more rules.

Commentary on the Previous Studies
Having reviewed those studies, the researcher's background has been enriched, to some extent, on using computerized educational games in teaching English language.
From the Previous Studies of Using Computer Games in Teaching English, the Researcher Concluded the Following:

- Implementing computerized games in teaching English language showed positive results on the achievement and attitudes towards the teaching-learning process.
- Most of the previous studies indicated that computerized games can create an interesting atmosphere for students which face the difference in their academic and intelligence levels. This means that they face the individual differences among students and help them work at their own speed.
- Some of the previous studies showed that using computerized games makes English teaching and learning process depends on the students which is called students center.

Research Design and Methodology
1. Research Design
The current study used a quasi-experimental approach which required one experimental group. The experimental group was the students in 6th grade. They were taught grammar by using computerized games which were based on fun and motivation as well as creating a positive atmosphere and emotion. By the end of the experiment, the researcher applied a post test in grammar to examine the effectiveness of using computerized games on developing aspects of grammar (the present and past simple tense) for the 6th grade.

2. Sample of the Study
The researcher used an intended sample. The sample of the study consisted of (24) students; (19) males and (5) females as an experimental group chosen from Al Zahra'a Privet School where the researcher works.

3. Instruments of the Study
In order to collect the data that help in achieving the aim of the study, the researcher used the following instruments:
- A Pre - Post Grammar Test.
- Computerized Educational Games.
3. 1  A Pre-Post Grammar Test

3.1.1  The General Aims of the Test
The general aim of the test was to measure the effectiveness of using computerized educational games on developing aspects of English grammar. It was designed according to the criteria of test specification and the criteria of testing students in English language.

3.1.2  Description of the Test Items
Focusing on the achievement test, the total number of the test questions was (6) with (30) items. Each question consisted of (5) items and every item has one mark. Therefore, the total scores given to the test were (30) marks. In addition, the test examined two grammatical lessons which are the present and the past simple tense.

- **Q. (1)** consisted of five choose the correct answer questions; items (1 & 3) examine the present simple and items (2, 4 & 5) examine the past simple.

- **Q. (2)** consisted of five questions. Each one has three sentences and the students tick (√) the correct one. Items (7, 8 & 9) examine the present simple; item (6 & 10) examine the past simple.

- **Q. (3)** consisted of five sentences and the student decides whether the sentence is correct or false. Items (12 & 14) examine the present simple; and item (11, 13 & 15) examine the past simple.

- **Q. (4)** consisted of five sentences. Each one has a grammatical mistake which the students should point out and correct it. Items (16 & 18) examine the present simple; and item (17, 19 & 20) examine the past.

- **Q. (5)** consisted of five sentences. Students have to rewrite the sentences using the words in brackets. Items (21, 22 & 24) examine the present simple and items (23 & 25) examine the past simple.
3.1.3 Validity of the Test

a. Referee Validity

The researcher refereed the test by a panel of English language teachers at Al-Azhara'a Privet School. According to their recommendations and advice, some modifications and editions were made.

b. Content Validity of the Test

The test was designed according to the general objectives of the content and the objectives of the test. The researcher specified the teaching objectives for the lessons and designed enough items for the pre-post grammar test. Then, a representative sample of these items were selected.

c. Internal Consistency Validity

The researcher used Pearson Correlation Coefficient to measure the internal consistency validity of the test. The correlation coefficient of each question with the total scores of the test is significant at level (0.001). The following table (1) shows the correlation coefficient of each question with the total scores of the test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Questions</th>
<th>Correlation with the Total Scores</th>
<th>Level of Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question (1)</td>
<td>0.678</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (2)</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (3)</td>
<td>0.924</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (4)</td>
<td>0.924</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (5)</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (6)</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (1) shows that the correlation of each question with the total scores of the test is significant at (0.001). For example, the correlation between question (1) and the total scores was (0.678). This means that the test is highly consistent.

### 3.1.4 Reliability of the Test

The reliability of the test was measured by Alpha Cronbach Coefficient and the Split-Half techniques.

**a. Alpha Cronbach Coefficient**

The researcher used Alpha Cronbach Coefficient technique to measure the reliability of the test as in table (2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Questions</th>
<th>Alpha Cronbach Based on Test Questions</th>
<th>No. of Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.864</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table(2) Alpha Cronbach was (0.86 > 0.05) which means that the test is reliable.

**b. Split-Half Technique**

To ensure the previous result the researcher tested the reliability by another technique which was Spilt- Half Technique. The test was divided into two parts. Part (1) included the first, the second and the third question and part (2) included the fourth, the fifth and the sixth question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Post Test</th>
<th>No. of Questions</th>
<th>Split-Half</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part (1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part (2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.882</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the previous tables (Alpha Cronbach Coefficient & Split-Half Technique), the test was proved to be reliable.

3.2 The Computerized Educational Games
The researcher designed eleven of computerized games.

3.2.1 Aim of the Computerized Educational Games
The researcher used different eleven computerized games to teach present and past simple tense. Each tense included three grammatical lessons; how to form infinitive, negative and question for the 6th graders. These games were used to teach the experimental group.

3.2.2 Validity of the Computerized Educational Games
To test the games validity, the researcher submitted the first design of the computerized games software to a group of specialists in English language teaching, English language teachers students and experts in instructional techniques to be refereed.

3.2.3 Computerized Educational Games Designing
The computerized games in the current study were designed to teach present and past simple tense. The following is an illustration about using the computerized games as one of the study instruments.

A. The Computerized Games of the Present Simple Tense:

- **My Way (1) Game:** In this game, the students in this study learn the rules and the examples of the present simple tense (affirmative, negative and question forms) through a boy who was walking, running in a way and standing up in front of a wise man who explains the rule or the examples. This game showed only the rules and the examples.

- **Rocket Game:** It is an exercise game aimed to teach the affirmative form of present simple tense which verbs take (s) or (es). It's designed according on "Choose the correct answer". This game consisted of ten items. Each item has three multiples choices after the wrong answer there is an immediate feedback.
- **Frog Game**: aimed to teach the negative form of present simple tense. This game named designed according on "Put (√) or (∗) for each sentence". A student should put the symbol before passing 30 seconds. After the wrong answer there is an immediate feedback and alternative question. This game consisted of ten items. Five of them are main items and the other five items are alternative items which appeared in the case of the wrong answer.

- **Catching Game**: aimed to make meaningful questions using does/do. Its idea based on catching the parts of the question (Do/Does, subject and the complement) by clicking on each part. The game was based on making a meaningful questions from the parts. The game consisted of ten items. When the student selected the wrong part, the correct one will be lighted.

- **Similar Pictures Game**: aimed to teach how to make affirmative and negative answers from do/ does questions. The game designed according on choose the correct answer. In the game there were ten items. When the student selected the wrong part, the correct one will be lighted.

**B. The Computerized Games of the Past Simple Tense:**

- **My Way (2) Game**: aimed to teach past simple tense affirmative, negative and question forms. This game showed the rules and the examples of the present simple tense (affirmative, negative and question forms) through a boy who was walking, running in a way and standing up in front of the wise man who explains the rule or the examples. This game showed only the rules and the examples.

- **Puzzle Game**: aimed to teach students to distinguish between regular and irregular verbs in the past simple tense. There were twelve regular and irregular verbs, the student should find out where the past form was.

- **Solitaire Game**: aimed to teach the negative form of the past simple. It was based on choosing the correct negative form of
the past simple. Ten items were included in the game. When the student selected the wrong part, the correct one will be lighted.

- **Car Game**: aimed to teach how to make meaningful and complete questions using (Did) and how to answer a question with affirmative and negative answer. The game designed according on choose the correct answer. In the game there were ten items. When the student selected the wrong part, the correct one will be lighted.

C. Additional Computerized Games - Revision Games

- **Key Game**: aimed to revise the present simple affirmative, negative and question forms. It was based on correcting the mistake in each sentence. When the student give the correct answer, it will move to find out another key.

- **Lights Game**: aimed to revise the past simple affirmative, negative and questions forms. The game consisted of twenty items. It was designed according on correct the mistake of the each sentence. When the answer is correct, the green light appears, and the red light appears when the answer is wrong. To pass the first level, the student should correct more than four mistakes.

5. **Description of the Students**
All the students who participated in the current study were in the 6th grade at Al Zahra'a Privet School.

6. **Statistical Analysis**
The researcher used the following statistical treatment
1. Test was used to determine the level of grammar competence of the experimental group before and after applying the experiment.
2. Pearson Correlation, Alpha Cronbach technique were used to account for the validity of the pre-post test by computing its internal consistency.
3. Spilt-Half Technique was used to confirm the reliability of the test.
4. Modified Gain Ratio Equation was used to count for the effectiveness of using computerized educational games on developing aspects of English grammar for the 6th graders.

7. The Procedures of the Study
The study was processed throughout the following procedures:
1. Reviewing literature and previous studies related to computerized educational games in general and the implementation of computerized games in teaching English grammar in particular.
2. Consulting a number of experienced 6th grade teachers about the learning objectives, the suitable grammar exercises and the initial designing of computerized educational games.
3. Identifying the objectives, preparing the grammatical exercises, and content of the computerized educational games.
4. Presenting the software of computerized games to a group of experts and specialists in teaching English and methodology to avail from their experiences.
5. Preparing a grammar test with the help of a group of teachers.
6. Consulting experts in English language teacher and methodology to assure the reliability and validity of the test.
7. Applying the pre test on the sample of the study.
8. Implementing the experiment, teaching the content using computerized educational games to the experimental group.
9. Applying the post test to examine the effectiveness of using the computerized educational games on developing aspects of English grammar, analyzing and interpreting the results.

8. Limitations of the Study
- The study aimed to develop aspects of English grammar for 6th graders (male and female) at Al Zahra'a Privet School in Gaza Governorate.
- The study was implemented in the first semester of the school year (2011-2012).
The research was limited to teach English language textbook, *English for Palestine 9*, through implementing computerized educational games. The content was the present simple and the past simple tense. The experiment lasted (4) weeks in October and November 2011.

**Data Analysis and Results**

1. **The Answer of the First Question**

The first question of the current study is stated as follows:

"**What are the suitable computerized educational games for developing aspects of English grammar for the 6th graders?**"

The researcher designed the Computerized Games according to the following points:

1. The capabilities and skills of the students.
2. Achieving the objective of the lesson.
3. Can be used at any time.
6. Interactive and non-traditional.
7. Exciting and attractive for continuing to use.
8. Increasing students’ motivation by limiting time for each game.
9. Displaying the result at the end of each game.

2. **The Answer of the Second Question**

The second question was to test the first hypothesis of the study which inquired the following question:

**Are there statistically significant differences at (α ≤ 0.05) between the 6th graders mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post grammar test due to the use of computerized educational games?**

To answer this question, the researcher tested the following null hypothesis:

There are no statistically significant differences at (α ≤ 0.05) between the 6th graders mean scores of experimental group in grammar pre and post test due to the use of computerized educational games.

To investigate the first hypothesis of the study, mean, standard deviation and T. value for the experimental group in the pre-test and the post-test were computed. The researcher used T-test paired sample to measure the significant differences
between the mean scores of participants in the pre-post test due to the use of computerized educational games and the followed table illustrates this.

Table (5)
Mean, Standard Deviation and T. Value for the Experimental Group in the Pre-Test and the Post-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T. Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>4.297</td>
<td>-14.756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19.44</td>
<td>4.427</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The previous table shows that the mean of the experimental group (19.44) in the post test is higher than the mean of the pre test (11.94). T. value was (-14.756) which means that there were statistically significant differences at (α ≤ 0.05) between the 6th student’s mean scores on their post and pre application of the test in favor of the post application.

Table (6)
The Difference between the Mean Scores of the Test Questions in the Pre-Test and the Post- Test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Questions</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T. Value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question(1)</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.155</td>
<td>-3.873</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(2)</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>-4.392</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.946</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(3)</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>-3.464</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(4)</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.265</td>
<td>-6.333</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(5)</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.683</td>
<td>-3.223</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.966</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (6) shows the difference between the Mean, Std. Deviation and T. value of each question in the pre test and the post test. For example, in the Question(1), the mean scores in the post test was (3.25) and it was less than the mean scores in the pre test (2). Sig. was (0.002 < 0.05) which means there was a significant difference between the mean scores in the pre test and the post test.

3. The Answer of the Third Question
The third question was to test the second hypothesis of the study which inquired the following question: Are there statistically significant differences at (α ≤ 0.05) between the 6th graders mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post grammar test due to gender factor?

To answer the third question, the researcher tested the following null hypothesis:
There are no statistically significant differences at (α ≤ 0.05) between the 6th graders of experimental group in the pre and post grammar test due to gender factor.

To investigate the second hypothesis of the study, the researcher used T-test for an independent sample to determine the significant differences between the male and the female in the pre and post test.

4. An Independent T. Test to Gender Variable in the Pre - Post test
To implement the independent T. test, the researcher tested the equal of variance between the male and female in the sample using Levene's test according to the hypothesis of "The male variance equals the female variance in the pre test and the post test."
Table (7)
The Equal of Variance between Male and Female in the Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre – Test</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>2.832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post – Test</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>2.895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (7) shows that Sig. was (0.115 > .05) in the pre test and in the post test was (0.111 > .05) which means there was no a significant difference between the variances. So, the assumption of the independent T. test was achieved.

Table (8)
Differences between the Mean Scores of Male and Female in the Pre - Post Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>T. test</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>-1.917</td>
<td>0.459</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-0.762</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-7.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>-0.917</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-0.0348</td>
<td>4.733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-6.566</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (8) shows that there were no significant differences between the mean of the male and female in the pre test and the post test.

Thus, the second hypothesis of the current study is accepted.

5. The Effectiveness of Using the Computerized Educational Games
To account for the effectiveness of the computerized games on developing grammar for the 6th graders, the researcher used Modified Gain Ratio equation as follows:

The mean scores of post test – The mean scores of pre test
---------------------------------------------------------------
Total scores – The mean of pre test
Table (9)
The Effectiveness of the Computerized Games on Developing Grammar for the 6th Graders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean of the Post Test</th>
<th>Mean of the Pre Test</th>
<th>Total Scores</th>
<th>Difference between the Two Means</th>
<th>Modified Gain Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.44</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (9) shows that the Modified Gain Ratio was (41.5), which nearly lied in the middle between the highest and the lowest modified gain ratio for all the questions (27.3 – 62.7) as in table (15). In other word, using the computerized educational games had a medium effectiveness on developing the 6th Graders English grammar.

Table (10)
The Effectiveness of the Computerized Games for Each Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test questions</th>
<th>Mean of the Post Test</th>
<th>Mean of the Pre Test</th>
<th>Difference between the Two Means</th>
<th>Modified Gain Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question(1)</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(2)</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(3)</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(4)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(5)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question(6)</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (10) shows that the Modified Gain Ratio for all the questions was between (27.3 – 62.7). Therefore, the positive signs of the differences between the means of the pre test and the post test highlighted the effectiveness of computerized games on developing grammar for the students.
**Recommendations**

Based on the results of the present study, the researcher adopted many recommendations that were directed to the following:

1. To computerize the curriculum like using PowerPoint presentations and computerized games to facilitate English grammar learning for students.
2. To support the schools with new instructional techniques like computers, televisions, videos, internet, copy machines and all kinds of board.
3. To mandate a number of experienced teachers and internal supervisors to support the other teachers and pay their attention to the best methods and techniques.
4. To provide teachers of the students with instructional materials which improve their awareness about using computerized educational games and their importance and necessity of using this strategy in teaching grammar.
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Abstract
This paper investigates the most prevalent metaphors used by the New York Times in constructing the emotions of news actors during the second Palestinian Intifada. Drawing on a systematic sampling of news texts published during the newspaper’s coverage of the Intifada, I first show that Lakoff’s (1987) ANGER IS HEAT metaphor is primarily used in characterizing emotionally-driven responses of Palestinian and Arab peoples. On the other hand, an examination of the themes, metaphors and images associated with Israeli society shows a rather favourable representation which evokes scripts of familial and social cohesion. At the centre of this treatment is the metaphorical construction of Israel as an in-group entity which is being encroached upon by an amplified outside threat primarily associated with the Palestinians. The selective use of metaphors and their evoked conceptual and emotional associations highlight the role metaphors serve as potent linguistic devices used to legitimate or delegitimate particular social actions and ultimately contribute to the construction of an ideological version of social reality.

KEY WORDS: emotion metaphors, anger, Palestinian Intifada, (de)legitimation, NYT

Introduction
This paper focuses on the metaphors that news writers of the New York Times (hereafter NYT) predominantly draw upon in conceptualizing the emotions of news actors during the second Palestinian Intifada. My analysis shows a marked contrast in the metaphorical representation of Palestinian and Arab peoples’ actions on the one hand, and the construction of Israeli society, on the other. I first examine the emotion concept of anger and how it is realized via conventionalized linguistic expressions which serve to delegitimize the emotions and political actions of Palestinian and Arab peoples. Conversely, news writers
evidently construct Israeli society in a favourable light through a combination of related metaphors and themes which invoke scripts of familial and social cohesion, i.e. Israel is portrayed as an in-group entity which is encroached upon by an outside threat which is characteristically associated with the Palestinians. At the heart of this analysis is my interest in identifying the evaluations these metaphors evoke of participants and actions, and how these evaluations invite the reader to conceptualize “a particular model of the social and the moral order – a model of what is normal and aberrant, beneficial and harmful, praiseworthy and blameworthy, and so on.” (White, 2006: 38) In this way, I show that by selecting particular metaphorical processes and consequently assigning positive and negative values to particular participants and actions, news writers contribute to the appropriation of a preferred version of reality which would likely play a role in influencing how the readers of the NYT understand both social groups and their political actions.

Emotion Metaphors: A cognitive linguistic perspective
Interest in metaphor from a cognitive linguistic perspective has burgeoned since the groundbreaking work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Cognitive linguists see metaphor not simply as a decorative feature of literary language, but as an integral component of the human conceptual system and how we understand aspects of the world in which we live (Chilton and Schaffner, 2002; Kovecses, 2002, 2005; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff and Kovecses, 1987; van Teeffelen, 1994). Lakoff and Johnson point out that our human conceptual system is “metaphorically structured and defined” (1980: 6), and that metaphor contributes fundamentally to the construction of social reality. Conceptual metaphors can be seen as mappings from a source domain (for example, fire) onto a target domain or experience (for example, war), which facilitate the understanding of complex or ill-understood domains and concepts by constructing them in terms of experientially concrete or familiar ones.

Metaphors structure not only our understanding of aspects of the social world, but are also instrumental in how we
conceptualize our emotions. In fact, correlations between metaphor and emotion concepts from a cognitive linguistic perspective have been demonstrated in studies such as Kovecses (1990), Lakoff and Kovecses (1987), Lakoff, (1987), and Kovecses (2002; 2005). Central to these studies is the argument that emotion concepts are best defined and understood in terms of prototypical cognitive models which characterize more or less our cultural (or folk) understanding of emotion. By examining the use of conventionalized language mainly of metaphors, metonymies and inherent concepts to describe emotions, we are in a better position to obtain “certain prototypical cognitive models associated with particular emotions and with the abstract category of emotion” (Kovecses, 1990).

A wealth of critical discourse analytic research has examined the use and functions of emotion metaphors in political, public and media discourses on socio-ethnic and political groups and events (e.g. Charteris-Black, 2006; Drury, 2002; Lee, 1992; Sykes, 1985; van Teeffelen, 1994). Perhaps the common thread in many of these studies is that emotion metaphors are not only used in the ideological mediation of a particular version of the social world, but also in the legitimation or delegitimation of social actors and their respective actions along the lines of positive in-group representation and negative out-group representation.

Lee (1992:93) examines the perspective of white reporters on the political actions of the people of the African township of Soweto in Zimbabwe during clashes with the police. Lee points out that their action are conceptualized as “some kind of natural force, specifically here as a volcano which had been ‘simmering’ with unrest and then ‘erupted’”. One effect of this metaphorical process of objectifying the emotions of the Sowetans in terms of a natural force and a place is likely to distance the reader from the participants in this ethnic event whereby the emotions of and decisions made by the African demonstrators are excluded from the process of interpretation, i.e. “the situation is seen as resulting from some kind of inevitable set of natural laws rather than from human feelings and decisions” (p. 93).
Similarly, Drury (2002) examines the use of a pathologizing discourse in newspaper constructions of anti-pedophile crowd protests in Britain. He identifies a set of negative themes, vocabulary, and metaphors which seem to delegitimize crowd action by evoking notions of irrationality, uncontrolled emotionality, and pathological behavior. He points to the use of metaphors of fire which negatively construct the crowd as a natural, inanimate force, thereby reinforcing their lack of self-control and their susceptibility to outside manipulation. One can make the point that a semantic strategy of metaphorizing human emotions and experience in terms of inanimate forces, e.g. fire, volcanoes and floodwater, seems to be at work in dominant discourses on social groups belonging to the ‘other’ camp.

Orientalist Tropes: Rage, violence and irrationality
Themes, images and tropes of rage, irrationality, atavism and violence have long dominated Western discourses on the Muslim Arab Orient (Said, 1978, 1997; Karim, 2003; Shaheen, 1997, van Teeffelen, 1994). The most influential study of these discourses is Said’s (1978) Orientalism which examines the reservoirs of images, motifs, themes and vocabularies which are used in dominant Western discourses to talk about and regulate knowledge about the Arab and Muslim Orient. Said points to a binary opposition between the Orient and the West in which the former is recurrently characterized as static, uniform, irrational, and aberrant, and the West which is presented as rational, normal, humane and developed (see pp. 40 and 300-1). These negative depictions also circulate in Western media representations of the Arabs:

In newsreels or news-photos, the Arab is always shown in large numbers. No individuality, no personal characteristics or experiences. Most of the pictures represent mass rage and misery, or irrational (hence hopelessly eccentric) gestures. (p. 287)

Similarly, Karim (2003:158) examines Northern media constructions of Islam as the primary post-Cold War ‘Other’. He illustrates that there is primacy in the North to core images of
Muslims as “a people generally prone to fanatical impulses” and “as driven by an irrational hatred as opposed to the scientific rationality that is the mark of modern Northern civilization.” For instance, during the first Gulf War, portrayals of supporters of Saddam essentially emphasized the “perceived lack of rationality and logic among those who supported the Iraqi leader – this was blamed on Islam and the Arab character” (p. 125). Such dichotomous constructions of Southerners as essentially controlled by emotion as opposed to the Northerners who apply logic to deal with difficult situations are symptomatic of traditional Orientalist narratives.

Another manifestation of negative constructions of the Arab Palestinian is discussed in van Teeffelen’s (1994) study of the metaphors used in western bestselling literature in the portrayal of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. He holds that dominant metaphors about the Arabs emphasized images of threat, atavism, violence, irrationality and sexuality. Van Teeffelen points out that metaphorical references to heat, explosion and pressure in a container are used in framing Arab action as uncontrollable anger which is explained in reference to environmental conditions, “the Arabs are said to be amenable to sudden emotional outbursts due to their historical inability to overcome natural (desert-like, dry) conditions.” (p. 392) Sea, fire, and animal metaphors are also used to suggest an amplified Palestinian boundary threat to Israeli society.

**Historical Background**

Here it is necessary to situate the reader into the historical and political context of the second Palestinian Intifada. This account needs to go well beyond the event which triggered the violence to include the major events which have shaped and defined this decades-long conflict, though a thorough and nuanced account of this complex and multi-layered conflict goes beyond the scope and aims of this paper. Therefore, I will confine my contextualization of this violence to the major events which I believe had been turning points in the historical trajectory of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The most momentous event in this conflict is perhaps the War of 1948 between Israel on one side and the regular armies
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of neighbouring Arab countries and the Palestinians on the other. A direct consequence of this War was that the State of Israel was proclaimed on 78 per cent of historic Palestine and the subsequent disintegration of Palestinian civil society and the expulsion and flight of nearly half of the Palestinian population – most accounts estimate about 700,000 people, from their cities, towns, and villages (Khalidi, 2001; Morris, 2001). In June 1967, Israel conquered and occupied the remaining 22 per cent of Palestine which constitute the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the eastern part of Jerusalem, and also captured parts of Egypt and Syria. The Palestinians inside the occupied territories had remained largely quiescent. After 20 years of growing widespread discontent with the Israeli occupation, the Palestinians inside the occupied territories eventually took to the streets in 1987 in a largely unarmed, popular uprising which lasted for six years and came to be known as the first Palestinian Intifada.

Efforts for reaching a peaceful settlement for the Middle East conflict culminated on 13 September 1993 with the signing of the Oslo Agreement on the White House lawn between the Palestinian leader Arafat and the Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. The understanding guiding the Oslo Accords was a five-year interim period during which a number of reciprocal steps would be implemented which would eventually lead to ending the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories which Israeli occupied following the 1967 War (Malley and Agha, 2001; Reinhart, 2002; Hirst, 2003). The interim period was fraught with obstacles and little progress was made to advance peace in the region.

The decisive moment came when the second Palestinian Intifada broke out on 29 September 2000 when then-leader of Israeli right-wing party Ariel Sharon escorted by 2,000 soldiers staged a “right-of-ownership walk-about at the Temple Mount which is also the site of the mosques of al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock, Islam’s third most holy place” (Hirst, 2003: 25-26). The provocative march triggered Palestinian protests on the mosque’s site as well as other protests in the Palestinian territories and in Arab towns inside Israel proper. Mass street
protests first characterized the early weeks of clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli military forces. Then the level of violence grew more deadly with Palestinian bombing attacks against Israeli military and civilians on the one hand, and Israeli military attacks and incursions into Palestinian areas in the West Bank and Gaza. During the Intifada, especially the first few months of the Intifada and in April 2002, popular demonstrations in the Arab world and across the world were held to protest Israeli army actions against the Palestinians.

**Methodology**

The present analysis is part of a study that critically investigates the coverage by the NYT of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict using a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework (c.f. Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak and Meyer, 2001). The present analysis explores the role of metaphor as a linguistic tool in political (de)legitimation of political actors and actions and is limited to metaphorical language used to characterize emotionally-driven actions of news actors. The aims can be summarized in the following questions:

1. **What are the predominant metaphors drawn upon in representing the emotions of political actors in the NYT's coverage of the Palestinian Intifada?**

2. **To what extent do these metaphors contribute to the legitimation or delegitimation of political actors and actions?**

For purposes of analysis, a four-month sampling of news reports, editorials and op-eds published during the first three years of the second Palestinian Intifada were selected; these four months are October 2000, August 2001, April 2002, and October 2003. News texts were available on the web-based source of LexisNexis and also on microforms in an Australian university library. The texts compiled formed a total of 293 news texts including 25 editorials, 28 op-eds by columnists and 214 news reports. An online corpus of all news texts was formed with a total word count of 281,330 words.

The analysis was conducted in two phases: in the first
phase, I conducted a lexical analysis of emotion metaphors by searching in the online text corpus for evidence of metaphors used in representing the emotions of Palestinian, Arab and Israeli political actors. This initial lexical analysis was based on the literature reviewed in sections 2 and 3 above. Lexical units searched for electronically included words such as 'anger', 'wrath', 'rage', 'wave', 'flood', 'tide', 'fire', 'flame', 'volcano', 'eruption', and 'explosion'.

The initial online search was followed by a careful reading of all texts since the online search does not include all possible instances of metaphorical language in the corpus and also given that some of these words searched for electronically were used non-metaphorically. Take, for example, the word "fire" which was used both literally and metaphorically respectively as in '2 Hour Gun Battle in West Bank Strains the Cease-Fire' (Headline, October 20, 2000), and 'Dousing the Mideast Fire' (Headline, October 10, 2000). Similarly, the word "explosion" was frequently used metaphorically to characterize violence, as in 'this unrestrained explosion of Palestinian-Israeli violence has taught the Bush team something as well' (Thomas Friedman, April 17, 2002), or 'But the explosive street fighting raged on throughout the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Arab towns within Israel' (New Report, October 3, 2000).

Therefore, a manual search of the whole corpus was necessary in order to arrive at any additional source domains used to characterize emotions. Linguistic features such as idioms, phrasal verbs, collocations, prepositions and word classes were also added to the selected data if they exhibited instances of metaphorical language.

In the second phase, selected items or phrases from both online and manual searches were grouped together based on which items were associated with which actors. Then a further coding of lexical units was conducted by first establishing the basic meaning of the lexical unit and its contextual meaning while taking into account what comes before and after this lexical unit. A word or phrase was identified as metaphorically used when, strictly speaking, it can be understood beyond its
literal meaning in the context of what is being said. As suggested by the PRAGGLEJAZ Group (2007: 25), in order to supplement the researcher's individual intuitions about the contextual and basic meanings of lexical units, the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* was used as an external source to further establish the basic meanings of words. A second coder who was a trained linguist was requested to follow similar procedures in reading and coding all texts for metaphorical language to avoid biased or inaccurate sampling of materials. There were a few cases of disagreement between the researcher and the second coder and these were resolved following discussion.

Each instance was assigned a source domain and a target domain without any attempt on the researcher to force predetermined source domains on the data, but to let the metaphorical patterns emerge freely. Each metaphorical token was then inputted together with other pertinent information such as text type, date, co-text and other contextual information. Here it is important to bear in mind that no attempt was done to quantify metaphorical language in relation to the whole corpus since "the boundaries between the literal and the metaphorical are rather fuzzy," and therefore any attempt at quantification is a necessarily inexact undertaking (El Refaie, 2001: 357). More importantly, providing a specific number of metaphorical instances is not in itself significant for the analysis in this paper. Instead, the researcher is more interested in dominant metaphorical characterizations or themes which are recurrently associated with emotions.

**Metaphors of anger: hot fluid, fire, insanity, and natural force**

The present analysis shows that a tapestry of related ontological metaphors denoting anger are drawn upon to characterize the political actions of Palestinian and Arab masses. These expressions are mapped from various source domains such as fire, hot fluid, water, insanity and natural force. Lakoff (1987) refers to such metaphors as basic-level metaphors linked directly to experience, rich in information, and rich in conventional mental imagery. The general conceptual metaphor *anger is heat*
is central to metaphorical language used to describe emotions.

Lakoff (1987), Lakoff and Koveces (1987), and Koveceses (1990) suggest a cultural model of the physiological effects of anger. They propose that the physiological effects of anger metonymically presuppose the presence of anger, e.g., an increase in body heat and internal pressure, agitation, and interference with normal functioning are physical symptoms which stand for anger emotion. Two related conceptual metaphors of the anger is heat metaphor are proposed in this model: 1)- the central metaphor anger is a hot fluid in a container is used when heat is applied to fluids and the body metaphorically stands for a container for the emotions, and 2)- when heat is applied to solids we get the metaphor anger is a fire. The analysis shows that anger is a hot fluid in a container metaphor predominates the metaphorical formulation of Palestinian and Arab emotions and seems to indicate the a negative evaluation of Palestinian and Arab emotions and actions.

### Anger is a hot fluid in a container

In talking about the Intifada, news writers assign more weight to the presupposition that intense angry behaviour and emotions dominate Palestinian and Arab political action. This is clearly evident in a plethora of metaphorical expressions which are derived from the central metaphor anger is a hot fluid in a container. The underlined conventionalized expressions in the following extracts illustrate this:

1. **Blood Is Boiling** in West Bank and Gaza (headline NR, Oct. 18, 2000)
2. The two leaders arrived in defiant moods. Mr. Arafat, **whose people are at a boiling point** over the visit last Thursday of the right-wing Israeli opposition leader, Ariel Sharon, to the Muslim holy sites atop the Old City of Jerusalem. (NR, Oct. 5, 2000)
3. But **this street** continued to erupt, albeit **less intensely**, and the oral cease-fire is considered tenuous, with increased violence predicted for Friday. (NR, Oct. 6, 2000)

Expressions such as “blood is boiling”, “at a boiling point”, and “this street continued to erupt” invite the reader to conceptualize an image of intense levels of anger associated
with the Palestinians. What is noteworthy about these expressions is the impersonalized representation of emotions in terms of a ‘hot liquid’ which leaves the impression that this anger is bursting out and getting out of control. Note also that in extract 3 the phrase “this street” stands metonymically for the Palestinian people. The effect of these metaphorical selections is likely to distance the readers from relating emotionally to the participants and events in question by means of objectifying the human feelings and experience of the participants involved in the actions reported, i.e. “the situation is seen as resulting from some kind of inevitable set of natural laws rather than from human feelings and decisions” (Lee, 1992:93).

Lakoff (1987) posits that as part of our conceptual knowledge of the behaviour of hot fluids in containers, certain metaphorical entailments can be carried over from the source domain of hot fluids behaviour onto the target domain of anger. In group (A) below, points 4-8 are some of the main metaphorical entailments which can be derived from this central metaphor (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff and Kovecses, 1987; Kovecses, 1990).

**Group (A)**

1- When the intensity of anger increases, the hot fluid (anger) rises
2- When anger rises past a certain limit, the container explodes (the person loses control)
3- An explosion (loss of control) is damaging to the container (the angry person) and dangerous to bystanders.
4- An explosion may be prevented by the application of sufficient force and energy to keep the fluid in (to keep anger under control).
5- It is sometimes possible to control the release of hot fluid (anger) for destructive or constructive purposes.

What is striking about these metaphorical carryovers of the emotion concept of anger is that news writers also use them in conceptualizing Palestinian action. I matched the number of each metaphorical entailment in group (A) with its corresponding number from the data in group (B) below:
Group (B)

1. With diplomacy at a standstill and anger over the Israeli campaign rising across the region, oil prices hit a six-month high on fears that the turmoil could spread. (NR, April 3, 2002)

2. This explosion of violence would be totally understandable if the Palestinians had no alternative […] Mourn the dead and pray that after this explosion of hatred is over, the parties will find a way to live apart. (op-ed, Friedman, Oct. 13, 2000)

3. The volcanic rage on both sides – intensified by the live TV coverage from the West Bank and the ability of the Internet to transmit people’s immediate reactions – is terrifying, and it is spilling, like lava, out of the Middle East into Europe and beyond. (op-ed, Friedman, April 7, 2002).

4. A huge Israeli security cordon prevented thousands of Palestinians from attending Friday Prayer services at the ancient mosques inside the Old City today, a move that further angered Muslims here but kept the embattled holy site from exploding anew into violent confrontation. (NR4, Oct 14, 2000)

5. But this war is also a revolt of Palestinian youth against the corrupt tyranny of Yasir Arafat, who has turned their wrath on Israel to deflect it from himself. (op-ed, Friedman, Oct. 31, 2000)

What can be seen in these examples are various applications of hot fluid behaviour onto Palestinian anger, i.e. Palestinian anger rises, explodes, spills over to other regions and is negatively manipulated and channelled. Central to this metaphorical representation is the image-schematic metaphor of a container. While in Lakoff’s (1987) folk model the human body is metaphorized as a container of anger emotion, in these extracts the occupied Palestinian territories, West Bank and Gaza, are metaphorized as the container for the emotion of anger. Thus, anger in this container rises and builds up as in extract 4 and intense anger causes an explosion as stated in extract 5. There is also expressed fear of spillage of this anger onto other containers as extract 6 illustrates, while Israeli army action in extract 7 are conceptualized as the force used to keep a lid onto angry emotion and prevent it from bursting out. Criticisms of Arafat for refusing to control violence are voiced where the Palestinians are portrayed as a passive, angry population manipulated and controlled by their leader as extract 8 illustrates (see also section 6.3.2 below).
Anger is insanity

The negative conceptualization of Palestinian action as intense angry emotion entails drawing on another related metaphorical process which describes Palestinian action as insane, irrational and abnormal behaviour. Kovecses (1990:59) refers to this as anger is insanity metaphor. He suggests that this metaphor is essentially based on the notion that agitation is part of the American folk theory of insanity in that “people who are insane are unduly agitated – they go wild, start raving, flail their arms, foam at the mouth, and so on.” These physical symptoms are metonymies for insane, irrational behaviour which impairs rational judgement and thinking. Evidence for this in the data can be observed in references to Palestinian violence as an overly frantic, uncontrollable behaviour that is motivated by feelings of vengeance and rage at Israel rather than the result of calculated, rational reasoning and logic. Let us trace the lexical and syntactic choices the reporter in the following extract makes which negatively evaluate the action of Palestinian protesters.

The streets in the center of the city erupted at nightfall when thousands of youths, calling on the militant Islamic group Hamas to avenge the attacks, flooded down the main avenue. Faces were contorted with rage as the crowd, waving green Islamic banners, pushed, shoved, spat and shouted. (NR2, Oct. 13, 2000)

Note that the reporter uses negatively charged verbs such as “shoved”, “spat”, “shouted”, and “contorted”, which can metonymically stand for irrational, aggressive, and highly frenzied behaviour. Thus, an image of the Palestinian crowd is constructed which is essentially derived from domains of psychopathy and abnormal activity. Note also the use of ‘natural force’ metaphors in the metaphorical verbs “erupted” and “flooded” which imply not only that the crowd is in massive numbers but also uncontrollable and menacing (see more on natural force metaphors in the following section). Furthermore, a script of Islamic violence, threat, and religious fervour is intertextually drawn upon in lexical references such as “militant”, “Islamic” (twice), “waving green Islamic banners” which reinforce this delegitimized formulation of political action by evoking negative associations of violence and threat. The
negative judgement of the event is also elicited by the transitivity choices in the text; note that the protesters are agents of the material action verb processes “pushed”, “shoved”, “spat”, and “shouted” and the semantic agents of the whole extract, thus thematizing their negative role in the event.

The delegitimation of this crowd’s protest as a frenzied, uncontrollable, and pathological behaviour rather than giving an alternative account of the same event along the lines of legitimate political expression is similarly discussed in Drury’s (2002: 42) analysis of press accounts of anti-pedophile crowd protests. He pointed out that negative, delegitimizing constructions in the press of crowd events tended to pathologize or criminalize an event and paint it in negative terms (e.g. “mob” or a “riot”) rather than neutrally (e.g. “demonstration”) or positively (e.g. “people power”). He indicates that studies have shown a correlation between the language used to construct crowd behaviour and the speaker’s social position and perspective.

The emphasis on anger as driving Palestinian action is also expressed in extract 10 below. Here the writer accentuates the argument that Palestinians’ anger dominates their action to the level that they are unable to think rationally and act normally as it is communicated by the expression ‘self-delusional’

Recently, the Palestinians’ mounting anger with Israel lulled them into their own self-delusional argument: that the Israeli occupation justified any Palestinian tactic for liberation, including suicide bombing of civilians. You can’t build a normal state on the backs of suicide bombers. (op-ed, Friedman, April 7, 2002, italics original)

The contrast the writer makes between “self-delusional” and “normal” contributes to the depiction of Palestinian attack as devoid of rationality. It is interesting to note the metaphorical verb “lulled” for it positions the Palestinians as being acted upon by their “mounting anger”, thus suggesting their lack of control over their actions and their inability to making sound judgement. These references register a version of reality along the lines of impulsive reactions whereby anger and violence are presented as unnatural, too extreme, insane, mad, and antithetic to civilized values of meaningful and normal political action. Here the
emphasis on irrationality and insanity downplays or overlooks other contextualizations of the same action which frame violence within a discourse of anti-occupation national struggle.

**Arab anger: A natural force and an exploitable sentiment**

During the Intifada, popular demonstrations were held in many Arab countries and across the world to protest against Israel’s actions in the occupied territories. The Arab protests received much coverage in the NYT and were constructed as an ominous development that would destabilize the pro-U.S. Arab regimes across the region. Therefore, in the following two sections I focus on how news writers metaphorically conceptualize these popular protests. The metaphorical constructions of Palestinian political action, namely, those derived from the central metaphor of *anger is heat*, are also used in constructing protests against Israel in the Arab world. To avoid repetition, I limit my discussion to two related metaphors which are woven into this conceptual metaphor and characterize Arab anger as a natural force and that this anger is exploited by Arab leaders.

Kovesces (2002) posits that emotion concepts such as anger, fear, love, etc, are typically conceptualized in terms of natural force metaphors. Hence, it should come at no surprise that news writers draw on conventionalized metaphorical expressions mapped from the source domain of natural forces such as ‘fire’, ‘tide’, and ‘floodwater’ in constructing these popular demonstrations in metaphorical expressions such as “the tide of anger”, “a wave of militant anti-Israel sentiment”, “inflame public passion”, “stoking popular rage”, and “let off steam”. Let’s consider the following extracts:

1– When it does, maybe we will have a more honest peace process … one in which weak, autocratic Arab leaders don't try to keep their people at bay by letting them let off steam on Israel. (Friedman, 17 Oct. 2000)

2– Heavy Palestinian casualties during clashes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip this month have inflamed public passions against both Israel and the United States, which is accused of abandoning all pretense of even-handedness in the now-paralyzed peace effort. The tide of anger -- more open and more defiant than any display of grass-roots political activity in at least a decade--. (NR, Oct. 20, 2000)
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3– Many [Arab] governments have been playing with fire lately, stoking popular rage against Israel by constantly broadcasting scenes of past Arab-Israeli wars and war songs. (NR, Oct. 20, 2000)

4– Arab leaders, uneasy riders atop a wave of militant anti-Israel sentiment across the Middle East, began to regroup after the Sharm el Sheik summit meeting today …. (NR6, Oct. 18, 2000)

The common thread in all of these metaphorical expressions is the negative portrayal of Arab anger as illegitimate, massive and threatening. In other words, Arab popular action is not perceived as a typical and organized political expression, but it is delegitimized as excessively intense, emotionally propelled, and is exploitable by others. Note the absence of words denoting civilized forms of crowd behaviour such as ‘protest’, ‘demonstration’, etc. Sykes (1985) aptly argues that:

 treatment in discourse that systematically implies a mechanistic behavior, inability to reason or to act meaningfully, and that therefore denies the mediation of consciousness in behavior or affective states dehumanizes its subjects and should be regarded as unfavourable treatment, as should any discourse that treats large numbers of people as though they were homogenous and hence denies normal human social variety (p. 100).

In this respect, one function of using natural force metaphors is that the emotions of participants are objectified in terms of non-human, inanimate entities thus de-emphasizing the causes of anger and highlighting notions of its magnitude, threat and containment. Anger acquires some characteristics of natural forces while notions of human agency, peoples’ voices and political expression are de-emphasized, if not silenced. One effect of this impersonalized treatment of emotion is that “it can background the identity of and/or role of social actors; it can lend impersonal authority or force to an activity or quality of a social actor; and it can add positive or negative connotations to an activity or utterance of a social actor” (van Leeuwen, 1996; 60). That is, these metaphorical processes ensure that the reader negatively sees the situation as simply an ominous emotional outburst rather than a rational, conscious action.

In this respect, it is not uncommon in the journalistic genre to find metaphorical references to violence or ethnic
conflicts in terms of explosions, fire, etc. For instance, in his analysis of differences in perspectives of reporters in a number of newspaper articles on ethnic events in the African township of Soweto and in what was then the Rhodesian Capital, Salisbury, Lee (1992) points out that from a White perspective the people of Soweto are often referred to as a natural force, as a volcano which had been “simmering” with unrest and then “erupted” (p. 93). Chilton (2004) holds that the projection of the fire metaphor, for example, on violence and conflict is to some extent conventionalized. Having said so, it is important to examine what are meanings implicitly or explicitly communicated when a metaphorical process is used, which aspects of this process are emphasized and which ones are hidden or overshadowed, which perspective is involved in presenting the events, and how this particular metaphorical feature interacts with other features in the text.

To briefly expound on this point, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) point out that the metaphorical structuring of a concept in terms of another is partial since comprehending one aspect of a concept would necessarily highlight certain aspects of the target experience and conceal other aspects. A reader’s world knowledge of natural or mechanical phenomena involves the knowledge that they are generally unpredictable, uncontrollable, or inexplicable. Thus, the readers are induced by means of analogy to draw similar inferences about the uncontrollability and inexplicability of the violence. That is, such metaphorical processes shift attention from historical and political contexts which may have triggered violence to issues of how to contain, stop or prevent the action itself. As it is the case when we experience fire, volcanoes, etc, we are prone to ask ‘what did it result in?’ and ‘what are the consequences of this action?’, rather than ‘why and how did it happen?’ In other words, we focus more on the activity and less on its underlying causes. The causality is primarily seen in terms of physical and natural law while human agency or the human dimension of this violence is not the locus of attention.
The construction of Israel: The familial and the normal

Unlike the largely objectified, delegitimized representation of Palestinian and Arab emotions and political actions, the analysis reveals a noticeable absence of metaphorical processes and other textual features which express emotional intensity associated with Israeli actors. On the contrary, news writers present favourable depictions of Israeli society and emotions by drawing on metaphorical processes, emotive language, descriptive details and appeal to factual objectivity that all seem to evoke scripts of familial and social harmony and cohesion.

This positive representation appeals to a common cultural frame (Chilton and Ilyin, 1993) with the reader and emphasizes the individuality of news actors and the positive range of human feelings and experience that one would relate to effortlessly. Further, the container metaphor is central to this representation whereby Israel is metaphorically constructed as an in-group entity whose security and social cohesion are being threatened by an external Palestinian threat. In order to showcase this treatment, I closely examine the following two extracts which are typical of the kind of texts that the reader commonly reads in the NYT’s reports on Israeli society.

Israel is in shock: Disruption of social harmony

A case in point is extract 15 below that comes from a news story on the killing of an Israeli soldier by a Palestinian crowd. Note that there are no expressions indicating intense angry reactions in this segment. For instance, in the headline, the reporter chooses the expression “in shock” which designates a rather favourable emotional response to an offending event than the negative expressions of anger associated with Palestinian and Arab reactions. In other words, in keeping with my discussion of metaphors of anger in the previous sections, instead of using phrases such as ‘Israelis are enraged/outraged’ or ‘Israelis are boiling with anger’, or ‘Israelis are steaming with rage as they bury mob’s victim’, the reporter selects the expression “in shock” which seems to be a rather favourable construction of the emotion experienced.

Israel in Shock as It Buries Mob's Victim
Israel buried Vadim Norzich today, and with him much of its hope for real peace. The image of Mr. Norzich's bloody body being thrown to a Palestinian mob hovered over the graveyard here -- even as the dirt was tossed, the wreaths were laid and the mourning prayer was chanted. Few Israelis could shake this image from their heads. Overnight, it made an indelible mark on the national psyche, "etched for eternity into the history of the conflict," Nahum Barnea, a columnist, wrote. (NR, Oct. 14, 2000)

Further, the reporter also describes the violent event as a “mob” killing and the soldier killed as a “mob’s victim”; a designation which is likely to entice the reader’s feelings of sympathy for the victim on the one hand, and her feelings of consternation and disapproval of the transgressors. This description is elevated to a headline status and in this way it thematizes the direct cause-effect relation between the mob killing and the emotion experienced. At this point, one can observe a metaphorical process of personification in the headline and in the clause “Israel buried….” in which Israel is metaphorically constructed as a person who undergoes feelings of shock and grief and as a person doing the act of burying. Drawing on the state is person metaphor is quite common in political and journalistic discourses (Chilton, 2004; Chilton and Lakoff, 1995; Kovecses, 2002). One function of this personification metaphor is to collectivize and personalize the feelings experienced in that it is not only individuals who are in shock, but it is the whole nation that is in a state of disbelief for what happened.

This personalization of emotions to an act of violence can also be observed in the lead paragraph as well. To illustrate, note the personification of ‘hope’ whereby the reporter imputes a human quality – in this case the act of dying- to an abstract entity “hope”, i.e. ‘hope’ is a person who has been killed and buried together with the soldier victim. This suggests that the Palestinian ‘mob’ which killed the soldier also killed Israel’s hope for real peace. I would add further that a metonymic relation can be established here at a symbolic level in that the killed soldier may symbolically stand for Israel’s “hope for real peace”.

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It is interesting to note that the phrase “the image”, which is an abstract entity in this context, is metaphorized as an object in the two instances in which it is used. The reference “the image” in the clause “the image ... hovered over the graveyard here” is conceived of as a flying object which is flying over the graveyard, while in the clause “Few Israelis could shake this image from their heads” it refers to a substance in a container that can be shaken. The function of selecting these two conventionalized metaphorical expressions is most likely to accentuate the proposition that the killing incident had a devastating impact on the Israeli mourners. This amplification of emotions of shock and grief is also communicated by selecting dramatic, factual, and pictorial descriptions as in “the dirt was tossed, the wreaths were laid and the mourning prayers were chanted”. Finally, note the reporter’s sympathetic presentation of emotions in the expression “an indelible mark on the national psyche”, and the direct representation of the voice of a well-known Israeli journalist to add more credibility and factuality to this construction of the event. Overall, all these various personalizing moves appear to collaborate in enticing feelings of empathy with the participants in this event, and in emphasizing the threat the actions of Palestinians pose on Israelis.

A familial and private life-world
Another illustration of the legitimation of the emotional experience of Israeli actors can be also observed in extract 16 below from a news report on a bombing attack targeting Israelis. Like the extract above, the reporter here draws on metaphorical processes, emotive language, hypothetical statements and factual details that entice the reader’s sympathy with the Israelis. The emotive headline first alerts the reader to expect a nuanced description of a depressing situation; it gives rise to the inference that this situation has become a painfully recurrent spectacle for Israelis. In the lead paragraph, the reporter dramatizes the situation through providing a pictorially poignant picture of the reactions of Israelis including the lone windsurfer, teams of soldiers, others hearing the blast, and the stragglers. Note that the reader is first struck by two contradictory life-worlds in the first clause, i.e. the image of the “gilded sea” and the “lone windsurfer” cruising on toward sunset which stands at
odds with the bombing scene that the reporter chooses to evaluate subjectively as “the carnage” rather than descriptively as ‘the bombing site’, ‘the bombing attack’ or ‘where the bomber struck/blew up’. The reporter’s emphasis on the deadly consequence of the bombing using the evaluation ‘carnage’ can be seen as emphasizing the magnitude of Palestinian attack, and it is almost an oxymoron when juxtaposed with the peaceful and serene image the “gilded sea” and the “lone windsurfer” evoke.

**Grim, Familiar Routine** At Israeli Bombing Site (headline)

Out on the gilded sea, barely 1,000 yards from the carnage, a lone windsurfer carried on toward sunset as though there were no reason to stop a Saturday’s sport. It was as if he had neither heard nor seen anything of the blast that others heard from miles away, as if he were somehow quarantined from the deaths in the afternoon, as though he were oblivious to teams of soldiers clearing stragglers from the beach. Perhaps, though, he understood it all, and had resolved to make a stand, not with anger and numbed grief but with the dogged pursuit of normality in a country where the normal, for many, is a dimming thing. (NR, Oct. 5, 2003)

The reporter’s sympathetic formulation of the event by presenting it symbolically and his construction of a private, normal life-world which is being disrupted by a perceived outside threat associated with the Palestinians is further reinforced in the remaining clauses of the extract as the readers get to know about “the lone windsurfer”, his Saturday’s sport (first clause), how he feels about and reacts to the attack (second clause), and what he resolves to do about what happened (third clause). Note the adjective ‘lone’ is interesting in that it invites the reader, with shared cultural assumptions and knowledge, to infer that it is the attack that disrupted the normal rhythm of life and prevented the people from enjoying doing a normal activity. What is implied in this presentation of the event is the authorial disapproval of the attackers who caused this disruption and suffering.

An additional point to be made about this authorial construction of the situation is that the reporter seems to draw upon his own interpretative resources in what appears to be a sort of an out-loud monologue about how the ‘anonymous’ windsurfer would have felt about the bombing incident. For instance, the reporter provides a number of hypothetical
situations beginning with “as if” and “as though”, which are likely to be interpreted that the windsurfer has acted or felt contrary to all expectations. It is interesting to see the reporter’s selection of the metaphorical verb “quarantined” which metaphorizes the bombing attack as a rampant plague which has caused many deaths, thus intensifying the enormity of the attack and its effect. Nonetheless, the reporter also appeals to factual objectivity in expressions such as “barely 1,000 yards from the carnage”, “the blast that others heard from miles away”, and “teams of soldiers clearing stragglers from the beach”. These factual details mix with and lend support to the reporter’s subjective construction of the situation.

In this vein, unlike using metaphorical expressions denoting angry reactions associated with Palestinian and Arab political action, note the absence of expressions indicating anger associated with Israelis. For example, rather than ‘reacting angrily’ or ‘fuming with rage’, the reporter’s reference to the main protagonist in this extract “a lone windsurfer” evokes images of peacefulness and calmness who chooses to carry on normally as if nothing had happened. Note the positive reference to his decision in the evaluative verbs “resolved” and “to make a stand”, which imply a conscious and rational decision not to take it out on someone or something, but to act against all odds by pursuing their normal life. The only reference to anger is in the clause “not with anger and numbed grief” which implies that it is expected or typical to experience these feelings in this situation. The phrase “numbed grief” is particularly interesting in that it suggests that others have not vented their anger on anyone or engaged in angry, uncontrollable behaviour, but rather they were quietly grieving about what happened. One can detect a sense of emotional involvement and empathy for the Israelis which is also visible in phrases like “dogged pursuit” and “a dimming thing” in the last clause which implicitly accentuates the threat Palestinians pose to a beleaguered Israel.

In this respect, an image-schematic container metaphor is evoked here whereby Israel is portrayed as an enclosed in-group entity whose safety and normalcy is being compromised by an outside threat associated with the Palestinians.
Conclusions

So, where does all this leave us? First, my analysis shows how metaphors function as a linguistic tool in legitimizing or delegitimizing the actions of social actors and their emotions. One manifestation of a delegitimizing discourse on Arab and Palestinian action is by reductively projecting it as intense angry reactions, i.e. a sort of Pavlovian responses which are lacking of rational reasoning and externally exploitable. The emphasis news writers assign to Palestinian and Arab actions as angry, violent and intense emotional actions which need to be contained has negative resonance for a western reader who would associate intense levels of anger with irrationality, insanity, and ultimately a disapproval of the emotion experienced and possibly the causes which produced it. Kovecses (2005) highlights this point by indicating that anger which is predominantly conceptualized in American culture today in terms of a hot fluid in a pressurized container has become a completely negative emotion in that the mechanical metaphor of a hot fluid in pressurized container projects anger as something which is independent of the rational self, i.e. “the angry person is incapable of any rational judgment, and the resulting angry behavior as extremely dangerous” (p. 181).

Similarly, the treatment of Palestinian and Arab news participants as natural forces with no individuality and human feeling and experience cumulatively contributes to a delegitimation of their actions and emotions. As Sykes (1985) correctly points out that,

One minimum criterion for the evaluation of treatment: Any lexical or syntactic patterns that fairly systematically deny their human subjects the normal range of specifically human attributes should be regarded as degrading, regardless of the intent of the speaker. By human attributes we mean those characteristics that are presumed to elevate human beings above the rest of animal world- consciousness and the capacity for meaningful social action, plus the infinite variety of social statuses and social relations that stem from these. (p. 100).

Second, the analysis reveals that the metaphorical representation of political actors and their actions is based on a discourse strategy of positive ‘in-group’ representation emphasizes ‘our’ actions as legitimate, rational, and moral on
the one hand, and a negative ‘out-group’ representation which constructs ‘their’ action as illegitimate, irrational, and amoral, on the other (van Dijk, 1991). In this context, the apparently negative presentation of Palestinian and Arab political action and emotions starkly contrasts with a positive treatment of Israeli people’s emotions and actions.

The favourable treatment of Israelis seems to be foregrounded in a construction of a private and familiar life-world associated with Israel by drawing on metaphorical processes, themes, and textual details which evoke scripts of familial and social cohesion and harmony. In this vein, a related container metaphor is called up whereby Israeli society is constructed as peaceful and cohesive in-group entity which is being penetrated or threatened by an external threat predominantly associated with the Palestinians.

Van Teeffelen (1994) shows that metaphors have become central in the study of racism especially conventionalized metaphors of water, wild animals, plague and cancer which are frequently drawn upon in accentuating the divide between self-other and in negatively framing the other’s identity and actions, i.e. “Invasion, plague, cancer, pollution, and wild animals are familiar notions to evoke a boundary threat to an ingroup conceived in terms of organic development and growth, family cohesion and purity.” (p. 385). In his study of metaphors in western popular literature on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, he similarly notes that metaphors of sea, fire, and animals are used to amplify the external Arab threat to and breaking through a containment formed by Israel’s geographical and physical borders.

In closing, this formulation reifies a particular view of reality with all the political consequences that such a view entails especially those relating to sustaining and naturalizing a dominant power relation between social groups which privileges and legitimizes a particular social group and puts another group at a disadvantage politically, culturally, and morally. This power dominance “may be enacted and reproduced by subtle, routine, everyday forms of text and talk that appear ‘natural’ and quite
‘acceptable’” (van Dijk, 1993: 254). One such ubiquitous and naturalized discourse form this paper focused on is the conventionalized metaphorical processes which writers use in positioning news actors in the *Intifada*.

Finally, this analysis is an attempt to contribute to an understanding of the roles of metaphor in news media discourse in times of crisis and the ways metaphors contribute fundamentally in shaping, reshaping, and challenging our understandings and perceptions of political events.

**Notes**

1. The metaphor analysis here is in part based on the PRAGGLEJAZ GROUP who provide a useful method of identifying metaphoric language in discourse using Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP). The method involves determining the lexical units in a text and establishing the contextual meaning and basic meaning for each unit and determining whether its contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
References


Nawal Al Saadawi’s *Woman at Point Zero*: A Replication of Western Stereotypes

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In Algeria, French soldiers made it a point to unveil Algerian women in public is an attempt to free them, but more realistically as a gesture of ownership and power over the *Woman at Point Zero* nation and its practices (Fanon 42-43).\(^1\) Nawal Al Saadawi’s text, *Woman at Point Zero*, reiterates these ideologies, equating colonization with liberation of her female characters. Such rhetoric carries with it a severe risk of alienating Muslim/Arab readers. For an American/European audience, the text seduces the Western reader into a state of comfort and familiarity with the rhetoric employed. As Leila Ahmed argues in *Women and Gender in Islam*, feminism in third world countries has been associated with Westernization, making it much easier to attack and dismiss in places where the West is regarded as enemy. By associating Westernization and feminism, the dominant narrative alienates indigenous feminism from the mainstream culture. Because of this association and its resulting alienation of the Arab feminist writer from her culture, some Arab feminist writers, such as Al Saadawi, are accused by other Arab women writers of betraying their culture by expounding stereotypical representations of Muslims and Arabs which make their work highly marketable in the West, where they flourish, while remaining virtual unknowns in their native countries (Amireh 2).\(^2\) Amireh says that such women writers are not popular because of “literary merit," but because of “their fulfillment of Western readers’ assumptions about Arab men

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\(^1\) Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism.*

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and women” (232). Thus, among many Arab readers, “Arab women writers are (considered) just pawns being manipulated and used by the West” (Amireh “Publishing” 4). In this way, the feminism/colonialism link extends to Muslim/Arab women’s literary output; the legacy of colonial and postcolonial, national and religious narratives lives on in the worlds of literature and publishing.

Nawal Al Saadawi as a Muslim Arab writer is accused by many, successful Muslim and Arab writers included, for being acclaimed in the West “not so much because she champions women’s rights, but because she tells Western readers what they want to hear”—that which “confirms the existing stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims as backward, misogynist, and violently oppressive” (Amireh “Publishing” 2). In this context, Edward Said’s concept of Orientalism is useful to establish the relation between the “West” and the “East” in light of Orientalist discourse. In his very influential book Orientalism, Said describes the relation between the Orient and the Occident as a relationship of “power” and “domination” (5). The Orientalist always represents the Occident as superior to the Orient: “He [the Westerner] comes up against the Orient as a European or American first, as an individual second” (11). Said also accuses Orientalist scholars of producing a false image of the Orient and Orientals who are represented as passive and non-participants. To control the Orient, the West chooses to speak for it, creates an image and a body of knowledge about it. Giving voice to the Orient means giving them power and authority. Orientalists have created, shaped, and framed the characteristics of the Orient and presented it to the Western reader, who accepts Orientalist codification as truth. Said maintains that according to the Orientalist, the Oriental is an object that can be easily described, judged and conceptualized.

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4 Among those who condemn Al Saadawi are the Palestinian Edward Said, the Egyptians Sabry Hafez, Salwa Bakr and Ahdaf Soueif, the Syrian George Tarabishi, the Lebanese Afif Farraj, and the Iraqi Ali Mahmoud, to name just a few.
Since the Oriental is viewed as an object, then any change in the characterizations of this object is considered by the Orientalist to be unnatural. All of the given characterizations of the Oriental are concrete and definitive.

Thus, with regard to Orientalism, one of Al Saadawi’s detractors in addition to Amireh is Sabry Hafez who believes that Al Saadawi “vindicates the main tenets of the traditional orientalist discourse” (189). In her novel Woman at Point Zero, Al Saadawi portrays the Muslim/Arab society according to the expectations and agenda of the Western reader, the same as the Orientalist does in his/her description of the Orient. Al Saadawi nurtures the Orientalist ideas about the Orient as backward, aggressive, male-dominated, and misogynist. This is why there is a market in the West for Arab women writers like Al Saadawi. It is, as Amireh puts it, the “West’s interest in Arab women is part of its interest in and hostility to Islam” and its interest in a “region perpetually marked as exotic, violent and inferior” (3). The West embraces Nawal Al Saadawi’s writings wholeheartedly because of her stance against Islam and her negative portrayal of the Muslim woman.

Anne Roald, in her article “Feminist Reinterpretation of Islamic Sources: Muslim Feminists Theology in the Light of Christian Tradition Feminist Thought,” labels some Muslim Feminists regarding their stance to religion in light of Carolyn Osiek’s classification of the Western feminist’s “hermeneutic approaches to the biblical text” (19). As Anne Roald states, there are five hermeneutic approaches: “loyalist, revisionist,

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5 Sabry Hafez is an Egyptian critic and writer. He got his B.A. in Sociology and Social Work, Cairo, 1962, MA in Criticism and Dramatic literature, Cairo, 1970 and Ph. D. in Modern Arabic Literature, University of London 1979. He was awarded Richter Memorial Prize for the best thesis in the University of London 1979. Now, he is a professor of Modern Arabic and comparative literature in the University of London, at the School of Oriental and African Studies.


7 In Karen Ask and Marit Tjomsland, eds. Women and Islamization: Contemporary Dimensions of Discourse on Gender Relation, p. 73-102.
According to Roald, Nawal Al Saadawi, as a Muslim feminist, is characterized as a “rejectionist” (20) who considers “the Bible as well as Christianity, Judaism [and Islam]... to be so permeated by patriarchal ideas that they had to be rejected” (19). As a “rejectionist,” Al Saadawi is considered, according to Roald, a reconstructor who “would imply a refutation of existing ideas” of the “interpretation of the holy text” (19).

Moreover, Roald contends that Nawal Al Saadawi’s reputation in Muslim Society is that of the “Western Feminists” and dismisses her contributions as, effectively, negligible and trivial since “very few Muslims outside the ranks of Muslim feminists would find [her] writings relevant” (25). Ultimately, Al Saadawi’s writing about her own culture reflects the same stereotyped, preconceived ideas of the “Western Feminists” such as Frank Hosken, Juliette Minces, Elizabeth Cowie and Patricia Jeffery who produce, according to Chandra Mohanty in “Under Western Eyes,” the image of an “average third-world woman ... [who] leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and being third world (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition bound, religious, domesticated, family oriented, victimized etc.)” (65). Of course, the image of the third-world woman is completely in contrast to the self-representation of Western feminists and women as “educated, modern, as having control over their bodies and sexualities and the freedom to make their own decisions” (Mohanty 65). In Woman at Point Zero, Al Saadawi takes the same steps of these Western Feminists and their relationship to the “Other” (Muslim/Arab women). Throughout the novel, Al Saadawi confirms certain Western stereotypes about the lives of women in the Muslim world as being “‘victims of male violence’ (Fran Hosken), ‘victims of the Muslim/Arab familial system’ (Juliette Minces) and finally

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8 According to Roald, Fatima Mernissi and Leila Ahmed are considered liberationist who “yearn for a transformation of the social order” (19) while Amina Wadud-Muhsin and Riffat Hassan are classified as loyalist and revisionist who accept the Qur’an as divine revelation and they “analyze the Koran within framework accepted by many Islamic scholars” (20).
Many literary critics and feminists have strong reactions to what they perceive as Al Saadawi’s failure to accurately portray the role of Arab women within their families and within an Islamic-structured family code. For example, Chandra Mohanty, in her article “Under Western Eyes,” makes clear how mistaken Western Feminists can be about this location when she accentuates the ideas and beliefs of some Western Feminists toward the familial system in the Muslim/Arab world. Mohanty argues how Elizabeth Cowie in her article “Woman as Sign” suggests that in the Muslim Arab world “women as women are not simply located within the family. Rather, it is in the family, as an effect of kinship structures that women as women are constructed, defined within and by the group” (70). For Cowie, as Mohanty argues, the kinship system is primarily patriarchal and considered to be the identical system of the Arab and Muslim societies. Mohanty considers Cowie’s claim problematic. Since “while on the one hand women attain value or status within the family, the assumption of a singular patriarchal kinship system (common to all Arab and Muslim societies, i.e. over twenty different countries) is what apparently structures women as an oppressed group in these societies” (70). Consequently, according to Cowie, the patriarchal kinship system in all Muslim/Arab societies is the sole reason for the oppression of Muslim Arab women. Muslim and Arab women, under the Western eyes, are seen as “sexual-economic” products of their society, they cannot define themselves as independent participants within their family system. Moreover, according to the Western feminists, it is the Muslim Arab patriarchal kinship system which grants and constructs Muslim women’s identity.

Al Saadawi, compromising the Western ideas about the familial system in Muslim Arab societies, reflects the same

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9 Mentioned in Chandra Mohanty’s article “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” p.66. I took these Western Feminist claims as standpoints in analyzing Al Saadawi’s Woman at Point Zero as a reflection of the Western preconceived ideas about the Muslim world.
tokens in *Woman at Point Zero*. Obviously, in *Woman at Point Zero*, Al Saadawi does not provide her Arab or Western readers with an authentic picture of the Muslim Arab woman inside the family code. What she offers is a stereotyped image that satisfies her Western reader and fills his/her passion, to the extreme, with the preconceived ideas he/she already has.

The institution of family plays a very important part in Muslim society. Within the family, there is a balance established the roles and relationships that exist between men and women. In contradiction to this, Al Saadawi starts *Woman at Point Zero* with an extremely severe depiction of Firdaus’s patriarchal family. And it is extremely important to note that there are no positive Islamic-based, Arabic family structures elsewhere depicted in Al Saadawi’s fiction. (She seems in fact to be interested only in depicting the neurotic—a very dangerous practice that reinforces Western notions of oppressive family structures in Islam as the norm). Firdaus is well aware of the violent manner in which women are bartered and dominated as forms of property. She begins to narrate her childhood memories with a description of her father, who she characterizes as “poor,” financially double-dealing-knowing “how to sell a buffalo, poisoned by his enemy, before it died,” skilled in the “exchange of his virgin daughter for a dowry” and good at beating his wife (12).

To further distort the father’s image, Firdaus portrays her father as a patriarchal figure and misogynist: “When one of his female children died, my father would eat his supper, my mother would wash his legs, and then he would go to sleep, just as he did every night. When the child that died was a boy, he would beat my mother, then have his supper and lie down to sleep” (18). Besides her father’s hatred of female children, Firdaus, here and in other places, connects eating with power and the male world. She describes how her mother hides her father’s food from her children to keep it for him while her children “would go to bed with empty stomachs” (18). Once Firdaus tries

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10 For more details regarding this connection see Fedwa Malti-Douglas’s *Men, Women, and God(s)*.
to stretch her hand to her father’s plate, but her father “stuck (her) a sharp blow over the back of (her) fingers” (19). Here, Al Saadawi delineates a distorted, inhuman father’s figure in the Muslim Arab family. The problem of Al Saadawi here is as Sabry Hafez says “not that her characters have failed to humanize the world, but rather that she failed to humanize her characters” (198). The extremely deformed, inhuman picture of the father, that Al Saadawi presents, increases when Firdaus loses the psychic bond that connects her with her father. She denies him mainly because of his patriarchal, offensive domination: “I sensed he was not my father, nobody told me, and I was not really aware of the fact. I could just feel it deep down inside me” (19).

Al Saadawi’s negative depiction of the Islamic family structure and of Arab men in general continues when she transfers the negative characteristics she gives to Firdaus’s father to her uncle. Later, when Firdaus’s parents die, her beloved uncle callously forces her into an undesired marriage to a very old man simply because Firdaus will fetch him a “big dowry… to pay (his) debts” (37). Again, when Firdaus gets married to Sheikh Mahmoud, a sixty-nine year old man who had a swelling on his chin that exudes pus and blood (43), she gives this link between food and male power. In his greediness, the Sheikh begrudges Firdaus her food (as her father did) and never lets up his surveillance of her: “All day long he remained by my side in the house, or in the kitchen, watching me as I cooked or washed” (44). Even after finding leftover scraps of food in the garbage bin, Sheikh Mahmoud begins to beat Firdaus on a regular basis (44). When she runs back to her uncle after a beating, she is told by her aunt that Islam permits wife beating (44). Without even being offered lunch, Firdaus is sent back “hungry” to her husband’s house. For the lack of good male character in the novel, Malti-Douglas in Men, Women and God(s) explains how Heong-Dug Park argues that “all males in (Woman at Point Zero) are evil, that conclusion is unfortunately not true” (51-52).

11 In “Intentions and Realizations in the Narratives of Nawal El Saadawi.”
The problem with the relentlessly negative depiction of the Muslim/Arab family and of Muslim/Arab men in Al Saadawi’s text and her fiction in general has to do with her status within the Western canon of contemporary Arabic literature. Thus, as Rosemary Weatherstone states, “Woman at Point Zero” has achieved the status of an informant text in US academia, being used to round out the syllabi of women’s studies, postcolonial studies, and literature courses that seek an authentic representation of ‘Middle Eastern Women’s subjectivity and subjugation” (114). On the other hand, for the Muslim Arab reader “apart from confirming to the Western reader the hackneyed stereotype, ‘think the worst of the Muslims and it will be probably true’” (Hafez 196), Woman at Point Zero is not authentic and objective representations of the “other,” but transformative, in which the “East” and its customs and peoples are not merely reflected but either transformed, fractured or denied altogether in the negative narrative of Al Saadawi.

To further increase the dilemma of the Muslim Arab woman, Firdaus’s story is told from the vantage of a prison cell. The prison functions for Al Saadawi and consequently for her readers as a metaphor for the predicament of all Arab women, much akin to the text’s use of “unveiling” to signify Firdaus’s revelations at the end of the novel. Accordingly, Al Saadawi’s prison as a symbolic commentary upon the plight of Muslim Arab women plays into Western self-congratulating stereotypes about Muslim women’s degraded realities. Of course, Orientalist imagery invades writings, paintings, photographs and postcards which allow the European observer to access the Oriental women. The Algerian writer Malek Alloula, in his book The Colonial Harem (a collection of postcards produced and sent by the French during the early 1900s), examines the East-West relationship of the French in Algeria to reveal an intense preoccupation with the veiled female body and Harem prisons. The Algerian women in these postcards do not represent Algeria, but instead “the Frenchman’s phantasm of the Oriental female and her inaccessibility behind the veil in the forbidden
These images continue to pervade the imagination of the Westerner, who regards the Muslim woman as passive and oppressed by her religion and culture. Like the prison metaphor, Al Saadawi’s “Author’s Preface” exemplifies the type of gesture that emphasizes the Western audience’s preconceived image about the Arab world. In her introductory statements, Al Saadawi plays into and gratifies the Western appetite for images of the Arab barbarism. She describes the horror of the prison in which Firdaus is incarcerated as a world of “sudden gloom” and “overall harshness” in which she finds “women, lurking behind the bars like animals, their white or brown fingers twisted around the bark metal” (ii). Al Saadawi depicts an image of a deprived existence that confirms Western stereotypes about the “savage” practices of the Muslim Arab culture.

In spite of the possibility for alternative readings of Islam regarding the respect of women, negative religiously determined stereotypes dominate Al Saadawi’s description of gender. For Al Saadawi, Islam (and almost Islam alone) causes and allows injustices toward the female gender. As Malti-Douglas explains in her book *Men, Women and God(s)* that we learn from Al Saadawi (along with Firdaus) that wife beating is permissible in the Egyptian religious and social system (65). In Al Saadawi’s novel violence against women is justified even by women themselves. For example, when Firdaus complains to her uncle’s wife about her husband’s beating, the latter tells her that the act is legal. At one point in Firdaus’s marriage to Sheikh Mahmoud, he beats her with a shoe, leaving her face and body swollen and bruised. In order to find refuge from his abuse, Firdaus returns to her uncle’s house. However, he simply tells her that “all husbands beat their wives” (44). Even her uncle’s wife admits to being beaten often. Firdaus cannot believe this and argues with her: “I said my uncle was a respected Sheikh, well versed in the teachings of religion, and he, therefore, could not possibly be in the habit of beating his wife” (44). However, her aunt replies that it was “precisely men well versed in their

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religion who beat their wives” (44). While *The Qur’an* enjoins men to live with their wives in harmony and to treat them well, we discover, in Al Saadawi’s writing, that the female gender has incorporated religiously sanctioned violence against women into its own discourse of the female condition (Malti-Douglas 65).

Thus, Al Saadawi’s image fits the first-world agendas and prejudices about the “East.” The Arab critic, George Tarabishi in his book *Woman Against Her Sex*, questions the message of *Woman at Point Zero*. In his opinion, Firdaus’s struggle “is aimed at liberating not her female sisters but herself” and her “nihilistic asceticism” is a way to reject reality (32). In the novel, Firdaus relinquishes all dependence on the community and imagines herself to be in a position of radical self-reliance. Paradoxically, it is only when Firdaus is most fully deprived and debased that she perceives herself to be in possession of untrammeled freedom: “I have triumphed over both life and death because I no longer desire to live, nor do I any longer fear to die. I want nothing. I hope for nothing. I fear nothing. Therefore I am free” (101).

Al Saadawi’s discourse of freedom in *Woman at Point Zero* serves primarily to indicate further subjugation, rather than as a meaningful vehicle for Firdaus’s empowerment. Only as a prostitute does Firdaus attain a sense of autonomy, freedom, and “honour,” and only as a murderer does she come into possession of the feelings of “pride” she spends her life pursuing. The same logic is essential to her feelings of autonomy and security when she is self-employed as a prostitute. After escaping from Sharifa, the high class madam to whom she is captive, Firdaus unwittingly prostitutes herself to make it through the night, and finds that she is paid with an unexpectedly large sum. Firdaus’s first act of self-assertion is to go to a restaurant and to order a

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13 It is worth to mention here what George Tarabishi in *Woman Against her Sex* states in this regard: “Can we then imagine a more neurotic condition than that of a woman who chooses to be a prostitute and a murderess in order to wage a war of the sexes, reassert herself and with the crown of a princess in a society of men” (33).
roast chicken, and her possession of money leads her into a series of memories about her first encounters with piasters, or coins, in her childhood. After eating the chicken, Firdaus then exercises newly acquired faculties of economic self-determination by refusing a potential client, informing him of her reasons: “Because there are plenty of men and I want to choose with whom to go” (68). Here, her mere perception that she makes an economic decision and free choice, even though is wrong, signals her empowerment.

One of the largest problems evinced by Al Saadawi’s work with the lives of women in Egypt and in a larger Arabic, Islamic context is that, as the Egyptian novelist Salwa Bakr asserts, “the problem of [Al Saadawi’s] women [is] mainly sexual” (qtd in Amireh “Framing” 236). In Woman at Point Zero, the initial time after Firdaus’s circumcision that she describes herself trying but failing at sexual arousal presents such an instance. Whenever she is alone with her uncle in her parents home as a child, Firdaus explains that her uncle, the same uncle who later adopts her after her parents’ death, would touch her leg with his hand “traveling up my thigh” and moving “with a grasping, almost brutal insistence” (14-15). Firdaus, however, does not construe these advances as unwanted, but instead mourns her inability to experience them as erotic. The same uncle again becomes an object of Firdaus’s attraction until he marries her to the elderly Sheikh Mahmoud, and her desire exhibits itself on other occasions. She lies awaken at night in a state of arousal when she is a student living with her uncle in Cairo: “I was trembling all over… that my uncle’s great long fingers would draw close to me after a little while, and cautiously lift the eiderdown under which I lay. Then his lips would touch my face and press down on my mouth, and his trembling fingers would feel their way slowly upwards over my thighs” (22). She also becomes excited when overhearing her

14 Salwa Bakr is born in Cairo in 1949. She is one of Egypt’s most respected novelists and short stories writers. Her novel Golden Chariot is a novel of narrative sophistication which was widely praised in its original Arabic publication and has been translated into English and other European languages.
uncle and his wife having intercourse one night. Firdaus at multiple points in her narrative strives not to safeguard her privacy but instead yearns to have it violated.

Ali Mahmoud, the Iraqi novelist, develops this criticism and charges Al Saadawi of “turning creativity, which is imagination and living memory into a lab to show sick, deformed samples which she presents as generalized social types” (qtd in Amireh “Framing” 236). All her characters in Woman at Point Zero, especially Firdaus, reflect a deformed picture of Muslim Arab people. Though Al Saadawi tries to prove that Firdaus is the ideal woman, a symbol of Arab woman’s liberation, for all Muslim Arab women, she ultimately fails in the eyes of her Arab readers. The liberation of Al Saadawi’s heroine is seen through her freedom of having many sexual encounters: “If the first man who comes along does not want her, she will have the next, or the one after. No need to wait any longer for just one man” (87).

At night, moonbeams flowed over me, silky and white, like the fingers of the man who lay by my side. His nails too, were clean and white, not like Bayoumi’s nails, which were black as the night, nor like my uncle’s nails with their edge of dark earth on the underside. I would close my lids and let my body bathe in the silvery light, let the silken fingers touch my face and lips, move down to my neck and bury themselves between my breasts. I would nurse them between my breasts for a while, leave them to slip down over my belly, and then below it to the place between my thighs. (56)

Firdaus’s “liberation” as a prostitute will arouse a sense of shame and anger in the Arab reader and cannot be, by no means, a liberation ideal for Muslim/Arab women. Al Saadawi in her portrayal of Firdaus as a rebellious, liberated Arab woman tries to castigate the manner in which stable Arab constructs such as “honor,” “respect” and “reputation” are used in Muslim society to imprison women in the Islamic culture. In doing so, Al Saadawi calls forth all the Western preconceived ideas of Islam and Arab culture: oppressiveness, backwardness, despotism. The
Westernization of Al Saadawi is shown through a comment one of her Arab advocates, Fedwa Malti-Douglas, receives from an Arab woman:

Is not Nawal El Saadawi writing for a Western audience? Does this not make her then a “Western” feminist? An Arab-American woman declared to me (to Malti-Douglas) after a public lecture in which I exposed Nawal El Saadawi’s subversive rewritings of the classical Arabo-Islamic tradition: “I still think she is a Western feminist.” The “still” tells it all, seeking to negate any evidence that might prove the assertion wrong. It follows then, from this Western allegiance, that El Saadawi’s writings do not provide their reader with an “authentic” vision of Arab women and the Arab world. (289)

More important, many Arab critics question not only the message of Al Saadawi but also the form of her writing. The aesthetic quality of her writing has been derided as either unsophisticated or entirely absent, sacrificed in favor of her radical repetitive message—women’s liberation. For Amal Amireh in “Framing Nawal El Saadawi”, Al Saadawi’s “celebrity” in the West “has less to do with [her] literary merit than with her fulfillment of Western readers’ assumptions about Arab men and women” (232). George Tarabishi in Woman Against Her Sex criticizes Al Saadawi for reducing her characters in Woman at Point Zero to “one dimensional” characters. Such characterization fails to explain the complex human relations and therefore “do not make for good literature” (17-18). Afif Farraj also shares Tarabishi his criticism of Al

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15 Fedwa Malti-Douglas is a native of Lebanon who is a professor of gender studies and comparative literature at Indiana University. She is the author of nine books and coauthor of three more, she has also published over ninety articles. Her book *Men, Women, and God(s)* was chosen as A Centennial Book by the University of California Press (1995).

16 In “Writing Nawal El Saadawi.” *Feminism Beside Itself*, Diane Elam, Ed.

17 Afif Farraj is a Lebanese critic and writer. Got his B.A. in English Literature, 1964, Cairo University and his Ph. D. in Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultures, 1984, Germany. He is a Professor of Cultural Studies and World Literature at the Lebanese University since 1985. He has
Saadawi, concluding that

Character in Al Saadawi’s novels is almost an empty board except for the ideological statements written in large type... The Saadawian heroine remains a captive of the rigid ideological text, and this text controls the narrative, plot and the fate of the characters. Her mechanical plot is built around an idea, like an Arab musical built around the words of the songs. (qtd in Amireh “Framing” 235)

Because women’s liberation is the radical ideological message of Al Saadawi, her heroine Firdaus in Woman at Point Zero remains captive to this sole idea. Accordingly, all “the thoughts and statements of [the character] seem forced and inappropriate” (Amireh 235).

Moreover, the Arab critics, Farraj and Hafez, fault Al Saadawi for “her repetitive style, weak language, and lack of technical development” (qtd in Amireh “Framing” 236). As a reader of Woman at Point Zero, one finds this undoubtedly true. The reader encounters many repeated words, sentences, and even long passages loaded with the same idea. In the novel, Al Saadawi portrays the same atmosphere, employs the same words and depicts the same scene with the same feelings in two major events. The first one is the narrator’s first encounter with Firdaus in the prison cell:

My body bent down and sat on the ground. It was January and the ground was bare, but I felt no cold. Like walking in one’s sleep. The ground under me was cold. The same touch, the same consistency, the same naked cold. Yet the cold did not touch me, did not reach me. It was the cold of the sea in a dream. I swam

several publications such as Freedom in Women’s Literature, Einstein’s Vision of a Jewish State and Jews, and Oriental Cultural References for the Hebrew Language.

18 The Anglo Egyptian novelist Ahdaf Souief echoes parallel concern, that “Al Saadawi writes good scientific research, but she writes bad novels. It is unfair that the West thinks that what she writes represents Arab women’s creative writing” (in Amireh “Framing” 236).
through its waters. I was naked and knew not how to swim. But I neither felt its cold, nor drowned in its waters. Her voice too was like the voices one hears in a dream. It was close to me, yet seemed to come from afar, spoke from a distance and seemed to arise from nearby. For we do not know from where these voices arise: from above or below, to our left or our right. We might even think they come from the depths of the earth, drop from the rooftops, or fall from the heavens. Or they might even flow from all directions, like air moving in space reaches the ears. But this was no dream. This was not air flowing into my ears. The woman sitting on the ground in front of me was a real woman, and the voice filling my ears with its sound, echoing in a cell where the window and door were tightly shut, could only be her voice, the voice of Firdaus. (7)

Again and in the same repetitive style the same scene is recurred at the end of the novel when Firdaus finishes her story: Firdaus’s voice suddenly fell silent, like a voice in a dream. I moved my body like someone moving in sleep. What lay under me was not a bed, but something solid like the ground, and cold like the ground, yet with a coldness which did not reach my body. It was the cold of the sea in a dream. I swam through its waters. I was naked and knew not how to swim. But I neither felt its cold, nor drowned in its waters. Her voice was not silent, but its echo remained in my ears, like a faint distant sound. Like the voices one hears in a dream. They seem to come from afar although they arise from close by, or seem to be nearby although they come from afar. We do not know in fact from where they arise. From above or below. To our left or our right. We might even think they come from the depths of the earth, drop from the rooftops or fall from the heavens. Or they might even flow from all directions, like air moving in space reaches our ears. But this was not air flowing into my ears. The woman sitting on the ground in front of me was a real woman. The voice filling my
ears with its sound, echoing in the cell where the window and the door were tightly closed, was a real voice. (105)

Because of this weak repetitive style of Al Saadawi’s narrative in Woman at Point Zero, it is worth here to quote how Sabry Hafez in his article “Intentions and Realization in the Narrative of Nawal El Saadawi” assesses her as a literary Arab figure:

The translation of two of her narrative works—I hesitate to call them novels—into English in one year is indicative of her success in the West, or at least of the success of feminist solidarity in both the reading public and the publishing trade. But the persistence of the same issues and shortcomings in two works written thirty years apart suggests a lack of artistic and intellectual development over that period. It may also suggest a certain disregard for the intelligence of the reader at home, for whom she has been labouring the same issues over and over again, without ever stopping to ponder the reasons for the ineffectiveness of her endeavour. Perhaps a change of tactics is overdue, since the old tactics have failed to effect the required socio-political change. Even a modification of her major strategies would be desirable, in order to achieve her goals and elicit a positive response from her change.

But, is she interested in the reader at home? I wonder. For I detect in her writing... that she is more interested in the Western than in her Arabic reader. (189)

As we see from Hafez’s criticism, Al Saadawi’s narrative creates a gap between her and her own Arab culture. This gap is due to her tireless repetition of her ineffective message about the liberation of Arab and Muslim women. For the Muslim/Arab reader, Al Saadawi’s style of writing is so useless and ineffective that she cannot achieve the required socio-political change in her Arab society. Her writing runs counter to the traditions of the Arab culture but has its applause in the West. Consequently, Al Saadawi, at home, ends up being perceived as an Arab writer who writes mainly for the West and
who agrees with the West on its image about the Muslim world as oppressive, violent, misogynist and backward.

According to both literary critics and following a close reading of the text, one can conclude that Al Saadawi has sold out to the West. She is more interested in the Western than the Arab reader. This interest motivates her to draw a distorted reality about her culture, which has an appeal to the Western reader. Consequently, she is considered by many Arab critics and readers as an unworthy Arab writer since “she made her name outside Egypt, rather than inside Egypt,”19 “she is living in America because she wants a Noble Prize. She is writing for the West, she cannot feel the true problems of women”20 (qtd in Amireh “Framing” 238).

The Muslim/Arab world’s accusations of Al Saadawi as a traitor to Arab culture cannot be easily discarded since Al Saadawi herself proves them to be true:

In a recent interview [Al Saadawi] praises her Western critics for being “objective” and declares that she is not interested in what her Arab critics have to say because they are not qualified to appreciate her personality, which is different from anything to which they are accustomed (al-‗Uwayt 1992). In another interview she makes clear that she no longer writes for an exclusively Arab audience: “Before, I didn’t have the pleasure or the freedom to experiment. But now I want to go beyond that, to experiment with the language, to experiment with ideas, to have more freedom. Even if the book is not published in the Arab world. At first, I wrote for the Arab people, men and women. And I had to consider my audience.... My audience was the Arab people. So If I spoke about something they would


20 This quote is said by the Egyptian novelist Jamal al-Ghitany and taken from Lennon, Peter. “Speaking Out in a Volatile Climate.” Guardian, May 28, 1994, 29.
totally reject, it would not be there at all. But now I don’t care.” (qtd in Amireh “Framing” 238)
References


The Use of Simile in Charles Dickens’ HARD TIMES

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Abstract
As a literary work, Charles Dickens’ Hard Times is full of different themes expressed by various linguistic devices. The novel embraces several facts related to the author’s Victorian society. In Hard Times, the writer varies his style using different linguistic features. The most frequently used linguistic device in Hard Times is simile. The author has an objective behind the overuse of this figure of speech: Dickens wants to transmit his impressions and views towards the Victorians. This paper comes to examine two main issues. First, it attempts to clarify the status of simile in the novel. Second, it tries to elucidate the concept of simile by formulating an operational definition and assessing different theories on this figure of speech. Our study attempts to cast light on the author’s motives behind the use of such a figure of speech (simile). This investigation aims at laying a finger on Dickens’ overuse of simile in the novel, focussing on its structure and meaning. The adopted simile model is descriptive and it consists of particular structural and semantic components such as the tenor (T), the vehicle (V), the ground (G), the marker (SM) and the topic (Tp). All in all, this inquiry reveals that this linguistic device operates in an active manner and that the decoration’s view needs more reconsideration. Finally, some suggestions are presented for further research on the subject.

Keywords: Simile, tenor, vehicle, ground, simile marker.

Introduction
In the present study, the structural analysis of simile will be based on those theories of Leech (1969) and Fishelov (1993). The terms ‘tenor’, ‘vehicle’, ‘ground’, ‘marker’ and ‘topic’ are applied to refer to the component elements of simile. For instance, in the simile form, ‘Jane runs as a deer’, ‘Jane’ is the tenor (T), ‘a deer’ is the vehicle (V), ‘as’ is the simile marker (SM) and ‘running’ the ground (G). Besides, the topic (Tp) is ‘a description of Jane’. The marker is the determining factor in
simile: the latter will be a metaphor if its marker is omitted (Leech, 1969). If the two compared items (the tenor and the vehicle) belong to the same category, the simile will degenerate into a literal comparison (Miller, 1979).

**The Selected Simile Markers in the Study**

Aiming at investigating simile in *Hard Times* (HT), different simile markers are examined to know how they operate. These markers are often considered to make an open set, making it a difficult task to confine simile. There are, however, two structures, ‘like’ and ‘as’, which become apparent and clear by virtue of their frequency of occurrence in the novel. The simile marker, ‘as’, combines with other words to produce various structures. The following five simile markers form the basis of this investigation: ‘like’, ‘as’, ‘as…as’, ‘as if’ and ‘as though’. In order to facilitate the search for similes in the novel, the choice of these markers is one of convenience and of exhaustiveness. Intuitively, it can be said that these markers are at the core of simile.

Specifying the linguistic context of the five simile markers in the novel can help to exclude some citations. ‘As’ may not signal simile if it is immediately followed by conjuncts such as ‘to’, ‘yet’ and ‘for’:

“‘As to a stocking, I didn’t know such a thing by name. I passed the day in a ditch, and the night in a pigsty.’” (HT: 13)

Also, ‘As…as’ does not indicate the occurrence of simile if it is presented with words like ‘soon’, ‘well’, ‘often’, ‘much’ and ‘near’:

“Almost as soon as they could run alone, they had been made to run to the lecture-room.” (HT: 8)

**Investigation of Simile in Hard Times**

In this section, each simile marker in the novel is examined in order to see how it works. Different similes are studied, focussing on their syntactic structures.
a. Like

‘Like’ is often regarded as the prototypical simile marker. It is used in different structures in *Hard Times* to represent various topics. Dickens makes use of ‘like’ to talk about animate and inanimate topics, describing his characters and places. In the opening chapter of the novel, Dickens has recourse to simile, portraying Mr Gradgrind when he introduces his model philosophy to his pupils:

“The emphasis was helped by the speaker’s hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie [...]” (HT: 1)

Through this passage, the author portrays the character of Thomas Gradgrind, focussing on his head. He makes the comparison between two items, ‘the hair’ and ‘the crust of a plum pie’. Both items share the same quality that of ‘covering’. The (T) is ‘the speaker’s hair’, the (V) is ‘the crust of a plum pie’, the (G) is ‘covering’ and the (SM) is ‘like’. In addition, the (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Mr Gradgrind’. The way Gradgrind’s hair covers his bald head is similar to the one the crust covers the plum pie. Dickens attempts to give every detail about his characters. In this simile, he provides the reader with a full account of Gradgrind’s baldness. This kind of portrayal helps to emphasize the nature of such a character as a practical man who only worships facts. Gradgrind’s description shows that the author is “in full enjoyment of his own inventiveness” (Hyland, 1981: 65).

Dickens makes use of caricature to describe his characters’ physical appearance (Forster, 1990). For this purpose, he introduces similes to draw more details about the people he describes in the novel. His portrayal of Bitzer’s appearance defining the horse is another illustration of the use of simile in *Hard Times*:

“Bitzer, after rapidly blinking at Thomas Gradgrind with both eyes at once, and so catching the light upon his quivering ends of lashes that they looked like the antennae of busy insects, put
his knuckles to his freckled forehead, and sat down again.” (HT: 4)

Bitzer is not a usual human being; he is the product of his mechanical society. He gives a definition of a horse in the classroom in a robot-like manner (Hyland, 1981). In the above passage, Dickens describes Bitzer’s lashes as the antennae of an insect. Thus, the (T) is ‘Bitzer’s lashes’, the (V) is ‘the antennae of busy insects’ and the (SM) is ‘like’. The (G) is ‘quivering’: Bitzer’s lashes quiver as the antennae of the insects act. Besides, the (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Bitzer’.

Throughout *Hard Times*, Dickens continues to portray his characters’ appearance and actions. He describes Thomas Gradgrind (Tom) as follows:

“But, Louisa looked at her father with more boldness than Thomas did. Indeed, Thomas did not look at him, but gave himself up to be taken home like a machine.” (HT: 10-11)

In this case of simile, Tom is compared to a machine controlled by his father. Syntactically speaking, the (T) is ‘Tom’, the (V) is ‘a machine’ and ‘like’ is the (SM). The (G) of this comparison is ‘acting automatically’. Moreover, the (Tp) is ‘a depiction of Tom’. Tom follows the direction of his father without thinking or showing any feeling. Through this case of simile, the author illustrates the theme of harsh education in the Victorian society. Mr Gradgrind deprives his son of feelings and emotions. The use of the indefinite article, ‘a’, generalizes such a portrayal. In the instance above, the psychological impression is one of generalization combined with the mental imagery involved.

Dickens is often known for his wit to create special characters in his novels (Grant, 1984). The author uses simile as a means to give more details about his characters. His description of Josiah Bounderby’s appearance stands as another instance of the use of such a linguistic device in *Hard Times*:

“A man with a great puffed head and forehead, swelled veins in his temples, and such a strained skin to his face that it seemed to hold his eyes
open, and lift his eyebrows up. A man with a pervading appearance on him of being inflated like a balloon, and ready to start.” (HT: 12)

Referring back to the syntactic structure of simile, one will have the following elements:
- The (T) is ‘a man’ who is Mr Bounderby.
- The (V) is ‘a balloon’.
- The (SM) is ‘like’.
- The (G) on which the comparison between the two items is done is ‘inflating’. Bounderby is as round as a balloon.
- The (Tp) is ‘portraying Mr Bounderby’.

This portrayal of Mr Bounderby’s appearance enables the reader to have a full picture of his personal nature. This picture which is only associated with the Victorian environment can be regarded as a representative figure of those Victorian manufacturers. The author focuses on the roundness of Bounderby. It can be said that this character is typical of the caricatures of which he is known. Such a portrayal of Bounderby is Dickens’ picture of the self-made man of industry. Throughout the novel, Bounderby cannot stop his hypocritical accounts of his lowly origins. He proclaims his old poverty.

Dickens does introduce simile in order to add depth to certain issues in the story. These issues refer to the unpleasant reality of the Victorians during the Industrial Revolution. The author also uses simile to depict the bitter reality of the industrial town, Coketown:

“It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood it was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage.”

(HT: 19)

In this case, Dickens compares two items, ‘Coketown’ and ‘the painted face of a savage’. Both items have the same colour. Thus, the (T) is ‘Coketown’, the (V) is ‘the painted face of a savage’, the (G) is ‘darkness’ and the (SM) is ‘like’. The (Tp) of this simile is ‘a depiction of Coketown’. The writer tries to present to the reader a complete picture of this industrial town
with all its horror. Dickens criticizes the soulless architecture of this place.

The description of Mrs Sparsit’s appearance after losing Louisa at the station is another example of the use of simile in *Hard Times*:

“Wet through and through: with her feet squelching and squashing in her shoes whenever she moved; with a rash of rain upon her classical visage: with a bonnet like an over-ripe fig […].”

(HT: 192)

Syntactically speaking, the (T) is ‘a bonnet’, the (V) is ‘an over-ripe fig’ and the (SM) is ‘like’. In addition, the (G) on which the comparison is made between the (T) and (V) is ‘wet’: the bonnet is as wet as the over-ripe fig. The (Tp) is ‘a description of Mrs Sparsit’. Dickens appears to be enjoying poking fun at her in the scene in which she spies on Louisa and Harthouse (Hyland, 1981). This fun becomes immensely powerful when it is extended over hundreds of pages of the novel; it turns out to be a complete panorama of chaos and of people ridiculously pursuing selfish interests (Price, 1967). Through the portrayal of such a character, Dickens attempts to transmit his impressions and views to such members of the Victorian society.

The study of the syntax of ‘like’ is not an easy task, for one cannot clearly distinguish between its use as a conjunction and as a preposition. In the novel, it generally seems to behave as a preposition. Using some ‘like’ similes, the author tries to form mental connections, pushing the narration to an imaginary side by recreating it in the reader’s mind. The following instance, in which ‘like’ is used as a preposition, illustrates this motive of Dickens’ use of ‘like’ similes:

“Thus saying, Mrs. Sparsit, with her Roman features like a medal struck to commemorate her scorn of Mr. Bounderby, surveyed him fixedly from head to foot, swept disdainfully past him, and ascended the staircase.” (HT: 265)
In the above example of simile, the (T) is ‘Sparsit’s Roman features’, the (V) is ‘a medal struck to commemorate her scorn of Mr Bounderby’ and the (SM) is ‘like’. Moreover, the (G) is ‘distinctiveness’: Mrs Sparsit’s Roman features are as distinctive and unique as a medal. The (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Mrs Sparsit when Bounderby discharges her without any ceremony’. Although she falls from her exalted position as Bounderby’s housekeeper, Mrs Sparsit is still proud of her respectable family that has fallen down in these hard times. Through tackling this character, Dickens attacks the class-consciousness of England during the Victorian period (Hyland, 1981).

In brief, the simile marker, ‘like’, is used to describe characters, their actions and some places in the novel. Therefore, one may say that ‘like’ helps the writer to develop his plot and enhances narration of his story.

b. As
‘As’ is often considered to be one of the most important simile markers because it can combine with other words to form different structures. The author makes use of the marker ‘as’ in *Hard Times* to tackle different topics.

Throughout the novel, ‘as’ is used either as a preposition or as a subordinator, introducing a clause of similarity. In the following instance of simile, ‘as’ functions as a preposition.

Coming back home, Stephen meets Mrs Pegler, a mysterious old woman who asks him many questions about Bounderby’s health and appearance. Stephen satisfies her curiosity, giving her information about the so-called self-made man:

‘As she straightened her own figure, and held up her head in adapting her action to her words, […]
“And how did he look, Sir? Was he portly, bold, outspoken, and hearty?”
“And healthy,” said the old woman, “as the fresh wind”?
“Yes,” returned Stephen.’ (HT: 69)
In Mrs Pegler’s speech, the comparison is between Bounderby and the fresh wind. In this case of simile, the (T) is ‘Bounderby’, the (V) is ‘the fresh wind’ and the (SM) is ‘as’. Besides, the (G) is ‘healthfulness’. Bounderby is totally free from any illness and full of energy. The (Tp) is ‘a description of Bounderby’.

Another example of Dickens’ use of the ‘as’ simile can be detected in the following extract that records Thomas Gradgrind’s interview with Louisa about Bounderby’s proposal of marriage:

“‘Why, my dear Louisa,” said Mr. Gradgrind, completely recovered by this time, “I would advise you […]. Then, the question arises, Is this one disparity sufficient to operate as a bar to such a marriage? […].’” (HT: 87)

Mr Gradgrind tells Louisa that the difference in age is not a reason not to marry Bounderby. He asks her to consider the proposal of marriage in terms of tangible facts. In his speech, Gradgrind makes a comparison between this disparity and a bar, using the (SM), ‘as’. Thus, ‘disparity’ is the (T) and ‘a bar’ is the (V). The (G) on which the comparison is set is ‘stopping’. The bar is usually designed to stop people getting through a window or a door (Crowther, 1995). Moreover, the disparity of ages between man and woman can stop the project of any marriage. The (Tp) is ‘a depiction of disparity in age’. Through this interview between the father and his daughter, Dickens exposes the abuses of the Victorian system of education that is based on facts, suppressing any kind of affection or imagination. Dickens also makes use of ‘as’ similes in order to complete the make-up of his characters. He describes Mrs Sparsit as follows:

“All the journey, immovable in the air though never left behind; plain to the dark eyes of her mind as the electric wires which ruled a colossal strip of music-paper out of the evening sky, were plain to the dark eyes of her body; […].” (HT: 188)
At this time, Mrs Sparsit’s insane jealousy of Louisa reaches dramatic proportions (Hyland, 1981). Mrs Sparsit tries to spy on James Harthouse and Louisa. Portraying Bounderby’s housekeeper, Dickens makes a comparison between the dark eyes of her mind and the electric wires. In this simile, the (T) is ‘the dark eyes of her mind’, the (V) is ‘the electric wires’ and the (SM) is ‘as’. One notices that ‘as’ introduces a clause of similarity functioning as a subordinator. The (G) of this simile is ‘immovability’. Besides, the (Tp) is ‘a description of Mrs Sparsit’. Through such a portrayal, the author presents the vision of such an evil-minded woman who is pleased to witness secretly the private life of others. He gives her a fuller role than usually offered to his eccentric female characters (ibid.).

Moreover, Dickens portrays Tom Gradgrind in the final scenes of the novel in the following way:

“In a preposterous coat, like a beadle’s, with cuffs and flaps exaggerated to an unspeakable extent; in an immense waist-coat, knee-breeches, buckled shoes, and a mad cocked hat; […] anything so grimly, detestably, ridiculously shameful as the whelp in his comic livery, Mr. Gradgrind never could by any other means have believed in, weighable and measurable fact though it was. And one of his model children had come to this!” (HT: 254)

Realising Tom’s responsibility for robbing Bounderby’s bank, the Gradgrind family help their son to escape, urging him to join Sleary’s circus. Tom is disguised as a black servant. In depicting this act, the author uses simile, comparing Tom with the whelp in his comic livery. Thus, the (T) is ‘Tom’, the (V) is ‘the whelp’ and the (SM) is ‘as’. The (G) can be ‘worthlessness’ or ‘underhandedness’. Moreover, the (Tp) is ‘a description of Tom Gradgrind’. Tom does not represent a good example of the educational system of his father. He is a victim of his world that he is not able to understand. His great humiliation is to be found at the end of the novel, where he is shown as a black servant in contrast with his father’s ambitions. The word ‘whelp’ usually
has unattractive connotations if it is used to portray a human being (Hyland, 1981).

In short, the (SM), ‘as’, functions either as a preposition or as a subordinator in *Hard Times*. Dickens uses this marker in order to portray his characters and their actions.

c. *As...As*

One of the main simile markers used in *Hard Times* is ‘as...as’. This marker is thought to be introduced to intensify meaning, being possibly more effective than the other simile markers in this respect. Dickens does have recourse to ‘as...as’ to talk about different topics. He describes people, their actions and feelings, their mental states and verbal acts. He also depicts inanimate objects such as places in the novel. The author uses ‘as...as’ in a scene in which Bounderby, standing in front of the fire at Stone Lodge, talks to Mrs Gradgrind about the poverty he experienced in his childhood and the way he overcame all the obstacles to become a successful self-made man:

“[...] I passed the day in a ditch, and the night in a pigsty. [...] Not that a ditch was new to me, for I was born in a ditch.”

Mrs. Gradgrind, a little, thin, white, pink-eyed bundle of shawls, [...] Mrs. Gradgrind hoped it was a dry ditch?

“No! As wet as a sop. A foot of water in it,” said Mr. Bounderby.’ (HT: 13)

In his speech, Bounderby makes a comparison between two items, ‘the ditch’ and ‘a sop’. The ditch where Bounderby was born and the sop have the same characteristics. Thus, the (T) is ‘the ditch’, the (V) is ‘a sop’, the (SM) is ‘as...as’ and the (G) is ‘wet’. The (Tp) is ‘a depiction of the ditch’. To maintain the idea of being self-made, Bounderby does exaggerate everything about his childhood. He proclaims that the ditch was the place where he was born, considering it as a sop. Bounderby tries to show Mrs Gradgrind how miserable the life he lived was.

Dickens continues to make use of ‘as...as’ in order to describe his characters’ feelings and emotions. One of these
characters is Mr Signor Jupe. In the Pegasus’ Arms, where the circus’ people live, Childers (a character) informs the two men, Bounderby and Gradgrind, that Sissy’s father (Signor Jupe) has left the circus and his daughter. Childers argues that Signor did so because of a given reason:

‘“When Sissy got into the school here,” he pursued, “her father was as pleased as Punch. I couldn’t altogether make out why, myself, as we were not stationary here, being but comers and goers anywhere. I suppose, however, he had this move in his mind – [...].”’ (HT: 30)

In his speech, Childers regards Signor Jupe as Punch. The latter is a comic figure in a traditional puppet show; he is the husband of Judy, another puppet (Davis, 1999). In this case of simile, the comparison is between ‘Sissy’s father’ and ‘Punch’. Thus, the (T) is ‘Sissy’s father’, the (V) is ‘Punch’ and the (SM) is ‘as…as’. The (G), which is clearly stated, is ‘pleasure’. In addition, the (Tp) is ‘a description of Signor Jupe’. According to Childers, Signor left his daughter for her benefit. Sissy’s father was very happy and concerned that she ought to attend school.

The use of Victorian words such as ‘Punch’ is the way adopted by the author in *Hard Times* to introduce the Victorian culture to his readers. On these premises, Dickens is considered as one of the most important writers who represent the literary tradition of British realism during the nineteenth century. Throughout *Hard Times*, Dickens goes further in using similes for different purposes. In his conversation with Louisa, Tom says about Sissy Jupe:

‘“She must just hate and detest the whole set-out of us. They’ll bother her head off, I think, before they have done with her. Already she’s getting as pale as wax, and as heavy as- I am.”’ (HT: 45)

Within these words of Tom, there is a comparison made between Sissy and wax. ‘Sissy’ is the (T), ‘wax’ is the (V) and the (SM) is ‘as…as’. The explicit ground (G) on which the comparison is made is ‘paleness’. The (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of
Sissy’. Tom sees that Sissy does not become bright as usual as a result of Mr Gradgrind’s treatment and education. Through such a comparison, Dickens attempts to facilitate access to the narrative of the novel, forming mental connections.

The use of ‘as…as’ is clearly observed in the speech of Stephen when he meets an old woman called Mrs Pegler, Bounderby’s mother:

“‘Yes,’” returned Stephen. “‘He were ett’n and drinking- as large and as loud as a Hummobee.’”

(HT: 69)

Talking to Mrs Pegler, Stephen makes a comparison between two items, Bounderby and a humming bee. Following the syntactic structure of simile, the (T) is ‘Bounderby’ (he), the (V) is ‘a Hummobee’ and the (SM) is ‘as…as’. The ground (G) which is explicitly stated is composed of two qualities that are ‘largeness’ and ‘loudness’. The (Tp) is ‘a description of Bounderby’. Bounderby considers himself as a self-made man worthy of respect and esteem. His constant claim that he has achieved success without the help of anyone forces people to notice his place in their society.

The use of simile in the novel enables the reader to have a complete portrayal of each character, including his/her different characteristics. One of these characters is Tom Gradgrind. In Chapter Three of the Second Book, the reader is given the following account of Tom’s meeting with James Harthouse:

“‘He did, though,’” said Tom, shaking his head. ‘I mean to say, Mr. Harthouse, that when I first left home and went to old Bounderby’s, I was as flat as a warming-pan, and knew no more about life, than any oyster does.”’ (HT: 121-122)

In the above passage, Tom denies the usefulness of his father’s system of education. Tom confesses that neither him nor Louisa benefit from the philosophy of facts. To maintain this fact, ‘as…as’ simile is used in the above account. The comparison is made between ‘Tom’ and ‘a warming-pan’. The
(T) is ‘Tom’, the (V) is ‘a warming-pan’ and the (SM) is ‘as…as’. The (G) is clearly stated; it is ‘flatness’. Tom does not know anything about life when he leaves Gradgrind’s home. The (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Tom’.

Finally, one may conclude that the simile marker, ‘as…as’, is used for different purposes in *Hard Times*. Dickens has recourse to it in order to handle various topics. In ‘as…as’ similes, the ground is explicitly cited. This marker is often regarded as another form of ‘as’.

d. As If

It can be said that the use of ‘as if’ in the novel is due to certain motives of the writer. This marker usually introduces a hypotactic clause; it functions as a subordinating conjunction (Quirk et al, 1972). Dickens makes use of such a marker in portraying human beings, in depicting their actions and emotions, and in describing inanimate objects. Describing Sissy’s reaction after losing her father, the author uses simile to emphasize the nature of her make-up:

“It was so pathetic to hear her saying many things
of this kind, with her face turned upward, and her
arms stretched out as if she were trying to stop his
departing shadow and embrace it […].” (HT: 33)

In the above passage, the comparison is made between two actions. The first is ‘stretching out arms’ and the second is ‘trying to stop her father’s shadow’. Following the syntactic structure of simile, the (T) is the act of ‘stretching out her arms’, the (V) is the act of ‘trying to stop her father’s shadow’ and the (SM) is ‘as if’. The vehicle is an expanded clause that is of an action-oriented nature. Besides, the (G) of this simile is ‘extending’. The (Tp) is ‘a description of Sissy’. After a long search for her father, Sissy comes back home, running into his room. At that moment, she cannot understand his disappearance. Sissy, who represents the world of wonder, begins to call her father, being sure of his coming back. The subjunctive, ‘were trying’, denotes a hypothetical state.
Through the use of ‘as if’ simile, Dickens portrays Mr Bounderby after talking to one of his employees, Stephen Blackpool:

“So he left Mr. Bounderby swelling at his own portrait on the wall, as if he were going to explode himself into it [...].” (HT: 68)

In this instance of simile, the (T) is ‘Mr Bounderby’, the (V) is the state of ‘exploding himself into his portrait’ and the (SM) is ‘as if’. In addition, the (G) is ‘swelling’. The (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Mr Bounderby’. The heart of Bounderby swells with pride at his power and achievement. He always claims that he makes success without the help of anyone. Bounderby considers himself as a benefactor of his employees. As a Victorian manufacturer, he is concerned with nothing but self-assertion and material success; he is a “Victorian ‘rugged individualism’ in its grossest and most intransigent form” (Leavis and Leavis, 1972: 253).

Mrs Sparsit, Bounderby’s housekeeper, is often treated with inordinate respect by her employer. However, her humiliation is to be found at the close of the novel, where she is blamed by Bounderby for hunting down his mother, Mrs Pegler. Dickens describes Mrs Sparsit’s reaction to this blame, using ‘as if’:

“This allusion to her favourite feature overpowered Mrs. Sparsit. She sat down stiffly in a chair, as if she were frozen; and with a fixed stare at Mr. Bounderby, slowly grated her mittens against one another, as if they were frozen too.” (HT: 233)

In this example of simile, the comparison is made between Mrs Sparsit and a frozen item like ice. Therefore, the (T) is ‘Mrs Sparsit’ (She), the (V) is ‘a frozen item’ (ice) and the (SM) is ‘as if’. The (G) of simile is ‘coldness’. The (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Bounderby’s housekeeper’. Such a description destroys any sense of dignity this old woman wants to convey (Hyland, 1981).
Another place which is frequently depicted throughout the novel is the industrial town, Coketown. Using ‘as if’ simile, the author describes this town at the daybreak as follows:

“The town was as entirely deserted as if the inhabitants had abandoned it, rather than hold communication with him. Everything looked wan at that hour. Even the coming sun made but a pale waste in the sky, like a sad sea.” (HT: 147)

In the above description, Dickens compares Coketown to a place left by its people such as a desert. Hence, the (T) is ‘Coketown’, the (V) is ‘a place that is abandoned by its inhabitants’ (a desert) and the (SM) is ‘as if’. The (G) is ‘desertion’. In addition, the (Tp) is ‘a depiction of Coketown’. The author’s actual portrayal of Coketown comes in contrast with its previously mentioned description in the first chapters of the novel. He attempts to introduce to the reader another real scene of this town at the end of the working hours. Coketown is grimly depicted as a desert where there could be no one to talk to. Dickens presents a frightening picture of this town. Such a description reveals a hostile atmosphere: Coketown seems not to be a city for human beings. Readers can get the impression that Dickens’ main concern is of a particular sort of a social novelist who is anxious to show the evils of his society (Miller, 1965).

By using ‘as if’ similes, Dickens tackles different topics. The (SM), ‘as if’, usually functions as a subordinating conjunction, introducing a hypotactic clause (Quirk et al, 1972). In the latter, the author uses the subjunctive mood which refers to a hypothetical state (Leech and Svartvik, 1975). In this respect, one deduces that the subjunctive parallels the indefinite article as a means for generalization.

e. As Though

‘As though’ is considered as an old form of ‘as if’. As a subordinating conjunction, it also expands into a hypotactic clause. In *Hard Times*, this simile marker is used to talk about characters, their actions, their feelings and inanimate items.
In the second opening chapter of the novel, Dickens emphasizes the physical appearance of Bitzer, Gradgrind’s pupil, making use of ‘as though’:

“His skin was so unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge, that he looked as though, if he were cut, he would bleed white.” (HT: 4)

First, the author describes Bitzer’s skin as an unnatural one. Then, he uses simile, comparing Bitzer with something that can be cut. Hence, the (T) is ‘Bitzer’, the (V) is ‘something that can be cut into parts’ and the (SM) is ‘as though’. The (G) is ‘being colourless’. Besides, the (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Bitzer’. Bitzer is described as an anaemic and colourless child. He is a product of Gradgrind’s system of education to which he has been subjected. Dickens gives Bitzer lifeless features. He appears to be intent on depicting Bitzer in uniformly repulsive terms. Bitzer is not a usual human being; he is a machine and a product of the Victorian mechanical age.

Further, Dickens has recourse to ‘as though’ simile to depict some places in the novel. Among these places are the little Gradgrinds’ cabinets which are described as follows:

“The little Gradgrinds had cabinets in various departments of science too. […], and the bits of stone and ore looked as though they might have been broken from the parent substances by those tremendously hard instruments their own names […].” (HT: 9)

In the above example of simile, the comparison is made between the bits of stone and ore and their parent substances. Thus, the (T) is ‘the bits of stone and ore’, the (V) is ‘their parent substances’ and ‘as though’ is the (SM). Moreover, the (G) is ‘hardness’. The (Tp) is ‘a depiction of the bits of stone and ore’. Dickens presents another fact of the grim architecture of Coketown’s buildings. Such a depiction emphasizes the unpleasant nature of the Victorian industrial environment. Throughout the novel, the writer never tires of depicting the threatening environment of the industrial towns of England. Using simile, Dickens also introduces Louisa, Gradgrind’s
daughter, discussing with her father Bounderby’s proposal of marriage:

“As she said it, she unconsciously closed her hand, as if upon a solid object, and slowly opened it as though she were releasing dust or ash.” (HT: 90)

In the above extract, the comparison is between Louisa’s action of opening her hand slowly and her action of releasing dust or ash. Thus, the (T) is the act of ‘opening hand slowly’, the (V) is the act of ‘releasing dust or ash’ and the (SM) is ‘as though’. Moreover, the (G) is ‘the slow motion’. Louisa’s act of opening her hand is so slow as the motion of dust or ash. The (Tp) is ‘a portrayal of Louisa’. The author attempts to describe how confused Louisa is; she confronts her father with questions concerning the neglect of the development of imagination in her person. Louisa is an exceptional character among Dickens’ heroines because “she has some inkling of the more passionate side of marriage and is even prepared to talk about it” (Carey, 1973: 161). She is “something of a breakthrough” for the author, escaping the two categories of pure maid and frump (ibid: 162).

Further, the author makes use of ‘as though’ simile to depict the scene in which Mr Gradgrind begs his old pupil not to arrest his son. Gradgrind tries to appeal to Bitzer’s good nature that is lacking:

‘“Bitzer,” said Mr. Gradgrind, stretching out his hands as though he would have said, See how miserable I am!’ (HT: 258)

In the above account, Dickens compares Gradgrind’s action of stretching out his hands to the act of saying “See how miserable I am!”’. Hence, the (T) is the act of ‘stretching out his hands’ and the (V) is the act of saying, “See how miserable I am!”’. Moreover, the (SM) is ‘as though’ and the (G) is ‘appealing’. Mr Gradgrind stretches out his hands to appeal to Bitzer not to arrest Tom. The (Tp) is ‘a depiction of Mr Gradgrind’. Although Mr Gradgrind begs Bitzer not to do anything against Tom, Bitzer thinks that he would be able to take over a good position at Bounderby’s bank only if he
apprehends Gradgrind’s son. The author tends to be suggesting the importance of feelings and wonder to be set against an inhumane society, where there is no recognition of individual needs and fancy.

In short, the (SM), ‘as though’, is used to deal with various topics, describing different people and places. This marker operates in a similar way as ‘as if’, even though the latter is the unmarked choice (Leech and Svartvik, 1975).

Reconsideration of The Concept of Simile
Different definitions of simile are provided by various linguists in several dictionaries. These definitions are usually regarded to be brief and to come in a form of comparison. It is also thought that they are vague and ambiguous at times. Cuddon (1992) defines simile as:

“A figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, in such a way as to clarify and enhance an image. It is an explicit comparison […] recognizable by the use of the words ‘like’ and ‘as’. It is equally common in prose and verse […]”. (Cuddon, 1992: 880)

Most instances of simile that are taken from Hard Times reflect the facts that the above definition refers to. Nevertheless, the ambiguity is evident in the case that sentences like ‘She is like her father’ which is not a simile, but a literal comparison, will satisfy Cuddon’s definition. Drabble (1985: 905) states that simile is a linguistic device in which “an object, scene, or action, introduced by way of comparison for explanatory, illustrative, or merely ornamental purpose, e.g. ‘as strong as an ox’”. Further, Crowther (1995: 1102) defines simile as “a comparison of one thing with another,” giving instances with ‘as…as’ and ‘like’, e.g. “a face like a mask”.

All the above definitions maintain the nature of simile as a comparison. However, they still require more details to convey the precise concept of this linguistic device. One can restate these definitions, avoiding their brevity and ambiguity. Thus, simile is thought to be a comparison between two unlike items,
aiming at describing and intensifying the meaning of the first item. This kind of comparison is recognised by the use of words, such as ‘like’, ‘as’, ‘as…as’, ‘as if’ and ‘as though’. ‘Like’ and ‘as’ are frequently used in similes to depict places and people’s actions. ‘As…as’ is often introduced to describe people. ‘As if’ and ‘as though’ are usually used to explain people’s actions. In the simile form, indefinite articles and subjunctives are used to generalize the comparison.

The use of simile leads the reader/listener to a mental frame of reference (Hatch and Brown, 1995). Similes intensify the meaning of words and can create new meanings without the use of new words (Hawkes, 1972). Overall, simile is considered as the most tangible form of metaphor, the latter being the blanket term which includes different figures of speech.

**Conclusion**

This paper attempted to investigate the use simile in Dickens’ *Hard Times*, laying a finger on the author’s motives behind the use of such a linguistic device. Different simile markers were dealt with to identify the syntactic structure of simile and its meaning. The apparent ones in the novel are ‘like’, ‘as’, ‘as…as’, ‘as if’ and ‘as though’. The author has various objectives behind the use of such a device. He uses simile in a number of ways to facilitate access to the narrative of *Hard Times*. It appears that Dickens’ motive behind the use of simile originates in the fact that he feels restricted by language. To a large degree, he uses the selected markers in material processes through the characters to develop the plot. He creates living characters that they go on living outside the book (Leavis and Leavis, 1972). Thus, the author may be attempting to move the reader to a parallel, mental world in his/her mind. The use of indefinite articles and subjunctives lends support to this view and can be as another indication of Dickens’ attempt to generalize the issues tackled in his novel. The author may also have a psychological motive in using this device, aiming at involving the reader in a cognitive mode with a view to enhance narration. Thus, the semantic creativity in similes is both linguistic and psychological. The ultimate objective seems to be the recreation of the story in the reader’s mind by means of
meaning intensification. Similes may be thus more functional than decorative as they were previously thought. The present study raises some questions; the more answers are obtained, the more questions arise. The syntactic arrangement of the simile markers exhibited few irregularities in the form of variant structures and unusual similes. Thus, the distinction between poetic and non-poetic forms of simile deserves closer investigation because it is an interesting issue to tackle. Finally, we hope that this study has helped to throw some light on the use of simile in literature.
References


Understanding and Redefining Different Capacities Required of Professional Interpreters in the Gaza Strip, Palestine

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Abstract
Palestinian interpreters are facing big challenges as they are dealing with two languages that are different not only linguistically but also culturally. Things are exacerbated by the fact that the present situation in the Gaza Strip shows that practicing interpreters are lacking the theoretical and practical experiences as well as the interpreting skills. The lack of proper training coupled with a severe shortage in training facilities and equipment and the absence of translation and interpreting specializations in Palestinian universities have led to erroneous translations and interpretations provided by unqualified interpreters. This paper investigates the current interpreting situation in the Gaza Strip and redefines the skills and capacities required by professional interpreters in the Gaza Strip, Palestine. Specifically, the present study seeks to provide answers to the following three questions provided by thirty professional interpreters, making the population of the present study.
1. What skills and capacities should a Palestinian professional interpreter have?
2. What other additional skills an interpreter should have at their disposal?
3. What are the main challenges facing Palestinian interpreters?

Keywords. Interpreter training, Interpreting skills and capacities, Shortage in training facilities and equipment, Interpreting challenges.

Introduction:
Interpreting is the process where one spoken or signed language is transferred into another spoken or signed language (CiLT, 2006: 11). Interpreters interpret between two languages in such a way that effective communication takes place between the participating language speakers/signers. The interpreter interprets one-way (e.g. from Arabic into English during
presentations and lectures) and/or two-way (e.g. during meetings, discussions and consultations). S/he interprets consecutively, i.e. in chunks or simultaneously, i.e. at the same time as the language is spoken or signed.

In Palestine the demand for translation and interpreting has steadily increased. According to El Fagawi (2000), this is due to the Palestinians’ belief that English has become the language of international negotiation through which they can tell the world about their problem. This motivational interest in English and especially in translation and interpreting increased after the Oslo Agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis. As a result, Gaza and the West Bank have become a major focus of international media attention, with large numbers of journalists from all over the world visiting the area to cover the political situation. These journalists are willing to listen to all Palestinians, including ordinary people in the street. At the same time, the Palestinian people have shown much interest in talking with these journalists about their painful experiences with the occupation. In most cases, the journalistic delegations hire local interpreters in order to facilitate their communication with ordinary people. Palestinian interpreters are also employed by the local government to help facilitate discussion between leaders and dignitaries, meaning that their level of fluency is vital to translating nuanced and detailed meaning. However, the lack of qualified translators and interpreters and the absence of effective and systematic training in translation theory and interpreting have led to erroneous translations and interpretations, resulting in distorted communication and misunderstanding. In this regard, Masoud (1988: 10) is right when she says:

More often than not, new translators dive into translation work thinking that because they speak two languages, they are qualified for the task.

Masoud’s statement makes it clear that translators and/or interpreters depend on their language experience to practice
translation and/or interpreting, a view which is also shared by Baker (1992:4).

Translators need to develop an ability to stand back and reflect on what they do and how they do it. Like doctors and engineers, they have to prove to themselves as well as others that they are in control of what they do; that they do not just translate well because they have a ‘flair’ for translation, but rather because, like other professionals, they made a conscious effort to understand various aspects of their work (ibid: 4).

In the Departments of English of Gaza universities, the two translation modules which are a major requirement of the degree of BA in English Language and Literature are taught by specialists in EFL and linguistics; none of them has a qualification in translation or interpreting. Some graduates however have professional diplomas in translation and interpreting. The one -year diploma, run by the Continuous Education and Community Service Unit (henceforth CECSU) at the Islamic University of Gaza, provides trainees with professional and practical training in translation and interpreting. However, most graduates (personal communication and through the questionnaire responses) have said that the training they received falls short of their expectations. As an interpreter trainer at the CECSU, I have realized that interpreters and translators lack translation competences and appropriate interpreting skills to properly qualify for the market. Given this situation, the graduates of English departments as well as the professional diploma graduates will join the profession dependent on their intuition and experiences, without possessing the appropriate training and theoretical tools needed for the job. In order to fully understand the situation of interpreting in the Gaza Strip and the training programmes available for translators and interpreters, this paper will discuss the following:
- An overview of the situation of translation and interpreting at Gaza universities.
An Overview of the Situation of Translation and Interpreting at Gaza Universities

Two translation modules are currently taught at Gaza universities which are a major requirement of the degree of BA in English Language and Literature. The Islamic University of Gaza and Al Azhar University have recently introduced a third translation module for the students at the Faculty of Arts as an elective course. These courses are taught by specialists in EFL and linguistics; none of them has a qualification in translation or interpreting. Although the course descriptions of these courses clearly state that the main objective is to introduce students to translation theory and train them to translate from English into Arabic and vice versa, the training students receive either at the undergraduate level or at the professional diploma in translation falls short of meeting the requirements of the markets. In a recent exam for sworn translators conducted by The Ministry of Justice, none out of the 33 candidates has passed the translation exam. Being part of a three-member committee who designed and marked the exam, the researcher noticed that the candidates' answers showed poor mastery of the mother as well as the target language. The candidates also lacked the proper translation techniques as they had a strong tendency for literal translation, sticking to the source text word order without paying attention to the textual considerations of the target language (El Haj Ahmed, 2009).

The translation and interpreting modules taught at the professional diploma emphasize building students' linguistic competences rather than building their interpreting and translation skills. These modules are taught by specialists in EFL, linguistics and sometimes literature, who depend on their professional interpreting and translation experiences without having the proper translation or interpreting training. Some however have acquired on-the-job experiences though they do not have any qualifications in interpreting or translation. In addition, the interpreting rooms, where students practice
interpretation, lack the proper equipment that enable trainees to improve their interpreting skills.

Survey Participants and Data
The questionnaire used in the present study is based on two previous studies. The first is Bontempo and Napier's (2007) and the second is Locker Mckee's (2008). The former identified several competences required by sign language interpreters as criteria of quality in interpreting, while the latter discussed quality in interpreting from the perspective of spoken and signed language interpreters. The anonymous questionnaire (See Appendix) was sent by email to thirty interpreters, providing a small but representative sample of local interpreters' views. The interpreters work in different settings across the Gaza Strip; twenty work with NGOs serving the local people, six working with journalists covering the current conflict, two working as conference interpreters and two are working with the Gaza-based government.

Nineteen interpreters hold a professional diploma in translating and interpreting from the Islamic University of Gaza; eight hold BAs in English language and literature; two hold PhDs in Linguistics and one holds an MA in translation and interpreting. Twenty interpreters have a relatively short period of experience ranging between 1-4 years; two have between 5 to 10 years; one has over thirty years and seven have had no training.

As for the validity of the questionnaire, the researcher asked his colleagues at the department of English, Islamic University of Gaza to modify and give opinions about the questionnaire items and how far they reflect the significance and purpose of the study. These colleagues are experienced. They lecture in translation and linguistics; they gave valuable feedback and suggested slight but important changes on some items.

After analysis, the researcher discussed the survey findings with a group of interpreters and translators currently doing a professional diploma in translation and interpreting at
the Islamic University of Gaza; the feedback and the points raised by the group discussion reinforced the conclusions reported in this study.

Findings of the Study

What skills and capacities should a Palestinian professional interpreter have?

Rate the following interpreting skills in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 the least important:

- cultural awareness
- mastery of the mother tongue
- tact and diplomacy
- research skills
- familiarity with information technology
- communication management skills
- note-taking skills

Participants were asked to rank the previous interpreting skills in their order of importance. The participants' responses and their percentages are shown in the figures below.

![Figure 1: Interpreters' first important capacities](image)

As seen in Fig.1 the concept of *mastery of the mother tongue* came as the most important skill required by the interpreters with twenty-two responses (73%) followed by *cultural awareness* with 6 responses (20%) and *communication and management skills* with 2 responses (7%). Giving the biggest number of responses to *mastery of the mother tongue* is a clear indication of the importance that the interpreters give to
this concept as one of the main requirements for interpreting training.

In Fig. 2 Cultural awareness was rated as second in importance with thirteen responses (44%) followed by note-taking skills with 7 responses (23%), mastery of the mother tongue with 5 responses (17%), communication and management skills with 4 responses (13%) and tact and diplomacy with 1 response (3%). In discussing the importance of cultural awareness with a number of interpreters they emphasized that a good knowledge of the source culture and the target culture is vital for interpreters to deal with any cultural incompatibilities that they may encounter in interpreting.

In Fig. 3 cultural awareness, note-taking skills and communication and management skills came third in place with eight responses each (27%). This is followed by research skills with 3 responses (10%) and mastery of the mother tongue, familiarity with information technology and tact and diplomacy with one response each (3%).
In Fig. 4 Tact and diplomacy was in the fourth place with seven responses (26%) followed by note-taking skill and research skills with six responses each (23%). Familiarity with information technology, communication and management skills and cultural awareness had two responses each (8%), while Mastery of the mother tongue had one response (4%).

In Fig. 5 research skills was in the fifth place with eight responses (28%) followed by tact and diplomacy with 7 responses (23%). This is followed by note-taking skills with 5 responses (17%), while familiarity with IT and communication management skills had 4 responses each (13%). Mastery of the MT and Cultural Awareness had one response each (3%).
In Fig. 6 *Familiarity with IT* came sixth in place with ten responses (32%) followed by *research skills* with 8 responses (27%). *Common management skills* and tact and diplomacy had 5 responses each (17%), while *Note-taking skills* had two responses (7%).

In Fig. 7 *familiarity with IT* came seventh in place with 13 responses (43%) followed by *tact and diplomacy* with eight responses (27%) and *research skills* with 6 responses (20%). *Note-taking skills* had two responses (7%), while *common management skills* had one response (3%).
As shown in Fig 6 and Fig 7 interpreters gave least attention to familiarity with IT. Despite the importance of IT for interpreters (See Sandrelli & De Manuel Jerez, 2007: 274-297) one reason is that interpreters consider the other skills more important and should be given more attention.

Add any skills an interpreter should have at their disposal?
The participants were also asked to add other capacity skills that they need. The following are the skills that participants believe they need alongside those mentioned in 4.1 (with number of responses shown in brackets):

Mastery (Good command) of the TL (13)
  Ability to concentrate (8)
    Background knowledge (7)
  Calm voice and public-speaking skills (7)
  Self confidence (7)

The participants' responses show that while the concept of mastery of the mother tongue came as the most important skill required by the interpreters (See Fig. 1), Mastery (Good command) of the TL was seen as the most important additional skills that interpreters need.

Other features that participants mentioned as important include:
  Ability to analyze and construe facts (6)
Skills in summarizing large chunks of spoken discourse (5)
Quick response (5)

Other features mentioned by fewer than five participants included:
- Good trained memory (3)
- Intuition (3)
- Punctuality (3)
- Impartiality (3)
- Qualification in interpreting (2)
- Having a wide-range experience and ample practice in different interpreting modes (2)
- Skills in different varieties of spoken English (American, British, Australian, Indian, Irish, and others) (2).
- Excellent listening skills (listening for main ideas-specific items) (2)
- Interpreter's physical and psychological state (2)

What are the main challenges encountering Palestinian interpreters?
This study asked participants to identify the most challenges encountering Palestinian interpreters. In order of frequency the interpreters' responses were as follows:
- Lack of training facilities and equipment (28)
- Lack of exposure and practice in different varieties of spoken English (9)
- Less opportunities to travel abroad to mix with native speakers due to the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip (8)
- Lack of translation and interpreting specializations at Palestinian universities (7)
- Not focusing on a specific field or an area of specialization (5)
- Lack of cultural knowledge (5)
- Non-existence of a league protecting interpreters' rights (4)
- Unfamiliarity of interpreting as a discipline among the Palestinian community (3)
Employing interpreters on political affiliations and physical appearances of interpreters (3)
Employers hiring interpreters with interpreting experience, a practice limiting opportunities for less experienced interpreters to find an adequate job. (3)

As seen above, the lack of training facilities and equipment is the biggest challenge encountering Palestinian interpreters. Most interpreters reported that the training institutions in Gaza lack the proper training facilities and equipment. They added that most of the training is carried out traditionally where trainers read texts aloud and student interpreters provide interpreting accordingly. Alternatively, trainers ask interpreters to listen to a recorded material and provide a proper mode of interpreting.

Lack of exposure and practice in varieties of spoken English came as the second biggest challenge. Interpreters reported that they find difficulties to interpret when they encounter varieties of English they are unfamiliar with, calling for more exposure to varieties of English. Lack of translation specialization as well as lack of interpreting and translation academics may affect the quality of interpreting and translation. Some added that the programs and courses available in Gaza are not as efficient as those available in other Arab or Western countries, either theoretically or practically.

While cultural awareness was reported to be one of the significant skills required by interpreters, the lack of cultural background knowledge affects the quality of interpreting. As a result, breakdown or misinterpretation usually occurs when the interpreter cannot make sense of what is being said. Empirical analysis of interpreted communication has highlighted the primacy of interpreters' background knowledge and discriminatory listening skills (Miguelez 2000)

Other difficulties the participants noted include:
Disregarding ethical values of the profession (2)
Cultural and social differences between the source language and the target language (3)
Linguistic differences between the source language and the target language (2)
Some words having no equivalents in the target language and vice versa (2)
Lack of communication skills and fluency (2)
Speaking in a good accent (1)
Absence of good models (1)
Importance of developing interpreting service due to the Palestinians' desperate needs to explain their political problem worldwide (1)
Difficulty of collocations (1)
Difficulties in language fluency (1)

Discussion and Conclusions
Interpreters in this study ranked and identified the most important capacities required by Palestinian interpreters as well as the main challenges encountering them. The competencies and interpreting skills identified in this survey are not dissimilar to the categories of ideal competencies identified by practitioners in Bontempo and Napier’s (2007). Perhaps, most interesting in the survey results is the rating of the mastery of the mother tongue as the most important capacity, which is seen as an indication of the participants’ awareness of the role mother tongue can play in maintaining proper rendition. Equal importance was given to the mastery and good command of the target language. The study also highlighted the significance of cultural background knowledge as interpreters believe that a sufficient knowledge of the cultures of source language and target language can make a difference for interpreters.

Interpreters in this study identify the main challenges as lack of training facilities and equipment as well as lack of specialized academics. This supports Pym's findings (2002) that one of the constraints in translation departments is that one can find a generation of language teachers conveying communication skills of which they have virtually no professional experience”. This finding highlights the need for basic training programmes for interpreter trainers that take into account the anticipated market needs as well as the needs of students. This should be followed by the provision of the state-
of-the-art facilities that help teachers offer appropriate interpreter education. The study also revealed the need for establishing a professional body for translators and interpreters that protects their rights and promotes their progress. The establishment of such a professional body will help Palestinian interpreters and translators be in contact with other colleagues, both nationally and internationally. In addition, the study calls for a shift in interpreter training – a shift from a teacher-centered approach towards a learner-centered. Hartley et al (2003:2) point out that though interpreter training relies heavily on self-directed study, classroom-based practice is almost entirely teacher-led. They further go on to say:

Currently, many if not most interpreter training programmes still apply a trainer-centered approach where expert-trainers, as the source of expertise and authority, play the major role in judging and assessing trainee interpreters' performance. However, the acquisition of interpreting skills by trainees requires not only professional guidance during classes, but also extensive practice outside these hours. In reality, therefore, trainee conference interpreters rely heavily on group practice and feedback from peers – targeting both language proficiency and communicative competence – to advance their interpreting skills and performance.

The researcher hopes that the findings of this research paper will have significant implications for the training and education of Palestinian interpreters across many sectors.
Bibliography


*Encountered by Palestinian EFL Learners at the Islamic University of Gaza, Palestine, PhD Thesis*, The University of Salford.


**Appendix: Survey Questions**

1. Gender:  M  □  F
2. Age:
3. What type of consumers do you usually work with? *Tick the ones that apply.*
   - □ NGOs
   - □ Government
   - □ International conferences
   - □ Others, please specify.
4. How long have you been working as an interpreter?
5. Have you got any interpreting and/or translation qualifications?
6. Have you received any professional training?
7. What skills and capacities should a Palestinian professional interpreter have?
   Rate the following interpreting skills in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important:
   - □ cultural awareness
   - □ mastery of the mother tongue
   - □ tact and diplomacy
   - □ research skills
   - □ familiarity with information technology
   - □ communication management skills
   - □ note-taking skills
8. Add any skills an interpreter should have at their disposal?
9. What are the main challenges facing Palestinian interpreters
Identification of Specific Language Impairment in Multilingual Contexts: Preliminary Validation of a Short Parental Bilingual Questionnaire in Lebanon*

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Abstract
Assessing children with Specific language Impairment (SLI) in multilingual contexts is challenging for speech language therapists given that language patterns in bilinguals and in children with SLI are often reported to be remarkably similar and that screening language tests are not standardized on bilingual populations. The present study aims to validate the use of a parental questionnaire focusing on early language development, the languages spoken by the child, the use of languages in his/her environment, and information on linguistic difficulties within the family, as a complement to language assessment in multilingual contexts. Thirty-three Lebanese/French bilingual children (12 with SLI and 21 with typical development) and their parents participated in this study in Lebanon. The parents were interviewed via the questionnaire while the children were administered standardized language tests in each language. Data analysis showed that the parents’ answers to the questionnaire were coherent throughout and that some variables of the questionnaire strongly discriminated between the two groups of children, in particular the age of the first words and first sentences. Moreover, although significant correlations were found with language test scores, the answers to the questionnaire allowed us to refine the interpretation of the performance on the standardized tests, thus demonstrating the value of the parental questionnaire as a complementary tool to clinical evaluation.

Keywords: Specific Language impairment, Bilingualism, Parental questionnaire, Lebanese, French
Introduction

This article focuses on the assessment of language disorders in multilingual environments. The most common language disorder in childhood is Specific Language Impairment (SLI). SLI is a behaviourally defined syndrome affecting language development: Language is slow to emerge and remains impaired through childhood and beyond ([1], [2], [3], [4]). Crucially, children with SLI don’t show any signs of neurological damage or hearing loss, or any deficits in motor skills and non-verbal intelligence. SLI is usually diagnosed in children via standardized language tools, such as the New tasks for the examination of language (N-EEL) battery in French.

Accurate identification of SLI in bilinguals is a challenge because the language tests used by speech language therapists (SLT) are not appropriate for this population since they were initially standardized on monolinguals ([5], [6], [7], [8]). Interpreting the scores obtained on these tests by bilingual children is therefore impossible. Moreover, comparative studies looking at language development in children with SLI and children learning a second language (L2) have reported striking parallels between the two populations, especially in grammatical morphology [9], such as use of tense and subject-verb agreement (for English) and object clitic production (for French) ([10], [11], [7]). Consequently, there are widespread concerns about diagnosing SLI in multilingual societies. The risk of not understanding the nature of language difficulties in bilingual children, that is, whether they are related to bilingualism or SLI, is real. Diagnostic errors such as under-identification or over-identification of language difficulties may emerge ([12], [7]) due to the lack of appropriate tools to assess children in situations of multilingualism ([13], [8]). Thus, new diagnostic procedures become necessary in such contexts.

The multilingual context of Lebanon is a prime example of the challenges faced by SLTs. In Lebanon, Lebanese is spoken by the majority of the population (93%), along with
foreign languages such as French and English, which are widely used by the population (45% and 40% respectively). Modern Standard Arabic is also taught at school ([14], [15], [16], [17]). Moreover, in schools, most teaching is done in the L2 ([14], [17]). This is not without consequences for language development and mastery of languages in Lebanese children. External factors, such as length of exposure and context of exposure to the different languages, as well as use of language and linguistic richness should be taken into account during the assessment and diagnosis of language disorders. Due to the recent appearance of the speech language therapy profession in Lebanon and to the lack of standardized assessment tools, the diagnosis of SLI is very difficult to reach. To date, professionals and clinicians have been using qualitative assessments of language, which may lead to faulty identification of children with and without SLI. This has become a public health problem.

In order to address this situation, current trends in international research have highlighted the use of parental questionnaires as a measure for identification of SLI in bilingual children. Such questionnaires have been found to be an accurate source of information on the child’s early milestones and current language skills ([18], [19]). A preliminary study on the so-called Beirut Tours Questionnaire [20], which was largely inspired by Paradis’ (2010) ALEQ questionnaire, was conducted in Beirut [21]. It showed that the questionnaire could be used in the Lebanese context, allowing reliable evaluation of the language skills of the children. The study also demonstrated that the questionnaire could discriminate between bilingual children suspected of SLI (Bi-SLI) and typically-developing bilingual children (Bi-TD), that is children who had not been diagnosed with SLI. Following this pilot study a revised version of the questionnaire entitled "Questionnaire for Parents of Bilingual Children " (PaBiQ) (COST Action IS0804) was developed in order to make it shorter and simpler to use by SLTs.

The primary objective of the present study is to perform

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21 COST Action IS0804, « Language Impairment in a Multilingual Society : Linguistic Patterns and the Road to Assessment » (http://bi-sli.org/).
a preliminary validation of the PaBiQ on a larger Lebanese population (from different parts of the country), and with more Bi-SLI children (there were only seven of them in the previous study). Data on the developmental history, context of language use, linguistic abilities of the child, as well as information about the parents were collected through the questionnaire. These data were then confronted to the results of the children on standardized tests in order to determine whether the PaBiQ could distinguish between Bi-SLI and Bi-TD children and thus whether it could be used as a complementary tool for the diagnosis of SLI in Lebanon.

**Method**

**Participants**

Thirty-three bilingual children participated in the study. There were 21 bilingual Lebanese/French children in the TD group (8 girls and 13 boys) with an age range of 5;7 to 6;6 ($M = 6;3$ and $SD = 0;3$), as shown in Table 1. These children had not been identified for language difficulties and had no motor problems and no sensory or neurological disorders. They were recruited in three regions across Lebanon: North, South and Greater Beirut. The majority of Bi-TD children were exposed, from birth, to Lebanese (20/21) and to French (18/21). The mean age of exposure to Lebanese was 2.08 months ($SD = 10.14$); for French, it was 5.04 months ($SD = 13.12$).

The second group consisted of 12 Lebanese/French children (7 boys and 5 girls) who were identified as having SLI by SLTs. They didn’t display any associated disorders, such as epilepsy. They were recruited in Classes Orange (a special school for children with difficulties), the Speech and Language therapy Center of Saint Joseph University of Beirut and in the Aida Naffah Najjar Speech and language therapy center. They were aged between 5;7 and 7;10 ($M = 6;8$ and $SD = 0;7$). All Bi-SLI children were exposed to Lebanese from birth. This was also the case for French for some of the children (3/12). For others exposure to French started when they were 1 year old (3/12), 2 years old (3/12) or 3 years old (3/12). The mean age of exposure to French was 18 months ($SD = 13.16$) (see Table 1).
Table 1: Details on the participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Age (SD)</th>
<th>Age-range</th>
<th>Age of first exposure to Lebanese (SD)</th>
<th>Age of first exposure to French (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TD</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6;3 (0;3)</td>
<td>5;6-6;7</td>
<td>2.08 (10.14)</td>
<td>5.04 (13.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLI</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6;6 (0;7)</td>
<td>5;8-7;8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18 (13.16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age is represented as x;y.z, where x=number of years, y=number of months, and z=number of days

**Materials and procedures**

**Assessment of oral language**

Two standardized test batteries were used to assess the language skills of the participants in each language. The assessment of Lebanese was done via the Evaluation of Oral Language - Lebanese (ELO-L) battery [22], which is an adapted version of a French battery, Evaluation of Oral Language [23], to Lebanese.

As shown in Figure 1, significant differences between the Bi-TD and Bi-SLI groups emerged on each sub-test of the ELO-L (Receptive lexicon, Oral Comprehension, Lexicon in production, Word repetition, Sentence production) and on the global score. However, low scores were obtained by the Bi-TD children on Oral comprehension (-1.61) and sentence production (-0.75).

Figure 1: Between-group comparisons of ELO-L sub-tests and global z-scores (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)
Assessment of French was done via four sub-tests of the N-EEL [24]: oral morphosyntactic comprehension (SYNT COMP), Morphosyntactic expression (SYNT EXP), Expressive vocabulary 1 (EXP VOC 1), and Receptive vocabulary 1 (Recep VOC 1). For phonology we used the Word repetition (Word Rep) sub-test of the BILO 3 battery [25]. The results are displayed in Figure 2. As can be seen, although the two groups differed significantly on almost every measure, low scores were obtained on a vast majority of sub-tests for both groups of children. For the Bi-TD children, this was particularly true for Morphosyntactic expression (-1.35), Expressive vocabulary 1 (-1.76), and Receptive vocabulary 1 (-3.50).

Figure 2: Between-group comparisons of N-EEL and BILO 3 sub-tests z-scores (*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$)

To summarize, results on standardized tools revealed significant between-group differences for all ELO-L sub-tests
and for almost all sub-tests in French. Low performance was also displayed by the Bi-TD children on some measures in Lebanese and in French, which in some cases could be interpreted as a cause for concerns. These results, however, should be considered with caution because of the bilingual situation of the children, and they were further analysed via the parents’ answers on the PaBiQ.

**Assessment of non-verbal IQ**

Raven’s progressive Matrices (Raven, 1964) were administered to all participants in order to evaluate their non-verbal IQ. All Bi-TD children had scores above the 5th percentile ($M = 18$ and $SD = 4.88$), except for one. For the Bi-SLI group, the mean was $14$ ($SD = 5.8$), with three children scoring below the 5th percentile.²²

**Parental questionnaire**

We prepared a Lebanese and a French version of the PaBiQ which included the same sets of questions:
- Specific and open-type questions, leading to numerical or nominal answers (e.g. *At what age did your child produce his/her first word?*)
- Closed-type questions leading to a yes or no answer (e.g. *Before your child was 3 or 4 years old, were you worried about his or her language?*)
- Single choice questions, leading to scores on a numerical scale (e.g. *Before the age of 4, was your child in contact with Lebanese? 0=never (0%); 1=rarely (25%); 2=sometimes (50%); 3=often (75%); 4=always (100%)*)

The PaBiQ consists of seven sections covering the following topics:
1. General information about the child (e.g. date and place of birth; languages currently spoken by the child)

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²² Since the initial recruitment of Bi-SLI children was made upon the « label » assigned to SLI in Lebanon, we chose to keep the children with low scores on Raven’s Matrices in the study.
2. Early milestones (e.g. age of first word and first sentences; age of first exposure to the language, language exposure context before the age of 4)
3. Current language skills (in comparison with the child’s peers) in terms of (1) expressive abilities, (2) level of performance in a language, (3) capacity in formulating correct sentences, (4) parental satisfaction with respect to the child’s expressive language, (5) possible frustration of the child during communication failures.
4. Languages used at home (with parents, siblings and family members)
5. Language use outside the home during routine activities (reading, watching TV, etc.) and with the child’s friends. A score of linguistic richness is calculated for each language.
6. Information about the parents: (1) place of birth, (2) current occupation and language(s) used at work, (3) education level, and (4) proficiency level in Lebanese, French and English (via self-assessment).
7. Parents’ and siblings’ difficulties in (1) reading and writing skills, (2) language comprehension, and (3) oral expression.

The interviews took place at the family’s home or at the workplace. Questions were asked orally in French or in Lebanese to one parent, most often the mother, or to both parents. Administration of the questionnaire took about 15 to 20 minutes.

Results
PaBiQ: Coherence of the answers
The coherence of the answers given by the parents throughout the PaBiQ was verified via Spearman correlations between global and composite scores on various sections of the questionnaire.

Developmental history, history of language exposure and current language skills
Two variables related to developmental history, age of the first word and age of the first sentences, were significantly correlated with each other among all participants ($r_s = 0.849; p < 0.001$). This was also found looking at each group separately. Moreover,
as shown in Table 2, the age of the first word and the age of the first sentences were negatively correlated to the global score of current language skills in Lebanese and French.

### Table 2: Correlations between developmental history variables and total scores on current language abilities (*p* < 0.05; **p** < 0.01; ***p** < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental history</th>
<th>Current language skills (Lebanese)</th>
<th>Current language skills (French)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of first word</td>
<td>-0.337*</td>
<td>-0.594***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of first sentences</td>
<td>-0.394**</td>
<td>-0.618***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, variables related to the current language skills section were correlated with one another in all participants for Lebanese and French, thus showing the parents’ ability to evaluate the proficiency of their children in the two languages. As shown in Table 3, strong correlations were found between the composite score of expression abilities compared to the child’s peers for each language, as well as with the score of sentence production, the parents’ satisfaction with the language capacities of their children, and the global score of current language skills. A significant correlation was also found between expression abilities and the evaluation of the children’s frustration in Lebanese, while significance was almost reached for French.

### Table 3: Correlation between variables of current language skills in Lebanese and French (*p* < 0.05; **p** < 0.01; ***p** < 0.001)
Negative correlations were also found between the global score of current skills in one language and variables related to age of exposure, frequency of exposure, length of exposure and context of exposure to the language, as shown in Table 4. For Lebanese, the global score of current language abilities was correlated with length of exposure and with the global score of context of exposure, but not with age of exposure, nor with length of exposure. This can be explained by the fact that most participants started learning Lebanese from birth and had had a long-term exposure to the language. For French, the global score on current language skills was negatively correlated to all measures of exposure, except for Context of exposure.

Table 4: Correlations between composite scores of current language skills in French and Lebanese and variables related to the history of exposure to these languages (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current language skills (global score)</th>
<th>Age of exposure</th>
<th>Frequency of exposure</th>
<th>Length of exposure</th>
<th>Context of exposure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>0.254</td>
<td>-0.619***</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>-0.525***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>-0.608**</td>
<td>0.697**</td>
<td>0.382*</td>
<td>0.229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use of languages, language richness and current language skills

Significant correlations were observed between the global score of current language skills in each language and the composite scores for use and richness. This is particularly true for French,
as shown in Table 5. The global score of current language skills in French was correlated to the use of French with the mother and siblings, as well as with the total score of use, and it was correlated with linguistic richness in French, especially with use of French during activities.

Table 5: Correlations between composites scores of current language abilities in Lebanese and French and specific variables related to language use and richness (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current language skills (global score)</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Richness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Siblings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.432*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>0.598***</td>
<td>0.470**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information on parents and correlations with other sections of the questionnaire

As shown in table 6, the parents’ proficiency level in French was highly correlated with length of exposure and context of exposure. No such correlations were found for Lebanese.

Table 6: Correlations between level of parents in French and variables related to history of exposure (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency in French</th>
<th>Length of exposure</th>
<th>Context of exposure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>0.419**</td>
<td>0.591***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.364**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between-group comparisons of PaBiQ section scores

In order to understand the extent to which the PaBiQ data distinguished between Bi-TD and Bi-SLI children, between-group analyses were conducted on PaBiQ section scores and for individual questions within each section. The results are
reported in Table 7. Significant differences between the two
groups emerged for each section, especially on the
developmental history and early milestones and on current
language skills. Comparisons between the two groups did not
reveal significant differences regarding length of exposure to
Lebanese since all participants had been exposed to this
language from birth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PaBiQ variable</th>
<th>( U )</th>
<th>( p )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of word</td>
<td>57.5***</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of first sentences</td>
<td>47***</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of exposure to Lebanese</td>
<td>205.5</td>
<td>0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of onset (French)</td>
<td>57.5**</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanges with mother (Lebanese)</td>
<td>72**</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score of current language skills (Lebanese)</td>
<td>44**</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score of current language skills (French)</td>
<td>31***</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PaBiQ reliability: Confronting answers to scores of
standardized tools**

In this section we confront parental responses to the scores of
the children on the standardized tests in order to examine the
reliability of the questionnaire.

**Developmental history**

Age of first word and first sentences were negatively correlated
with all the scores of the ELO-L test, including the global score
(age of first words:  \( r_s = -0.520 ; p < 0.01 \); age of first sentences:
\( r_s = -0.605 ; p < 0.001 \)). Recall that the ELO-L tool had been
standardized on the multilingual Lebanese population. Fewer
significant correlations were found between the variables of developmental history and the scores on the tests evaluating French (Table 8). This particularly applied to vocabulary measures, which yielded almost no significant correlations.

Table 8: Correlations between the variables of developmental history and the scores on French tests (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PaBiQ variable</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic expression</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic comprehension</th>
<th>Expressive vocabulary</th>
<th>Receptive vocabulary</th>
<th>Word repetition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of first word</td>
<td>-0.372*</td>
<td>-0.353*</td>
<td>-0.347*</td>
<td>-0.311</td>
<td>-0.703***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of first sentences</td>
<td>-0.367*</td>
<td>-0.351*</td>
<td>-0.299</td>
<td>-0.246</td>
<td>-0.720***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**History of language exposure**

Significant negative correlations were observed between all ELO-L scores and frequency of exposure to Lebanese ($r_s = -0.276; p < .05$) and the length of exposure to Lebanese ($r_s = -0.386; p < 0.01$). We did not find any significant correlations between age of exposure or context of exposure to Lebanese and ELO-L scores.

**Current language skills**

Significant correlations were found between the global score of current language skills in Lebanese and French and most scores of the standardized tests, as shown in Tables 9 and 10. Similarly, correlations were found between some components of the current language skills and standardized test scores. These are shown for French in Table 10.
Table 9: Correlations between current language skills in Lebanese and ELO-L scores among all participants (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current language skills global score</th>
<th>Receptive lexicon</th>
<th>Oral Comprehension</th>
<th>Lexicon in production</th>
<th>Word repetition</th>
<th>Sentence production</th>
<th>Global score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current language skills global score</td>
<td>0.464**</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.379**</td>
<td>0.351*</td>
<td>0.334*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Correlations between variables related to current language skills and standardized test scores in French among all participants (*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PaBiQ variable</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic expression</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic comprehension</th>
<th>Expressive vocabulary</th>
<th>Receptive vocabulary</th>
<th>Word repetition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>0.365*</td>
<td>0.435*</td>
<td>0.481**</td>
<td>0.382*</td>
<td>0.617***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison monolinguals</td>
<td>0.542**</td>
<td>0.454**</td>
<td>0.587***</td>
<td>0.509**</td>
<td>0.714**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence production</td>
<td>0.466**</td>
<td>0.493**</td>
<td>0.539**</td>
<td>0.472**</td>
<td>0.765***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.402*</td>
<td>0.475**</td>
<td>0.478**</td>
<td>0.440*</td>
<td>0.613***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>0.507**</td>
<td>0.282</td>
<td>0.465**</td>
<td>0.414*</td>
<td>0.348*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score</td>
<td>0.519***</td>
<td>0.513**</td>
<td>0.627***</td>
<td>0.566**</td>
<td>0.780***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language Use and richness

We also investigated the relationship between language use and children’s performance on the standardized tests. Statistical analyses did not reveal any significant correlations between the global score on the ELO-L test and the global score of language use in Lebanese. However, significant negative correlations were found between the global score of the ELO-L test and the use of Lebanese with the mother ($r_s = -0.408; p < 0.01$) and the father ($r_s = -0.280; p < 0.05$). For French we found significant positive correlations between the global score of French use and richness on the one hand, and the scores on standardized tests on the other hand (Table 11).

Table 11: Correlations between variables related to French use and richness and children’s scores on standardized tests (*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PaBiQ variable</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic expression</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic comprehension</th>
<th>Expressive vocabulary</th>
<th>Receptive vocabulary</th>
<th>Word repetition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global score of use</td>
<td>0.560*</td>
<td>0.422*</td>
<td>0.635**</td>
<td>0.600**</td>
<td>0.484**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richness</td>
<td>0.431*</td>
<td>0.389*</td>
<td>0.511**</td>
<td>0.500**</td>
<td>0.474**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

The objective of this study was to conduct a preliminary validation of the PaBiQ (COST Action IS0804) in the multilingual context of Lebanon, with a focus on French and Lebanese. Specifically, we collected information on bilingual Lebanese/French children, some diagnosed with SLI, some not, by asking 25 questions to their parents about their developmental history, the history of exposure to languages, language use and language abilities. This information was then confronted to the results of the participating children on standardized tests in each language. Our aim was to examine
whether the answers to the questionnaire were coherent, whether they could distinguish between the two groups of bilingual children, and whether the questionnaire could be used as an additional tool in clinical evaluation in multilingual contexts.

Statistical analyses of the questionnaire data revealed multiple correlations across different sections showing the logic and consistency of the parents' responses. For example, the developmental history variables were significantly correlated with the variables dedicated to language skills. In fact, the age of the first words and sentences produced by the children was a strong developmental predictor of language delay and appeared to be a major warning sign of language disorder [26]. In addition, parents were able to provide consistent answers related to the two languages. We found that variables related to the history of exposure to one language and to the use of this language were negatively correlated with the same variables for the other language.

In addition, analysis of the results showed that the PaBiQ data could discriminate between Bi-TD and Bi-SLI children. This applied not only to various composite scores, but also to the majority of questions when taken individually. The largest differences between the two groups were obtained on variables related to early milestones and current language skills. This confirms previous findings reported in the literature ([18], [21], [27]).

The confrontation of the questionnaire variables to the scores on standardized language tests led to a variety of significant correlations for both French and Lebanese. These correlations covered the entire population of our study, as well as each group of children (TD and SLI) taken separately. For Lebanese, we found that the sooner the children started producing their first words and sentences, the higher their scores on the ELO-L test. By contrast, we found a negative correlation between the scores on the ELO-L test and age on the one hand, and exposure to Lebanese on the other, regardless of the way the children were grouped (all children, Bi-TD children only, or Bi-SLI children only). Moreover, the relationship between the
scores on the ELO-L test and other variables, such as use of Lebanese and richness in Lebanese, was not very strong. These findings are reminiscent of attrition, a phenomenon also noted in research on bilingual children in Canada [18]. In Lebanon, children receive a lot of exposure to the L2 once they start going to school (out of 30 hours of teaching per week, 23 on average are done in the L2 [17]). This sustained exposure could have a strong (negative) influence on the retention and perfection of the L1 [28], Lebanese in the case of our study. Attrition is also described as gradual and it may even go unnoticed, as reported in previous research [29]. In addition, it is important to note that in Lebanon the L2 is highly valued as it is often associated with academic success. This situation could explain the low scores obtained by some of the Bi-TD children on the ELO-L test.

In contrast to Lebanese, no systematic correlations were observed between the age of the first words and sentences produced by the children and the scores on the standardized sub-tests for French. Moreover, the parents’ evaluation of their children’s language skills in French was consistent with the performance on all sub-tests in French. Similar results were reported in L2 Spanish [19]. These results held when we analyzed Bi-TD scores separately, which reflects the heterogeneity of proficiency in French, contrary to what was observed for Lebanese. No correlations were found in the Bi-SLI group, which means that the language skills of the children were fairly homogeneous (and low).

Regarding the contact with the L2, a positive correlation was found between, on the one hand, age of first exposure to French and use of French in the children’s environment, and their scores on the N-EEL and BILO 3, on the other hand. These findings show the importance of age of onset and the quality and quantity of input in the L2 acquisition process. Regarding linguistic richness in the L2, which was related to the children’s activities in the questionnaire, we should point out that in Lebanon most cultural and television programs for young children are in French, which can widely influence their skills in the L2. However, these latter observations apply mostly to Bi-TD children; no correlations were found between richness in
French and the scores on the standardized tests in the Bi-SLI group.

What can be concluded from the discussion on the relationship between the data from the questionnaire and the standardized language tests is that in order for the scores obtained by bilingual children in their L2 to be better interpreted, it is necessary to look at their developmental history and use of the L2 in their environment. This seriously calls into question the appropriateness of language batteries standardized on monolinguals in assessing language skills in bilingual children, which is common practice in Lebanon [8]. By contrast, greater sensitivity to language skills was observed with the ELO-L test, which was calibrated on a multilingual Lebanese population, than with the N-EEL and BILO 3. As an example of the inappropriateness of language tests standardized on monolinguals and of the way the questionnaire can shed light into the interpretation of the scores obtained by bilingual children, we focus on the case of RIR, one of the Bi-TD children. RIR’s global score for the ELO-L test was slightly below average, without being pathological (-0.69); for French, the scores were very low (e.g. Morphosyntactic expression: -2.46; Morphosyntactic comprehension: -2.67; Vocabulary in production 1: -4.22, and Receptive vocabulary 1: -13.73). These very low scores could lead to the conclusion that this child was at risk of SLI, which was not confirmed by the performance on the ELO-L test. The questionnaire provides evidence suggesting that in fact RIR’s proficiency in French should be higher than what the scores on the French tests seemed to indicate. In particular, the age of RIR’s first words and first sentences was normal, and the answers to the questionnaire suggested that the child’s environment was very favorable to L2 development.

We end this section with a discussion on the use of the PaBiQ in clinical practice. The PaBiQ could be particularly useful in contexts where direct examination of a child’s L1 development is limited or impossible. For example, assessing language skills in Armenian children in Lebanon is challenging due to the lack of standardized tools in Armenian. Moreover,
Armenian-speaking SLTs are rare in Lebanon. However, it is important to stress that the PaBiQ is not a diagnosis tool, even though our results have shown that it could discriminate between Bi-TD and Bi-SLI children; rather, the PaBiQ data should be used as a complement to the information gathered through direct examination of children’s language skills. In order to further examine the discriminatory power of the PaBiQ, this questionnaire should be proposed to first-coming multilingual families in Lebanon before an assessment is made and a diagnosis is reached. The PaBiQ should also be investigated with other language combinations, such as Lebanese/English.

**Conclusion**

In this study, we have shown that parents’ answers to the PaBiQ were consistent throughout and we have confirmed the validity of the questionnaire to a large population of Bi-TD and Bi-SLI children. In addition, the study has highlighted the discriminatory power of the questionnaire with respect to SLI, in particular the questions related to developmental history and current language skills. Confrontation of PaBiQ data to scores on standardized tests in the L2 revealed the limitation of tools calibrated on monolinguals for language assessment in Lebanese bilingual children. This finding should encourage clinicians to be careful about the use of such tests and to rely on additional information for the interpretation of the scores via the parental questionnaire. In cases where direct examination of language skills is limited, the PaBiQ can become essential as a screening tool.
References


Representing Characters' Speech and Thought in R. M. Ballantyne’s the Coral Island

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Abstract
This paper aims to examine the representation of characters' speech and thought in R. M. Ballantyne’s The Coral Island. The Victorian novel belongs to the Robinsonade, island, adventure and children’s literature tradition. Three boys, are shipwrecked to a coral island of the South Seas. They have enjoyed the beauty of the paradise-like coral islands and had amazing experiences. On the other hand, they have encountered conflicts from different sources: nature, pirates and the natives who are savages, cannibals and bloodthirsty. United against all sources of antagonism, they have returned back home to set a victorious/adventurous example/model to young English teenagers. The analysis, here, adopts an integrated approach of language and literature. For the purposes of linguistic analysis, the researcher adopts a modified stylistic speech and thought presentation model (Short 1996: 286-311). The check-list of linguistic indicators of point of view, with some modification, is from Short (1996): given vs. new information/definite and indefinite articles, schema-oriented language and deixis/value-laden expressions. The discussion and results in this research show how speech and thought presentation is utilized in away to reveal how Ballantyne uses the “The Coral Island” as a carrier of ideology to represent colonial and imperial values that are characteristic of the Victorian age.

Keywords: Stylistics, Speech and Thought Presentation, Coral Island, Victorian Age, Colonial and imperial values

Introduction
The Coral Island: A Tale of the Pacific Ocean is Ballantyne's most famous novel. "Never out of print since 1858, it has an undoubted right to the status of a children's classic" Bratton (1990: vii). The story is an adventure story. It belongs to the Robinsonade tradition where the writer is inspired by Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Siegl (1996: 3).
The novel is a first-person-narrative where Ballantyne uses Ralph, one of the protagonists, as a narrator:
Roving has always been, and still is, my ruling passion, the joy of my heart, the very sunshine of my existence. In childhood, in boyhood, and in man’s estate I have been a rover; not a mere rambler among the woody glens and upon the hill-tops of my own native land, but an enthusiastic rover throughout the length and breadth of the wide, wide world, Ballantyne (1858: 1).

Three boys—Jack, eighteen; Ralph, fifteen; and Peterkin Gay, thirteen—are shipwrecked to a coral island in the South Seas. Throughout the novel, they lead an ideal cooperative life. They have enjoyed their earthly paradise: beauty, food and drink. Also, they love each other and the events moved towards a romantic happy end.

The novel can be divided into three parts. The first part describes the happy beginning and how the boys have enjoyed a wonderful experience on an earthly paradise. They are united, adventurers and explorers. The middle part illustrates the rising action and development of the conflict. It is an external conflict with nature, savage natives and later English pirates. The third part portrays how the boys, with the help of the missionaries, are able to overcome their problems and lead to a happy ending. They are successful basically because they are: English, Whites and Christians. Through adopting a stylistic approach and applying a modified framework based on Short's (1996) model (Sections 2, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3), this paper exemplifies how The Coral Island's statues as a children's classic can be questioned. The narrator/author seems to use the character's speech and thought as a carrier of ideology representing imperial and colonial values. The next section addresses Short's model and ends up with a modified framework that is utilized for the purposes of this study.

1. Speech and thought presentation strategies
Stylistics involves an in-depth analysis of individual literary works or extracts, in order to relate specific linguistic choices to potential meaning and effect, Semino (2004: 429). This
approach represents a major strength of the stylistic practice. She asserts:

[F]or all the controversy that sometimes surrounds the linguistic study of literature, explicit, rigorous, and sensitive linguistic analysis provide invaluable insights into the working of texts and language generally, as well as useful hypotheses and explanations with respect to readers' interpretations.

Speech and thought presentation is a crucial aspect of narratives. It has received the attention of many scholars in the field of stylistics: Banfield (1973), Mchale (1978), Leech and Short (1981) Fludernik (1993), and Short (1996).

Novelists utilize a range of strategies for the presentation of characters' speech and thought to enable readers understand "the motivation for the action and attitudes of characters," Leech and Short (1981: 337). It also indicates that "the narrator was taking on that character's view point" (288). Simpson (1993: 211-218) stresses the value of selecting one mode of speech and thought presentation in favor of another. It may affect the distance between the narrator and a particular character—degree of empathy or ironic distance. In addition, it is:

[A]n opportunity to explore relatively systematically narrative techniques such as "stream of consciousness" and "interior monologue" and to provide explanations of these terms with much greater degree of descriptive rigor than that found in the corresponding hand-me-down definitions in dictionaries of literary terms.

One of the most broadly acknowledged frameworks for speech and thought presentation is Leech and short's (1981) model and a later account appears in Short (1996).

Short (1996: 288-325) proposes six parallel categories of speech and thought presentation which show different degrees of narrators' interference and can be distinguished from the levels of their linguistic form, their effects and functions.

**Short's speech presentation model:**
1. Direct Speech (DS)
2. Free Direct Speech (FDS)
3. Indirect Speech (IS)
4. Free Indirect Speech (FIS)
5. Narrator's Representation of Speech Acts (NRSA)
6. Narrator's Representation of Speech (NRS)
7. Narrator's Representation of Actions (NRA)

The above modes are expected to allow the reader to determine in what way she or he is close to the character as in (FDS, DS and FIS) or distant form the character towards the narrator/author's end as in (NRA).

**Short's thought presentation model:**
1. Direct Thought (DT)
2. Free Direct Thought (FDT)
3. Indirect Thought (IT)
4. Free Indirect Thought (FIT)
5. Narrator's Representation of Thought Acts (NRTA)
6. Narrator's Representation of Thought (NRT)
7. Narrator's Representation of Actions (NRA)

These different degrees indicate how far or close readers are to the thoughts of characters as in (FDT) or to the narrator as in (NRT).

**Modified framework based on Short's model**
For the purposes of this research, Short's model will serve as part of a modified framework for the analysis of characters' speech and thought presentation in Ballantyn's *the Coral Island*. It consists of three stages:
1. Critical reflections about the novel
2. Speech and thought presentation analysis (Short's model)
3. Linguistic indicators of point of view (Short 1996) combined with the stylistic effect on interpreting and understanding The Coral Island.

The first stage serves as an introduction to the analysis. It provides background information including a plot summary, themes, setting and critical comments on the text. The second stage describes different techniques used by Ballantyne to present his characters’ speech and thought and this will be followed by the stylistic effect of such use on enhancing readers interpretation and understanding. The third stage offers further linguistic support to initial interpretive impressions in stages 1 and 2. This stage shows how Ballantyne chooses particular words and expressions in a way that allows the reader to construct a viewpoint about the story and come up with conclusions that are supported by linguistic evidence. Linguistic indicators of point of view in this study are derived—with some modification—from Short (1996: 286-7): given vs. new information/definite vs. indefinite reference, schema-oriented language, deixis/value-laden expressions.

Extracts for Analysis
Part One
(1) ROVING has always been, and still is, my ruling passion, the joy of my heart, the very sunshine of my existence. (2) In childhood, in boyhood, and in man's estate, I have been a rover; not a mere rambler among the woody glens and upon the hill-tops of my own native land, but an enthusiastic rover throughout the length and breadth of the wide wide world (Coral Island: 1).

(3) They told me of thousands of beautiful fertile islands that had been formed by a small creature called the coral insect, where summer reigned nearly all the year round,--where the trees were laden with a constant harvest of luxuriant fruit,--where the climate was almost perpetually delightful,--yet where, strange to say, men were wild, bloodthirsty savages, excepting in those favored isles to which the gospel of our Savior had been conveyed. (4) These exciting accounts had so great an effect
upon my mind, that, when I reached the age of fifteen, I resolved to make a voyage to the South Seas (CI: 3)

(5) My mother gave me her blessing and a small Bible; and her last request was, that I would never forget to read a chapter every day, and say my prayers; which I promised, with tears in my eyes, that I would certainly do (CI: 5)

(6) My heart sank within me; but at that moment my thoughts turned to my beloved mother, and I remembered those words, which were among the last that she said to me--"Ralph, my dearest child, always remember in the hour of danger to look to your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (7) He alone is both able and willing to save your body and your soul." (8) So I felt much comforted when I thought thereon (CI: 10).

(9) I knew that we were on an island, for Jack had said so, but whether it was inhabited or not, I did not know. (10) If it should be inhabited, I felt certain, from all I had heard of South Sea Islanders, that we should be roasted alive and eaten. (11) If it should turn out to be uninhabited, I fancied that we should be starved to death (CI: 16).

(12) "Do you know what conclusion _I_ have come to?" said Peterkin. (13) "I have made up my mind that it's capital,--first rate,--the best thing that ever happened to us, and the most splendid prospect that ever lay before three jolly young tars. (14) We've got an island all to ourselves. (15) We'll take possession in the name of the king; we'll go and enter the service of its black inhabitants. (16) Of course we'll rise, naturally, to the top of affairs. (17) White men always do in savage countries. (18) You shall be king, Jack; Ralph, prime minister, and I shall be--" "The court-Jester," interrupted Jack (CI: 16).

Part Two
(19) From all these things I came at length to understand that things very opposite and dissimilar in themselves, when united, do make an agreeable whole; as, for example, we three on this our island, although most unlike in many things, when united, made a trio so harmonious that I question if there ever met
before such an agreeable triumvirate. (20) There was, indeed,
o note of discord whatever in the symphony we played together
on that sweet Coral Island; and I am now persuaded that this
was owing to our having been all tuned to the same key, namely,
that of _love_! (CI: 124).

(21) "For my part I don't know, an' I don't care, what the gospel
does to them; but I know that when any o' the islands chance to
get it, trade goes all smooth an' easy; but where they ha'nt got it,
Beelzebub himself could hardly desire better company" (CI:
213).

(22) "As for the missionaries, the captain favors them because
they are useful to him. (23) The South-Sea islanders are such
incarnate fiends that they are the better of being tamed, and the
missionaries are the only men who can do it" (CI: 214).

**Part Three**

(24) "Oh! My dear young friend, through the great goodness of
God you are free!"

(25) "Free!" cried Jack.

(26) "Ay, free," repeated the teacher, shaking us warmly by the
hands again and again; "free to go and come as you will. (27)
The Lord has unloosed the bands of the captive and set the
prisoners free. (28) A missionary has been sent to us, and Tararo
has embraced the Christian religion! (29) The people are even
now burning their gods of wood! (30) Come, my dear friends,
and see the glorious sight" (CI: 332).

(31) In the conversation that immediately followed between us
and Tararo, the latter said that the light of the gospel of Jesus
Christ had been sent to the island and that to it we were indebted
for our freedom (CI: 333-334).

(32) During the short time that we remained at the island,
repairing our vessel and getting her ready for sea, the natives
had commenced building a large and commodious church, under
the superintendence of the missionary, and several rows of new
cottages were marked out; so that the place bid fair to become,
in a few months, as prosperous and beautiful as the Christian village at the other end of the island (CI: 337).

**Position of extracts in relation to text**

_The Coral Island_ is about different widespread themes such as: children's adventure without adult's supervision, English vs. savagery, white vs. black, civilizing influence of missionaries, spreading Christianity, importance of hierarchy and leadership. Modern critics point out darker undertones such as: British imperialism, colonial domination, superiority of the white race, and the civilized good white Christian English vs. the 'other' primitive bloodthirsty cannibal savage (Siegl: 1996) and Bengtsson (2012).

For the purposes of this research, the researcher have chosen three extracts, one from each part (See section 1) of the novel and each extract consists of a number of excerpts.

**Critical reflections on The Coral Island**

_The Coral Island_ is an adventure story. It reflects the values of its time, the Victorian Age. The novel is published towards mid-nineteenth century during the expansion of the British Empire. Bratton (1990), Siegl (1996) and Bengtsson (2012) declare the story a product of its time entailing didactic and colonial/imperial values.

Ballantyne's heroes are all boys. The text is intended to be read by a masculine reading community. In his preface, the first person narrator Ralph Rover states:

I was a boy when I went through the wonderful adventures herein set down. With the memory of my boyish feelings strong upon me, I present my book specially to boys, in the earnest hope that they may derive valuable information, much pleasure, great profit, and unbounded amusement from its pages.

One word more. If there is any boy or man who loves to be melancholy and morose, and who cannot enter with kindly sympathy into the regions of fun, let me seriously advise him to shut my book and put it away. It is not meant for him (The Coral Island: xxx).
The choice of male characters reflects male-domination in the Victorian Age. The boy/man reader is invited to take the characters in the fictional world as an ideal example in order to identify with their mind-set, discover and enjoy the attributes Ballantyne admires in them. They are perceived as: English, Whites, Christians, united, courageous, energetic, brave and lovers of adventure in faraway countries. Women on the other hand have a very minor role in the narrative and masculinity is reinforced through its heroes only. This situation seems an implicit invitation for teenage readers to leave their home land and go outward to join colonial and imperial activities anywhere in the world.

*The Coral island* is clearly informative and didactic. It lends itself to historical and cultural instruction. The boys return to the state of nature leaving their parents, schools and society to pursue an adventure where they become closely related to nature. They are shipwrecked to a tropical island which is an excellent setting for instruction. Jack, Ralph and Peterkin have arrived to the island empty-handed. Like the first human beings, they provide their own food, drink, and shelter. In addition, they protect themselves against various dangers: nature, blood-thirsty natives and merciless European pirates. In this context, the boys are dependent on themselves and there is no need for mothers and fathers to provide a living for them. Consequently, Ballantyne encourages his characters and readers to be ready and leave home to the colonies.

Scientific instruction has significant space in *The Coral Island* where it includes a great deal of geographical, biological, geological and zoological information. For example, Jack points out the importance of reading:

“I’m not up to everything, Peterkin, as you’ll find out ere long,” replied Jack with a smile; “but I have been a great reader of books of travel and adventure all my life, and that has put me up to a good many things that you are, perhaps, not acquainted with (CI: 25).

Moreover, learning through observation is successfully employed in *The Coral Island*. The three boys have learned a lot
through observation. They have dived to the bottom of the lagoon where they have seen wonderful creatures such as coral formation and unusual marine plants: "Our burning-glass, also, now became a great treasure to me, as it enabled me to magnify, and so to perceive more clearly, the forms and actions of these curious creatures of the deep" (CI: 61).

Through Ralph, Ballantyne presents advice to his young readers:

[A]course of conduct which I have now for a long time myself adopted—namely, the habit of forcing my attention upon all things that go on around me, and of taking some degree of interest in them whether I feel it naturally or not. I suggest this the more earnestly, though humbly, because I have very frequently come to know that my indifference to a thing has generally been caused by my ignorance in regard to it (CI: 123).

Scientific thinking and instruction are significant aspects of the novel and Victorian England. Ralph encourages the young readers to learn and achieve knowledge by noticing and seeing through nature.

Religion has a central position in The Coral Island. Of the three boys, Ralph symbolizes the good Christian. Throughout the novel, he functions as a religious instructor inviting his readers to be good believers. At times of trouble, Ralph always remembers his mother's words: "Ralph, my dearest child, always remember, in the hour of danger, to look to your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He alone is both able and willing to save your body and your soul" (CI: 10). Furthermore, when Jack, Ralph and Peterkin are set free from their prison, the native teacher cries out:

The Lord has unloosed the bands of the captive and set the prisoners free. A missionary has been sent to us, and Tararo has embraced the Christian religion! The people are even now burning their gods of wood! Come, my dear friends, and see the glorious sight (CI: 332).
Missionary activities are a key characteristic of *The Coral Island*. Converting the savages to Christianity has a taming effect on them. At the right moment, the light of the gospel arrives to the savages of the Mango Island:

The natives had commenced building a large and commodious church, under the superintendence of the missionary, and several rows of new cottages were marked out; so that the place bid fair to become, in a few months, as prosperous and beautiful as the Christian village at the other end of the island (CI: 337).

Ballantyne points out the benefits of Christianity to his young readers. Ralph serves as the author's choice as a model for a true believer. Thus, the novel seems to be a carrier of ideology where the author propagates for Christianity: a principal purpose of colonialism.

*The Coral Island* is Eden-like:

Meat and drink on the same tree!” cried Peterkin; “washing in the sea, lodging on the ground—and all for nothing! My dear boys, we’re set up for life! It must be the ancient Paradise—hurrah!” and Peterkin tossed his straw hat in the air and ran along the beach, hallooing like a madman with delight (CI: 27).

Almost two thirds of the book is descriptive. It illustrates the beauty of the coral islands and the boys' happy life. The boys are good and cooperation among them is perfect. Their relationship is musically described by Ralph:

…We three on this our island, although most unlike in many things, when united, made a trio so harmonious that I question if there ever met before such an agreeable triumvirate. There was, indeed, no note of discord whatever in the symphony we played together on that sweet Coral Island; and I am now persuaded that this was owing to our having been all tuned to the same key—namely, that of love! Yes, we loved one another with much fervency while we lived on that
island; and, for the matter of that, we love each other still (CI: 124-125).

This is a message and an invitation to young Victorian readers to leave home and go to distant colonies where paradise is waiting for them. However, evil does exist on the coral islands as well. And, the source of evil is from outside the boy's community. It is either a natural phenomena like storms, the savages who are bloodthirsty, cannibals and bloodthirsty, and white European pirates who are evil and untrue Christians. Consequently, Ballantyne's negative portrayal of the natives and by contrasting their behavior, appearance, actions and food with that of the three boys, he creates an evil image of the native inhabitants as 'The Other'. Siegl (1996:55) explains:

In the story, 'the mixture of good and evil' is not found within the nature of an individual, but within society and between different cultures. Ballantyne attributes 'good' to his white boy-heroes and the British society in general and 'evil' to the white, yet uncivilized outcasts that is the British Pirate-traders, and the colored natives.

Furthermore, the three boys give the impression that they are representatives of the atrocities of the British Empire. They believe in the superiority of the white race over the blacks and colored people, "Of course, we'll rise naturally, to the top of affairs. White men always do in savage countries" (CI: 16).

In this regard, Ballantyne's focuses on missionary work and its positive effect on the social, cultural, religious, commercial and civilized transformation of the savages. English missionaries have served the imperial and colonial mission and brought the light of the gospel to the dark savages. They established a modern village where a white church is built in its centre. Ralph points out:

I could not help again in my heart praying to God to prosper those missionary societies that send such inestimable blessings to these islands of dark and bloody idolatry (CI: 296).
The next section offers an analysis of the character's speech and thought presentation in the selected extracts.

**Speech and thought presentation**

_The Coral Island_ is a first person narrative where Ralph Rover, a participant character is the story-teller/narrator. The story is told through his reliable perspective. The whole narrative is written in the form of FDS of the narrator's voice in addition to frequent use of DS by the characters. This can be recognized through an apparent use of punctuation, particularly, quotation marks. The effect of such use of this strategy is to let characters speak for themselves and achieve direct contact with the readers who are in this case are children.

DS appears in sentences 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, and 30. It gives a foregrounding effect to the reported utterances, since it gives the reader the impression that they are listening directly to the characters without the narrator's interference. Also, DS and first person narration offer a reliable source of information which is suitable for Ballantyne's young readers who tend to imagine that the reported words are actually spoken by the characters. DS seems to be suitable for Ballantyne's purposes in the novel which lends itself to didacticism/instruction of teenagers.

FDS is in sentences 1-6, 8-11, 19, 20, 31 and 32 and it is also dominant of in the whole novel and is characteristic of Ralph, the first person narrator. This form can be distinguished from DS of other characters through punctuation, in particular, quotation marks which are used with the later. The narrator's voice is clear throughout the text. He is the author's model to be followed by Victorian children.

DT appears in 6, 8 and 9. These are ascribed to the narrator, Ralph. They are presented in DS stretches and identified by quotation marks. FDT on the other hand is in 3, 10, 11, 13, 19, and 20. In 20, for example, Ralph uses musical terms when he thinks of unity, cooperation and harmony among the three of them. This manipulation of FDT allows a closer distance between the character/narrator's thoughts and his
readers, a suitable style in didactic literature where the narrator, Ralph, is used by Ballantyne as teacher.

NRA is also another major feature of sentences 1, 2, 4, 26, 31, and 32 These occurrences have a background effect- one of the purposes of narratives is to represent actions, events and states which happen in the fictional world, Short (1996: 292).

FIS or FIT which could serve ironic or sarcastic purposes is not present in the extracts. The novel is aimed to young readers who are better addressed by more direct modes such as: DS, FDS, DT and FDT.

**Linguistic indicator's of point of view**

On Reading the first extract, the three characters seem to have a number of shared characteristics. Ralph is a teenager who is a typical Victorian English explorer who is fund of adventures, in 1 'ROVING has always been, and still is, my ruling passion, the joy of my heart, the very sunshine of my existence.' The other two boys have the same interests in having an adventure, in 13 Peterkin has said, 'I have made up my mind that it's capital,--first rate,--the best thing that ever happened to us, and the most splendid prospect that ever lay before three jolly young tars.' In addition, the second extract illustrates the conflicts they face which are either from natural causes, savage natives or English pirates. The third extract shows the happy ending of the novel where the savages are tamed and civilized as an outcome of the missionary activity. The boys leave the coral islands with,'a thrill of joy, strangely mixed with sadness, passed through our hearts; for we were at length “homeward bound” and were gradually leaving far behind us the beautiful, bright green coral islands of the Pacific Ocean (CI: 339).

**Given vs. new information/Definite vs. indefinite references** appear in sentences 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 24, 28, 30, 31 and 32. The first word in the novel is 'ROVING' which possesses an indefinite reference. Also the word is capitalized. The effect seems to put the whole novel in focus to meet the expectations of the reader which is having an adventure story.

More space is given to definite references, for example, 'the joy of my heart', 'the woody glens...of my native land', 'the
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The writer assumes his readers familiarity with what is referred to. They are invited from the very beginning to be in the middle of actions in medias res.

Schema-oriented language is in 1-7, 10, 14-17, 19-22, 24, 27, 28, 31 and 32. The novel is a Victorian story. The narrator/author's choice of words reflects familiarity with the time, its values and ideological position- colonialism, imperialism, science and religion. Positive words are employed to describe the three protagonists, 'an island to ourselves', 'we'll rise naturally', 'to the top of affairs', 'white men always do in savage countries'. Also, their life, unity and cooperation are presented in musical terms, 'symphony we played together', and 'tuned to the same key'.

In contrast, negative words are employed to illustrate the natives of the coral islands, 'wild bloodthirsty savages', 'we should be roasted alive and eaten', 'black inhabitants', 'savage countries', 'Beelzebub', and 'incarnate fiends'. Such comparison reflects Ballantyne's colonial and imperial stance.

Moreover, religious schema is in, 'the gospel of our savior', 'bible', 'prayers', the missionaries', 'Tararo embraced the Christian Religion', 'church', and 'the Christian village'. Such use has a foregrounding effect of the role of Christianity in the novel in converting the natives of the coral island. Such conclusion supports the researcher's reflections (3.2 above) concerning the relationship between colonialism, imperialism and religion.

Deixis/value-laden words and expressions include: deictic/evaluative nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. This is evident in the 32 sentences of the three extracts.

Using the pronoun 'my' repeatedly suggests a suitable style used by the first person narrator. Ralph is the deictic center of the fictional world. Through his perspective, the text world is constructed.
The coral islands are portrayed as an earthy paradise, 'thousands of beautiful fertile islands that had been formed by a small creature called the coral insect', 'summer reigned nearly all the year round', 'the trees were laden with a constant harvest of luxuriant fruit', and the climate was almost perpetually delightful'. Ballantyne implicitly invites his young readers to leave home and go outward to join colonial and imperial activities.

Also, missionaries have positive effects in taming the native savages by converting them to Christianity. An English pirate captain has said, 'I don't know, an' I don't care, what the gospel does to them; but I know that when any o' the islands chance to get it, trade goes all smooth an' easy'. Trade is a key feature of colonialism. On the other hand, the civilizing effect of missionaries is evident at the end of the novel when 'Tararo has embraced the Christian religion', the natives 'are burning their gods of wood', a 'commodious church' is built in the center of a 'Christian' village following the western style. This explains the colonial/western mission in the Victorian times in civilizing and trading with "the other" savage countries.

**Conclusions**
This paper has shown how a detailed stylistic analysis reveals how different modes of speech and thought presentation are used in away to achieve a variety of significant effects and interpretations. In particular, the choice of speech and thought presentation in the extracts from *The Coral Island* contributes to conveying the characters' perceptions and attitudes of their adventure to the South Seas. In general, the analysis reveals the writer's ability to manipulate specific modes of speech and thought to achieve didactic, colonial and imperial purposes.

The analysis has attempted to question the novel's status as a children's classic and provided a textual/linguistic evidence to support this thesis. Through a comparison between the three young British boys and the coral islands' natives, Ballantyne advocates the values and ideology of the Victorian Age: superiority of the white and the civilizing mission of 'the other' savage, cannibal and primitive people through Christian
missionaries. Furthermore, the boys are portrayed as a perfect image of Victorian ideals: pure goodness, wise conduct, first-class leadership, patriotism and devotion to the Christian religion.

The natives on the hand are described negatively: savages, cannibals, bloodthirsty, black inhabitants and primitive. To sum up, the Coral Island is a children's adventure story which carries an ideological stance, that of colonialism and imperialism.
References


Portfolios and Presentations for University Students Who Major in English to Improve their Speaking Skills

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Al-Azhar University – Gaza

Abstract
In English as a foreign language (EFL) environment of Gaza, university students who specialize in English usually lack the opportunity to interact or to expose themselves to English speaking community. This has created a real problem for many of them. In an attempt to help these students improve their speaking skills, the researcher as a teacher used two techniques to investigate possible improvement of their speaking performance: portfolios and presentations. Students have been asked to keep an individual digital file of some video and audio clips which they download from internet by their own choice with some guidance from the teacher. These clips together with a paper file where they put their reflection logs, comments and questions comprise their portfolios. At regular stages, learners are asked to present some topics from their files in front of their peers. They have to use video and audio clips in their presentations. A questionnaire and semi-interviews have been conducted to collect data. The experimental group showed a great interest in such a process and their performance in speaking has improved to a good extent.

Key Words: Video and Audio clips, Portfolios, Presentations, Speaking Skills

Introduction
“Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important.” ([28]:120). However, the main problem that EFL learners face in developing this skill is that there is a limited space to practice speaking. First of all, students do not have many courses in speaking and listening. Second, lectures are almost done by their teachers. Third, their contribution in developing such a skill is fairly limited as they live in an Arabic speaking community (Gaza, Palestine). They compensate by listening or
doing some kind of chatting via internet. In the researcher's experience, EFL students need more practice and follow up activities to enhance their speaking skills. Therefore, this paper comes to investigate the effect of students' portfolios and presentations in developing their speaking skills.

Research Questions
Main Question
Can Portfolios and Presentations help EFL students to improve their speaking skills?

Secondary Questions
1. Does portfolio facilitate and support students speaking skills?
2. Does presentation accelerate and enhance students' speaking performance?

Theoretical Background
Teaching speaking as a skill has become a necessity those days [2]. Students need to expose themselves to various discourses in order to be able to develop a good awareness of the cultural, social and even psychological aspects of speaking skills [26]. They need to practice speaking from time to time in terms of interaction in a meaningful manner ([20]:206) where they feel that they can present their ideas and feelings to others and evaluate their performance in such a communicative manner [8] & [26]. The following literature will cover the main areas of investigation in relation to speaking.

Portfolios
Portfolios can be defined as "a purposeful, interrelated collection of student work that shows the student's efforts, progress or achievement in one or more areas" [25]. Research shows that there is a great benefit of using portfolios as a means of assessment in ESL/EFL language classroom [3], [31] & [13]. EFL students would engage more and take ownership of their own learning as well as reflect on their learning process and therefore enhance their autonomy by using portfolios [24] & [30].
Portfolios, in this study, were investigated to see if they can be a good tool of helping learners to organize, collect, select and experience studying various aspects of speaking (e.g. body language, intonation, stress).

Students were asked to keep a portfolio where they can collect, select, reflect and present the subjects they like. The idea of encouraging them to collect is to widen their scope of awareness of how and what variety of speech acts are [23]. This in its turn would help them not only to watch and listen to authentic or semi-authentic English but also to interact willingly with these texts. This means they can make questions, comments, stories, presentations...etc.

Allowing students to select from their clips whether audios or videos and to present a topic or a sketch around would encourage learners to check or double-check their interaction with the authentic texts [31].

**Presentations**
The presentation experience in itself has emerged from what learners showed of interest to do similar clips from "Youtube" and other websites. They want to sound English in their talk and in their interaction. The presentation was a free choice where students can decide the way they feel comfortable to perform. Some chose to present alone. Others chose to present in pairs or groups. Some students used LCD and Laptops, whereas others used posters and the white board. However, the most interesting thing in this process is the variety of techniques and methods of selection and presentation which the researcher believes is very necessary in enhancing the productivity of the speaker [26].

**Speaking**
The following analogy (See Table 1) which was done by the researcher after reviewing the literature in the three areas (portfolios, presentations and speaking) has encouraged the researcher to focus his investigation on presentation and portfolio together and to check whether it can facilitate bringing
about most of the speaking skills that EFL students actually need [6], [7],[17] & [18].

Research Methodology

Participants

The study was applied to 192 third level EFL students (160 female + 32 male) of the Faculty of Education at Al-Azhar University – Gaza last semester (2011-2012). Those students did at least two courses in conversation before the Listening and Speaking course after which the researcher conducted this study.

Instruments

Findings and Discussions of the Questionnaire

A quasi experimental method was used in this study. A questionnaire including 11 statements was developed in order to find out students' preferences and views in using portfolios and presentations in developing their speaking skills. On a four-point-scale ranging as "Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly disagree", participants put their responses which best indicate their level of agreement on the situation.
Table (1)
An Analogy among Speaking, Presentation and Portfolios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Speaking</th>
<th>In Presentations</th>
<th>In Portfolios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language;</td>
<td>Voice plays a very important part especially stress, rhythmic structures and intonations.</td>
<td>Design and structure of the digital and non-digital materials reflects SS’ views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  using grammar structures accurately;</td>
<td>Using appropriate language where accuracy is preferable</td>
<td>Neat Design and presentation of the collection in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives;</td>
<td>Audience is a key element in the interaction [26]</td>
<td>Audience-based presentation either digital or written [30].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs; [8]</td>
<td>Selection of appropriate vocabulary is very essential in presentation</td>
<td>Selection is a key element [23]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing,</td>
<td>Eye-contact and evaluating the audience understanding</td>
<td>Panel presentation is another key element for evaluation [31].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or checking for listener comprehension;</td>
<td>Gestures and body language are important elements in making the presentation successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>using gestures or body language;</td>
<td>Adjusting interaction according to the rate and complexity of listeners' comprehension and involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (2)
Students' answers in percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Item</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Exposing to audio and video clips is necessary</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Keeping a portfolio for audio and video clips is important</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Selecting clips was a real experience of unintentional study</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Downloading and keeping a portfolio taught me to be selective and evaluative</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Watching and listening to people speaking in English makes it easier for me to attempt speaking</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Practicing presentation has helped me to become fluent in English</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Presenting in English has helped me to be more aware of my pronunciation and grammar</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Discussing and interacting inside the class after presentation were of great benefit</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Using the sheet of assessment has helped me a lot in paying extra attention to my speech.</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (2) shows the results of the questionnaire. It is clear that most of the students tend to believe that using portfolio and presentation has a great value (more than 60% of the respondents strongly agree). The remarkable result of statement (5) indicates that more than 80% of the students believe that watching and listening to English spoken by others makes it easier for them to speak. It seems, though, that using a sheet of assessment has not received that much attention where the percentage of those who agree is around (70%).

Semi-structured interviews:
The researcher asked students the following questions and recorded students' views:

1. Do you think that keeping a portfolio is a good idea in developing your speaking skills? How?
2. What is the most important thing that you have learned in presentations?
3. How did you evaluate your speaking skills after you have done your presentations and you attended your friends presentations?
4. Do you believe in collaborative evaluation where you and your peers as well as the teacher evaluate your speaking?

Findings & Discussion of Interviews:
In terms of the qualitative measurement, the researcher interviewed 30 male and 35 female students who studies the course of Listening and Speaking during the second semester of the academic year (2011-2012). The researcher reviewed the recorded interviews and made a list of the most repeated and used terms which in a sense reflect the underlying perception or attitude of the interviewees [12]. Coding and analyzing interviewees' views concerning portfolios by using the ground theory of ([15] & [12] has resulted in the major codes in Table (3).
Table (3)
Portfolio Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>35 female and %</th>
<th>30 male and %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Less anxiety</td>
<td>24 (80%)</td>
<td>21 (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encouraging</td>
<td>31 (90%)</td>
<td>22 (74%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Enriching knowledge</td>
<td>30 (86%)</td>
<td>19 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Recording information</td>
<td>28 (76%)</td>
<td>25 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Rehearsing</td>
<td>31 (90%)</td>
<td>23 (84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Searching and selecting are</td>
<td>29 (88%)</td>
<td>17 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Authenticity</td>
<td>22 (72%)</td>
<td>20 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Free choice</td>
<td>26 (77%)</td>
<td>27 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Strategies stimulation</td>
<td>23 (72%)</td>
<td>24 (84%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the study indicated that the EFL students at Al-Azhar University – Gaza tend to accept and like keeping portfolios. Almost, 75% of the students prefer the less risky technique of keeping a portfolio. They believed that it is good for helping them to better manage not only language and vocabulary but also develops their knowledge of the language as cultural and social aspects are concerned. It can be seen that the codes that the researcher came up with indicate how far the learners benefited from keeping a speaking portfolio. For example, in terms of strategies simulation, almost 76% of both males and females believe that portfolios have helped them to be more aware of their speaking strategies as they make a good record of them in their files. Another good example is the authenticity, where around 70% of both males and females believe that they can speak or behave like native speakers if they develop their speaking awareness of watching, listening, commenting and presenting things from their speaking portfolio.

On the other hand, 29% of the students believed that files or portfolios are not serious. Their claim came into the interviews. They indicated that their attempt to present a
The portfolio has not always been successful as they used to bring anything and even sometimes cut and paste from the internet without even reading and interacting with. Their complaint comes as there is no extra effort from their part and from the part of the teacher to sit and to talk to them in more serious English or as some of them put it "business English".

The majority, however, indicated that such techniques of keeping a portfolio as a flash disk and a written file has benefited many of them in various ways. As far as the importance of keeping a portfolio is concerned, most of the interviewees indicated a psychological influence the portfolio has on their learning. One male student said,

"When I knew that this portfolio is up to me to do what I want, I felt very calm and relaxed."

Another female student said,

"I like the idea of keeping a file, it really helps in organizing and enriching my knowledge."

A third female student said,

"I used to be very afraid to speak, however, when I started to see how people speak in youtube and other websites, I become more aware of how to ..and I can say I was encouraged to speak."

A fourth male student said,

"I have learned a lot of how to download and how to read extensively and how to search the internet.. it is really a very interesting way of teaching as I learn by choosing what I like."

This implies that there is a tendency among those students to be self-motivated and self-centered in their learning [28].
Table (3) shows clearly that this kind of interaction has been praised by the majority of the respondents (82%). They find it mostly participatory where they work cooperatively and collectively presenting in front of each other [10].

*Table (4)*  
**Presentation Codes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>35 female and %</th>
<th>30 male and %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Challenging: provoke thinking and acting</td>
<td>32 (92%)</td>
<td>25 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demanding: needs effort and time</td>
<td>26 (83%)</td>
<td>27 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Activating knowledge and skills</td>
<td>28 (86%)</td>
<td>24 (84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Developing evaluative skills</td>
<td>27 (85%)</td>
<td>22 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Stimulating spontaneous reaction</td>
<td>26 (83%)</td>
<td>24 (82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Stimulating reflection: thinking of strategies</td>
<td>25 (82%)</td>
<td>23 (81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Participatory: working together</td>
<td>24 (81%)</td>
<td>20 (78%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Fun: interesting</td>
<td>26 (83%)</td>
<td>25 (86%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presentations as a technique was of a great help and the effect of this technique was obvious in what most of the students said (activating knowledge and skills) [1]. One female student recommends,

"All our teachers at the university should help us to do presentations and to assess our work not only by a written test... I like to interact with others and presentation helps me to feel that I am speaking."

Another male student comments on the development of the fluency and improving his pronunciation (activating knowledge and skills),
"I have been wondering how I can improve my fluency in speaking, but when we were asked to search the internet and other available books and magazines and bring a topic for our presentations, I could say, I will make use of this golden opportunity... I really encourage other students to ask for more presentations in other subjects."

A third female student's comments on that presentation is a very interesting way of studying English and encouraging students to speak (Fun and challenging).

"It is really fun to go for a presentation. I like it even I have to prepare things. It is really interesting to feel that I can stand and speak and discuss things in front of the whole class."

However, the researcher can realized from the experience of teaching and researching the course that portfolio should be more systematized. This means, students should present their files on regular basis as this could ensure constant work and could develop the critical and the creative abilities [5] & [2]. In terms of speaking skills, keeping a portfolio and presenting it on regular basis in terms of a student-teacher conference would develop further awareness and understanding of the skills and the strategies of speaking [9].

**Discussion**

To answer the questions of the study, the statistical findings in general and the students' comments in their interviews show that there should be a kind of interaction and socialization in order to develop their speaking skills. This view has been reflected in many researches [2], [20], [27], [31]. The manifestation of these teaching and learning tools can be best seen in encouraging EFL students to keep a digital portfolio where they can download video and audio clips from the internet and they can interact with
them through their paper files by writing comments, questions or doing presentations and discussions about.

As far as the portfolios are concerned, the findings show that more than 70% of the students prefer to use this tool to learn by themselves to develop their own performance in speaking. This highlights the importance of scaffolding for helping EFL students to work on their own [14]. Many of the students reflected how much fun and challenge they had during presentations which added to their interest and concern of discovering and exploring more strategies and skills through interacting and attempting to speak in their presentations.

In terms of presentations, the findings of the questionnaire agree to a good extent with the findings of the interviews in that presentations are can stimulate the learners various strategies to become a competent speaker of English.

1. Conclusions and Implications
This study was conducted to investigate the effect of using two tools (portfolios and presentations) on developing speaking skills of EFL students at Al-Azhar University - Gaza.

The results show that there is a good tendency towards keeping and searching for information and knowledge by using portfolios and developing this process through presentations. Students, in general, like and benefit from keeping a speaking portfolio. They indicated in their questionnaire and interviews that portfolios have a good influence especially in enriching their information and ideas of how aural/oral language works. In terms of presentation, they showed a great interest in doing presentations in whatever way they like. They explained that presentations have encouraged them to study more in order to experience speaking and discussing in English.

Therefore, the researcher believes that speaking can be a very interesting skill to study if students go and search for authentic and semi authentic materials to enrich their linguistic, social, psychological knowledge [17] & [2]. Presentation, on the other hand, would work as a demonstration where EFL
students consolidate and evaluate to what extent they have learnt from what they have collected in their own portfolios. This would agree with what [16] postulated that learners should be given at least "one-minute presentation" to talk in "a meaningful way" in order to improve their speaking performance. The teacher can facilitate this process by supporting learners to be "hands-free" or independent speakers of English [21], [4], [19] & [22]. This can also be done electronically nowadays by making use of the internet facilities such as blogs, websites, wikis and others[11].
References


Narrating the Self and Others in the Travel Letters of Susan Hale, Margaret Van Horn Dwight and Emily Dickinson

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Islamic University of Gaza

“Travelers are very pleasant people. They tell you what picture was produced in their brain by the things they saw. How it looks to none pair of eyes would be a good reminder penciled on the margin of many a volume.”

N.P. Willis, Letters from Under a Bridge (1840)*

Travel literature is a form of fiction that has a narrator, a setting, a conflict, characters, and even a plot. The voice of the travel writer is the realist non-fictional medium of communication with the society (addressee). It sees, perceives and shows things as they are. The objective of this paper is to trace the characters of women as shown by the traveling voices of Susan Hale, Margaret Dwight and Emily Dickinson. The analysis of characters aims at discovering women as objects (other women in the travel letters) and as subjects (characters of writers themselves). The paper discusses the characters revealed through the eyes of writers in 20 travel letters: 10 for Susan Hale, 5 Margaret Dwight and 5 for Emily Dickinson.

Letter writing was a dominant practice through which men and women of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries came to know themselves as individuals and developed personal attitudes towards others. The letter became an everyday activity, which was more than a medium of exchanging news; it was a necessary means for self-awareness, social awareness and self-

* Quoted from: Mulvey, Christopher. Transatlantic Manners. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1990-3
expression. Through letter writing, individuals unfolded their subjectivity and portrayed themselves and others. I will not employ the notion of self/other in this paper as two binary opposites as usually assumed by feminism or post-colonialism in a way they cause us to create stereotypes of travel writers and the people they encounter. The objective of this paper is to trace the representation of women as shown by the self-referential traveling voices. The subjectivity that women developed through the practice of letter writing sheds light on the image of others as part of their understanding of that subjectivity. This paper aims at discovering women as objects (other women in the travel letters) and as subjects (the image of the ‘I’).

I choose the epistolary genre for this paper because letters in general address a specific audience. In this way they are a direct call to the reader to pay attention to the particular selfhood of the author. In this way, the epistolary genre becomes a unique forum for life writing. Casy Blanton, in her book *Travel Writing*, states that “The reader of a good travel book is entitled not only to an exterior voyage, to descriptions of scenery and so forth, but to an interior, a sentimental or temperamental voyage, which takes place side by side with that outer one” (5). Travel writers construct new identities while discovering the identities of others. This is the ‘I’ that is evolving in travel, the self they present to us on a path to know the self while knowing others.

From this understanding, writers subject to this paper are not assumed to be egocentric who reflect upon others as binary opposites of themselves. A postcolonial reading of travel writings usually frame writers as colonial travelers and representatives of their empires. “They are always associated with their ‘home’ empire, regardless of whether or not they express the colonial values in their writings” (McColley 22). A great deal of feminist writings, on the other hand, sees travel writers as eccentric or imposters. In her essay “Travel Writing and Gender,” Susan Bassnett discusses the earlier writing about women travelers by feminist scholars, she describes the style of representation common to their scholarly publication:
The titles of some of these studies reflect a particular way of looking at women travelers. Though praising their efforts and achievements, the authors hint nevertheless that they are slightly eccentric, and introduce a comic note that can easily be interpreted as mocking. So we find *Ladies on the Loose, The Blessings of a Good, Thick Skirt, and Spinsters Abroad*, all of which focus on the unusual life stories of women travelers, on their originality, and on their refusal to conform to social norms of the day. (226)

The use of this caricature is ironic when used to describe women writers in a process of forming new identities through knowing others. This paper finds it unfair to the writers and to their process of transformation to analyze such works as paradigms of feminist and postcolonial texts.

The woman travelers who are subjects of this study are women who made conscious effort to make their self-awareness, as well as their process of self transformation through travel, known through writing about themselves and others. These women, I argue, are not merely egocentric, but rather very conscious about the self within the complex context of the travel places. The paper will include examples from the autobiographical epistolary texts of the three authors of my study. The approach is to begin describing the textual details that allow the exploration of self as a subject and the other as an object.

**Suzan Hale and the ‘Other’**

In her travel letters during several journeys to different countries, Susan Hale described many women of different cultural backgrounds: French, German, Middle Eastern, English, Jamaican and Scotch. These characters were usually compared to American women who worked as the standard comparison image, the only image well known to the addressee. This was a common phenomenon of the letter writings of that time; “As
women write home from abroad, they presume to remark the world in the image of the United States, which is to say in the image of white, Protestant, middle class values” (Schriber 9). It is a process of knowing others in the light of self awareness. For this reason, it seemed difficult to separate the image of foreign women from the image of American women in these letters. It also seemed very difficult to separate the image of women from the image of men as well. Both sexes were compared to each other, and described in relation to each other. As a result, description of men revealed in this paper was necessary to show the image of women themselves.

The prominent women’s figure described in details in the letters of Suzan Hale was the image of French women. They were well-cultured working women. “I went to buy my tickets, in the afternoon; but the odd thing is that a woman keeps the box-office” (Hale 89). It seemed odd to Susan to find women working in a box office, which indicates that such jobs were not common to women in the United States. Despite working, French women were “polite ladies in caps who tend the boxes and tickets” (Ibid). They enjoyed much freedom and independence than American women at that time. This was the reason behind being astonished when Hale said, “the streets are full of women (of respectability) at all hours” (Hale 90). Unlike the women of the United States, French women went out alone, not accompanied by a male figure. “Perhaps it is just as well, however, not to yawp much about our going alone, as it may be considered loose in America” (Ibid). Later, Susan expressed frankly that it was not socially accepted in the United States to go out alone. She said, “All our French friends here think it perfectly comme il faut*, and seem not to know what we mean when we doubt about going without a man” (ibid).

French women were also portrayed as socially powerful figures. They control their husbands, which was unfamiliar to Americans, “the fact is the women have got the upper hand entirely in this town, and men are of no importance at all; Jules

* A French expression which means being in accord with conventions or accepted standards
makes the beds and Madame scolds him” (ibid). Similarly, Scotch ladies are described like the French women. They were beautiful and delightful: “She is small and very gentle with large blue eyes, her manner as gentle as Mrs. Matlack, though she is the most determined little creature, she rules him with a rod of iron” (Hale 416). This seemed strange to Hale as an American woman. She considered reporting such information as something important to be told. If the same conditions were common to American men, she would have not mentioned it in her letters. This indicates that men in America, at that time, did not accept to do what Jules did, and women could not scold men in any way. American men of that time, as implied in the letter, were Patriarchal in nature who had the upper hand.

The outside appearance of French women was also described in details. They were fashionable and good-looking, who used to wear short skirts made of excellent fabrics, “All Parisian women go about with neat petticoats of black Moreen just to the tops of their boots. Then they hold or hitch their dresses quite out of sight. They are either with a flounce or not, trimmed with rows of black velvet ribbon or not” (Hale 93). American women, on the contrary, wore long skirts that drag in mud or dust. For this reason, it was easy to distinguish between French and American women by their dress. “No French woman dreams of letting her skirts drag in the mud or dust, and you can tell them from the Americans in a minute by this difference” (ibid).

The second image of women shown in Hale’s letters was the image of Dutch women. Hale described a hospitable landlady of the hotel she was staying in, who used to enter the room many times without knocking the door. “My dear, they never any of them knock! And I can’t teach them to. I can only suppose that the reason is that they are determined to come in whether I want them to or not” (Hale121). Dutch women did not take care of their outside appearance like the French women; “the German bed, which no effort can remedy, and I have spoiled my best nail trying for it in vain. By the way, they take not the slightest interest in finger nails” (Hale119). American women, or at least women of Suzan’s social class, took good
care of their nails. Hale, here, seems to look down on Dutch women because they take not the slightest interest in finger nail. Another quality of Dutch women, as revealed by Hale’s letters, was that they did not usually bathe or use soap. “I don’t mean to say but what they are clean and neat enough, as a general thing I think they always wash their faces once a day and their hands, say, twice a week, when they are going to party, but not so often with soap” (Hale 121). I guess this information about nails and soap was just an ironic personal view and should be read the same, and therefore; the information included should not be authentic, or otherwise the whole meaning would change.

Middle Eastern women were mentioned briefly as housewives looking after the household affairs; “a woman from the neighborhood was got over to sew up my gown” (Hale 60). Men were described as strong servants or servicemen, “the Arabs are very strong. They pull you up like a weed” (Hale 46). They were also gentle and shy, “The gentle Hagi mounted the box” (Hale 45). Jamaican women had similar qualities of Middle Eastern women; “they sell eggs and milk cows,” but they were not mentioned in details like the French or German women. Description of Middle Eastern and Jamaican women is more related to the nature of their professions rather than belittling them.

Reading Hale’s letters gives us a window into herself to see how this self was constructed. The self image of Susan Hale, as indirectly revealed through her letters, was characterized by independence. She traveled alone to different countries without a companion. This slightly shows the status of American women as a whole at that time. Schriber claims that “the travels of many women were in no way accidental. On the contrary, women claimed to conceive and execute travel plans independently…..they traveled in what they saw as their own interests quite apart from those of a man” (15). Such a case is applicable to Susan Hale because almost all her letters, discussed in this paper, were sent to her family back home to share them her own experience of traveling. She was an adventurous woman as well: she rode a wild camel in Egypt, ascended to the top of the pyramid alone, ventured to ride the
bus in France, and went out late at night there; “the big door swung open, and we rushed up to narrate our adventures. The other girls were afraid to go” (Hale 90). She was also a very well cultured woman, whose interest was gaining knowledge. She used many expressions of different languages in her letters, drew pictures, went to musical concerts and discussed the symphonies of Schumann and the architecture of Spain like an expert, and went to music lessons in France.

She was also a funny woman who had a high sense of humor. This was shown through the description of her experience of riding a camel in Egypt and the details of the hotel life in Germany. She was a smart woman as well who was not easily deceived by the flattery of men. She talked about her French teacher who once told her that “he has never parted from any one with so much regret,” but she understood that “¾ flattery, if not 7/8, but he is very good to me” (Hale 91). She was physically fit which enabled her to ascend the grand pyramid while “Lucretia got half way; Mr. Lesley only a few rods” (Hale 45). She had long hair that she always tried to make it well arranged. When she fell down the camel she said, “My back hair came down,” and when she criticized one of the French women she said, “I think she is very high in the social scale, though her hair is ill arranged.” This indicates that it was necessary for a woman to have well-arranged hair.

Subjects and Objects in the Letters of Margaret Van Horn Dwight
The prominent image of women shown in Dwight’s travel letters was the image of the tough landladies of guest houses. She described them as mannish, strong women; “The landlady (I hate the word but I must use it)” (letter 1). They were also displayed as masters taking the place of their husbands, “the landlady is a fat, dirty, ugly looking creature, yet I must confess very obliging—she has a very suspicious countenance & I am very afraid of her. She seems to be the master, as well as mistress & storekeeper.” I think such a description of women was unnatural. In fact, I believe that the landladies had been made such creatures because of the nature of their work which put them in a direct contact with many different people of
different manners. It was necessary for women like her to be harsh because of the many unmannered residents of their inns. Later in the same letter, Dwight described the landlady as a very noisy woman. She said, “From the great noise she has been making directly under me for this half hour, I suspect she has been stoning the raisins & watering the rum” (1). I wonder if such a duty of stoning the raisins and watering the rum was a common task to American women who lived at that time.

Another working lady in the guest house was described like the wife of Bath, “the woman had no husband at present, I suspect she has one in expectation.” (letter 2) One of Dwight's women companions was a soft and easy to cry woman, “poor Susan groans & sighs & and now sheds a few tears. I think I exceed her in patience & equanimity.” On the contrary, another companion of hers was in a good control of her feelings and demonstrated signs of patience to the hardships of traveling. “Mrs. Wolcott is a woman of the most perfect equanimity I ever saw. She is a woman of great feeling & tenderness, but has the most perfect command over her feelings” (letter 3). Elizabeth, the third companion, was a decent soft girl who cried and escaped from the bedroom when one of the residents of the house broke into their room. Dwight, herself, taught her “to eat raw pork and drink whisky” (3).

Men in Dwight’s letters were exhibited in a depressing manner; they were a group of misfits and drunkards. The first man was a deacon, with whom she traveled. He was a miser who obliged them to sleep in a cheap hotel to save some money, “to be obliged to pass the night in such a place as we are now in, just because it is a little cheaper, is more that I am willing to do” (1). Contrary to Dwight, both he and his wife didn’t mind the dirt and disgusting food offered in that place, “I didn’t think I could eat in the house, but dare to refuse. The good deacon nor his wife didn’t mind it” (1). A second character was the husband of the landlady of the guest house. He had a weak character if compared to the character of his wife, who was “cross as a witch”. He was also unfriendly person, who “could not be persuaded to bring in but a small part of the baggage.” Other men were a group of “drunken prophane wretches,” who were
“swearing and laughing” all the time in a room whose “air is so intolerable.” Even the ferrymen “were swearing at every breath.” Some other men broke into the ladies bedrooms and made their life miserable. The one broke into Dwight’s room was described as “A good for nothing brute” (letter 4). Among such horrible creatures, it is justified to find harsh landladies to run the house.

Dwight demonstrated herself as a patient person, who was willing to bear the hardships of traveling, but reflected normal responses and feelings of sensitive women as well. “I went to bed last night with fears & trembling & feel truly glad to wake up & find myself alive & well” (letter 5). In the few lines that followed, she displayed the normal womanly concerns of clean bed sheets and nice curtains, “there we were all obliged to sleep in the same room without curtains or any other screen, and our sheets there were so dirty, I felt afraid to sleep on them.” (ibid) I do not think such concerns were very important for a man who intended to spend a night in a motel during a long journey. Moreover, what was the use of curtains or screens if all of them were obliged to sleep in one room? Margaret Dwight seemed a rich woman, who neither paid much concern for money nor made the household activities by herself. While she was staying in Cook’s Inn, she complained: “It is very grating to my pride to go into a tavern & furnish & cook my own provisions or to ride in a wagon.” This complaint implies that she did not get used to furnish and cook her own provisions or even to ride in a wagon.

Emily Dickinson Narrates the Self and Other
As a form of fiction, travel letters have “a narrator, who travels for the sake of travel; a narrative organization that owes much to fiction; a commitment to both a literary language and personal voice; and thematic concerns of great moral and philosophic import” (Blanton 30). The travel letters of Emily Dickinson included many of these qualities; Emily had a commitment to both a literary language and personal voice. Through the practice of correspondence, Emily developed her own form of subjectivity in her way of expression, usage of language, and
private relations with other women. In her letter to Abaih*, Emily expressed her temporary illness in her own unique way. She said that her physical status affected her spirits, “my health affected my spirits & was quite down spirited for some time, but have with renewed health regained my usual flow of spirits.” This personal distinguished voice of Emily shows that she was not a normal traveler recording a journey, but a very well cultured learned person who had her own way of expression. She also expressed her privacy in a philosophic way when she said, “I feel that I have not yet mad peace with God.” However, she desired to reach that peace to get rid of her restless self: “pray for me dear A. that I may yet enter the kingdom, that there may be a room left for me in the shining courts above.” Somewhere else in the same letter, she found it too much for her to be happy like other normal people, “I am visiting my aunt’s family & am happy. Happy! Did I say? No not happy, but contended.” She expressed herself in a different way from both Hale and Dwight, who usually reflected a happy self and a sense of humor in their travel letters. Like Susan Hale, Emily demonstrated a great interest in educational and cultural activities. She told Abaih, “I went to the Chinese museum, to Bunker hill. I have attended two concerts and one Horticultural exhibition” (Letter 13).

Other women shown in her travel letters were the loved ones, either friends or family members. They were educated, caring and appreciate close relations. Both Emily and her friends were serious correspondents, in love with books, and curious about everything. They were also devoted friends whose letters were filled with expressions of their devotion and their critical reflections on what they were reading, seeing and doing. They also appreciated social activities and had some interests in some aspects of aristocratic life: “Have you any flowers in Norwich? My garden looked finely when I left home.”, “Many sweet ladies and noble gentlemen have taken us hand by hand and smiled upon us pleasantly.” (Letter 179)

* Abiah Root, a girlhood friend and correspondent of Emily Dickinson.
Men, as described in the few travel letters of Emily, were two Chinese professors. They were rich and opium eaters. Both were strong-willed who managed to “overcome the practice.” Another good quality of both was their “self denial.” I think self-denial, here, referred to the two men’s ability to control their desire and deny their joy for health purposes and families’ sake. One of the two men invested his journey and made business by “writing the names of the visitors who request it upon cards in the Chinese language- for which he charges 12.5 cts. a piece.” (Letter 16)

Letters form an autobiographical project. Faced with the desire to write to another, writers are also faced with a confrontation with the self. When letters are sent, they reveal a person whose identity is informed by immediate relationship between self, time and place. This self couldn’t be articulated clearly unless directly or indirectly compared to others in the time and the place. These other people mirror the travelers themselves and may cause them to experience a sense of sameness or difference. Hale reflects a character of her own through her letters as An American model to which other international women are compared. She shows herself as independent, funny and sharp-witted woman. Similarly, Dwight, through her letters, reflects upon the life and duties of European women as compared to herself, the American moral and social standard. The ‘I’ image of Dwight as revealed through the letters studied is egoistic and judgmental. Dickinson, on the other hand, mirrors herself much more than portraying others in her travel letters; unhappy nor having a sense of humor, but a great deal of interest in educational and cultural matters. Travel letters open a window to the life and ideas of their writers and a medium of self awareness.
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The Different Translations of Ibn ^ufayl’s *|ayy Bin Yaq&[n* and their Transfer to Europe

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**Abstract**

The motif of the castaway living and philosophising for years on a desert island is one which has captured the imagination of various writers in many cultures and literatures and over a very long period of time. Literary historians and critics in the West are most familiar with the famous example of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and the many versions and variations it spawned over the following three centuries, including in recent years works by Michel Tournier, J. M. Coetzee, William Golding and Derek Walcott. However, little attention has been paid to some of the antecedents of Defoe’s great novel, especially those from other cultures like the remarkable *|ayy Bin Yaq&[n* (Alive, Son of Awake) by the 12th century Arab Muslim philosopher and physician Muhamm^ad Ibn ^ufayl who was living in Spain. This text is Ibn Tufayl’s only surviving work apart from a few writings on medicine and astronomy. It summarises his own ideas and also encapsulates much of the philosophical and scientific thinking of his age in a direct, plain style. Due to its profound influence on European thought and philosophy, Ibn ^ufayl’s *|ayy Bin Yaq&[n* was translated into no less than eight languages (Hebrew, Latin, Dutch, English, French, Russian, German, and Spanish) in addition to Persian and the other major languages of the Islamic world. This paper is an attempt to provide a critical account of some of the aforementioned translations, especially the English and Latin versions and their transfer to Europe. Accordingly, this study seeks to prove that English readers of the eighteenth century had access to four English translations of the *|ayy Bin Yaq&[n*, the fact which lends credence to the view of some critics that the Medieval story of *|ayy Bin Yaq&[n* was a model and a possible source for Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), just as the real-life castaway Alexander Selkirk was.

**Key Words:** Transfer, Influence, Translation, Impact, Source

**Latin Translation:**

European interest in Ibn ^ufayl’s story goes as far back as the fourteenth century when the text was translated into Hebrew,
and supplied with a commentary by the Jew, Moses of Narbonne, in 1349. A Latin translation from the Hebrew version by Pico della Mirandola occurred in the second half of the fifteenth century. In 1671, the year when John Locke started on the first drafts of his Essay on Human Understanding, a bilingual text in Arabic and Latin was published at Oxford under the title Philosophus autodidactus «Self-taught philosopher», sive Epistola Abi Jaafar Tophail de Hai Ebn Yokdhan. The story portrayed the development of a child’s mind from a tabula rasa to that of an adult, in complete isolation from any given society. By means of sensory experience, reasoning, and contemplation, without any innate conceptions, |ayy discovers the natural and physical sciences, God, and morality. With perfect justification, Russell calls this work a case study for the main thesis of Locke’s Essay.

The Arabic narrative was |ayy Bin Yaq&n, written in the twelfth century by Ibn ^ufayl, the physician-philosopher under the Muwa++ids’ reign in Muslim Andalusia. This Latin version was directly translated from Arabic by Edward Pococke the eldest son under the supervision of his father, Dr. Pococke, the first Laudian Professor of Arabic (1636) and the Regius Professor of Hebrew (1648), who provided the historical preface to the text. In fact, the whole project was conceived and directed by the father, who obtained the manuscript from which the translation was made during his five-year visit to Aleppo, wrote the introduction, and supervised the translation itself. There is no doubt that the time was opportune for his son, whom he saw


24 He was an Italian Humanist who acquainted himself with the theories of ‘Aristotle and Averroes which he eventually endeavoured to harmonise with Platonism as he learnt it at Florence and with the tenets of the church.’ See S. H. Steinberg’s edition of Cassell’s Encyclopaedia of Literature, Vol. II (Cassell: London, 1953), 1354.

as his successor in the Arabic Professorship, to create a place for himself, but there may have been other reasons for Pococke’s not publishing this outstanding work under his own name.

It is worth mentioning that the elder Pococke had even started to make an English translation of the work himself in 1645. Whether he ever completed it is not clear, although it seems likely that he did. However, Toomer claims that ‘this did not happen, probably because of Pococke’s cautiousness.’

During the Civil War and the Interregnum it would have been exceedingly irresponsible for one in Pococke’s precarious situation to publish a work which could easily be analysed as an assault on revelation and established religion. Even after the Restoration, when Puritanism had lost its influence in England, there would be many readers who might take a rather negative stand against such a book, especially if published in English. Therefore, it is not strange that when Pococke brought it to the public, he did that in his son’s name, and in Latin (so that it would appear as a scholarly, not a debatable book). In addition, his preface incorporates a note requesting the readers to make room for the differences between then and the time in which the work was written and to understand the work’s ideas according to their own interpretations.

In his own argument concerning the author’s purposes, he argues that, after explaining how far reason alone can soar in ‘attaining knowledge of God, the work demonstrates that further progress is only possible by divine revelation.’ This reading seems misleading, since to a contemporary English or non-English reader ‘divine revelation’ would stand for the word of God as embodied in the Scriptures, and Ibn ’ufayl meant nothing of the kind, but rather some kind

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26 Russell points out that there is no evidence that anyone was aware of this early unfinished translation; its existence in the Bodleian was initially drawn to his attention by P. M. Holt. See G. A. Russell, ‘The Impact of the Philosophus autodidactus: Pocockes, John Locke and the Society of Friends’, in The ‘Arabick’ Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England, ed. G. A. Russell (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 262.

27 See Toomer, 221.

28 Ibid, 221.

29 Ibid, 221.
of mystical spiritual union of the individual with the Divine. In this regard, Toomer interprets this deliberate ambiguity as an attempt by Pococke to provide a cover of belief for a treatise which he knew to be, if rightly understood, profoundly rebellious against ‘conventional morality’.

The dissemination of the *Philosophus autodidactus*, shining and glowing from Oxford to the Continent, is an amazing phenomenon. In clarifying the contributing factors to the reception of this translation, G. A. Russell admits that it was Dr. Pococke’s strong reputation both at Oxford and abroad which attracted ‘attention to the book’. To record an idea of the extent of Dr. Pococke’s domain of influence and the admiration in which he was held, one needs only to look at the correspondence reported by Pococke’s eighteenth-century biographer, and at the number of scholars who were interested in consulting him. Even his son’s translation has at times been mistakenly attributed to the father.

Immediately after its publication, many copies of the *Philosophus autodidactus* were being sent to prominent figures abroad. For example, Francis Vernon, who was secretary to the British Embassy in Paris (1673-77) at the time, reported that ‘by

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31 Leonard Twells, *The Theological Works of the Learned Dr. Pocock, To which is prefixed An Account of his life and Writings never before printed* (London:1740), I. It includes correspondence which is no longer extant. Subsequent references will be to this volume, cited as *Works*.

32 Twells explains (*Works*, 3) that because the father wrote the learned Preface, it ‘led foreigners, especially those of France to consider the whole as the father’s Performance.’ This wrong attribution has, in fact, continued even in this century with reference to the ‘Latin translation of Pococke’ without identifying which one, as in Gauthier, *Hayv ben Yaqdhan*, vii.
the Doctor’s own Direction,’ he had delivered copies of ‘his son’s Book’ to a number of orientalists at the Sorbonne. He also observed that ‘all had read and approved it’. Not only key orientalists or ‘Sorbonists’ in Paris were interested, but also such influential figures as Melchisedec Thevenot (1620-92), who was in touch with most of the famous persons of his time, and John Wallis, Pococke’s friend, who had little skill in the Arabic language. In fact, it seems that Vernon ran out of extra copies to circulate. In a letter to Dr. Pococke, he regrets that he ‘had not begged a copy for Thevenot,’ who was so clearly ‘much taken with the fancy of the piece’ and intended in return to send a gift of an Arabic manuscript of the life of ‘Ibn Tophail’. The great demand for the book can be, for example, witnessed in the fact that Francis Vernon, having run out of copies of the book, had even to part with ‘his own copy’ in order to present it, either on his own proposal or possibly upon request, to Christian Huyghens, the distinguished Dutch scientist who was in Paris at the time.

In November 1671, the book had already been taken to Florence by Abbot Lorenzo Panciatichi (1635-1676), to make the ‘value of it known’ there. By the end of December of the same year, the Philosophus autodidactus was being translated into Dutch in Holland. This anonymous translation from Edward’s Pococke’s Latin is entitled Het Leven van Hai ebn Yokdhan (Amsterdam, 1672) and went through several editions.

33 See Twells, Works, I, 67-68. Vernon cites such eminent French orientalists as Capellain, Herbelote, de la Croix and Ferrand, and conveys their admiration and enthusiasm for the book.

34 Melchisedec’s academic interest in oriental subjects is realised in a practical way by his nephew, Jean de Thevenot, who travelled in the Near East, Persia and India. The accounts of his travels were published in five volumes, entitled La Decouverte (Amsterdam, 1727). Cited by Russell, 254-55.

35 See Toomer, 247.

36 See Twells, Works, I, 68.

37 Ibid, 68.

38 Ibid, 68.
‘For example, when Pococke’s Latin was reprinted in 1700, a second edition of the Dutch translation followed in 1701, with the additional title of De Natuurlyke Wysgeer.’\textsuperscript{39} In their \textit{Arabic Studies in the Netherlands},\textsuperscript{40} Brugman and Schroder claim that it was Adrian Reland (1676-1718) who revised the Dutch translation (1701) of \textit{ayy Bin Yaq\&n}. There is no doubt that the efforts of the Oxford circle of Dr. Pococke’s followers were responsible for the primary circulation of the book. In addition, the fact that it was also in Latin made it reachable by the educated elite, and allowed it to travel through Europe.\textsuperscript{41} These do not, however, explain the great popularity of the book, or, as Vernon related, why ‘they every where made Account of it.’ There were burning demands for the \textit{Philosophus autodidactus} even of scholars who had come to Oxford from out of the country, to study with Dr. Pococke. For example, Ferrand, at the Sorbonne, requested a copy from Ottsius, the Swiss scholar, on behalf of Francis Bosquet, the Bishop of Lodève and later of Montpellier, who ‘impatiently’\textsuperscript{42} waited for it.

\textbf{The Quakers’ Translation:}

The bilingual publication of the \textit{Philosophus autodidactus}, having attracted immediate attention, was followed by different retranslations into Dutch, English, and German, initially from Pococke’s Latin, but subsequently also from the original Arabic.\textsuperscript{43} There were reprinted editions, summaries (in English and French), and similar ‘plagiarised’ versions which continued

\textsuperscript{39} See Russell, 255.

\textsuperscript{40} See J. Brugman, and F. Schroder, \textit{Arabic Studies in the Netherlands} (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1979), 25.

\textsuperscript{41} See Simon Ockley’s ‘Dedication to the Reverend Mr. Edward Pococke’ in his translation of the work from the Arabic original, entitled \textit{An Account of the Improvement of Human Reason, exhibited in the Life of Hai ebn Yockdhan} (London, 1708).

\textsuperscript{42} See Twells, \textit{Works}, I, 68.

right into the next century. These editions evoked inspiring reactions not only from orientalists, but also from theologians and natural philosophers. George Keith the Quaker, arrested by the similarity of Ibn ‘ufayl’s views to his own, though innocent of Arabic, immediately set about translating Pococke’s laboured Latin into noble English; his version, annotated in the spirit of Quakerism, appeared in 1674 under this long title:

An account of the Oriental Philosophy, the Wisdom of some Renowned Men of the East: And particularly, the profound Wisdom of Hai Ebn Yaqdhan. Both in Natural and Divine things; which he attained without converse with Men (while he lived in an Island a solitary life, remote from all Men from his Infancy, till he arrived at such perfection). Writ originally in Arabick, by Abi Jaaphar Ebn Tuphail; And out of the Arabick translated into Latin by Edward Pococke, a student in Oxford; and now faithfully out of his Latin, Translated into English: For a general service.

This translation bears significant relationship to the ‘Society of Friends’, or the Quaker movement. What Keith and other Quakers of the time found attractive in the book was the fact that Ibn ‘ufayl’s ideas and conceptions were in complete harmony with those of the Quakers regarding the Inner Light and personal spiritual experiences. Keith observed that the ‘infidel author’ had been a good man, and far beyond many who had the name of Christians - a striking contrast to the prevailing intolerance against Islam - and added that he showed excellently how far the knowledge of a man, whose eyes are spiritually opened, different from that knowledge that men acquire simply


45 As appears on the title page of Keith’s translation printed in 1674 and provided by Early English Books Online EEBO, image no. 1.
by ‘hear-say or reading.’ In other words, the personal communion with the Deity which the Quakers valued was beyond any rites or dogma. From this explanation we can say that Keith found a remarkable affinity between this Islamic text and his own form of Nonconformist Christianity where personal experience was put above the established dogma of the church. At the same time, he is acutely aware that such a connection might appear inherently incongruous to some of his readers. So he recommends them in his own introduction entitled ‘An Advertisement to the READER’ to receive what is agreeable with them and pass by what is not.

Keith’s translation seems to have coincided with his drafting of the formal Quaker manifesto, in co-operation with Robert Barclay (1648-1690), the highly influential Scottish apologist for the Society of Friends. For Keith, Ibn ‘ufayl’s story depicted exactly what he summarised as the Quaker ‘common notion’: ‘the sufficiency of inner light.’ The Quaker doctrines were put forth in 1675 as fifteen propositions, referred to as Theses Theologiae, a public discussion of which was held at Aberdeen in Scotland. Being prepared in defence of the ‘theological theses’, Robert Barclay’s Apologia was reprinted in Amsterdam in 1676.

Not only did Keith influence Barclay in the creating of the Quaker manifesto; he also provided him with a ‘Quaker’ version par excellence of |ayy Bin Yaq&[n. The self-taught philosopher appears in the Apology—Propositions V and VI (par. xxvii)—as the perfect illustration of the experience of Inner Light without the means of the Holy Books. The assumption that George Ashwell’s English translation of The

46 See Keith’s ‘Advertisement to the Reader’ in his translation of Hai Ebn Yaqdhan.
47 Ibid, image no. 2.
48 For Robert Barclay, see An Apology for the True Christian Divinity (London, 1678).
49 The title is Theologiae vere Christianae apologia (Amsterdam, 1676). Cited by Russell, 263.
*History of Hai Ebn Yokdhan* is remarkable for having provided Robert Barclay with a piece of evidence of his doctrine of Inner Light is completely incorrect. Ashwell’s translation from Pococke’s Latin version was published in 1686, which puts it after Keith’s translation in 1674 and twelve years after the publication of the *Apology*. Like Keith, Barclay leaves out the intellectual development of |ayy Bin Yaq&[n, and focuses in his summary only on the final achievement of the knowledge of God through personal experience. Although Barclay may have seen Pococke’s Latin publication, the main statement of his summary is taken almost faithfully from the ‘Advertisement to the Reader’ in Keith’s version of the *Philosophus autodidactus*. Yet there is a book translated out of the Arabick, which gives an account of one Hai Ebn Yokdan, who without converse of man, living in an island alone, attained to such profound knowledge of God, as to have immediate converse with him, and to affirm that the best and most certain knowledge of God is not that which is attained by premisses premised and conclusions deduced, but that, which is enjoyed by conjunctiuon of the mind of man with the Supream Intellect, after the mind is purifie\textsuperscript{d} from its corruptions and is separated from all bodily images and is gathered into a profound stillness.\textsuperscript{50}

Entirely aware of his contribution to the Apology, Keith gives a description of it years later in his *Standard of the Quakers examined, or an answer to the Apology of Robert Barclay*.\textsuperscript{51} By that time he had given up Quakerism, after a life spent in and out of jails with angry battles ranging from England to America (Pennsylvania),\textsuperscript{52} where he most probably carried at least the

\textsuperscript{50} Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, (London, 1678), Prop. V and VI, Paragr. 27, p. 134. (As appears in Early English Books Online EEBO, image no. 81.)

\textsuperscript{51} See the *Apology*, paragraph 27, 134.

\textsuperscript{52} See G. Keith, *The Standard of the Quakers examined* (London, 1702), 5. According to Russell, he wrote this book after becoming an Anglican; it is both a criticism of *The Apology* and an account of his contribution in its preparation.
summary of |ayy Bin Yaq&[n, if not a copy of his own translation.

Providing the Quakers with a sound proof of the existence of the Inner Light, the Apology was highly influential in its original Latin as well as in its English, Dutch, French, German, and other versions. Equally important, the Apology was the most reliable and systematic statement of Quaker principles. According to it, the Quaker movement was defined as a religion of ‘inner light’, against both Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism, and conceived of as one where neither the church nor the Holy Scriptures could claim ultimate power or lead to salvation. Instead, salvation could be realised only through the Holy Spirit. |ayy Bin Yaq&[n served the Quakers’ principles simply because it was seen by them as the perfect manifestation of religion as an individual experience of ‘inner light’. In fact, the eighteenth-century English translation from the Arabic original by Simon Ockley (1678-1720) was in reaction against the Quaker understanding and use of the Philosophus autodidactus as a representative for their ‘enthusiastic notions’.53

George Ashwell’s Translation:
Inspired by Ibn ^ufayl’s story, George Ashwell, the vicar of Banbury, emulated Keith by putting Pococke into English with an epilogue of his own in 1686, under the title The History of Hai Eb’n Yockdhan; an Indian Prince: or the Self-Taught Philosopher. Being well known for his naturalist theology, Ashwell translated the book in support of his argument that nature is capable of leading us to God. In his introductory letter to the reader entitled Epistle Dedicatory, he suggests that his main concern is to instruct this ‘licentious Generation, whereof some are too loose in their principles and others in their

53 It has also been translated into Spanish, Danish, and curiously in part into Arabic and is described as not only ‘the first defense of Quaker principles by a man of trained intelligence, but in many respects as one of the most impressive theological writings of the century.’ See Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee’s edition of The Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. I, 1089-1090 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921-22).
practices.’ He elaborates by saying that the philosopher, whose life is described here, is capable of teaching them:

……in such principles of Morality and Religion and such alone as the light of Nature discovers and which must needs be acknowledged for true by all those, who will judge and act as Men, according to the dictates of reason, and the Conclusions resulting from experience. And I heartily wish indeed, that all us were arrived even thus far, by the guidance of this light, and agreed in such principles as humane Reason teacheth out of the book of nature, which sets forth to our view God’s works of Creation and Providence. For this foundation being laid, there would be hopes of agreement about that, which the Supernatural light of Revelation discovers to our Faith, and super structs thereupon.54

In his preface, he also declares that his version is not a slavish translation of the Latin rendering. Thus, he thinks that he can use more liberty in order to render it ‘more clear’ and provide the reader with greater profit and pleasure as well. To achieve this goal, Ashwell deletes Ibn ^ufayl’s introduction, the spontaneous generation version of |ayy’s birth, and the passage concerning the argument advanced by Ibn ^ufayl in support of his view that regions under the equinox enjoy the most temperate weather, for he perceived in them little or nothing contributing to the main ‘Design of the History’. To this translation, Ashwell adds an epilogue written by himself entitled Theologia Ruris, Sive Schola Scala Nature: Or; The Book of Nature, Leading us, by certain Degrees, to the Knowledge and Worship of the God of Nature.55

Even before Keith and Ashwell had made their translations, Pococke’s Latin had crossed the North Sea and gone into Dutch; as mentioned previously, Het Leeven van Hai Ebn Yokdhan appeared anonymously in Amsterdam in 1672. However, as regards its anonymity, we may note that it was

54 As appears on Ashwell’s translation (1686) provided by Early English Books Online EEBO, image no. 3.
55 Ibid, image no. 111.
reported that Spinoza, the Dutch philosopher whose family settled in Holland as refugees from the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal, had either translated the Arabic novel or recommended it to be translated into Dutch. Another anonymous translation (an English one) of Hayy Bin Yaq&[n appeared in 1696, bound with Robert Green’s Dorastus and Fawnia, and under the title The History of Josephus the Indian Prince. Here, most of the philosophical concepts of the original text were either omitted or summarised, with the outcome that Hayy Bin Yaq&[n was presented to its readers simply as an amusing story rendered in plain style and language.

Simon Ockley’s Translation:
Now, Simon Ockley, however impatient and inexperienced he may have been in his promotion of things Arabic, was very far from hoping to be identified with the ideas of Keith, Barclay and Ashwell. In his preface to his translation, he tells his readers that he tried to translate it anew, because he is certain that since Keith’s and Ashwell’s renderings ‘were not made out of the Original Arabic, but out of Latin’, they must have mistaken the sense of the author in many places. His other reason for translating this work is to incline his friends who have not seen this book to a more favourable opinion of Arabic learning. In 1708, Simon Ockley’s version, made directly from the Arabic, was published in London (and was reprinted there in 1711, and again in Dublin in 1731) under the following long title:

The Improvement of Human Reason, Exhibited in the Life of Hai Ebn Yokdhan: Written in Arabick above 500 Years ago, by Abu Jaafar Ebn Tufail, In which is demonstrated, By what Methods one may, by the meer Light of Nature, attain the knowledge of things Natural and Supernatural; more particularly the knowledge of God, and the Affairs of another life, .......Newly translated from the Original Arabick,.......With an

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Appendix, In which the Possibility of Man’s attaining the True knowledge of God, and things necessary to Salvation, without Instruction, is briefly consider’d. 57

Ibn ^ufayl himself had written a short introduction to his treatise, in which he discusses briefly some of the concepts held by the leading Muslim advocates of mystic philosophy before his time, namely, al-F[ra]’(d.950), al-Ghaz[al] (d.1111), and Ibn S[u]n[ (d.1037) and Ibn B[jja (d.1139). This is omitted not only from Ashwell’s translation, but also from the 1731 edition of Ockley’s version, and from the 1986 edition which was revised and introduced by A.S. Fulton, since - according to him - it contains nothing of general interest. 58 The bookseller’s (Edward Powell) preface to the reader in Ockley’s first edition (1708) summarises the author’s purpose and outlines the story with sufficient clearness. It states that the purpose is to show how humane reason may, by observation and experience, arrive at the knowledge of natural things, and from thence to Supernatural; particularly the Knowledge of God. Furthermore, in order to achieve this goal, he presumes an individual brought up by himself, where he was altogether fully deprived of any kind of instruction, but what he could get from his own observation and contemplation when living in isolation. Conant claims that one appealing depiction of the lonely hero’s manner of making himself live at ease on the island recalls Robinson Crusoe, and that since this book appeared only eleven years before Robinson Crusoe, ‘the passage may possibly have been seen by Defoe.’ 59

Conclusion:
Thus, English readers of the eighteenth century had access to three remarkable English translations of Ibn ^ufayl’s |ayy Bin Yaq& on in addition to Pococke’s Latin translation and the

59 See Conant, 129.
anonymous partial English translation entitled *The History of Josephus the Indian Prince*. If we make brief comparison between these different versions of Keith, Ashwell and Ockley, we can say that Keith was mainly concerned to use it as a support to the Quaker’s conception of Inner Light, and he was not so much concerned with producing an elegant work of art as providing his readers with a faithful and accurate rendering of Pococke’s Latin translation. It is also worth mentioning that Keith included all Ibn ‘ufayl’s introductions to the story in his translation. Ashwell gave himself the freedom to render the Latin version into plain language, for his major concern was the pleasure of his readers. Unlike his predecessors, Ockley’s aim was to produce a neat, well-organised and as much as possible accurate piece of Arabic artistry. As suggested by Arberry, Ockley’s translation is ‘a fluent and on the whole very accurate piece of work’, and can hardly have failed to make a positive impression on his public. Large claims have now and then been advanced concerning its influence on eighteenth century thought; particularly, it ‘has been argued, not implausibly, that the book was read by Daniel Defoe, and remembered when he came to picture Robison Crusoe as a speculative philosopher’.60 The following extracts quoted below may well clarify how far the mentioned translators did succeed in achieving their aims:

We will consider an extract from the Arabic text which illustrates |ayy’s unexpected discovery of the art of cooking, which runs as follows:

وكان من جمله ما ألقى فيها على سبيل الاختبار لقد أصب في شيء من أصناف الحيوانات البحرية - كان قد ألقى البحر إلى ساحته - فلما أنضجت ذلك الحيوان وسطع قهراً تتحرك شوته إليه، فأكل منه شيئاً فاستطابه، فاعتاد بذلك لكل اللحم.61

In Keith’s version, this passage turns out to be an ambiguous chain of relative clauses:

Among other things which he did cast into (fire), for the trying of its strength, there were some of those animals which live in the sea, which the sea

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had cast upon the shore, which being roasted with the fire, and the smell of them rising up, his appetite was stirred up, so that he tasted somewhat of them; which when it was acceptable to him he accustomed himself to the eating of flesh….. 62

As an objective reader, I can say that Ashwell’s version seems much more interesting and amusing:

And among other Experiments, wherewith he made trial of its strength, he put thereinto certain fishes which the sea had cast upon the shore; which being fried, and the steam thereof coming to his Nose, his Appetite was stirr’d up, and become quickened thereby, insomuch that he ventured to taste some part thereof; which when he found acceptable to his Palate, and agreeable to his Stomach, from thence Forward he accustomed himself to eat Flesh.63

If compared with the previous ones, Ockley’s extract is concise, smooth and elegant in style:

Among other things which he put in to try its strength, he once flung in some Sea Animals which had been thrown ashore by the Water, and as soon as e’er he smelt the Steam, it rais’d his Appetite, so that he had a Mind to taste of them; which he did, and found them very agreeable, and from that time he began to use himself to the Eating of Flesh….. 64

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62 Keith’s translation as appears in Early English Books Online EEBO, image no. 53.

63 Ashwell’s translation, ibid., image nos. 29-30.

64 Simon Ockley, trans. of The History of Hayy, 67-68.
Regarding modern translations of |ayy, mention can be made of J.M. Budd’s in 2000\textsuperscript{65} and Lenn Evan Goodman’s in 2003.\textsuperscript{66}


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The Moral Space in Coetzee’s *Disgrace*: An Ethical Reading in a Postcolonial Context

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“Poesy, therefore, is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termed it in his word *mimesis*; that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth; to speak metaphorically a speaking picture with this end, to teach and delight”

(Sir Phillip Sidney. *Defense*, 79-80)

Despite all the debates embedded in the Critical Theory on the purpose of reading literature, the act of reading literature essentially remains an ethical issue. We might read literature for pleasure, for its aesthetics, or in quest for the modes of representation, yet the final purpose of literature remains within the Aristotelian expectation ‘teach and delight’. In his discussion of the value of reading literature, Daniel Schwartz sees the premise of connection between art and life as a strong unifying factor among ethical critics. For him, literature is essential to the development of the mature personality. In this context, Daniel, cited in Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack, asserts that: “Literature provides surrogate experiences for the reader, experiences that, because they embodied within artistically shaped ontology that heightens our awareness of moral discriminations” (5). The questions, however, remain: What ethical package does a given text offer to the reader? And, is this package compatible with the reader’s ethical standards? It is true that some texts preach certain issues which are culturally specific, and in effect, might not be congruent with the ethical values of the potential reader, but it should be admitted that some other texts go beyond the boundaries of local culture to address issues of universal appeal. In both cases, however, the reader seems to be the decisive factor in his/her ethical interpretation of any given text. In fact, the problem of ethical and unethical texts has become a point of contention between the two critics, Richard Posner and Martha Nussbaum. The former believes that we read literature for its aesthetics, while the latter contends that we read literature for the ethics. In “Against Ethical Criticism”, Posner rejects any didactic claim at the expense of aesthetics. He argues that:

Nussbaum thinks moral philosophy incomplete without literature.  
She does not deny the importance of aesthetic values, but she is
prepared to trade them off against the moral, so that the morality of the work affects its final evaluation of the work of Literature. (3)

Accordingly, Posner opposes any classification of literature in terms of morality or ethical standards. Nassabaum, however, rejects Posner’s claims of objectifying the work of art and reducing it to the issue of mere aesthetics. She thinks that reading literature enhances the moral growth of the reader; therefore and according to her, we should be selective and choose the texts that involve the readers’ morality. In refuting Posner’s claims of detached reading, Nussbaum strongly argues that:

At bottom, then, the appeal to aesthetic detachment is not innocent of politics. To

read Dickens in a detached way is to refuse the invitation of Dickens to reflect. To cling to authors who can more plausibly be read in that detached and political way is to refuse the initiation and other social authors to reflect, (76)

In this sense, Nussbaum seems to be right in thinking that when we read literature, we resist accepting the author’s aesthetic point of view whereby he treats characters as ‘objects’. Instead, readers tend to wonder and fancy how some literary works maintain a kind of an intimate relationship with the reader, a relationship which helps them to nourish the ascription of humanity and the prospects of friendship (Poetic Justice, qtd. in Davis and Womack).

In his distinction between ‘ethics of reading and ‘ethics while reading’, Daniel seems to have resolved the conflict between Nussbaum and Posner. He seems to favor ‘ethics of reading’ because it allows us to read the text from multiple perspectives. According to him: “an ethic of reading realizes that original and contemporary audiences are polyauditory and that each of us is an interpretive community of one” (12).

In the light of the above debates, one tends to admit that the aesthetics of a given work of art provides the reader with multiple options of interpretation, yet the final and the decisive factor in the act of reading is what and how, we as readers, become beneficiaries of the work of art. We tend to dig for the lesson to be learned. In this context, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the ethical lessons that might be learnt in Coetzee’s Disgrace.

In this text, the protagonist seems to go through a journey of self-exploration, a journey that starts by ignorance and ends by full awareness of the reality; it is this conscious awareness of the lessons to be learnt. Accordingly, the reader of this text will certainly benefit from the experience of the others. This reader, however, while involved in the novel, might not embrace the author’s ethical point of view, on the contrary, he/she might appropriate the moral message in accordance with his/her ethical standards that might not be completely compatible with those of the author.

Disgrace, a novel written by James Coetzee; mainly deals with the postcolonial situation in South Africa; however, if we closely look at the book, we find out that it deals with ethical issues within a postcolonial discourse. The text, with its postmodernist style, underlies much complexity, a complexity that allows different interpretation. Therefore, this paper will touch only upon two possible interpretations; one has to do with the personal experience of David Lurie, and the other concerns the postcolonial situation
in South Africa. In both interpretations, there is a lesson to reflect on and aptly learn.

The first element, which strikes us in the novel, is the choice of the protagonist. Coetzee seems to fashion David, the protagonist, on the Greek models of heroes, but in a subversive manner; he is neither tragic nor comic hero. David is a prestigious professor and celebrity in the world of academia; yet and according to Aristotle, he is a man with a lapse in his character. (52-53) He is a man whose weakness is blatant in his overriding sexual desire. This desire leads him to his downfall, as is the case in the Greek tragic hero. In this sense, David’s experience in life is a journey from ignorance into full awareness of his weakness and the right moral course to follow. However, the lesson to be learned is not limited to the protagonist but also to the reader. The book opens by the scene of David driven by his excessive sexual desire; this desire seems to have blinded and debased him to the level of animals. David, the elderly divorced professor does not seem to care about any moral standard whereby he can resolve his sexual problem. We see him driving to Windsor Mansions in order to make love with Soraya, the prostitute. This lady, who is portrayed by the author as a professional prostitute, is merely a destitute who seems to be a victim of circumstances. A Muslim reader might consider the representation of Soraya offensive and lacking any credibility. If she were really a Muslim as the narrator assumes, she would not be too unfortunate to work as a prostitute because in Islam, a woman like Soraya would not be left alone; she would find many Muslims who would willingly extend their hands to help. So, it is up to the reader to accept or reject this representation. In either case, however, it is the reader’s ethical code which is decisive in ethical criticism. At any rate, David’s sexual desire makes him forget the requirements of having a stable and dignified life. It is not strange, then, when the narrator comments on such kind of indifference to and irresponsibility in life:

“It surprises him that ninety minutes a week of woman’s company are enough to make him happy, who used to think he needed a wife, a home, a marriage. His needs turn out to be quite light after all, light and fleeting, like those of a butterfly” (5).

It is clear that every thing for him becomes illusive except his sexual desire, a desire, which makes him relentless and restless in his pursuit of Soryia. Desperate to satisfy this desire, David does not hesitate to make love with Dawn, the secretary of the English department. However, when he finds her “she works herself into a forth of excitement that in the end only repels him” (9), he shows no more interest in her. Certainly, he is a narcissist who is much obsessed by his sexual desire.

David’s story with Melanie is another evidence of his moral degradation. Melanie, a student in his class, is a young girl who steams out with passion and desire. David, as her professor, is expected to discipline her and other students. Unfortunately, we find him making use of his position and abusing his students instead. We understand that he takes her to his house and seduces her. In class, David’s language becomes seductive. For instance, speaking
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about the ‘Alps and the Darkensberg’ mountains is nothing more than an allusion to Melanie’s body. Reflecting on this twisted relationship, one might resist interpreting David’s affair with Melanie as an act of rape, but if we consider the situation deeply, we find it even worse than rape. Melanie, as hinted above, is a young lady who is curious about sexual experience, yet she has never thought of having an affair with a man who is as old as her father. The narrator, in a very sarcastic note, tries to hint at David’s experience with Melanie as a kind of rape: “Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core. As though she had decided to go slack, die within herself for the duration, like a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck”, (25) Melanie, then, becomes a victim of David’s desire and hers. Of course, she has a boyfriend, but there is no hint of her making love with him.

Dictated by his eroticism, David starts to repudiate his moral and academic responsibility and, in effect, he has created a situation where Melanie starts to blackmail him; he has to tolerate her recurrent absence, and worse than that, he begins to give her grades without setting for the exam. When his affair with Melanie is revealed, David has fallen into real trouble; he has to face his own disgrace and defend himself in front of the disciplinary committee. Moreover, he has to justify himself to his students and the public. At this juncture, David turns out as the Greek tragic hero. In effect, we as audience and readers start to feel sorry for him; we regret his fortune and wish that had opted for another course. We start to dislike the members of the inquiry committee who want to press him to make a confession and declare himself guilty in public. In spite of the fact that he admits his mistake and holds himself responsible for what he had done, we find the members of the committee trying to go beyond their human liabilities and assume the role of the Divine Power! David tells the committee that he is a victim of desire: “I was not myself; I was no longer a fifty-year old divorced at loose end. I became a servant of Eros (52). The committee’s persistence on David’s repentance and confession in public seems to be an act of hypocrisy; they are not as much interested in his salvation as they are in him declaring his repentance in public in order to keep his job. We, however, admire David when he declares that: “Repentance belongs to another world, to another universe of discourse” (58). It is not surprising, then, to find that David’s refusal to repent in public costs him his career and wraps him up with disgrace.

David’s journey to the East, then, becomes a journey of self-understanding, a journey full of endurance and longing for purification and redemption. In this situation, he resembles Shakespeare’s King Lear; he has to put up with the fact that he is no longer a leader but rather led and guided by his daughter. He comes to live in a world of reality, a world which is different from the pastoral and romantic world he has been familiar with in the courses he was teaching. He has to accept the harsh reality of the countryside, the violence and the atrocities committed against his daughter, Lucy. We then, feel that David’s experience in the countryside is a journey of revelation about the self. He admits to his daughter that the reason of his
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ordeal and fall is his desire: “My case rests on the right of desire… on the god who makes even the small birds quiver” (89).

In the countryside, David becomes involved with the animals; it is an involvement which helps him to reflect on his animalistic desire. He tells Lucy how their dog used to chase the bitches whenever they come to the garden of their house. This dog is an animal and an animal should not be punished for its instinctive desire. However, when the overriding sexual desire concerns man, it becomes a burden: “No, not always, sometimes I have felt the opposite. That desire is a burden we could well do without” (90). In the East, however, David’s journey of suffering is further aggravated by the rape incident of his daughter. He feels that he is invalid and unable to protect her. Accordingly, despair dominates him, and at this juncture, the narrator gives us inkling about the mental and the spiritual state of the protagonist: “His pleasure in living has been snuffed out. Like a leaf on a stream, like a puffball on a breeze, he began to float toward his end” (107).

Lucy’s rape has certainly enraged him and invited him to seek revenge on the perpetrators; however, Lucy’s reluctance to press the issue foreword has made him question the whole idea of rape. It is only when Lucy hints to him that rape is like murder that he starts to realize its horror, a horror which is expressed by Lucy when she questions: “Isn’t it like killing? Pushing the knife, like getting away with murder?” (158).

Realizing that rape is a horrible act, David urges Lucy to leave the farm and go back to the West. Yet, Lucy, who seems to have understood the real motives behind her rape, decides to stay and put up with all the difficulties she might encounter. Lucy's behavior is reminiscent of Caliban’s rape of Miranda which was excused by Prospero. But as we see her it is not the father but rather the daughter who is willing to excuse the rapist. This echoes Dominique O Mannoni when he pointed out that Caliban’s raping of Miranda is excused. This colonial discourse was totally refuted by Fanon who is cited in Green Keith and Jill LeBihan “points out that the white man’s fear of black men raping white women, and their desire for profit, heedless of exploitation, can’t be excused so easily” (163). Nevertheless the whole rape situation gives Lucy’s her father a lesson in perseverance and endurance. What is funny, however, is the fact that David still clings to the lyrical and bourgeois values of Byron. He thinks that he can remedy his decaying world with his new version of Byron’s opera. It is a funny way of dealing with an age which is no longer lyrical. The whole Byronic project becomes comic because it is not a genuine remedy. Moreover, the story of Byron and Teresa is not a story of real love but rather of betrayal and deception. Accordingly, David’s approach to a changing world is pathetic and is doomed to failure: “Yet first on Lucy’s farm and now again here, the project has failed to engage the core of him. There is something misconceived about it, something that does not come from the heart” (18). Still obsessed with voluptuous desire, David has made love with Bev Shaw. The narrator, however, implies that this is not an act of rape since it is Bev Shaw who seeks him; it is, then, a sexual experience which is based on the desire of one party and the acceptance of the other. This final sexual intercourse, however, has aroused David’s disgust and awakened in him the dislike of any sexual
experience which is not built on real love. In this sense, David has come to realize that his sexual experience with Melanie was only an act of voluptuous desire. Therefore, it is not surprising when we find David seeking Mr. Isaac, Melanie’s father, in order to apologize to the family for all the pain he has caused them. David, who does not believe in God, agrees to accept his disgrace, but when Isaac asks him about the real reasons of his coming to his house, the narrator intrudes and gives an open ended comment: “He is silent” (173). This sentence, which is stylistically foregrounded, conveys David’s inability to talk simply because nobody is going to listen to him. In this context, the whole colonial situation is subsumed by the silenced victim. The need to talk, as Spivak puts it, is determined by the need to be listened to. It seems that David lost the power of talking and in a sense the power of imposing his views of the others. David’s silence conveys his inability to further subjugate the other and eventually acceptance of his disgrace. Whatever this statement means, it seems that David has learnt the lesson; it is the lesson, which makes him kill the dog at the end. This killing seems to be a symbolic act; this dog which likes music is a symbol of the false values encoded in Byron’s opera. The relationship between Teresa and her lover is mainly based on sexual desire, not real love. In this context it means that one should get rid of any animalistic desire that is not disciplined or balanced by love. The question now is: What lesson has the reader learned? The answer to this question is not complicated; we as human beings should never let our animalist desires sway and debase us in the way this desire debased David and made him live in disgrace. This personal disgrace, however, is not the only ethical issue in the novel; there is another level of disgrace, which has to do with a larger ethical issue related to the disgrace of both the colonial and the postcolonial situation in South Africa. Again, the aesthetics of the book gives a space for a metonymic interpretation that explicitly hints at another ethical issue, also related to desire; it is the desire of the colonizer to perpetually humiliate and subjugate the colonized. In this sense, David with his lyrical love story of Byron and Teresa stands for the Western colonizer and the unsubstantiated values of colonization. It seems that he is a product of a colonial culture which depends on denigrating the image of the colonized. It is the culture which Homi Bhabah believes was promulgated by Western newspapers and quasi-scientific works which are replete with a wide range of stereotypes. (17) David with his decaying bourgeois values has become anachronistic in the postcolonial South Africa. Accordingly, David’s relationship with Lucy, on the one hand, and Petrus on the other becomes the focal ethical issue of *Disgrace*. When in the East, David, the representative of the previous Western colonial power, finds himself displaced. His stay in the East is an attempt to find refuge; however, the East is no longer a safe haven for him. Being displaced and outdated, David does not show any interest in involving himself in the postcolonial enterprise because he is not accustomed to the equality principle of the new situation. When Lucy asks him to volunteer and help Bev Shaw, he reluctantly accepts the offer and rejects any implication that his service is an act of “reparation for past misdeeds” (77). David rejects
what seems to be the new egalitarian situation in South Africa; it is a situation that denies him the role of the master. He does not want to accept the fact that Petrus can be the owner of the farm and the master of himself. This why, we always see David looking at Petrus with much dismay, mistrust and fear. The narrator comments on David’s attitude of frustration over his new subsumed position: “This is not what he came for- to be stuck in the back of beyond warding of demons, nursing his daughter attending to dying enterprise” (121). Lucy, however, represents the new generation of the colonizer; it is the liberal generation that rejects the colonial values of the ancestors. It seems that Lucy has acquired values different from those of her father; she accepts to live in this society on the basis of equality. Further than that, she does not seem to resist any attempt of being subjugated or subsumed by the other. She is unwilling to question any act of violence perpetrated against her. Coetzee, here, seems to adopt Lucy’s point of view and consider her perseverance and endurance as an act of penance or expiation for the sins of the fathers. It is no wonder then to see Lucy after her rape unwilling to raise the issue to the public or report it to the police. However, her father, who still adheres to the past values of the previous colonizer, has the desire to inflict the sever punishment on the perpetrators. He feels very angry and sad when he finds himself unable to defend his daughter. The narrator comments on David’s pathetic situation and his inability to provide security to his daughter: “He has the sense that inside him, a vital organ has been bruised, abused—perhaps even his heart. For the first time, he has the taste of what will be like to be an old man, tired to the bone without hopes, without desires, indifferent to the future” (107). Certainly, this is the utter humiliation to the previous colonizer. Accordingly, David sees that the best option for his daughter is to leave the place. When finding himself an outsider, he decides to leave the place and stay in Cape Town. Again, David finds himself placeless and the messy situation of his apartment is a symbol of his displacement in a country, which has been occupied for so long and it is the time for him to leave without return. However, when David learns that his daughter is pregnant, he quickly comes back for her aid. Upon his return David encounters Petrus and asks him about the boy, he wants to deny him the right to defend the boy, Pollux. The encounter between the two is a central ethical issue in the book. Petrus tells David it is his duty to protect the boy. When David, however, accuses Petrus of lying, the latter gets angry and tells him: “You go away, you come back again why? ... You have no work here. You come to look after your child. I also look after my child” (201) Pollux, for Petrus, is ‘his family’, and ‘his people’. David, then, becomes to realize that this place is no longer his nor is his daughter’s. Therefore, he asks her again to leave the place, but Lucy, as usual, is relentless and refuses to give up. At this point, it is interesting to see how different readers would respond ethically to such a situation. Some would admire Lucy and hail her for her courageous decision to stay and endure the hardships of the newly emergent situation in the postcolonial South Africa. These readers seem to adopt Lucy’s point of view and after all that of the author. It is an intriguing colonial discourse, a discourse that calls for dubious alliance or reconciliation. These readers might not find Cotzee’s point of view ethically
problematic. On the contrary, they will hail him as an ethical author who seeks for universal harmony. Certainly the ethical standards of these readers are built on the assumption that there is no harm in accommodating the previous colonizers to the new situation by dressing them in the gown of reconciliation. These readers might not have tasted the bitterness of colonization or the horror of the racial discrimination. Other readers, however, might admire David’s point of view in leaving the place and would consider any attempt of reconciliation as a dubious extension of colonization in the postcolonial era. These readers seem to have ethical standards built on justice and the right of South African people to live free in their own land. They would also embrace Petrus’ assertion that David should leave because he has no place. These readers would find difficulty in accepting Coetzee’s view of letting Lucy stay even if she is subsumed by Petrus and his clan. In this sense, David remains the hero who has learned the lesson and realizes the danger of desire on two levels, the personal and the postcolonial; he says in the end:

“Yes agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps this is what I must accept. To start from the ground. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity… Like a dog.”

(205)

Here, some readers might not sympathize with David, but they would certainly admire his endurance and his ability of putting up with the humiliation inflicted upon him by his imprudent desire of colonizing and subjugating the others. Again, his killing of the dog still resonates with the animalistic desire established in the first interpretation; a desire, one should get rid of to free the self and the others.

In conclusion, one can say that *Disgrace* is a novel which encodes many ethical issues. These issues, however, are not straightforward; they are wrapped up by the aesthetics of the text. The potential readers of this book might not take the ethos of the book blindly; on the contrary, they might embrace ethical stances different of those of the author. In this sense, one tends to agree with Posener that there is nothing called ‘ethical’ or ‘unethical’ text, however, one contends that the aesthetics is not the end of reading process, but rather a means to an end; the aesthetics allow multiple meanings, thus helping to sustain a friendly relationship between the reader and the text whereby the latter, according to Nussbaum, can fancy and reflect, and in effect benefit ethically.
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