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Submission Guidelines

- *Threshold* welcomes contributions of original (not previously published) works of interest in the disciplines of English Literature, English Language Teaching, Translation Studies and Comparative Studies along with related reports, news, profiles of eminent scholars, book and movie reviews, and creative writings.
- The contributors are expected to submit their works for the coming issue no later than 1st of Day, 1398.
- Prospective authors are invited to submit their materials to the journal E-mail address: sbthreshold@gmail.com
- The manuscripts are evaluated by editors of each section and at least two referees from the advisory board.
- The editors require the following format styles:
 - ③ Informative title
 - ③ Abstract (150-200 words)
 - ③ Keywords (3-5 words)
 - ③ Introduction (500-800 words)
 - ③ Background or review of related literature (1500-2000 words)
 - ③ Methodology (500-700 words)
 - ③ Results and discussion (500-700 words)
 - ③ Notes and references
- The name of the author(s) should appear on the first page, with the present affiliation, full address, phone number, and current email address.
- Microsoft word 2016 is preferred, using Times New Roman font and the size of 11 with

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Editorial

Grace is to God who once again helped us in the publication of the thirteenth volume of the *Threshold* journal. The present issue is in debt to the sincere essays of the editorial board that I am genuinely thankful. I need to express my exceptional thanks to Miss Ensieh Moeinipour, the respectable editor of the section "Army of Letters" who exerted great effort in introducing the journal to other academic centers.

Our interview in this issue is with one of the most popular professors of Shahid Beheshti University, English Literature department, Dr. Shahryar Mansouri, Assistant Professor of English Literature and IASIL regional Bibliography Representative for Iran. In this issue the readers get familiar with this popular professor, know his fields of interest and his domain of expertise.

Vafa Keshavarzi

Editor-in- Chief

Literary studies

Deconstructive Images in Elizabeth Bishop's Geographic Poetry

Sara Hassan Pour

From Derrida's perspective "language never offers us direct contact with reality; it is not a transparent medium, a window on the world. On the contrary, it always inserts itself between us and the world- like a smudgy screen or a distorting lens" (Bertens 126).

Bishop stands "at the threshold, along the pane of glass" recording the circumstance in her flexible point of view (Costello60).

Apparently, with Postmodernism of the second half of the twentieth century the concepts of knowledge, reality and truth went under a destabilizing revolution. Perhaps, more effective and articulating than any other factors, the roots of this transformation would be traced back to deconstructive texts of Jacques Derrida and his followers. Analyzing and reanalyzing the ways in which we think about the nature of world and self, these thinkers, more than any other contemporary critics believe in irrational knowledge. The shift in the stability and authenticity of knowledge

was paralleled simultaneously with a shift in the status of language as the key means of getting knowledge and understanding the world for poststructuralists. Declaring the obsolescence of any fixed objective reality, they demonstrated the inherent instability of both language and meaning and took under the question the ultimate authenticity of all human knowledge. As J. Hillis Miller asserts, for them “the moment when logic fails in their work is the moment of their deepest penetration into the actual nature of literary language, or of language as such” (qtd in Culler 23).

Deconstructive critics foreground how much we rely on language to articulate our perception of reality, through an unstable and uncontrollable language that makes our knowledge seem flawed. They affirmed that always there seems to be an inevitable contradiction between the original reality we want to express of ourselves and the slippery and fleeting medium we must use to express it. For them, knowledge exists in a language that there is no escape from it. We cannot have knowledge of anything beyond language, because language cannot present the world thoroughly. Words do not have stable meaning. They do not refer to fixed concepts; therefore, they cannot embody knowledge of the world completely. Derrida asserts that language does not refer to some external reality but only to itself and the same can be said for all knowledge. So search for truth and quest for centers and origins are doomed to failure.

In this approach, all definitions and depictions of truth are subjective, simple creation of human mind, a matter of construction and relativity. As Terry Eagleton remarks, “truth is the product of interpretation, facts are constructs of discourse, objectivity is just whatever questionable interpretation of things has currently seized power, and the human subject is as much a section as the reality he or she contemplates, a diffused, self-divided entity without any fixed nature or essence” (201). So reality has no ultimate external reference except when human’s perspective and knowledge becomes referential based on difference, because it differs from some other bit of knowledge to which it is related.

While Derrida, as a philosopher extends the structuralism challenge to the notion of the autonomous self to undermine the dualistic opposition between the individual and the surrounding world, so does Elizabeth Bishop, in her poetry. As “a self-proclaimed poet of geography,” Bishop’s poetic status that due to the oversimplified or rather misleading critical labels as “impersonal,” or “objective,” of her geographic poems was isolated to a minor one during her life, after her death seems to be “continually ascended” to “The Elizabeth Bishop Phenomenon”, as Thomas Travisano calls it (903). The recent postmodernist debates has induced deconstructive critics to uncover the expertly localized

subject matters as complicated problems of time, space and the elusive nature of knowledge in her geographical poems.

However, in Bishop's destabilized language, it is her supplementary outlook of physical senses and imagination that more than any other characteristics has captured the attention of her critics and readers. As Doeski truly asserts, in her poetry aesthetic tension drives neither from complex psychological outburst, nor from strange subject matter, but from the “restraint imposed by language itself” (4). This research is an attempt to study Elizabeth Bishop’s poetry in the shadow of Post structuralism doctrines of Derrida’s deconstruction. Consequently, this article, through a close textual reading of her indirect liminal perspective covers the deconstructive geographic images as the main dominant imagery of her poetry. It elaborates, how artistically, through applying a set of deconstructive doctrines, like a simultaneous presence/absence of her supplementary outlook the poet creates knowledge of geography at the threshold of present/absent place. Finally, it demonstrates how Bishop’s plurality of perspective results in an uncertain and vague knowledge that undermines the accuracy of her records. Keeping the phenomena in the process of knowing, describing and remembering, the poet destabilizes the affirmation of her observation and recollections. Therefore, the restrictedly one-sided attributes of her critic's as “brilliant surfaces, keen observation, and

formal perfection” need to be redefined through the deconstructive lens of inaccuracy and uncertainty (Travisiano 903).

Perspective at the Threshold

Post structuralism, in continuation and rejection of some structuralism’s linguistic doctrine offers a somehow different system of signification. Derrida proposed a distinctive conception for the process of signification; the key term “differance,” which means “to differ” and “to defer,” at the same time. It shows how language depends on differential systems to produce meaning in an endlessly postponing and delaying process. That the words and meanings (signifiers and signifieds) on the phase of endless thresholds bear the traces of their previous appearance, while they anticipate their future ones in the text too.

To summarize this chain-like process of searching meaning, Derrida rejects the base of stable meanings on the ground that signifiers and signifieds depend on what they are not. In other words, whenever we tie a signifier to a signified, the nature of both signifier and signified depends on something other than itself, an absent. We cannot say to what a signifier refers without evoking an absent, and once we evoke an absent, we cannot say what it refers to without evoking another absent, and so on. It seems that in a total categorization, Deconstructive critical debates of language and meaning are founded on a general binary opposition of

presence/absence. The authority of presence that determines the base of all our thinking is supported by a metaphysic foundation that is challenged by Derrida. As he discusses in his concept of “differance”, due to its differing and deferral process, meaning of a sign is created out of what the sign is not, what is hidden and concealed from it. Likewise, Terry Eagleton notes, “meaning of a sign is a matter of what the sign is not, its meaning is always in some sense absent from it too” (128). Deconstructing the hierarchical opposition of presence/absence would involve demonstrating that for “presence” to function as the way it is, it must have the qualities that supposedly belong to its opposite, “absence”. Thus, instead of defining absence in terms of presence, the notion of presence is derived out of differance, from an effect of differing and deferring. As Derrida puts it:

the movement of signification is possible only if each so-called ‘present’ element, each element appearing on the scene of presence, is related to something other than itself, thereby keeping within itself the mark of the past element, and already letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element, this trace being related no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past, and constituting what is called the present by means of this very relation to what it is not (qtd in Bertens125).

Concerning Bishop, the duality of her applied language, the sensory physical language and figurative one leads to a dichotomy of meaning. The world and its phenomena are like a text that Bishop through her constant readjustment of perspective gets indulged in a never ending reading process of it. The reason behind this indirect altered can be summarized in what C. K. Doreski states: “distinction between looks and visions of mind’s eye” that she applied throughout her career (ibid5). However, her lifelong literary career of differentiating the exterior “look” from the interior “vision” of mind is an intermingling collaboration of both her “observation” and “speculation” side by side.

The mentioned differentiation between “look” and “vision” creates meaning out of the alternative “presence” and “absence” of her mediums. Betraying the immediacy of physical senses, Bishop artistically challenges the hierarchal priority of look over vision. In other words, the metaphysical status of “presence” that is attributed to physical senses is deconstructed in her poetry. For Bishop, meaning emerges in a constant flickering of what is present and what is absent in her senses. Meaning of presence is created through absence, of look through vision, of surface through depth, and vice versa. There is no priority and no precedence, as they are supplementary. Concerning the debates of differentiation, Derrida deconstructs the opposition that was assumed between two

contrary poles of meaning. He challenges the hierarchy some “self-sufficient” centers, e.g. "truth," "origin," essence," can serve as “transcendental signified” and nourish the desire of western culture for ultimate reality. Derrida shows how these “self-originating” terms are supported by illusory “presence” that is inscribed to them.

Deconstruction approach demonstrates how belief in logos, transcendental signifieds or some centers inevitably leads to assuming some other notions as de-centers. This “either-or” logic leads to formation of binary oppositions like central/marginal, literal/figurative or presence/absence that inevitably assumes a stable ground upon which a whole hierarchy of meaning may be constructed. In this dualistic thinking, one pole is “privileged” and “superior” over the other that is “unprivileged” and “inferior”. As Culler states “logocentricism thus assumes the priority of the first term and conceives the second in relation to it, as a complication, a negation, a manifestation, or disruption of the first”(93).

Derrida deconstructs the opposition. He challenges the hierarchy and states that, “to deconstruct the opposition is above all, at a particular moment, to reverse the hierarchy” (ibid85). Through a reversal of traditional oppositions, he shows that the relationship between two poles is less oppositional than it seems in the first look. There is no inherent hierarchy in their meaning; neither is prior because each could not be without the other. No

valued characteristic is pure in itself and contradictory issues are contaminated by shady traces of each other. By showing that two poles are not diametrically opposed but mutually involved, he replaced either-or logic with a both/and position. Barbara Johnson provides an excellent summary of deconstruction of binary oppositions that "The "deconstruction" of a binary opposition is thus not an annihilation of all values or differences; it is an attempt to follow the subtle, powerful effects of differences already at work within the illusion of a binary opposition (qtd in Booker 60).

Supplementation logic foregrounds the unstable relationships between elements in a binary opposition. It reveals two poles' contamination to each other. Therefore, for deconstruction, meaning and state of binary oppositions is created out of supplementary interplay of both 'presence' and 'absence' together. Derrida states that: "It is the strange essence of the supplement not to have essentiality: it may always not have taken place. Moreover, literally, it has never taken place: it is never present, here and now" (qtd in Royle 50).

Bishop's endeavor in establishing a flexible "constant re-adjustment" of the surrounding world and her mind's concerns resembles that of gentleman in his self-reading in the poem, "The

Gentleman of Shallot". It is the story of a man who along the symmetry line of "spine", assumes his physical half self becomes complete by its metaphorical half reflection in the mirror; "Which eye's his eye? / Which limb lies / next the mirror?"(lines 1-3). The gentleman's supplementary perspective vanishes any priority between two poles of his binary outlook, so he has no sense of discrimination between his half-factual/half-fictional-ness; "for neither is clearer / nor a different color / than the other" (lines 4-6). The opposition of inner and outer resource of reflection is removed, as in a mutual arrangement, he completes his real self with the imaginative one. Observing the scene from multiple perspectives which is divided between his "eyes" and "thought," the gentleman's sources of self-recognition would be manipulated repetitively based on his various positions in front of the mirror:

The glass must stretch
down his middle,
or rather down the edge.
But he's in doubt
as to which side's in or out
of the mirror.

.....

And if half his head's reflected,

thought, he thinks, might be affected. (lines 21-30)

Poetry of exterior and interior, of object and subject reveals as much as it conceals. Bishop's apparent simple language, enriched with sensory descriptive images serves knowledge as it hinders. Bishop's poetry would be appreciated based on the same mutual interaction between the observable and the unobservable world, between the visible phenomena and the invisible ones, that all create a dynamic two way movement between reticence and revelation in her poems. Of the objects and scenes, they somehow reveal their physical existence, something accessible for the reader and at the same time conceal something unachievable, one that resorts to its own interiority and interior power of imagination. The most depersonalized and factual entities are entrapped within the private and fictional moments; while the most personalized ones are engulfed with the public and objective strategies. Landscapes, objects, animals, birds and people offer their external concrete characteristics while withdraw to the interior abstract ones; avoid giving more information than the surface. This is the way of the world, as Derrida writes, "the idea of world-origin, arising from the difference between the worldly and non-worldly, the outside

and the inside, ideality and non-ideality, universal and non-universal, transcendental and empirical, etc” (qtd in Culler 107).

The tension between what the poet represents and what does not, what can be observed and what cannot, what can be heard and what cannot, what can be articulated and what cannot, what can be written and what cannot pervades throughout her poetry, from very early to late. “The unseen hysterical birds,” in “Florida,” or an imaginary “iceberg” that “cuts its facet from within” and is “self-made from elements least invisible” in “The Imaginary Ice berg,” or the “pale blue cliffs” which are “receding for miles on either side” in “Large Bad Picture,” or somewhere in “The Moose,” “where if the river / enters or retreats” or a color confusion in “Poem,” “a thin church steeple / -that gray- blue wisp- or is it?” As most critics remark, it is because of this reason that Bishop’s poetry, to a large extent, revolves around two poles of a general binary opposition, “revelation / reticence”. While the term “revealing” invokes the “presence” that is accompanied by physical senses (look), “conceal” invokes the “absence” that is with mind’s imagination (vision). As Culler states, “the notions of “making clear,” “demonstrating,” “revealing,” and “showing what is the case” all invoke presence” (94). “Say/don’t say/half say,” and “feel/half feel/deny,” Bishop’s poetry struggles to make meaning out of presence as well as absence, make a balance between revealing and concealing (Spivack 502). Likewise, reading her with deconstructing lenses, postmodern critics mostly

have hinted to her complicated employment of language. Lombardi considers Bishop's use of an equivocal nature of language as a potent artistic tool, "a common language—a language that is never straightforward in its effect, a language that is always hiding something in the process of revealing everything" (qtd in Danford3). Furthermore, Harold Bloom remarks that in spite of her sensitive eyes, Bishop's "actual achievement is to see what cannot be seen, and to say what cannot quite be said" (11).

Deconstructing Images

"One can never really see full-face but that seems enormously important" (Bishop, qtd in Bloom 76).

As mentioned, the supplementary collaboration of presence/absence inserts meaning and text in the phase of threshold and trace. Through differing-deferring system of language, one signifier relays to another and that one to another one. So "there are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces" (Culler 99).The constant re-adjusting perspective in a differed and deferred process of absence/presence, look/vision that parallels with a shift in place from surface to depth shows how much the knowledge we acquire in Bishop's poetry is perspective and local bound. Perspective at the threshold, consequently, leads

to knowledge at the threshold, in the process of observing and speculating.

Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,

element bearable to no mortal,

.....

If you should dip your hand in,

your wrist would ache immediately,

your bones would begin to ache and your hand would burn

as if the water were a transmutation of fire

that feeds on stones and burns with a dark gray flame.

If you tasted it, it would first taste bitter,

then briny, then surely burn your tongue.

Sensational knowledge achieved out of water in “At the Fishhouses” is represented paradoxical, bearable to no mortal’s physical senses. The water that there is no doubt in its extra coldness (the word “cold” appears several times in third stanza), now, in the final part displays contradictory attributes, as “a

transmutation of fire...a dark gray flame”, with the ability to “ache” and “burn” the hand. It is also that much “bitter” and “briny” that “burn your tongue.” Likewise, both “absolutely clear” and “dark,” make it invisible. What do these oxymoronic terms imply except challenging the accuracy and exactitude of perception one gets straightforwardly by five immediate physical senses. This contradictory sensual aspect of water, in a broader extend, calls into doubt the nature and truth of “knowledge” one gets from the outside in its “absoluteness.” For Bishop’s reader there is no fixity and stability in the most immediate medium of knowing our circumstance. “Flowing, and flown,” the scene one observes is the product of continual change, in the process of never ending transformations. Because our knowing anything is itself imaginary, in adhering to a vision of unending process. Bishop asserts in the last line of "At the Fishhouses" that “our knowledge is historical, flowing and flown.” As if the world is not founded on absolutes that exist outside time and space. Limited, fallible, indirect and metaphorical, the possibility of knowing everything thoroughly everywhere and all the time is a failure for Bishop. She is offering a metaphoric knowledge, as she emphasizes that, “it is *like* what we *imagine* knowledge to be” (emphasis mine). As Doeski asserts for Bishop “all knowledge, finally, is incomplete, and consists not of ends but of paths, process, maps, and ways” (127). On the threshold of things, locations and persons, not clearly

seen, heard, felt, and remembered, meaning is waiting, still to come.

Differing and shifting from exterior, observational “look” to interior, meditative “vision,” incessantly, Bishop undermines the stability of her own perspective. The poet, whose “careful observation,” and “standards of accuracy” once had hypnotized the attention of numerous critics seems to offer an unusual and self-deconstructing accuracy (Costello136). The descriptive observational knowledge received out of surface is accurate in its inaccuracy and incompleteness. As Ford states, “she at once seeks to be accurate with a fierce eye for minutia while she also debunks the category of empirical “accuracy” (2). In fact, Bishop’s accuracy is more persuasive in its own inaccuracy, when it negates itself. In Doreski’s words, Bishop’s reflection[s] “exemplifies the candor of incompleteness” offering a “peripheral but convincing” realization (19-20). And such a mysterious accuracy bears the characteristics of a liminal knowledge, shady, vague, and uncertain. No more does she assign her physical senses a higher presence. Meaning for her temporally drives out of absence, not just from presence and sameness, because she finds something more valuable in the indeterminacy. Like the gentleman of Shalott, “...the uncertainty / [s]he says [s]he / finds exhilarating...” (lines 39-41).

Geography, as a dominant text in Bishop's poetry, invites the reader to a special reading of the world and its phenomena; one that is founded on an intermingling perspective that treats the real world and the imaginary one side by side. Her geographic texts highlight how "seeing" or "reading" actually occurs as much as it investigates the actual object being seen or read. These poems affirm that "the task of mind devoted to accuracy is to be continually aware of perspective; no angle on a subject can be taken for granted" (Millier 77). Poetry depicts the way the things and places are and the way they seem; the way they are observed on the surface in five physical senses and the way they are perceived and influenced by her inner vision, in a shifting readjustment of point of view from outside to inside of self and the world (and vice versa). Bishop's illustration of landscape, her wholehearted commitment to accurate and objective observation is not immune to the observer's subjective (personal) concerns. Bishop's landscape's observer in their self-effaced commitment to record their observation as accurately as possible inevitably falls in the domain of their existence within the context of place. In fact, it leads to "what can be seen and known from a landscape, as well as how it can be 'constructed'" (Paton136). And this is true even in Bishop's early collection *North & South* consisted of objective lyrics bare of first person "I" speaker.

The geographic observer remains liminal in her inward and outward senses that are adjusted to each other. That is why her chosen landscapes and objects, simultaneously, are observed (from outside) while meditated (from inside), in a shifting perspective. So while the pre-supposed objective observation records the exteriority, the subjective meditation tries to penetrate into the interior and depth. As one out of many observers, in her representing the world accurately and objectively, she falls in a kind of speculative obsession that no more trusts her own observations. The more she concentrates on the clarity and precision of her observation, the more uncertainty grows in them and the less her poor visibility succeeds; as if "visual clarity drives from the fiction of the objective stance" (Doreski 25).

Like the gentleman along "the edge" of mirror, geography observations remain in no farther or nearer location than the threshold. They are located on the liminal space, between the sea and the land, between in and out of life and its representation, where two worlds meet and overlap and never join: "S-shaped birds" which are "in and out among the mangrove islands" in "Florida" to "hundreds of fine black birds / hanging in n's in banks" in "Large Bad Picture" to "A speck like bird is flying to the left. / Or is it a flyspeck looking like a bird?" in "Poem". As she says in "The Monument", "the view is geared" to be located on the part that does belong neither to life nor its metaphor, neither to

land nor to sea, but to the border line that belongs to both at the same time.

“The Map,” as Millier states is “the first “Elizabeth Bishop” poem...the beginning of a lifelong concerns with shifting perspective and scale” (76-77). Things as they are and as they seem are so intersected that the map reader cannot distinguish the objective representations from her own subjective interpretations. It exemplifies the existence of a huge gap, a never-ending space in the way of appreciating knowledge in its exteriority and interiority:

Land lies in water; it is shadowed green

Shadows, or are they shallows, at its edges

showing the line of long sea-weeded ledges

where weeds hang to the simple blue from green.

Or does the land lean down to lift the sea from under,

drawing it unperturbed around itself?

Along the fine tan sandy shelf

is the land tugging at the sea from under? (lines 1-8)

Therefore the accuracy of the mathematical map-making science in representing a factual picture of the world and its geographic phenomena is inevitably called into question; so is Bishop's sensory accuracy. The speaker's defamiliarizing eye in its devotion to record the accuracy displaces the literal with the figurative and vice versa. As soon as surface goes to depth; "land lies in water," the knowledge that the map reader achieves "at its edges" is of hesitation; one of fact and fiction together. Bishop's keen eye fails to offer a totally objective accurate picture of the world, as her perspective is infected with her imagination. The scenery is reported through the eyes of just one of the world's observers, from different perspectives it might appear different.

Likewise, from the very beginning, "The Monument" starts with an observer's self-correcting observations. Describing visible and physical characteristics of a monument, it continues until its spatial dimensions, its material, shape and angle is elaborated. After all, paradoxically, in contrast to the prolific sensory and detailed exterior particulars, information concerning the monument's internal center remains subjective, hypothetical and vague. The speaker has no access to its interior reality:

It may be solid, it may be hollow.

The bones of the artist-prince may be inside
or far away on even drier soil.
But roughly but adequately it can shelter
what is within (which after all
cannot have been intended to be seen.) (lines 72-77)

The monument hides something beyond man's accessible visual senses and knowledge; something intended not to be seen by an eye, but by an inner eye, a "private I". It reminds us of Seamus Heaney's statement about it that can be considered as a fundamental characteristic of Bishop's poetry. He asserts that the monument "promises nothing beyond what it exhibits, and yet it seems to be standing over something which it also stands for" (qtd in Bloom 24).

The same mutual interaction between the observable and unobservable world, between the visible phenomena and the invisible ones can be seen here, where "the silken water is weaving and weaving, / disappearing under the mist equally in all directions, / lifted and penetrated now and then" (lines 8-10). The island with its specificity and known particularity is covered with an obscuring mist, "like rotting snow-ice sucked away / almost to spirit...." (lines 16-17). After that, the landscape with all its

accuracy and tangibility seems to escape the poet's poor visibility, resorts to its "interior" whose mystery can only be speculated and imagined interior of the mind:

The road appears to have been abandoned.

Whatever the landscape had of meaning appears to have been abandoned,

unless the road is holding it back, in the interior,

where we cannot see,

where deep lakes are reputed to be,

.....

and these regions now have little to say for themselves.

(lines 28-36)

Experiencing the place at the phase of threshold, the child persona of Elizabeth Bishop in the middle and late parts of her poetry collected in *Questions of Travel* and *Geography III*, gets knowledge of the surrounding geography in liminality. Reconstruction of Nova Scotia and Worcester childhood memories reveals how little Elizabeth remains on the threshold of place. The

whole setting of the Great Village, where she spent her childhood, in the autobiographical short story “In the Village” is distributed in a constant shifting from “outside” to “inside” and vice versa. It moves from one location to another; interiority of “Nate’s shop” is against the exteriority of landscape; “outside, along the matted eaves, painstakingly, sweetly, wasps go over and over a honeysuckle vine. / Inside, the bellows creak.” Inside the house is against the shop that is outside, “at the end of the garden.” Similarly, in “In the Waiting Room,” little Elizabeth gets knowledge of her identity that is local bound. The “aunt was inside” the dentist’s room, while the child is outside it, “in the dentist’s waiting room.” Both of them, along with other patients are located “in Worcester, Massachusetts,” while “the black naked women” of National Geographic may be outside in e.g. Africa.

In “In the Village,” Bishop uncovers the interiority of her childhood house. Little Elizabeth who because of her mother’s abnormal behavior is separated from her house, is brought to her maternal grandparents’ house. From early on in her life, In Bulmer’s house, Elizabeth is kept away from the reality of her mother’s insanity, just observing the scene in the threshold. As she herself narrates in “In the Village,” “unaccustomed to having her back, the child stood in the doorway, watching.” While in the house, she is kept away from the upstairs, the interiority of her mother’s room, where she gave the scream; “back home, I am not

allowed to go upstairs.” Knowledge of childhood village (both house and landscape) in the phase of liminality is “very much about what the child ‘knows’ and does not know,” shady as before (Millier¹⁰). Because the reality of her life is hidden from her, she gets knowledge indirectly, in the shade, in doubt and suspicion. Child, in the process of knowing the world around and its inhabitants clings to the level of surface and finds it tinted with a layer of shadow and darkness.

Not only visually, but also auditorally, the child falls in a never ending domain of uncertainty and vagueness. Bishop remembers in “In the Village” how her relatives were trying to conceal the disease of her mother from her: “but now I am caught in a skein of voices, my aunt’s and my grandmother’s, saying the same things over and over, sometimes loudly, sometimes in whispers. “Confronting absence of knowledge, even on the level of surface, the child falls in some misunderstandings which are never resolved. Like the map reader in “The Map” that cannot trust her look and distinguishing “shadows” from “shallows,” the child falls in some mishearing confusions:

“Here’s a mourning hat,” says my grandmother...

“There’s that mourning coat she got the first winter,” says my aunt.

But I always think they are saying “morning.” Why, in the morning, did one put on black? How early in the morning did one begin? Before the sun came up?

Bishop’s lifelong search for geography gets a more personal color in her late poetry, *Geography III*. Crusoe in “Crusoe in England,” shares with adult Bishop the lifelong issues of wandering and nostalgic search for the interior of the house. However, it is still doomed to fail, “...but my poor old island’s still / un-rediscovered, un-renamable. / None of the books has ever got it right” (lines 8-10). As the young map observer in “The Map” and the child listener in “In the Village” who confuse “shadow” with “shallow” and “mourning” with “morning”, the old solitude traveler gets indulged in a hesitant calling of his island: “One billy-goat would stand on the volcano / I’d christened Mont d’Espoir or Mount Despair” (lines 116-117).

The seashore in “The End of March” reminds one of “Cape Breton.” The beach in its surface and exteriority remains unresponsive to the most apparent occurrences. There is much that the observer’s physical senses cannot possess. Moreover, the journey from exterior world to the interior seems fleeting and impossible: “Everything was withdrawn as far as possible, / indrawn: the tide far out, the ocean shrunken”. The “withdrawn,”

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“indrawn” atmosphere of the landscape anticipates the impossibility of the house’s interiority that is located on the seashore. Like the monument on the seashore, resorting to the interior of the house that is with a turn of mind from observation to the power of speculation seems only imaginary and unendurable:

I wanted to get away as far as my proto-dream-house,
my crypto-dream-house, that crooked box
set up on pilings, shingled green,
a sort of artichoke of a house, but greener
(boiled with bicarbonate of soda?),
protected from spring tides by a palisade
of- are they railroad ties?
(Many things about this place are dubious.)(lines 24-31)

As mysterious and unreachable as the interiority of any other places in Bishop’s poetry, this house, Bloom remarks needs “to be deciphered or made sense of” (74). The impossibility of the house locates the speaker on the seashore, withdrawing from interior of the house and her interior imagination. “On the way back,” the

emergence of “the sun” though “for just a minute” makes “long shadows” of the “stones”. But immediately it “pulled them in again” like Bishop’s “--perfect! But--impossible” house that was withdrawn by its impossibility: “...the wind was much too cold / even to get that far, / and of course the house was boarded up.” As “there would be no access to the interior” Bishop “returns to the exterior of the house,” shielding “her interior self from its own fantasy” (Doreski 152).

However, one might conclude that Bishop’s geography poems leave without revealing anything of the interiority of the place. Her construction of place -located in Nova Scotia, Brazil or New England- foregrounds the complexity of transiting in a place. Seductive and unreachable interior of any place resists exploration and appears distant and deferred. It “suggest[s] that leaving and entering”, whether in the form of sea, the wood, the monument, the island and the house “are mutually implicated motions; that one never leaves as completely nor enters as deeply as one might think” (Axelrod294). There is no decisive dividing line between geographical locations; as if “the names of seashore towns run out to sea / the names of cities cross the neighboring mountains” (“The Map” line 14-15). The poet, in her personal and poetic locations captures no better place than “in the waiting room” affirming that meaning is suspended, held over, still to come.

The complex relationship between interior and exterior obliges the reader in a constant readjustment of perspective. That where literal vision cannot penetrate, imagination can see, hear, taste or touch the interior. As Bloom writes, “viewer’s perspective merges with and is unsettled by the imagined perspective” (19). And it is this figurative quality that can permeate all those “abandoned” and “impenetrable” sceneries of Bishop. So for sure, “the literal vision” is obviously inadequate for a true perception of the curious edifice. Only a “more imaginative vision- which can, in a figurative sense penetrate the exterior- is capable of interpreting and fully understanding it” (Mc Nally 197). This shows how in Bishop’s liminal perspective and geography the border line between presence and absence, observation and speculation, surface and depth is fleeting. Meaning of those seen, heard and smelled is complicated by the unseen, unheard, unsmelled. Bishop replaces either-or logic of surface/depth, exterior/interior, literal /figurative, with a both/and position, as the matter is of differentiation and supplementation and not hierarchy.

Vague and uncertain, one might agree that nothing seems to be granted in Bishop’ poetry. Impossibility of final conclusive meaning situates the text and reader in a state of undecidability, indeterminacy and indecision, like a never ending carpet, a never ending puzzle whose final edge and piece never reveals itself. Deconstruction is an endlessly dynamic process, allowing us no escape or apparent respite from the shifting play of meaning. As

Derrida puts it, “there is no decision that is not structured by this experience of the undecidable” (qtd in Royle5). Answerless questions and unresolved meditations that enclose the observer lead to open ended poems that need a circular and not linear reading. She knows that the knowledge we get from the world is achieved by senses which are entrapped in the domain of language of vision. Never tried to represent herself as such a privileged observer, the poet deconstructs and decenters the authority and determination of each detailed observation and speculation. No final certitude, in her poetry definition exists only in terms of relation, where each thing is linked to another, shadows the other, ebbs from the other, and overflows with the other. Bishop’s “postmodern uncertainty, indeterminacy, heterogeneity with linguistic techniques and attitudes, undecidable tone in fragmented observation and recollection, self-correction, and self-questioning” calls into doubt those more praised claims to exactitude of recordings that critics have granted to her poetry (Travisano 186).

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A Critical Review of “Traveling Theory” by Edward W. Said

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David Damrosch (2014) has structured his book *World Literature in Theory* into four separate parts of origins, world literature in the age of globalization, debating world literature and world literature in the world; each part reporting an account of works written on different aspects of world literature which lead to a reasonable coverage of the concept at the end. Among the ten papers of the second part, Damrosch has included an essay titled “Traveling Theory” written by Edward W. Said from his book *The World, the Text and the Critic* which is the target of this study. The paper addresses the controversial notion of the circulation of ideas. The significance of bringing it back into focus (since it was written in 1982) lies in the fact that it is a fundamental issue in need of further attention and discussion. Furthermore, it is proposed by an eminent postcolonial theoretician which implicates that unlike most of the other works written on the similar subject we are facing less practice of Eurocentrism. In this study I attempt to provide a fair summary of the paper then I will point out the strong points as well as those that despite explanations might remain vague for the readers.

In his most quoted sentence “like people and schools of criticism, ideas and theories travel from person to person, from situation to situation, from one period to another... whether it takes the form of acknowledged or unconscious influence, creative borrowing or wholesale appropriation” (Damrosch, 2014, p.115), Said exhausts his subject on the circulation of ideas.

Following this, he talks about the movement of European views about society to the traditional Eastern societies but speaking about the mere movement without considering the consequences is not enough; one instance of this situation can be Iran’s constitutional draft which is based on French constitution. The theory moved from one place and time to another but despite the fact that several laws were amended in order to institutionalize a constitution that was basically western, it has never been “transplanted” and the society seems to reject the borrowed parts now and then due to its many paradoxes; however, Iranian political theorists have tried their best to give various solutions in order to use those parts of the western- based constitutions that are more applicable to the culture and ideology of our country.

He later introduces four common stages of any traveling theory; first of which is the ‘point of origin’ or starting point from where the idea comes into existence, second is a ‘distance transversed’ by which he means all the different forces an idea faces moving from its point of origin to a different context, the

third stage is the condition of acceptance or resistance as a necessary part of its introduction to the new destination and the final stage refers to ‘the now fully/partly accommodated idea’ which has presented a new usage in its adopted home. In order to clarify his point, Said allocates two-thirds of his paper to the notion of ‘reification’ and strategies to resist it, surveyed by Georg Lukacs as a directly involved militant of the chaotic situation of Hungary in the early 20s, its adaptation by Lucien Goldmann as a French scholar after WWII and finally another adaptation of this concept by the English Raymond Williams as a reflective critic in Cambridge, each one adapting the same concept to the condition of their own time and place.

He further refers to multiple faces of criticism; whether regarding it as “an enclosing domain with clear outer boundaries” (Damrosch, 2014, p.118) and independent of any other field or an entity “contaminated” by such non-literary areas of study. However, this analogy is essentially fallacious since literature and in the same respect literary criticism are the products of human minds and they are in an infinite debt to other fields such as philosophy, psychoanalysis, linguistics, and sociology for their creation. These fields are so intertwined that analyzing one without asking help (However slight) from the other is impossible. He seems to be negligent of the fact that an individual cannot produce a literary work or any other art form without having a social network since his own

psyche is defined in relation to others. Interestingly, although Said indirectly takes side with those who believe in criticism as a pure field due to his use of words such as “contaminated” field or “babble”, he himself uses a political example of “reification” in order to explain his point within the domain of literature.

The voyage of any theory from one particular situation, time and place to another can be defined as an engagement in the process of interpretation. Luckily Said distinguishes the act of interpretation from misreading as he claims that “it seems to me perfectly possible to judge misreading (as they occur) as part of a historical transfer of ideas and theories from one setting to another” (Damrosch, 2014, p.123). The alternate readings of a concept might appear to be different from the original version and its aftershocks , as I will explain, are undeniable but they also provide new horizons which could have remained hidden since a single creator trapped in a particular time and place cannot grasp and cover various layers and aspects of its own creation. Moreover, the very act of travel gives the theory this opportunity to be refined in a trial and error experience and be conscious of the limitations of its performance in a new context which was impossible to achieve in the limitations of its point of origin; this increases the chance of theory’s success in other circumstances as well.

One point that needs consideration while reading Said’s traveling theory is the possible reduction of the theory. Although

he refers to this issue as “once an idea gains currency because it is clearly effective and powerful, there is every likelihood that during its peregrinations it will be reduced, codified and institutionalized” (Damrosch, 2014, p.125), but this brief reference does not run through the seriousness of the matter. According to Said, a theory through its long journey from one place and time to another goes under institutionalization; however, if these movements which are not from the original but from the institutionalized version of that idea keeps repeating, after several movements nothing will remain of the initial idea. Thus retracing the root would become a daunting act which leads to the disappearance of the theory and its other potential receptions. This is exactly the case of Raymond Williams institutionalizing Lukacs’s theory not directly but through Goldman’s understanding of the original theory which results in “professing not to understand reification, and to speak instead of the objective correlative”. In this case, the reduction happens the instant that first Goldman then Williams eliminated the element of insurrection which provided the foundation for Lukacs’s theory of class consciousness as opposed to the state of ossification in society caused by capitalism’s reification for the simple reason that they studied this theory through academic lenses and not as a witness of social crisis. In fact, they only borrowed the paradigm of the theory brushing away its essential factors which gave rise to its formation. The above situation is quite different from the one I explained in the previous paragraph which various theories were

inspired by a single theory not in a successive manner but as individual adaptations.

The other point I would like to mention is related to the consequences of this traveling theory. Moya Lloyd (2015) praises the diverse quality which the idea takes through its travel suggesting “the ability of a particular theory or body of ideas to survive over time, or to gain influence in a historical epoch distinct from that in which it originated, might well be attributable to this capacity for travel” (p.2) but there is no reference to the result of this movement. From the political perspective (since Said also illustrated his point through a political example), the consequence can be devastating; one possible instance can be a situation in which a theory moves from its original source to a new place and time and this gets even more complicated when the new context is in conflict with the original; therefore, when the theory goes under accommodation process in order to fit its new context, it changes in favor of the destination and this creates a boomerang effect. In other words, the second place can use “Hellenistic invasion” strategy against the place in which the theory was originated and destruct them using their own ideas. A simple example of this can be the postcolonial theories developed by theoreticians living in lands that once were colonized. They speculate over various possible methods of colonization different from those which were previously employed; their speculation backfires by kindling new

ideas and methods of colonization in favor of their opposite party. The failure is highly probable in this situation since the theory is developed by colonized people themselves and it unconsciously encompasses their strategy and weak points.

Moving from the political to the literary realm, same complexities exist; as proof is the issue of translation. Based on Said's thesis, the ideas do not remain neutral in the process of moving but "the now fully (or partly) accommodated (or incorporated) idea is to some extent transformed by its new uses, its new position in a new time and place" (Damrosch, 2014, p.115). Having this in mind, consider a text which was born in a particular European culture by a Christian writer for Christian readers and in that text the word 'blood' is used which is closely related to Jesus consequently conveying a sacred connotation developed in a religious context. How can this idea be refined after its transfer to a Muslim context in a Middle Eastern country like Iran where 'blood' is viewed as religiously unclean for a group of readers? The accommodation of this idea into its new place puts the main message which is intricately embedded with the original context in the danger of not being conveyed in all respects because there is no possible new usage for it to be employed. This happens, as Min Dongchao (2014) in his article "Toward an Alternative Traveling Theory" describes, when a theory does not travel but only gets to be translated.

Speaking of the consequences, “Traveling Theory” is not empty of positive outputs. One instance could be a hypothetical situation in which a theory is traveling in a parallel direction with other theories to a certain destination. When it comes to comparing a collection of things, one can find at least one or two similarities and theories which are no exception to this practice. All the theories which travel to a certain place at a certain time are similar at one point or another or at least they get to be similar while they are being refined in the process of adaptation. These theories can either be useful in the new context individually or they can join together (based on their degree of similarities) and create a unique whole which very much resembles a piece of collage. The outcome is itself both a theory capable of traveling to other parts possessing all the features that a theory can have and a meta-theory capable of analyzing and commenting on the theory’s formation and function; this helps the never-ending circulation of ideas which results in a dynamic and lively world where ideas come and go and nothing remains static. Frank (2009) sees this vitality in a different way, rather referring to its dark side and calling it “blind spot”. He talks about “received theory” which is a highly selective one and through the process of introduction, it only chooses those aspects of a theory which are suitable to its purposes and other aspects are consequently ignored; this creates a new form of the theory different from the original one. Looking from other perspectives, the previously ignored aspects come to focus this time and they

form new alternative results; “in this sense, theories never cease to travel, although they rarely ever travel in their entirety” (Frank, p.63).

Twelve years later, Said along with other numerous essays in the book *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (2013) publishes an essay called “Traveling Theory Reconsidered” (1994) in order to revise some of what he has previously written on this matter. He rejects his own idea on Lukacs when he said that his theory of “reification” got diminished and lost its insurrectionary element after it was adopted by Goldmann and Williams; he explained that maybe this deletion was not an unconscious act but an optional one. Giving the theoreticians this authority to have the choice in selecting parts of the original theory and create their own version of the original theory leads to an alternative traveling theory. He concludes by saying “This movement suggests the possibility of actively different locales, sites, situations for theory, without facile universalism or over-general totalizing” (Said, 2013, p.377). Writing another essay and confessing his biases, Said has certainly done a remarkable act but in my first encounter with the title of the essay, I expected to find answers to the question that were raised while reading the first one such as the clarification on the possible ways and means by which theories travel from one place and time to another. My answer to how theories travel is similar to the one Donald James (1987) suggests, which is by the movement of people who are the agents of the theories; an example of this is

Goldmann's trip to Cambridge which inspired Williams to contemplate over a theory developed by Lukacs. In spite of the fact that the movement of a theory precedes its function and impact, Said does not deal with this matter in any of these two essays.

The effect that "Traveling Theory" has left upon the general study of world literature is undeniable but the mere praise of the concept does not fill the gaps. The core idea of world literature revolves around the circulation of theories; thus, its conditions and consequences are of great importance. Speaking of conditions, Said's notion of accommodation of a theory does not necessarily occur while traveling; sometimes it is not transplanted even after its movement to the destination. The reduction of theory is another major problem; despite the fact that a theory traveling constantly from one place to another moves beyond limitations and might find a chance to discover its hidden aspects, some of its (important) elements will be vulnerable to reduction and finally there is a complete change in the original idea. Said's traveling theory seems to be dysfunctional both in literary domain of translation and the non-literary politics causing irrecoverable problems.

Generally, the benefits of "Traveling Theory" are more than its disadvantages but these few weak points (although Said tries to revise as many as possible) create a sense of vagueness that

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remains unanswered in the mind leaving room for further expansions and modifications.

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George Eliot: A Case of Victorian Gender Camouflage

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Abstract

The current study has attempted to find an answer to the question of why Mary Ann (Marian) Evans (1819-1880), the British female novelist, chose “George Eliot” as her pseudonym. The study has come to the conclusion that she chose her pen name *partly* as a deliberate cover-up by which she managed to hide her outrageous romantic life from her readers for a while and *partly* as a reactive measure against both the stereotype of her contemporary female writers and her contemporary critics who used to criticize every talented female writer harshly. This assertion substantially differs from the commonplace explanations that are usually offered to account for the use of male pseudonyms by a number of Victorian women writers, e.g. the Brontës. The result of this study has been confirmed through three main stages: the rejection of the trite explanations about “George Eliot”, the evidence from Evans’s

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private life that proves her pseudonym as a deliberate camouflage, and finally, the documentation of the fact that Evans, by choosing a male pseudonym, reacted both against her contemporary female novelists and against the critics.

The sixty-four years of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901) witnessed an upsurge in literary works by female writers. Among them, the Brontës, Mary Anne (Marian) Evans, Elizabeth Gaskell, Harriet Martineau and Elizabeth Barrett Browning are only a few examples of note. What attracts every scholar's attention is the fact that some of these female writers chose male pseudonyms for themselves. For example, the Brontës, Charlotte (1816-1855), Emily (1818-1848) and Anne (1820-1849), published their works under the uncommon masculine pen names of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. Another renowned author is Marry Ann (Marian) Evans (1819-1880) who signed "George Eliot" for all her career as a novelist.

Although the mystery of using the male pseudonyms by these women can be broadly addressed in a comprehensive study, here the main focus of attention will be maintained on Evans's pseudonym, George Eliot, for two reasons. The first is that her motives for using the male pen name seem somewhat idiosyncratic, as it will be shown. The second reason is that Evans's pseudonym displays such tenacity that is totally lacking with the Brontës: although today no one speaks of the Brontës as

the Bells, we almost always speak of “George Eliot,” but not of her real name (Judd 262). Few scholars may tend to consider her as an exception to the allegedly general rule about the Victorian female writer, but this study holds that Mary Anne Evans chose her male pseudonym primarily and specifically as a deliberate cover-up for her outrageous private life and then as a reactive measure both against the critics who used to attack any talented female writer and against the stereotype of her contemporary female writers. With this end in view, I will first evaluate the deeply rooted viewpoints about the use of male pseudonyms by these authoresses and I will pinpoint the main drawbacks of applying these clichéd models especially to Marian Evans. Secondly, I will offer my reasons to believe that Evans used a pseudonym as a shield behind which she protected her scandalous romantic life from public scrutiny. Finally, I will try to elucidate why she chose a *male* pseudonym instead of a female one. This will be followed by an answer to the important question whether or not her choosing a male pseudonym contradicts her allegedly feministic attitudes.

To begin with, there exist some general ideas about gender roles in the Victorian society. For instance, the social attitude towards gender in the Victorian era is often delineated simply in terms of male oppression and female repression. Therefore, it has become trite “to assert that the use of male pseudonyms by Victorian women writers, especially domestic novelists, illustrates

the repression and victimization of the female writer” (Judd 250). Such a clear-cut model still persists in multiple accounts of the Victorian era. For example, Patricia Lorimer Lundberg begins her article about George Eliot with the statement that those nineteenth-century female novelists, “struggling to write in a patriarchal society, often have taken male pseudonyms to disguise their identities in an effort to be taken more seriously by a general audience” (270). Then, by saying that “Mary Ann Evans, alias ‘George Eliot,’ is one of these novelists” (270), she employs the same model to interpret Evans’s adoption of a male pen name as an indication of patriarchal supremacy in her time.

However, Lundberg’s statement can be assessed as an overgeneralization since, firstly, a considerable number of these female writers did not use pseudonyms, and, secondly, many of those who hid their identities used female pseudonyms or published anonymously (Judd 250). For example, the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) published all her volumes of her poetry under her own name (Leighton 9); Jane Austen (1775-1817), who began writing even earlier, “published her novels under the protective but revealing pseudonym ‘A Lady’ ” (Clare 5); Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) published her poems under the female pen name “Ellen Alleyne” (Bryson, *Britannica*); and the novelist Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865) published her first novel in 1848 anonymously (Matus 14). Moreover, as for Evans, she showed that she was affected by no social repression

whatsoever when her English translation of Ludwig Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity*, which demystified the Bible by casting doubt on its literal veracity, was published under her real name in 1854 (Ashton, "Evans, Marian"). And again, when she began her journalistic career in London in 1851, writing as a confident, witty essayist for the *Westminster Review* (Ashton), her social position "as a single working woman in London in the early 1850s was extremely unusual... She was now in a society composed entirely of men" (Ashton). Thus, she had already crossed those ostensibly patriarchal limits of the Victorian society.

A second entrenched viewpoint on the Victorian age lays emphasis on the literature marketplace which was dominated by male authors: the woman writer published her literary works under a male pseudonym in order to sell adequately well, or she would have been supplanted by her male counterparts in the marketplace. Harold Orel maintains that it was a standard view in the middle years of the Victorian age that literature could not be a female business (8). This idea also seems to be supported by evidence from the Victorian era. For example, Robert Southey (1774-1843), the then Poet Laureate, wrote a letter (March 1837) to Charlotte Brontë in which he told her that

Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life,
and it ought not to be...but do not suppose that I
disparage the gift which you possess, nor that I would

discourage you from exercising it. I only exhort you so to think of it, and so to use it, as to render it conducive to your own permanent good. Write poetry for its own sake— not in a spirit of emulation, and not with a view to celebrity. (qtd. in Wise and Symington 154)

Having referred to this letter, Margot Peters points out that in 1830s only a few men could encourage any woman to become a professional writer (55). Thus, it may seem that the Victorian literary marketplace is not generally acknowledged to be an equitable one which was as freely open to women as to men. As Catherine A. Judd points out in her essay, “Male Pseudonyms and Women Authority in Victorian England,” this view of gender bias in the Victorian marketplace may apparently come to the conclusion that “the male pseudonym was a necessary mask due to the prejudices and exclusions of the literary marketplace”(251). It is true that no one can deny the legal, social, political, educational, or vocational discrimination inflicted upon women in the nineteenth century, but it was during the very century that “the female voice gained authority and dissemination more than any previous century” (Judd 252), as evidenced by the unprecedented surge in the Victorian authoresses. In one of her letters in 1853, Marian Evans herself gives further evidence of the proliferation of female writers and their “feminine” novels in her time:

How women have the courage to write and publishers the spirit to buy at a high price the false and feeble representations of life and character that most feminine novels give, is a constant marvel to me. (Eliot, *The Works of George Eliot* 225)

Elsewhere, she also specifies that a career in writing was even more freely available to women than other professions:

The standing apology for women who become writers without any special qualification is that society shuts them out from other spheres of occupation. (Eliot, “Silly Novels by Lady Novelists” 203)

Although a significant number of these women did not publish their works under male pseudonyms, they were successful in the marketplace. For example, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who used to write under her own name, was widely popular during her lifetime, and her prolific output made her a rival to Alfred Lord Tennyson as a candidate for Poet Laureate in 1850 on William Wordsworth’s death (Stone, “Browning, Elizabeth Barrett”). Women like Harriet Martineau and Elizabeth Gaskell, who did not write under a male pseudonym, had “great success in both the full-length and periodical fiction markets” (Hughes 187).

Even if it is assumed for the sake of argument that the mere discriminative requirements of the Victorian marketplace drove

some of the female writers to adopt male pseudonyms for themselves, this supposition cannot be applied to Marian Evan's case since she did not relate the use of her male pseudonym to success in the marketplace when she wrote in 1857 to the Edinburgh publisher John Blackwood that "Whatever may be the success of my stories, I shall be resolute in preserving my incognito..."(Eliot, *The Journals of George Eliot* 285). Therefore, the use of the male pseudonym, at least, by Marian Evans cannot solely be associated with gender bias in the Victorian marketplace.

To find out why exactly Evans chose "George Eliot" as her pen name, we should closely scrutinize both her life and her writings. The advent of her male pseudonym dates back to 1857 when Marian wrote the aforesaid letter to Blackwood, signing herself for the first time "George Eliot" (Ashton, "Evans, Marian"). Then the name reappeared in the same year when the advertisement for the first edition of Evans's *Scenes of Clerical Life* was circulated widely across the press (Dillane 147). It was assumed then that the name, "George Eliot," was that of a clergyman. When Evans's first full-length novel *Adam Bede* was published in 1859 under the same pen name, reviewers proceeded on the very assumption with no suspicion that "George Eliot" was a pen name, let alone that the novelist was a woman (Harris 41). It was not a coincidence that she began to write under a pseudonym once she decided to commence her career as a storywriter. As a translator and a

journalist, she had not used a pen name before. She herself clearly specified in the very letter to Blackwood that

I shall be resolute in preserving my incognito, having observed that a *nom de plume* secures all the advantages without the disagreeables of reputation. Perhaps, therefore, it will be well to give you my prospective name... and I accordingly subscribe myself ...Yours very truly, George Eliot. (*The Journals of George Eliot* 285)

One may wonder why a *nom de plume* (a French word for a pen name) could afford her such advantages and how reputation could bring her disagreeable consequences. In all likelihood, the answers can be found through examining her private life.

Having been suspected to be an apostate because of her translation of Ludwig Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity*, Evans was even more scandalously marked as a woman of loose morals when she started her cohabitation with George Henry Lewes (1817–1878), a Victorian critic and a married man (Harris 41). Evans and Lewes made no secret of their liaison so that Marian Evans changed her name, though not legally, into Mrs. Lewes or Marian Evans Lewes (Ashton, "Evans, Marian"). In 1854, when they went on a joint journey to Germany, this caused socially disgraceful consequences which could potentially

reverberate on the professional level. On their return to England in 1855, Evans most probably found her professional position so anomalous that she saw it no longer sensible to write under her own name. Thus, it seems that she had a great reason to seek the protection afforded by a pseudonym. That is why her first collection of stories, *Scenes of Clerical Life*, was published under a pseudonym, George Eliot. The contemporary evidence from the Victorian literary world can positively confirm the assertion. For example, Elizabeth Gaskell, one of Evans's contemporary female writers, recognized the talent of the anonymous author of *Scenes from Clerical Life* and *Adam Bede*, saying that their author was a "noble creature, whoever he or she be" (*Further Letters of Mrs. Gaskell* 200). However, once she discovered that the author of these books was Lewes's mistress, she said candidly that she did not respect the life style that Eliot had chosen:

It is a noble grand book, whoever wrote it,—but Miss Evans' life taken at the best construction, does so jar against the beautiful book that one cannot help hoping against hope. (*The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell* 566)

At first, George Eliot's true identity was not divulged even to the publisher (Harris 41). However, when a pretender to the authorship stepped forward as early as 1857, shortly after *Scenes of*

Clerical Life had been published, Marian Evans Lewes eventually had to admit that she was the author (Henry 109-110).

Yet, one may wonder why she continued to publish her novels under the very pseudonym after her identity had been disclosed by 1859. In her book, *The Life of George Eliot*, Nancy Henry explains that Evans still had to write under a pseudonym since by using her real name, Marian Evans Lewes, she “would only call attention to her adulterous union with Lewes” (110), given that the legal Mrs. Lewes was still living. Moreover, despite the uproar which followed her lifting the veil of anonymity, Evans’s first long novel under the pseudonym, *Adam Bede* (1859), was extremely successful; it went through eight printings within the first year of publication, that is, more than 10,000 copies within a year (Ashton, “Evans, Marian”). That is why she did not venture her great success on giving up the pseudonym or writing under another name. Almost similar success recurred in the marketplace upon the publication of the subsequent great novels by “George Eliot”: *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Middlemarch* (1871–72), and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). That can clearly account for Evans’s resolute adherence to her pseudonym when, in 1879, she replied to an inquiry from *Oxford English Dictionary*’s editor about what name she preferred to be cited by. Her answer was “I wish always to be quoted as George Eliot...Yours Truly, M. E. Lewes” (Eliot, *The Yale Edition of George Eliot’s Letters* 279).

Therefore, although Marian Evans's identity was revealed to the public within only a few years of her debut as a novelist, she never published under her own name since her professional identity was inextricably linked with her male pseudonym.

Thus far, it has been elucidated why Marian Evans published her works under a pseudonym, but there remains the question of why her pseudonym had to be a *male* one. To answer this question, I will provide evidence from her age to show the prevailing trend in the Victorian literary criticism before I invoke Evans's writings which may cast light on her personal motives to adopt a male pen name.

Victorian female writers are said to have been more liable than their male fellows to prejudice or condescension on critics' part. For example, Catherine A. Judd in her feministic essay, "Male Pseudonyms and Female Authority in Victorian England," specifies that "Many women writers...had their publications reviewed unfairly, based solely on their gender" (251). This assertion can also be deduced from numerous Victorian documents. A telling example is provided by Elizabeth Gaskell in her biographical account of Charlotte Brontë's life; Gaskell has quoted Charlotte as saying about why she and her sisters veiled their names under the masculine pen names:

We did not like to declare ourselves women,
because... we had a vague impression that

authoresses are liable to be looked on with prejudice...We noticed how critics sometimes use for their chastisement the weapon of personality. (286)

Similarly, in her eloquently outspoken essay, "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists," Marian Evans herself wrote that

No sooner does a woman show that she has genius or effective talent, than she receives the tribute of being moderately praised and severely criticized. By a peculiar thermometric adjustment, when a woman's talent is at zero, journalistic approbation is at the boiling pitch; when she attains mediocrity, it is already at no more than summer heat; and if ever she reaches excellence, critical enthusiasm drops to the freezing point. (Eliot 202)

Clearly, such severe criticisms that were presumably leveled against those female writers who reached excellence could normally discourage them from writing under their own names. Accordingly, this constitutes one possible explanation of why Evans chose a male pseudonym. However, there exists an even more plausible explanation for that.

As mentioned earlier, the Victorian age witnessed an unprecedented increase in the quantity of literary works by female authors. One may wonder how those works may be evaluated in

terms of their quality. While working for the *Westminster Review* as an essayist, Marian Evans set out a manifesto about contemporary fiction by women in the aforesaid essay (1856), “Silly Novels by Lady Novelists.” Here, she assesses the novels by female writers according to certain criteria and passes judgment on their quality. In most of her essay, she criticizes the ludicrous plots and styles of contemporary lighthearted romances by women. At the beginning of her essay, she defines these “feminine novels” as “a genus with many species, determined by the particular quality of silliness that predominates in them” (178). Then, she enumerated the features of “silliness” in a major category of these novels:

The frothy, the prosy, the pious, or the pedantic. But it is a mixture of all these—a composite order of feminine fatuity—that produces the largest class of such novels. (178)

Having leveled harsh criticisms at several contemporary female novelists for their “silly” novels, Evans finally reaches the conclusion that

On this ground we believe that the average intellect of women is unfairly represented by the mass of feminine literature, and that while the few women who write well are very far above the ordinary

intellectual level of their sex, *the many women* who write ill are very far below it. (202-203)

These straightforward comments can persuade us to believe that she disliked being judged by her readers as one among the majority of those female novelists who used to write only silly, lighthearted novels. Consequently, now that she had to use a pseudonym, making her debut as a novelist, she reasonably preferred a male one. In other words, she used her male pseudonym as a reactive strategy against the stereotype of her contemporary women novelists who produced works of poor quality.

The next question which spontaneously comes into our mind would be as follows: Why did she choose specifically this pen name, that is, George Eliot? There are fanciful explanations about that, but what Evans's last husband, John Cross, said in this regard seems the most likely: At the end of her life, Marian Evans told him that she picked the name since "George was Mr. Lewes's Christian name, and Eliot was a good mouth-filling, easily pronounced word" (qtd in Hughes 186).

Although my argument about why Marian Evans chose "George Eliot" as her pseudonym may seem to come close to the conclusion, there still remains another important question

unresolved: Doesn't writing under a "male" pseudonym substantially contradict Evans's feministic attitudes?

There is no question that Marian Evans fulfilled in practice some of her time's feministic aspirations. She resisted the Victorian stereotypical conventions about gender roles: she translated books that obviously dissented from the orthodox views; she worked in positions traditionally occupied by men; she lived a financially independent existence; she refused to marry until she made her own decision; and, as a career woman, she led a successful life with high social standing. Yet, it was highly controversial from the outset whether she was a full-fledged feminist or not. Those feminist critics who wanted literature to provide better models for women rejected her novels, particularly *Middlemarch*, since the novels did not illustrate the possibility of an independent life for women. Most of them strongly disapproved of the way she depicted the heroine in her novels where "the woman who breaks the mold of conventions is doomed" (Austen 550). For example, the British feminist writer and critic, Virginia Woolf gave voice to this disapproval as early as 1919 by saying that Evans's heroines usually end in "tragedy or in a compromise that is even more melancholy" (176). Admittedly, Evans's prime concern in writing novels was realism rather than feminism. In other words, she committed herself to write realistically, as evidenced by her remarks in the essay, "The Natural History of German Life":

But our social novels profess to represent the people as they are, and the unreality of their representations is a grave evil. The greatest benefit we owe to the artist, whether painter, poet, or novelist, is the extension of our sympathies. (144)

Evans regarded a novel's capacity for extending the reader's sympathy towards reality as its greatest benefit. Accordingly, she laid her emphasis more on verisimilitude than on feminist ideals which used to be neglected in the real-life Victorian world. Feminist critics dislike the way Evans portrayed Dorothea Brooke in *Middlemarch* since Dorothea was not permitted to do what Marian Evans herself did in real life (Austen 549). However, she could not permit Dorothea to do what Marian Evans did because Evans was the exception that proves the rule. Had Evans depicted her heroines in the same way as she was in real life, their representations would have seemed incredibly unreal.

Nevertheless, Evans's credentials as a supporter of feminism are not so clear. At the height of her reputation, Evans was at best indifferent to the cause of women's suffrage (Ringler 55). She had bluntly declared that "she had never in all her life cared very much for women" (Haight 493). She can hardly be considered as a woman who believed ardently in feminism, though in practice she at times made common cause with contemporary feminists. Evans had personal attitudes which can be interpreted as feminist, but

she was not a full-fledged feminist proper. Thus, her decision about writing under a “male” pseudonym was not necessarily in direct contradiction to her aspirations or beliefs.

To sum up, the question of the present study that I have wished to answer is: why did Marian Evans choose “George Eliot” as her pseudonym when she began her career as a novelist? There are a number of answers that are usually put forward, but I have tried to reject them as mere overgeneralizations that do not hold good in every case and, at least, in Marian Evans’s case. Then, referring both to some evidence from Evans’s life and writings and to other documents from the Victorian age, I have offered my arguments to show that she wrote under a pen name as deliberate camouflage by which she was able to hide her outrageous romantic life for a while, though, even after her identity had been disclosed, she still clung to the pseudonym because of the immense success of the novels published under the very name. Next, I have tried to make it clear why she used a *male* pseudonym. I hold that she used a *male* pen name as a preventive measure against her contemporary critics who used to criticize every talented female writer harshly and, more importantly, she used it as a reactive measure against the stereotype of her contemporary female writers who used to write novels of poor quality. Finally, the study has dealt with the important question whether her using a *male* pseudonym contradicts her feministic attitudes. I maintain that some of Evans’s attitudes could be designated as feministic, but she was

not a full-scale “feminist” in the literal sense of the word. Accordingly, by adopting a *male* pseudonym, she does not seem to have violated her principles.

Although this study has been aimed at unraveling the mystery behind the question of why Marian Evans went by the name of George Eliot, it is quite difficult to ensure that all her motives in this regard, even possibly her ulterior motives, have been thoroughly explored here. It does not seem farfetched that further research might illuminate some new angles which are still hidden from my sight.

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TEFL

SAY IT OUT: A MOBILE APPLICATION TO IMPROVE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

(App Review)

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Application details:

Publisher: English Mate

Product type: Smartphone Application Software

Language: Monolingual

Level: Any

Media format: APK

Operating system: Android

Hardware requirements: Smartphone/ Internet Connection

Supplementary software: None

You can download it from: Myket.ir

Price: Free

1. Introduction

The widespread growth in the availability and the use of mobile and hand-held devices such as smartphones, tablets, PDAs, and MP3 players has resulted in an unprecedented avalanche of end-user language learning and teaching programs (Rosell-Aguilar, 2017). This drastic development is in line with Wagner's old quote: "the mobile revolution is finally here. Wherever one looks, the evidence of mobile penetration and adoption is irrefutable.... No demographic is immune from this phenomenon" (2005, p. 40). In the field of education, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is one of the significant achievements of this technological progression. This fast growing area of research (MALL) has considerable implications for second language teaching and learning (see Burston, 2013 for a review).

One of the aspects of L2 learning and teaching that could benefit from MALL is pronunciation. Pronunciation has always been a challenge for non-native speakers of English. Vague or unintelligible pronunciation could have a negative impression on native or non-native interlocutors and would result in ineffective communication. In this sense, a large repertoire of vocabulary could be of no use when one cannot enunciate them correctly.

Empirical studies suggest that people who start learning English after school years may have serious problems with mastering intelligible pronunciation, and this difficulty increases tangibly as they become older. This problem has nothing to do with one's level of education or mastery of English grammar or vocabulary (Pourhossein Gilakjani, 2011). Bueno Alastuey (2011) states "Communicative competence is the ultimate goal of most learners of a second language and intelligible pronunciation a fundamental part of it. Unfortunately, learners often lack the opportunity to explore how intelligible their speech is for different audiences". Fortunately, today we have many applications developed to provide English learners with the opportunity to explore how intelligible their English pronunciation is. This paper focuses on one of these mobile language learning applications called "Say It Out", and explores the possibilities the application offers for enhancing English pronunciation.

2. Description

Learning a new language has always been a necessary skill to achieve, and nowadays we have many applications that have made possible to learn a new language easily whenever you want. "Duolingo" and "Memrise" are two good instances of such applications. Among the available apps, "Say It Out" has an interesting distinction. Indeed, it is not an independent application for learning a new language, but a simple and easy to use

application that helps learners master only one aspect of language called pronunciation. Much to the frustration of learners of other languages, this application is limited to English language alone. “Say It Out” is exclusively developed by English Mate for Android devices. The application helps to not only improve pronunciation, but also polish your English accent simultaneously. According to Google Play, it has been downloaded more than 5000 times and its rating is 4 out of 5 stars from 111 reviews of different users. These data reveal that users are quite satisfied with the application.

To increase its precision, the app uses Google text-to-speech engine, which is a screen reading application developed by Android Inc. It enables different apps to read a text aloud. The engine provides users with the opportunity to practice any word or sentence, and scores them based on the accuracy of their pronunciation. The application also needs an internet connection to work and its last update on Feb 20th, 2016 has solved compatibility issues on some devices. The application is not a heavy one and runs smoothly on any android devices.

“Say It Out” has a very simple design and bears the minimum elements possible. By looking closely at it, one would admit that the design serves the purpose of the application, however, the problem is that its dull appearance may demotivate users. The only elements users would see on its white screen are: a search box used for entering words, a big circle which turns into

several different colors in different situations, and a microphone icon placed in the middle of that circle (see figure 1). The icon is mainly used when you want to record your voice. Happily, there is nothing else, and you can't even change the theme of the application! But the good thing is that unlike many free applications that have a lot of bothering ads, "Say It Out" is ads free.

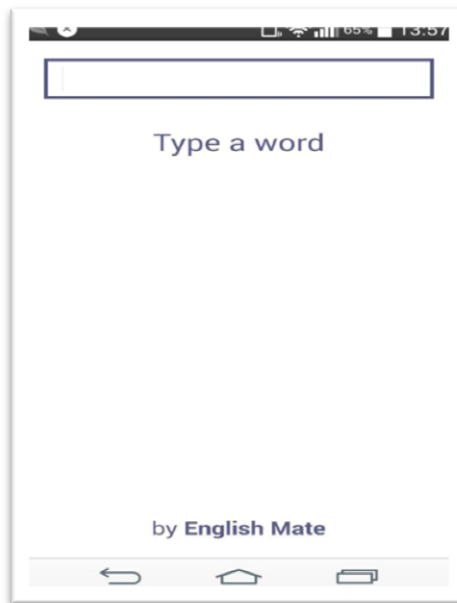


Figure 1. A screenshot of what comes when opening the app

To use the application, you have to type a word into the search box on the top of the screen, after that you will immediately

hear the correct pronunciation of that word (see figure 2). Then you can record your voice by tapping the big circle in the middle of the screen and pronounce the word you typed in the box (see figure 3). The application has a high level of precision in differentiating the pronunciation of different words, but it would be better to be in a noise free place to make its performance even better.

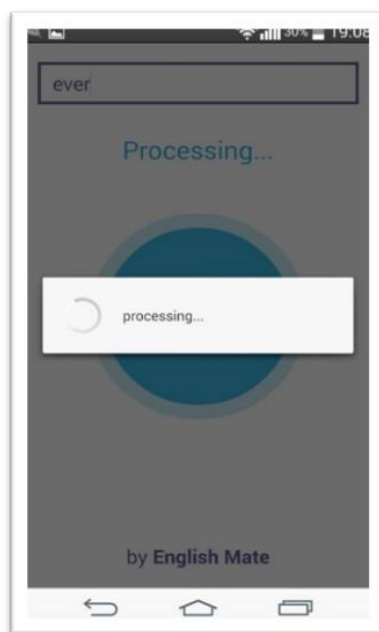
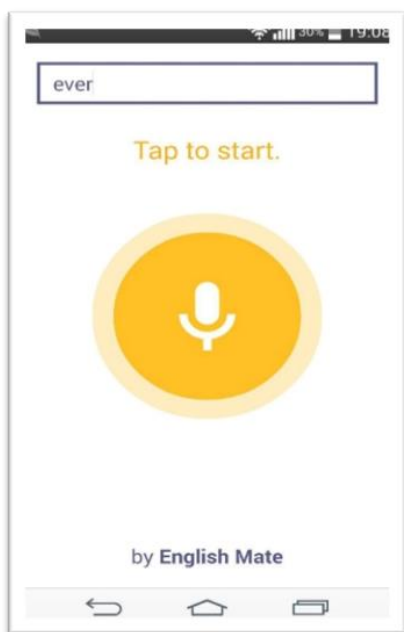


Figure 2. A screenshot of when the app pronounces a word

Figure3. When the app processes user's recorded voice

After processing your voice, two things will happen. If your pronunciation is correct, the word “Correct” appears on the top of the screen and two options appear below the microphone icon (see figure 4). By tapping on the first option “Compare”, you can hear both your recorded pronunciation and the app pronunciation. The other option is “Details”. By tapping on this icon, you can see a list of words that you tried to pronounce them. In front of each word, similarity percentage of your pronunciation to the app pronunciation is provided (see figure 5).

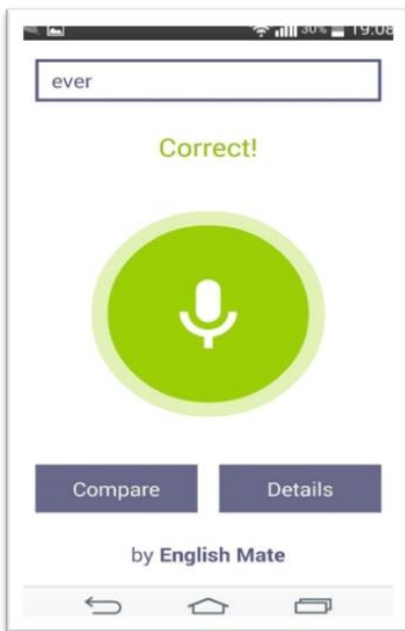


Figure 4. When user’s pronunciation is correct

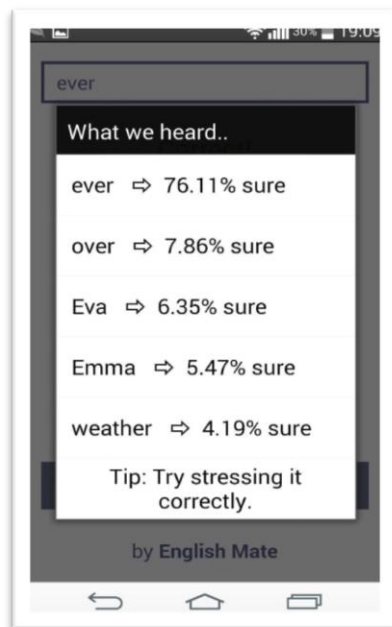


Figure 5. Similarity percentage of user’s pronunciation to the app pronunciation

But if your pronunciation is not correct or accurate, a red text appears that says: “Sorry, we heard ...” (see figure 6). Again, the two options: “Compare and Details” are available below the microphone icon (see figure 7).

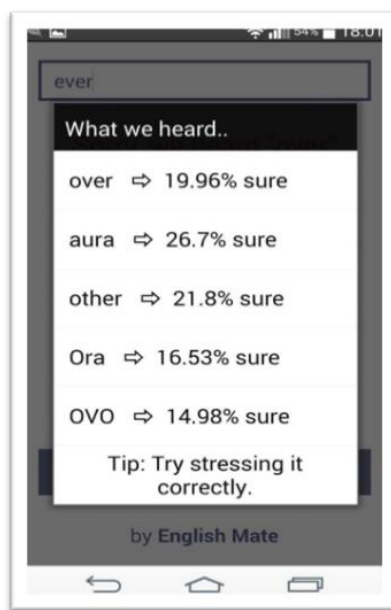
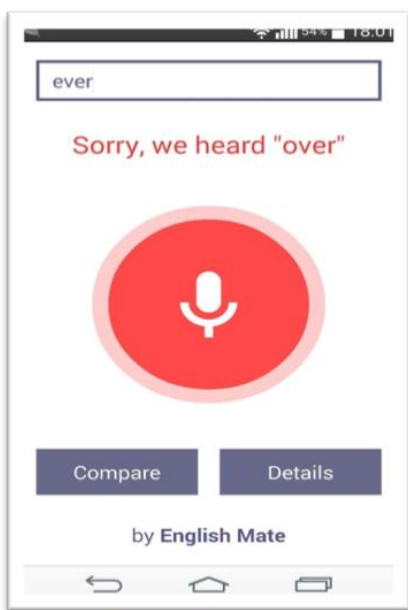


Figure 6. When user’s pronunciation is incorrect

Figure 7. Similarity percentage of user’s pronunciation to the app pronunciation

3. Evaluation

Although, “Say It Out” claims to help beginners improve their English pronunciation, there are some considerable

problems with the way it functions. First, you have to pronounce a word at the same pace as the application or better to say Google text-to-speech does, otherwise you will be faced with the message “Can’t reach the Internet”. Obviously not all the beginners can keep up with the right pace of pronouncing a word. This problem becomes more evident especially when one wants to use the application for pronouncing a string of words in a sentence.

Although the application claims to be able to even read a book if you type it, which is not a surprise since it is using Google engine, it is not able to analyze recorded sentences including more than 25 words. And here is the exact place where beginners will not be able to use the application, since they have to pronounce the words in a sentence at the application desired pace. Another downside of the application is that it doesn’t provide any specific tip to help learners improve their pronunciation except showing the message “Try stressing it correctly” repeatedly whenever the list of words appears.

3. Conclusion

In general, this user friendly tool developed by English Mate is a great way of polishing your accent and pronunciation. Learners can use the application for any single word as much as they want and compare their pronunciation to the correct pronunciation of the word without any limitation. Its main drawbacks are dull appearance and being restricted to only one aspect of English

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language; pronunciation. In this sense, its usage must be accompanied by other learning applications.

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Task Type and Their Effects on Learning English Phrasal Verbs

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Abstract

Learning phrasal verbs (PV) is one of the challenging tasks in second language learning that has been neglected in the research literature, despite their importance in achieving native-like fluency. Among the variety of factors which may contribute to the acquisition of phrasal verbs, designing appropriate task types has attracted researchers' interests. The current study attempted to address this issue by exploring the effect of two types of tasks i.e., output and input tasks on learning PVs. The study was conducted in two intact low-intermediate adult English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. Task effectiveness was examined by a test administered before and after the treatment. The results revealed an effect of task type, with the output tasks being more effective than the input tasks in learning and retention of PVs.

Keywords: task types, phrasal verbs, formulaic sequence

Introduction

Acquiring an extensive vocabulary is an ongoing enormous challenge for second language learners (Milton 2009). Corpus linguistic studies have indicated that language consists of not only

separate individual words, but also a lot of formulaic sequences (FS) (Martinez & Schmitt, 2012). Formulaic sequences are fixed combinations of words that serve a range of functions assumed to be cognitively stored and retrieved by speakers as if they were single words.

Being labelled differently by different researchers such as chunks, fixed expressions, multi-word expressions, prefabs, recurring utterances, formulaic sequences (FS) have been defined as:

A sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other meaning elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar (Wray, p. 465).

FS constitute a large proportion of authentic native-speaker discourse, written or spoken. Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) stated that FS are ubiquitous in language use. [Altenberg \(1998\)](#) comments that “what is perhaps the most striking impression that emerges ... is the pervasive and varied character of conventionalized language in spoken discourse ...” (p. 121). Erman and Warren (2000) have estimated that over 50% of spoken and written English discourse as the first language consists of FS. They are thought to be of fundamental importance to language process and use as they reduce the time of online language

processing and increase fluency. Pawley and Syder (1983) found a connection between FS and native like fluency, arguing that native speakers' fluent and idiomatic control of language is associated to a large extent to the "knowledge of a body of sentence stems which are institutionalized or lexicalized" (p.91). Speech fluency requires not only the automatic access to rules, but also the finding the proper expressions. Formulaic sequences are assumed to be stored in the long-term memory as unitary and ready-made wholes and consequently can be accessed holistically and processed more quickly and easily than general sequences of words (Chen, 2009; Kim & Kim, 2012; Kuiper, 2004; Pawley & Syder, 1983; Swan, 2013; Wray, 2008).

Given the arguments above, in addition to individual words, mastery of FS seems one significant component of successful language learning (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Schmitt and Carter, 2004; Wray, 2000). This means that second language learners who wish to achieve native like fluency require to learn these sequences. However, FSs are indicated to be difficult and challenging for L2 learners and many English language learners even those at advanced levels come to have difficulty learning and using these sequences (Irujo, 1993; Howarth, 1998; Zarei & Koosha; 2003; Levitzky-Aviad & Laufer, 2013). In recent years, researchers have acknowledged the importance of FS in the second language acquisition process (for example, Boers et al., 2006; Howarth, 1998; Schmitt, 2010; Swan, 2013) and FS

acquisition, their representation, and their processing have increasingly attracted scholar's attention. FS can be of many different kinds including, collocations, binomials, phrasal verbs, idioms, speech formulae, discourse markers, lexical bundles, and many more. Of different types of formulaic sequences, this study focuses exclusively on phrasal verbs (PV) because they are extensively used by native speakers of English but have been proved to be fundamentally difficult for L2 learners to master and they frequently prefer to avoid using them(Sinclair ,1996). Moreover, PVs have one distinguishing characteristics in that they stand at the interface of grammar and vocabulary because they are made of one open-class item which is the verb and one closed-class item which is the particle (Gardner & Davies, 2007). Native English speakers' extensive use of phrasal verbs usually induce misinterpretation by English learners and they prefer to avoid using PVs by choosing single-word verbs instead (Darwin & Gray, 1999). This suggests a need for a better understanding of this structure, and calls for new teaching strategies rather than just listing them for memorization. With the limited empirical studies conducted so far, little is still known about the type of classroom intervention and the effective techniques that can help acquisition of PVs. The present study was to address this issue. This paper will examine the effect of using different types of tasks on the acquisition of PVs.

Most studies conducted in instructed Second Language Acquisition (SLA) are based on premise that some types of interventions work better than others (Maftoon and Sharifi, 2012). Language teachers wish to find ways that instructional interventions enhance and promote the acquisition of new words. One of the main concern of language teachers and researchers in L2 vocabulary learning is to find instructional tasks that provide L2 learners with the perfect opportunity to learn new vocabularies. According to Folse (2006), different task types can draw learners' attention to specific vocabulary item, and make the learners notice to the particular word. However, it is a controversy that which task types is most efficient in promoting L2 vocabulary. One area of debate among language researchers and teachers about the most appropriate types of tasks to teach vocabulary in language classrooms is the use of input-oriented and output-oriented tasks. These debates stem from Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985) and Swains' Output Hypothesis (1995). While Krashen (1985) has denied any role for output in language learning process claiming that language production is the result of learner's exposure to comprehensible, Swain(1995) argued that input alone is not sufficient for language learning and emphasizes the role of output for learners' language development. She believed that language production makes the L2 learning process easier. In this regards, output is defined as oral or written linguistic production which is used for communication.

With regard to PVs, some researchers have conducted studies on the use output and input tasks and activities to promote learners' engagement with PVs. Nassaji and Tian, (2010), for example, examined the effectiveness of two types of output tasks, including reconstruction cloze tasks and reconstruction editing tasks to learn phrasal verbs. The findings showed that editing tasks were effective than the cloze tasks in learning PVs. Khatib, and Ghannadi, (2011) investigated the effectiveness of interventionist and non-interventionist approaches to the recognition and production of phrasal verbs. The results of the study showed that interventionist was more effective than non-interventionist approach in both recognition and production of phrasal verbs. Karimi (2017) investigated the effectiveness of cloze output task and an editing output task on PVs and found that editing output task showed more positive effects than cloze output task inspired by these studies, the aim of the present study is to compare the effectiveness of output and input task types on learning PVs. In particular, the study aimed to answer these question:

Is there any significant difference between the effects of input tasks and output tasks on the recognition and production of phrasal verbs by non-English major Iranian English learners?

Method

Participants

The study was conducted during fall semester in two intact university-level classes at the Islamic Azad University, Savadkooch Branch. A total of 59 students who had enrolled in General English course as a requirement of the university curriculum participated in the study. They were B.A. and B.S. students, all Persian native speakers and their ages ranged from 20 to 45. Learners attended these classes once a week. To eliminate the selection bias, the two intact classes were randomly assigned into two experimental groups: Input-Oriented group and Output-Oriented group.

Research Design and Instruments

A list of candidate PVs was selected from intermediate *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* by McCarthy and O'Dell (2004). The study consisted of a pretest, a ten-week treatment, and a delayed posttest. It used two types of tasks: input task and output task. Data were collected during regular class time and over a period of ten weeks in a 16-week semester. At the beginning of the study, all the students in both classes took a pre-test of PVs that were supposed to be used in the treatment through multiple choice test prepared by the researcher. The session after the pre-test, the researcher started to teach both groups. One group received input-based approach for teaching English phrasal verbs and the other group was taught output-based approach for the same phrasal verbs. (. As part of general English course, the students were first introduced to the target phrasal verbs through eight short texts

which had been randomly selected from *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* by McCarthy and O'Dell (2004). The participants in input-based group were given a lot of information, including definition, Persian equivalent, and some examples. The participants were not required to produce the phrasal verbs but were given some matching tasks in which they were to match phrasal verbs listed in one column with their definitions in another column. The same phrasal verbs were taught to output-based group was. They were also given the definition of PVs accompanied with many examples. Then, fill-in-the-blank tasks were written on the board and were required to tell which one of the phrasal verbs which they have learned would be appropriate in those blanks. They were also required to make novel sentences using these phrasal verbs. At the end of the course, a post-test, which was exactly the same as the pre-test, was administered to both groups. After collecting the data, appropriate statistical tests were used to find out the significance of the results.

Results

A one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run to explore any significant difference between output and input tasks to learn PVs in post-test scores of phrasal verbs. Equality of variance is the assumption of ANCOVA. As shown in table 1, Leveine F value of 39.01 has the associated significant level of .31 which is higher than 0.05. So, the assumption of equality of

variance between the two groups is met and ANCOVA test can be run.

Table 1 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Dependent Variable: post-test phrasal verbs

F	df1	df2	Sig.
39.011	1	58	.312

Table 2 shows the tests of between-subjects effects. As shown, after adjusting for pre-test scores, there was not a significant difference between post-test scores of PVs of the input- oriented and output-oriented groups 2 . $F(1, 57) = 39.10, P = 0.012 < 0.05$, partial Eta Square = .56.

Table 2. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: posttest phrasal verbs

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1671.413 ^a	2	835.707	85.454	.000	.750
Intercept	339.194	1	339.194	34.684	.000	.378
Pre-test phrasal verbs	38.596	1	38.596	3.947	.052	.065

Group	423.507	1	423.507	39.105	.012	.564
Error	557.437	57	9.780			
Total	31401.000	60				
Corrected Total	2228.850	59				

Table 3 shows that the group which received output tasks to PVs (M=21.28) outperformed the group which received input tasks (M=15.98).

Table 3. descriptive statistics for group

Dependent Variable: posttest phrasal verbs

Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
input	15.981 ^a	.689	14.211	18.245
output	21.285 ^a	.689	21.894	24.986

Conclusion

The current study was an attempt to investigate the effect of task type on the acquisition of PVs in an EFL context. Some of the previous studies tried to find out whether the type of task makes a difference on learning L2 target vocabulary and structure (Folse, 2006; Kargozari & Ghaemi, 2011). In this study, two types of tasks including output tasks and input tasks were used to find out if they make any difference in my students' acquisition of PV.

Between the two types of significant difference has been found regarding their relative effectiveness on the learning of the target phrasal verbs. The result of this study showed that using output tasks leads to better acquisition of PVs. As Fuente (2006) states, the output tasks attract learners' attention to form and meaning and help them make form-meaning association. Therefore, it can be concluded that input or output orientation may also be a determining factor in PV learning and should be taken into consideration. This finding can be helpful for instructors and researchers who wish to know in which ways instructional programs might promote the acquisition of PVs.

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An analysis of cultural representations in Iranian English language schoolbooks

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Introduction

Values, beliefs, attitudes and accepted behaviors shared by a group of people, which can be easily observed is known as "culture" and is reflected in a language (Brown, 2000; Hedge, 2004; Jiang, 2000; Kramsch, 1993; Mitchell and Myles, 2004). Moreover, culture has been realized to be a significant component of language teaching, and teaching a language cannot take place unless we teach the culture representing it. Furthermore, culture and language should be considered as the two sides of the same coin, and they are interrelated. It inevitably plays a crucial role in ELT. Tomilson (2001) also claims that it is only through learning culture that one can communicate cross-culturally and appropriately. Based on what Risager (2012) have said, language and culture cannot be segregated and language practices are representative of cultural and social activities that we do. In addition, culture learning can motivate the students to discover and learn. It facilitates L2 learning. Therefore, teachers should feel committed to teach culture in a way that encourages learners. Furthermore, teachers should make their students aware of the

cultural diversity (Alptekin, 2002), and raise their awareness that culture learning plays a very important role in communicating cross-culturally.

Since teachers are considered to be part of language teaching, textbooks play a very crucial role in language teaching. Tomilson (2008) believes that ELT materials are responsible for the failure of learners to use language communicatively because they focus too much on linguistic items. Also, Risager and Chapelle (2012) pointed out the important position of textbooks as the best providers of target language and target culture. Therefore, textbooks should provide language learners with information about both their own and other peoples' culture and their interactions (Tomilson, 2001). Moreover, teachers would heavily rely on the cultural content of the textbooks when they have little information about the target culture (Bateman & Mattos, 2006). In addition to that, the way culture is represented in the textbooks can influence the way it is taught (Messekher, 2014). Cortazzi and Jin (1999) have described three ways of representing culture in textbooks. 1) The source culture, representing the learner's own culture; (2) the target culture, representing the countries where the foreign language is spoken as the first language; and (3) international cultures, which is neither the source nor the target culture (it can be the culture of both EFL and ESL contexts).

Several research have been conducted to analyze the cultural content of the textbooks in different areas. However, we are so

much concerned about books which are taught in Iran. Zareia & Khalessi investigated cultural density in the internationally-distributed textbooks, i.e., Interchange Series. Farzaneh, Kohandani, & Nejadansari also worked on the appropriateness of socio-cultural contexts in Top-Notch Series. However, few or almost no study have been conducted on English language school books which are locally designed by the government to be taught in public sections.

This study aims to investigate the cultural representations in five English books. This study focuses on the regional representations of culture and also it provides a framework proposed by Yuen to allocate each representation into its appropriate category. Yuen's (2011) analytical tool includes four Ps. They are: (1) products, (2) practices, (3) perspectives, and (4) persons. In the following paragraph I will spell all the four categories out.

According to Messekher, products are the products of literature, fine arts, and the sciences, along with historical figures, and social, political and economic institution. Practices are the patterns of behavior and the way that people live. For instance, sports, games, and entertainment. Perspectives refer to the worldviews that people may have to something which give value to it. And finally, persons are well-known things and individuals in

any field such as music, television, or the Internet which is also called "celebrity culture".

Significance of the study

All the materials provided for language learning play a very significant role in facilitating the process of language teaching and learning. Therefore, through the evaluation of the materials we may be able to reform or improve them. Moreover, evaluation of the textbooks can lead to future success of any educational program. This study aims to analyze the cultural representations in locally-produced books for Iranian language learners taught in public sections.

Research questions

Therefore, these 2 research questions are formulated:

1. What is the frequency elements regarding source culture, target culture, and the international culture in locally-produced Iranian English language textbooks?
2. How is culture represented in locally-produced Iranian English language books in terms of product, practice, perspective and person based on Yuen's framework?

Literature review

Several studies have investigated cultural aspects of locally-produced and international English textbooks. Some

researchers have analyzed the textbooks from teachers' and also students' viewpoint. Different studies had different attitudes toward cultural representations in the textbooks due to the religion of the researcher or the culture of the country the researcher is living in.

Bateman and Mattos (2006) examined six Portuguese textbooks for their treatment of a single cultural theme: food. The textbooks were analyzed in terms of the Cultures and Comparisons goal area of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, as well as the use of authentic texts, the attention given to the various regions where Portuguese is spoken, and the treatment of heterogeneity within Brazilian culture. They found that most of the cultural information presented in the textbooks deals with cultural products, and to a lesser extent, cultural practices. None of the books emphasize cultural perspectives. Moreover, in terms of authentic texts, only one of the textbooks contains a significant number of authentic texts related to food. Furthermore, with respect to the regions addressed, only three of the textbooks include information about Lusophone countries other than Brazil, and none of the books addresses Portuguese-speaking groups living in the United States. Finally, with respect to cultural heterogeneity, the researchers believe that the textbooks in this study could be enriched by devoting increased attention to the voices of Brazilians representing different social classes, regions, races, ethnicities, and ages.

Ahmed and Combes (2011) analyzed three textbooks written by foreign authors for Pakistani learners which reflect two layers of cultures: (1) the learners' first culture, (2) the Anglophone cultures or the target culture. This study has chosen three areas to work on: first, the representation of the learner's culture through pictures in the textbooks, second, the cultural stereotypes pertaining to the learners' first culture, and third, the cultural sensitivity on the part of textbook authors. The findings of this study reveal that ESL textbook authors should be more aware of the similarities and differences between C1 and C2. Moreover, it recommended that two authors, one from C1 and one from C2, work in collaboration.

Furthermore, Zarei and Khalessi (2011) investigated cultural density in internationally-distributed textbooks of English, i.e., Interchange Series. They used a model of cultural patterns categorized into 4 different categories called value, norm, institution, and artifact to analyze the content of Interchanges. The results show that these textbooks are loaded with cultural values unique to western world and some issues such as opposite sex relationship which may be disruptive to other Islamic societies.

Farzeneh, Kohandani, and Nejadansari (2014) also explored the appropriacy of socio-cultural context in Top-Notch Series. For this purpose, a survey questionnaire was used to elicit the teachers and supervisors' perceptions concerning the Series. The findings

revealed that the intercultural content of the Series was understood and evaluated positively by the teachers. However, the textbooks had no clear objectives in the beginning and did not satisfy teachers and supervisors' expectations regarding teachability. Finally, there was no clear consensus regarding the cultural awareness component.

Tüm and Uğuz (2014) analyzed a Turkish textbook to see how much target (C1), source (C2), and international cultural (C3) elements are presented in the textbook. The analyses were carried out via the application of a checklist and an Item Frequency Analysis. They found that all types of culture are represented in the textbooks. However, C1 and C3 seem to be included more so that learners could feel motivated.

Rodriguez (2015) investigated the cultural content in three communicative English as a foreign language textbooks. This study examined whether the text books include elements of surface (easily observable and static elements that represent a nation) or deep (invisible meanings related to a region, a group of people, or subcultures that reflect their own particular sociocultural norms, lifestyles, and beliefs) culture. The results of the study indicate that the textbooks contain only static topics of surface culture and omit complex forms of culture. It also suggested how teachers can address deep-rooted aspects of culture.

Furthermore, Arslan (2016) investigated the usage frequency of elements related to source, target, and international culture employed in English language textbooks, which are used for 3rd and 4th grade students in state schools in Turkey. For this purpose, this study used a descriptive content analysis and the data are collected through a specially-developed checklist and an Item Frequency Analysis. The findings of the study indicate that 3rd grade textbook had more cultural items than 4th grade textbook. Moreover, native cultural elements are less than target and international ones in both 3rd and 4th grade textbooks.

Method

1. Design

This study is a descriptive content analysis study in which I will explore the frequency of cultural items in two different phases. In the first phase, items are categorized into three categories which are source, target, and international culture. In the second phase, items are analyzed based on four different categories which are product, practice, perspective, and person.

2. Materials:

Materials used in this study were:

- Prospects 1 to 3

- Visions 1 and 2

The text book entitled Prospects, written in 2014 and 2015, by a team of Iranian educators, published in Tehran, Iran. These text books are for students who are studying in secondary schools. Moreover, the textbooks entitled Visions, written in 2017, by a team of Iranian educators, published in Tehran, Iran. These books are designed for high school students.

3. Procedures

In order to answer the research questions, each single page of the textbooks was examined to see how culture is represented in the textbooks. Also, the topics of the units were categorized into four different categories which are: products, practice, perspective, and person. Moreover, pictures and texts in conversations and reading passages were analyzed based on Yuen's (2011) framework. Furthermore, the content was mainly investigated under three categories: source, target, and international culture. Therefore, in this study, descriptive content analysis was conducted to see what cultural items are represented in the textbooks, and to realize which culture, source, target, or international culture was more frequently used in reading passages, dialogues, and pictures.

Data collection

In order to investigate how culture is employed in locally-produced textbooks, descriptive content analysis is used. Data was gathered from five locally-produced English textbooks produced by Iranian educators for secondary and high school students:

Prospect 1: for 1st grade secondary students with 8 units

Prospect 2: for 2nd grade secondary students with 7 units

Prospect 3: for 3rd grade secondary students with 6 units

Vision 1: for 1st grade high school students with 4 units

Vision 2: for 2nd grade high school students with 3 units.

All state schools in Iran are obliged to teach these books. That is, teachers are not allowed to get students any other textbooks and they should follow the syllabus of the textbooks.

Data analysis

In order to analyze the gathered data, we first have to see what Yuen means by 4 Ps. As explained above, products are the products of literature, fine arts, and the sciences, along with historical figures, and social, political and economic institution. Practices are the patterns of behavior and the way that people live. For instance, sports, games, and entertainment. Perspectives refer to the worldviews that people may have to something which give value to it. And finally, persons are well-known things and

individuals in any field such as music, television, or the Internet which is also called "celebrity culture". However, in the following paragraph, I will discuss these 4 Ps in detail.

Products include books, foods, laws, music, games, history, geography, artistic and intellectual work, and institutions such as arts, literature, drama, and dance; practices include patterns of interaction, behaviors, entertainment, and artefacts; perspectives include meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas; and persons or the 'celebrity culture' representing famous people and icons.

Moreover, cultural items should be categorized into three different groups which are source culture, target culture, and international culture.

The cultural representations are coded based on 4 Ps and also the country representing each 'P'. This study analyzes cultural representations according to the texts and pictures. Table 1.1 shows the distribution of cultural items in texts.

Table 1.1 categorization of cultural representations in texts (prospects 1-3, visions 1 and 2)

Yuen's 4 Ps \ Countries	Source culture	Target culture	International culture
Products	38	0	26
Practices	7	1	0

Threshold

Perspectives	20	0	5
Persons	3	1	0
Total	68	2	31

Table 1.2 Examples of culture in the textbooks

textbook	page	Type of culture	Cultural representation	country
Prospect 2	19	practices	What do you do on Thursdays? I visit my relatives	Iran (source)
Vision 1	76	Persons	Razi taught medicine to many people	Iran (source)
Vision 1	80	Persons	Thomas Edison was interested in science	America (target)
Vision 1	102	products	Taj-Mahal and Great Wall	India and China (international)
Vision 1	38	products	Persian Gulf	Iran (source)
Prospect 3	57	perspectives	Fitr Eid is an important religious holiday in Turkey	Turkey (international)
Vision 2	59	perspectives	Praying decreases stress	Iran (source)

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Prospect 1	24	perspectives	What's your father's name? (while filling out a form)	Iran (source)
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Table 1.3 shows the distribution of cultural items in pictures:

Table 2.1 categorization of cultural representations in pictures (prospects 1-3, visions 1 and 2)

	Source culture	Target culture	International culture
countries Yuen's 4 Ps			
products	47	1	10
practices	14	0	1
perspectives	23	0	0
persons	9	0	1
Total	93	1	12

Table 2.2 Examples of culture in the textbooks



Dr. Louis Pasteur

Persons (international)



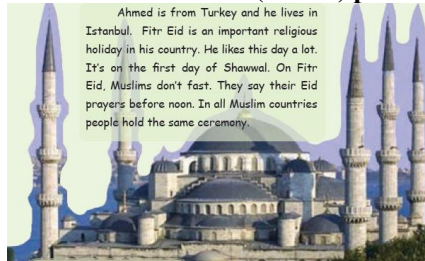
**Perspectives (source)
2 leaders that we value**



Practices (source)



Tahereh Saffarzadeh (source) persons



Products (international)

Results and discussion

The analysis of locally-produced textbooks in Iran reveals that there is a trend in all five books which encourages students to value Iranian culture, religion, art, language, traditions, and the

country itself. Moreover, all these five books started with a picture of our previous leader which has a deep root in our history and his quotes. Furthermore, every unit starts with a verse from the Holy Quran which shows how much our religion affects our lives and education. Besides, while investigating the books the researcher realized that as the level of the books go up, the number of cultural representations, especially international ones, increases.

As the tables indicate, the cultural elements and items mostly focus on source culture. The textbooks also contain some cultural representations of other countries which are categorized as international culture, such as Turkey, China, Korea, France, and Germany. However, those cultural elements were mostly product ones, and too few cultural items could be categorized as perspective, practice, or person. Moreover, almost no reference was made to the target culture, and I will say that may be because of political ties we have with the English-speaking countries such as the USA.

Due to the religion we have in Iran, Islam, no picture or text could be found representing women wearing no hijab or any relationship between opposite sexes which is considered inappropriate in our country. However, I reckon that these cultural aspects can be considered as practices or perspectives. Therefore, the researcher suggests including some cultural elements which represent target culture in terms of their products and celebrities.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine five English language textbooks which are locally produced by Iranian educators and are supposed to be taught in state schools only. As it is said above, I analyzed these books in terms of their cultural representations, and the analysis took place in two stages. First, texts used in conversation dialogues and reading passages were analyzed based on 4 Ps. Second, they were categorized according to the country or region representing that culture. In the second phase, pictures were investigated both considering 4 Ps and the regions representing the culture.

As the findings show, these textbooks are loaded with source culture and have little attention to international and mainly target culture. This trend has its own pros and cons. This can be considered as a good attitude because students learn how to talk about their own culture and traditions using English to communicate better.

However, they should know target culture as well since knowing the target culture makes students motivated to learn that language. Moreover, they should know how language is representing the culture of English language speaking countries. Therefore, students

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may be able to communicate more effectively and appropriately with English language speakers.

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Cinema and literature

All BoJack Horseman Is

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BoJack Horseman is a Netflix animated sitcom which recounts the tale of its protagonist's profound psychological conflicts. BoJack Horseman, a humanoid horse and the forgotten star of the 1990's famous TV show called Horsin' Around, struggles with his mid-life crisis. Almost at fifty years old, he is asked to write his memoir in order to revive his dead fame and career. Due to his inability to unfold his past, therefore, procrastinating writing his book, Diane Nguyen is hired by the publication as a ghostwriter to write BoJack's memoir. The process of writing his memoir brings BoJack's unresolved and unconscious problems into the spotlight. The following is a brief interpretation of the first season of the show through a classical psychoanalytical lens.

After watching the first few episodes of the show, the audience is introduced to two of the most important core issues by which BoJack's life is greatly influenced: fear of abandonment and fear of intimacy. Core issues are defined by Lois Tyson as "deeply rooted, psychological problems that are the source of our self-destructive behavior" (16). BoJack's fear of intimacy as a psychological problem is the reason he has always maintained an

emotional distance between himself and others. Throughout the first season, he is depicted as a middle aged single man who has never been married and constantly changes partners without getting attached, indicating that he is afraid of being hurt, rejected, and destroyed by others. Not even upon realizing that he is emotionally attracted to Diane is he able to express his feelings.

One of the causes of his fear of intimacy could be his fear of abandonment which is the fear of being deserted or ignored by loved ones. BoJack's fear of abandonment has its roots in his unpleasant childhood; in all the flashbacks to his childhood, his parents are represented as negligent, unloving parents who are indifferent towards BoJack's needs and feelings. One of the examples of being neglected as a child which creates the fear of 'emotional' abandonment is his father's rejection of a postcard that BoJack had made as a Father's Day gift to which his father refers as "some shoddy craftsmanship" ("BoJack Hates the Troops" 00:13:28-00:13:30). Another instance of fear of abandonment which, in this case is both 'emotional' and 'physical' is when BoJack sabotages Todd's career. Todd is one of BoJack's friends who lives in BoJack's house-on his couch-and when Todd finally finds an opportunity to pursue a career and move out of the house, BoJack destroys his career in order to prevent being deserted. He desperately tries to keep people around him and all attention on himself in fear of being ignored and abandoned.

Since BoJack is incapable of handling the pressure that his childhood memories bring upon him, he uses denial as a defense mechanism to reject his unhappy experiences as a child as if they had never existed or happened. As it was mentioned in the previous paragraph, he was raised by unloving parents; both alcoholics who were even aggressive towards BoJack's existence. Therefore, he was deprived of a normal, happy childhood. Nevertheless, when asked by Diane about his childhood, he claims that "it was, uh, normal, normal childhood stuff" ("BoJack Hates the Troops" 00:08:42-00:08:46), refusing to admit his unpleasant and overwhelming early experiences in life. It is by spending a lot of time and having many interviews with BoJack that Diane is able to discover some secrets about his psychological struggles. However, BoJack's repressed contents of his unconscious and his complicated psychological conflicts are best depicted through his abuse of drugs.

Diane's final version of BoJack's memoir is in fact not a memoir; it is a revelation about BoJack's true personality and identity narrated by Diane herself. The book characterizes BoJack as a vulnerable and flawed celebrity whom the audience finds relatable. Displeased by the portrait Diane has painted of him, BoJack decides to write his memoir by himself. In order to be able to focus, he resolves to begin writing the book through massive drug abuse. As a result, drug-induced hallucinations emerge; these hallucinations, which include images of his future and possibilities

about his current situation, have a dream-like quality worth interpreting. Therefore, the latent content of his dream-like hallucinations demonstrates his deep unconscious wounds. In one of those hallucinatory episodes, BoJack finds himself approached by a deformed and monstrous version of Diane, which represents the fact that he feels his identity has been attacked by Diane's portrayal of him in the book. The most significant part of his hallucinations is where he sees himself repeating a line given by the producer on the set of Horsin' Around. The line is "this is all I am and all I'll ever be" ("Downer Ending" 00:17:02-00:17:04). Repeating this line in front of the audience of his 90's famous TV show which is associated with his years of success reveals BoJack's conflict with his truth and the reality of his personality. Here, the underlying meaning is that BoJack perceives himself as an unchangeable, troubled character; a character who is unable to admit his true personality to himself and is unwilling to disclose that truth for others.

BoJack's psychological issues are signs of great losses he has experienced throughout his life such as losing his parents' love and care which he attempts to substitute with fame, wealth, and drug abuse. A psychoanalytical interpretation of the first season of the show shows that his early childhood experiences contribute a lot to his current unconscious state of mind, and since his psychological issues are unresolved, they result in self-destructive behaviors. This is all BoJack is. Is this all he will ever be? In order

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to find the answer to that question, we will need to watch the remaining seasons carefully and interpret them through psychoanalytical spectacles.

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Un Peu de Violette Africaine Dans la Class: Philip Falardeau's Monsieur Lazhar as the Critique of Psychoanalysis of Diasporic Trauma:

Moein Moradi

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"How odd the psychoanalytic venture is. Psychoanalysis ought to be a song of life, or else be worth nothing at all. It ought, *practically*, to teach us to sing life. And see how the most defeated and sad song of death emanates from it."

Anti-Oedipus (Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze 313)

Neither Évelyne de la Chenelière's diasporic pièce, nor Philip Falardeau's movie adaption *Monsieur Lazhar* (2011) develops post-traumatic experience as a recurring, unresolvable, and pessimistic point in identity formation. *Monsieur Lazhar* is a drama that follows a linear narrative, recounting the story of two children and their exiled teacher. Opposite to Freud and Lacapra's negative formulations about the contemporary process of subjectivation outside of one's homeland, Alice and Simon's story is simply better conveyed through sharing chewing gums. As the movie unfolds, Falardeau takes side with Félix Guattari and his like-minded experts at the La Borde's school for practical psychiatry. Director's stand point is evident through Bachir's character: a traumatized Algerian refugee who doesn't believe in

conventional psychology's power to provide a solution for his nightmares or in its capability in resolving children's turbulent experiences. Furthermore, the movie more than once emphasizes that the group therapy, sessions with psychologist at school or any form of methodological understanding of trauma is useless, and in Simon's case, even counter-productive.

Chenelière and Falardeau instead insist on practical solutions, exemplified by two major maneuvers: narrative therapy and facilitating communication among traumatized children. Rather than complicated therapeutic methods, the politics of chewing gum or telling stories are proved to be effective ways that help Alice, Bachir, and Simon to cope with their emotional wounds. Bachir's creative solution in telling his class a fable heals his diasporic trauma as well as his pupil's traumatic experience of losing their previous teacher. At the end of Bachir's fable a strong sense of hope and gaiety shines that renders decades of psychoanalytic insistence on the inescapability of post-traumatic attacks useless.

One of the diaspora scholars who insist on the psychoanalytic reading of trauma is the Indian author Vijay Mishra. In *Literature of the Indian Diaspora* (2007), Mishra proposes a biased formulation, using scattered and often negative views toward the repetitive nature of diasporic experience. Reflecting on Cathy Caruth's doctrine of containment, Mishra

regards diasporic trauma as an "uncontrolled repetitive experiment of hallucination" that happens at the expense of a "deferred experience" (Mishra 108, 109). He then goes on displacing Derrida's affirmative concept of *différance* to justify his dystopian diasporic view of the world: "Everybody from minorities to war veterans may be discussed as traumatized victims of some aspect of the nation's policies" (109). He goes on to connect diasporic post-trauma to Pleasure Principle that for Freud leads to death. From here, it is evident that although for Mishra the world of the traumatized victims is dying, Chenelière and Falardeau's storyworld is blooming. Through inter-subjectivity reconnections and what Chinua Achebe has called "re-storytelling" to heal the "trauma of all kinds of dispossession" (Achebe 79), professor Lazhar admits that a little African Violet can be more effective than a psychologist for the class, and in his fable although "la chrysalide n'est jamais devenue un papillon", the sad olive tree retells the story of "la chrysalide qui ne s'est jamais réveillé" just to make us "témoin privilégié de l'histoire d'amour". With these words, Falardeau ends his movie with a flashback to the last scene of Valerio Zurlini's 1972 movie *La Prima Notte di Quiete* in which the diasporic protagonist Daniele (Alain Delon) dies but with his untimely death, he ignites flames of love and compassion.

In *Monsieur Lazhar*, Simon proves not to be guilty; since diaspora is not about guilt but moving on. Alice will have a "belle maturité" so the narrative is certainly not about Mishra's idea of

trauma as a mis-en-abîme. The movie stresses that even in the death of a loved one, even in abandoning one's homeland, there are silver linings. As Alice's eyes remain **bachir** and hopeful through the end, the movie becomes a beautiful portrait to show that the psychoanalytic version of traumatic diaspora is fundamentally dangerous, disastrous and above all, unrealistic.

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Interview

**An Interview with Dr. Shahriyar Mansouri on
Modern Irish Literature and IASIL Regional
Bibliography**

By Vafa Keshavarzi



THRESHOLD: Dear Dr. Mansouri, Thank you very much for honoring *Threshold* with accepting to have this interview with us. If you agree, let our readers know more about your educational background. What made you interested in English literature and then why did you shift to Irish literature?

Dr. Mansouri: First of all let me start by thank you and your team at *Threshold* for all your efforts and hard work, and for keeping the passion for academia burning. I wrote an MA on the intersection of philosophy and modern literature at UPM, Samuel Beckett's *Trilogy* and solipsism to be more precise. I was awarded a full

funding for two years by the faculty of Modern Language and Communication; and I then wrote a PhD at the University of Glasgow, where was I awarded two doctoral research awards for two consecutive years. The Irish have been seen as the best raconteurs, from their satirical tales to their plays and to their modernist literary giants such as Flann O'Brien, Samuel Beckett and of course James Joyce. Their tales can be considered as a phantasmagoric space, a simulacrum proper to which everyone can belong, a Khora of some sort that enables the reader to experience that which one cannot see or feel; a day-long walk you can't afford to take at the heart of Dublin; a schizophrenic dialogism everyone is afraid to indulge in with one's self. I was introduced to the modern Irish novel the hard way, that is by reading Beckett's dense, and complexly unmanageable prose, and let me tell you it was shockingly love at first read!

THRESHOLD: How about IASIL Regional Bibliography? I always saw it at the end of the emails you sent us but I was not certain what it exactly is.

Dr. Mansouri: International Association for the Study of Irish Literature, or in short IASIL, is as the name suggests a world-renowned center for the study of Irish literature and culture, holding annual conferences and promoting Irish literatures and culture world-wide. The center includes various sub-committees one of which is Bibliography committee in charge of drafting

bibliographical lists of any Irish literature related research. I have officially represented Iran at IASIL as the country-regional Bibliography scholar since 2011, creating lists of any academic activity that pertains to the study of Irish literature carried out in Iran.

THRESHOLD: I accept that if you take Irish writers away from English literature, not much will be left, but why don't we have courses like Irish literature to know Irish writers in their own literary context not the English context?

Dr. Mansouri: Touché! There are several other questions like this on my mind! Maybe a course appears someday!

THRESHOLD: It is a question that is of interest to me as your PhD student: you have taught in different universities both abroad and in Iran, comparatively speaking, how do you find SBU students? Are there any strong and weak points that are specific to them?

Dr. Mansouri: To provide a relatively unbiased comparison we should note that we learn about English literature almost when we are admitted to universities as students who will major in English literature and language; whereas for students in say other parts of Asia or Europe international literatures, say English, German or French are part and parcel of their school curriculum. We learn about major English, Irish, American, or in large world literature

by way of translation first, that is before university; and hence there has always been a layer of meaning interpolated into literature, making it a form that has already been processed to meet not only our national language but also our perception of that language. This is quite natural; when, for instance, we read Ferdowsi, Molana, Hafez and Akhavan at school as our usual curriculum, foreigners will first need to hone their perception and understanding of Persian language and then have their first bite of Persian literature. Our students, however, are quite competent when we think of say, literary theory, literary genres, film studies as they learn them in the original pattern it was planned. I find SBU students very talented and quite in love with English literature, history, and theory; they don't settle easy, as they feel the need to explore the world of literature themselves.

THRESHOLD: Are there any projects that you are working on right now? Would you please tell us a little about that?

Dr. Mansouri: I am currently working on two projects simultaneously; actually, one is being planned which is on Joyce, and the other is being written which is on Beckett and his contemporaries; and sadly, both are going very slowly considering my responsibilities in our faculty. Both projects provide a fresh look at episto-ontology, episodic memory and its fictionalization in the context of modern Irish literature.

THRESHOLD: You have been teaching different courses as I can see in your resume, but is there any course that is of particular interest to you and you feel more inclined to teach?

Dr. Mansouri: Modernism and Postmodernism as PhD courses, the modern Novel in our MA curriculum, and Contemporary Literature and Literary theory in our BA curriculum are my favorites.

THRESHOLD: Teaching is a profession replete with memories. I wonder if there is any unforgettable, good or bad memories that you like to share with our readers?

Dr. Mansouri: That walk down the memory lane [...], losing students for various reasons, or meeting fresh, ambitious students are quite rollercoasters for almost all lecturers and academics. Seeing a student you once met as a teenager in one of your BA classes who has now become a teacher himself or herself is quite a rewarding experience I truly appreciate.

THRESHOLD: Are there any questions or points that I have forgotten to ask so far and you are interested to tell us?

Dr. Mansouri: At the end I would like to wish all our SBU students and specially our very own *Threshold* editorial team a wonderful summer ahead, with many books to read and many hours to think about those books!

THRESHOLD: Dear Dr. Mansouri, Thank you very much for the time you devoted to answer our questions. Wish you best of luck with your projects and more success with your classes.

Dr. Mansouri: Thank you very much for setting up this interview, Ms. Keshavarzi and again for your hard work, and for keeping the passion of academic life burning.

Army of Letters

Tehran

Panthea Rajabi Nejad

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We seldom seek sit on a bench,
As we may ponder, way absorbed;
Seldom while drained, while depressed
We still perceive a light compressed.

Shimmery moon, gloomy hope
High building is so high disgrace
No water pass below to sense,
A reflection, a-packed-picture there.

No one attempts to rise, to trust,
To see the light, the moon, the flame.
No heart impulsion in this town,
To move the urges whilst abate.

Absence

Hooriye Khajooee Dehshib

English Literature, B.A., Payam Noor University, Varamin branch

Once upon a time

I've swallowed the bitter silence

Which has hugged me for betterness

It was shouting inside me

To grab and find thee

Thy shadow was sitting there

To ignore me, is it fair?

Tis true my hands are too cold

Since thy heart has been sold

Thy eyes will be banished

If they overlook and say finish

Therefore thou art my hope

Prithee don't say nope

Joyful Glance

Shiva Rohi

English Literature, B.A., Shahid Beheshti University

When those remembrances will fade?

Their vestiges will perish?

My eyes implore for that moment

An erstwhile beloved of mine did vanish.

The first time i noticed his brownish eyes

I asked melancholia to wish him a Farewell,

Our everlastingly joyful glance lapsed in silence,

Dolour embraced me and we were banished.

Winter

Shahrzad Ashouri

English Literature, M.A., Kharazmi University

Flowers wither

Water slows

Trees sleep

Leaves grow old

Sky grays

Animals hide

All is covered

Under snow

My room gets cold

My heart cries

My mind darkens

Yellowed life dies.

Interior Savior

Marzieh Davari Nezhad

English Literature, B.A., Payam Noor University

Among people, you can understand where you stand.

While they are staring at you, they look for your soul.

Looks are profound.

The bottom of the eyes are sorrowful.

Where there is a silent sound,

It is worthless being hopeful.

In the roads of life, there is nothing to be found.

All the ways are deceitful.

When our ego forces us to be proud,

Proud of being more dreadful.

Among this clamour, something is always left around.

Our dreams are like shadows for us to feel fanciful.

Here is a little hope which remains for us to see our destiny.

Our conscious mumurs into our ears;

Good things will come up upon great serenity.

If you are away from fears;

There are better ways out to our journey.

Search them in your heart.

A Passenger

Maryam Bahrami Nejad

English Literature, M.A., Shahid Beheshti University

I'm a stone

Impassively and smoothly

Flung into the loneliest river

Of the darkest jungle

Frosted with the most aloof trees

Warm touches of the winds

On the coquettish leaves

Entertains the moon at nights

The bulging shiny blue doesn't promise

Sun all the time here

I'm the gayest passenger

In the narrowest river of the least green forest

Overlooked by universe

With no written fate

We write bubbling anecdotes every morning

On drops' memories

I'm a stowaway passenger

Enjoying my anonymity

Penetrating at times

In my cramped corner

In the most twisty road of the world

That flows into the moon sometimes.

The One That Got Away

Soha Ghezili

English Literature, B.A., Shahid Beheshti University

My sister, best friend, and I
Were walking home from school

It was near summer
And all the fruits were ripe

As we walked and talked,
We turned into an alley
And saw a berry tree
Hanging over the wall

Hungry and drooling
We tried everything
Yet failed to get any

At last my sister
To make some berries fall
Asked for Shiva's slipper

It got stuck on the wall
And they started fighting,
So I was the one,
That got away smiling.

A Bitter Break-up at Five in the Morning

Maryam Siahmansouri

English Literature, M.A., Alzahra University

Detaching from the soft bed

I mourn the split from my kind pillow at five a.m.

Pushing my puffy eyes to part them from the lids

Laboriously I drag my heavy burden of body out of it,

But still it is buried; the lifeless warm corpse

In the whole squire shaped blanket.

Invoking Hypnos to drive off the sleep,

From the bottom of my sleepy heart I'm beseeching him listlessly:

Dear Hypnos, undo the spell of slumber

To witness the dim light of sky well

Bestow upon me the strength to leave my bed

Or the professor will chastise my tardiness.

“What Had to Be Done”

Sharareh Farid

English Literature, M.A., Yazd University

It was a cold night, but I had no idea if the chill was rising from within me or it was from the wind which was coming from underneath the door. For times I gazed at the table in front of me. The silence was annoying, but the gaze of the spectators behind that window was worse. I could not see them, but I had this strong feeling they were watching me! I started tapping my fingers on the table. Bringing in the images of the event that had happened. I had done it. I had committed the crime. I had killed him; but I had done what had to be done!

The door opened. An officer came in. He uttered words which I was trying to make sense out of. I think he said my lawyer was going to meet me soon, but I'd better speak up. I looked at him in amazement. Now I had a lawyer! When did this happen? The door closed but I could not turn away my head. My eyes were fixed on the door. After a few minutes it opened. Of course it had to be her; she never left me alone all these years, except the years she had to go abroad to finish her studies. And what years were those!

“Jolleen!” she said while looking at me with fear.

“I don’t think lawyers ought to be amazed in these rooms, you know?”

“When you see a friend here, you are allowed to have any feeling that pops into you! Tell me Jolleen, Did you do it?”

“I did it.”

“I know you! You are not a murderer. You can’t be. If you did it, then why did you do it?”

“I did what had to be done. He didn’t deserve to live. I just killed a monster. He had to die.”

“These words cannot help if I want to save your life, Jolleen. You got to tell me why you did it or I won’t be able to do a thing on the trial day.”

“Elisabelle, you were always there. I thank you for being my friend when I had no one. But if the trial is going to lead to my death, I will happily accept it since I have no desire to live anymore.”

“How can you even think of such words? You can’t give up! I am here for you. Listen to me! I won’t let anything happen to you. You just need to tell me why you did it!”

Tears shed from my eyes. I couldn’t look into her eyes. Now it was hitting me more that I was a criminal. I don’t know

whence I had found the strength to kill him, but now I had lost every bit of that strength to live.

“Do you hear me? I won’t let anything happen to you. Did he abuse you? Did he try to hurt you? Did you kill him to protect yourself?”

“You knew Michael. He could not hurt me. But he deserved to die.”

“No one deserves to die unless they have the intention to take another’s life.”

“Then I deserve to die! I have already fulfilled my intention.”

“I remember all those years you two were in love. You guys had only that one problem, but again you didn’t care because you loved each other. Hadn’t you just decided to adopt a child?”

I laughed crazily. Tears started touching my cold cheeks. I was cold like a dead body. I could feel no blood running through my veins. The room was dark. Everything was dark. He was dead. He was dead the moment I realized the truth. I was dead the moment I killed him. If I could see the face of me in the mirror at that moment, it would have been like the devil laughing. Elisabeth looked at me with fear, but I couldn’t stop laughing.

The door opened and the same officer came in. “Your time’s up! We need to take the prisoner.”

“The prisoner,” I murmured. I was a prisoner all these years. Now I was the criminal. I shouted loudly, “Not the prisoner. I am a criminal. Do you hear me?”

Elisabelle jumped out of her chair. She caught me by my arms. “Calm down, please.” I started laughing harder this time. The officer came forward. “Miss! I am sorry, but we have to take her.” She let go of my arms, I felt colder. “I will come again Jolleen. I promise not to leave you here.”

They took me. I passed all those corridors in silence. A door opened. All the prisoners or better said the criminals looked at me as if they had seen a mad woman enter the room. Perhaps they said to themselves, they’d better take this mentally ill woman to the mental hospital rather than the prison. I sat on the bed that was intended to be mine. “I killed him”, I murmured.

“Ladies please; does anyone have paper and a pen?” No one seemed to have heard me. I cried out, “Paper and a pen, please.” The lady who seemed the oldest got up; she put a piece of paper and a pen beside me and left me without a word. I wanted to say thank you to her. But words just froze in my mouth. I picked up the pen. My hands were trembling. For a moment I didn’t know where to start from but I knew I had to start. So I began.

“Dear Elisabeth, forgive me. All these years I had suffered because I couldn’t become a mother. Now I know the

problem was not me. It was he who didn't deserve to be a father. We had tried everything. We had spent thousands of dollars to cure me! Now I wish I had taken him to a psychologist to cure him instead of me. I wish we had spent all that money on him instead of me. I couldn't be a mother, but I felt for each and every child around me! You are right; we had decided to adopt a child. I wish we had never decided to adopt a child. I feel guilty not because I killed him but because we ruined another child's life. When I think of what he did, I don't regret what I did even for a moment. I killed a person who didn't kill anyone, but let others live with misery. I killed him because he didn't know what is innocence. Even if I meet him again in hell, I'll kill him. May we meet in hell. We both deserve to be there. Dear Elisabethe, please I beg you to do me this last favor. Go to Saint Joseph Orphanage. Find a seven-year old boy named Baryon. It was all my fault. We ruined that kid's life. I had chosen him to be my son...our son. I didn't know he was going to be my beloved husband's victim. Tell him I'm sorry. Tell him I killed that man. Tell him all our properties and everything else is for him now. Oh dear Elisabethe, please tell him. Please be by his side like you were by my side all these years. He might never trust anyone again. You can give him love so he'll start believing that good people are still there in this world. Use

all our money to raise him. And now I have nothing more to say, but I did what had to be done. I killed him so he won't be able to ruin a kid's life anymore."

I folded the paper and went towards the door. I knocked on the door several times. Finally, someone answered. "Give this letter to my lawyer."

"Ma'am, this is not a hotel. You better keep your orders for yourself," uttered the guard.

"I beg you, give this to my lawyer. Take this as my last wish."

The guard took the paper reluctantly. The only thing that mattered was my letter to be given to Elisabethelle. I went toward my bed. It seemed like a grave. I tried to close my eyes, but each time I closed my eyes I saw my hands full of blood. I sat for hours, my head between my hands. The sun had risen like it was never going to set again. The night had passed but hope had not arrived. The prisoners were now allowed to take a shower. I did not move. When everyone had returned I still had time to take a shower so I got up and followed the path which had meant to be mine. Few criminals were still there, but I did not care anymore. I went inside one of those bathrooms. The world was so smaller now. The hot water ran down my cold body. My eyes were shut, but the nightmare was reality. The decision was made; no one else could judge me. I had to be my own judge. My brain decided my head to

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be rapped against the wall. The cold blood now was running among the hot water. I felt unconscious but peaceful because no one could judge me now. I had done what had to be done.

“The Ladder”

Mohammad Reza Ghaemi

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X wanted to take a glance at the blue sky; he had heard that there was a luminous object in the sky called ‘star’. In the city where x lived the sky could not be seen by the cause of contaminants and pollutants.

X told Y: “How do you think I can see the stars?”

Y replied: “We can see their photos in sources!”

But X said: “I really want to see them. I have not seen any stars until today. Do you really believe stars exist?”

Y replied: “No, I don’t think so. I have not seen any throughout my life.”

X added: “But there certainly must be. We should try to ascend this turbidity to see these so called ‘stars’.”

Y then asked: “How can this be?”

X replied: “If we make a ladder we can climb up the clouds and see the stars!”

They became busy making a ladder that would later elevate them higher than clouds. The ladder grew taller and taller day by day and X and Y went higher and higher.

When they reached a cloud pile they asked: “Oh! You gracious, do you think there is a star up there?”

Cloud replied: “I doubt! I haven’t seen a star up there in a long time!”

They still continued their way. Contamination was such that they could not even see each other.

Y cried: “Let’s return! I don’t think we can go higher!”

X replied: “Don’t say that! Let’s continue, I am sure stars exist!”

Y who was quite exhausted grumbled: “I will return, I cannot breathe any longer!”

In consolation X said: “Please tolerate! I feel we are getting nearer.”

Y, frustrated and impatient, was climbing the stairs when X suddenly cried: “I feel the warmth! I had read in books that the sun is warm but I never thought we would be getting nearer to it!”

Y said: “The sun does not virtually exist, it is only in books.”

X responded: “No! I can feel its warmth, so we can say the sun must exist. But I haven’t seen a star and I don’t even know how it looks like.”

Y could not tolerate anymore and told X: “I will return, I think you are making a mistake. No one has ever seen the star or the sun, and I believe there is nothing in virtue.”

X continued to climb the stairs. Each step hit him with warmer weather. The thickness of clouds incremented and gradually the black clouds superseded the grey. But X did not give up. As heat increased the clouds became lighter. X had almost lost his ability,

yet continued to climb up arduously. The ladder became hot; he could not take his hands off much. A piece of cloud abruptly crossed his eyes, he then inquired: “Cloud?! Do you think there is sun in the sky?”

Whilst moving the cloud replied: “I have not seen the sun till now; it is extremely hot here and I cannot climb higher.”

X paid his gratitude and continued to climb. His legs were almost scorched from the ladder and he could not hold on longer. Suddenly he felt a breeze. X asked the breeze: “Hey, passionate! Have you seen the sun?”

Breeze answered: “I cannot go higher but I can feel its heat!”

X asked the breeze to help him cool the weather to clear ambiguities. Breeze tried to direct cooler air from underneath to reach X to move higher. He then said that he tried to bring cooler air up with all his might and to climb higher aside each other. As they climbed higher and higher X gazed above; everywhere was golden. He then glimpsed at the ladder. The heat had melted the ladder. Breeze could not cool the climate. Unaware, he suddenly screamed out: “Return! Or you will melt!”

X climbed a few steps higher and did not continue anymore. They then heard a noise saying: “Who are you?”

X replied: “I am X. Who are you?”

A reply came: “I am the sun.” X was astonished: “So you do exist!”

The sun replied: “Yes, I do!”

X quoted: “We haven’t seen you down below until now, just read about you in books!”

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The sun then replied: “I haven’t seen the below for some time either!”

X Then inquired: “By the way, where are the stars?”

The sun replied: “Look beneath!”

X glared at the stars that had fallen down on the plains and had died! Plains full of dead stars!

Zozo

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“I really have no idea. But I’m sure wherever they are, they are busy adoring each other. You know Hairy, they were the most romantic couple in the world. They had everything they need. They were so rich.”

“Whats rich?”

“When you have a lot of money, you are rich.”

“Whats money?”

“Something by which you can buy whatever you wish. It’s human’s greatest invention. It’s so valuable and lack of it can cause serious problems. Money is also a sign in the great system of signs. People work around the clock to achieve it. Humans are smart creatures, they make money to bring happiness to their lives. Niki and Bern had lots of money and they were so happy. But the old man couldn’t earn enough money to lead a happy and peaceful life.”

“Ye has money?” asked Hairy.

“No, I don’t. I never had. Actually, I didn’t need it.”

“If ye sayin its good, let’s havin it.”

“It’s impossible for us to have money Hairy. Unfortunately, we’re not as smart as humans to invent such system.”

“System, again!” Hairy ranted. “Ye sayin money necessary for happiniss, ain’t it? But whats gotta been happiniss?”

“Well done Hairy! You got the point. Without this system you can never be happy. I was an eyewitness of it in three families. Niki and Bern were the happiest couple, and they had a colorful life since they had money. And to answer your question, happiness is a strange feeling that you have to experience it. It’s difficult to explain.”

“Is ye happy?”

I got puzzled by his strange question, but I tried to formulate an answer, “hmm. I don’t know. Maybe I am, but I am not sure.” I even didn’t know what it felt like when you were happy.

“Listen Hairy, happiness is what humans have discovered and you may never understand it. But I was lucky enough to understand it. Niki and Bern had everything, a huge two story house with luxurious furniture. There was a large garden, in their house, with a high fountain in the middle, with exotic trees, and joyful chirping birds. Everyone was happy in that house. They had also dogs, huge barking dogs. They bought a very unique cage for me. In the cage,

there was a small citrus tree and a bowl full of nuts, especially cashew nuts, my favorite. I even had a swing. Niki once told me they had to wait a long time and spent a fortune to have me in their house. She said that she fell in love with me the first moment that she saw me; my long elegant green tail, and the vibrant rainbow colors of my feathers simply blissed her out, and also perfectly went with the theme of their modern living room. When they finally bought me, they threw a big party in their house and presented me to their friends in my super luxurious cage. Bern took me out of the cage, I climbed up on his shoulder, and spread abroad my wings. The dazzling color of my feathers enchanted everyone. As they were gazing at me in awe, Niki proudly smiled and boasted about how rare my specie was, and the fortune that they spent for me. I was so important for them.”

“whats cage?”

“It’s a special house for birds. Actually, for pricey birds like me. Ordinary birds can’t enjoy such luxury.”

“We, our gang, buildin our own hose, but we ain’t never call it cage. Its a hose. It ain’t no bars, no swing, no nuts. But its a hose. We all sleepin in it, when it been rainin or snowin, we sitin in our hose and holdin our babies, keepin them warm. But when de weather been good, we goin out and ain’t never sitin in it for de whole day.”

“If you had a cage like mine, you would never get out of it. You would sit back there and relax all day.”

“They ain’t talkin to you?” Hairy asked.

“They talked a lot with me. I am an intelligent kind of bird and so sociable. I can imitate human speech. I could understand what they said, but couldn’t talk back. Zozo was the name that Niki gave me, but at times she called me Cutie. Niki talked to me a lot. Actually, she loved talking. She loudly talked and laughed with her friends. She had a soft voice. I wasn’t bored for a little moment in their house. They were always so kind-hearted not only to me but to everyone. They threw big parties and invited people. The guests danced, ate, drank and laughed happily and wildly till late at night. They also had live music which was the funniest hours of the party for me. Bern was an amazing husband and so kind to everyone. He was so gentle and caring towards women, and talked to them gently. He crazily loved Niki. He even missed Niki while they were with others. Bern took her to their bedroom and crazily kissed her in the darkness and said romantic words to her, but I always wondered why Niki’s hair turned black in the darkness. She was a natural blonde. When they were with others, they looked at each other like lovers, and tightly held each other’s hands. In the mornings, when Bern was at work, she missed him a lot. She loudly cried in the bedroom and called Bern. Sometimes Niki yelled at Bern and became hysterical. I became worried and afraid

that the great love is going to crack. But then Bern handed her a fancy box. At first, she reluctantly opened it, but when she saw those little shiny things in it, smiled happily and then everything went back to normal.”

“Humans is vey difficult.” Hairy raised his thick eyebrows.

“Yes, complicated Hairy. So Complicated.”

“I ain’t never understand. I ain’t never yell my gang. We ain’t never cry and never laugh. Why gotta we cryin? We just fear. Fearin of enemies. We ain’t never parties. We aint never eat without reason. We eatin when we’s hungry.”

“Because you’re simple creatures Hairy. You may be twice as big as humans, but your minds are rarely one hundredth of humans. At nights, we had a lot of fun. They had a huge colorful box. They sat in front of it for hours and stared at it with great interest. They sometimes cried, and at times laughed. I couldn’t figure out the words and the pictures but the colors fascinated me a lot. It had an interesting name, TV. We ate some crispy salty things while watching the box. They were incredibly tasty. I didn’t see that colorful box in other houses.”

“If their house’s very good and they’s kind, for what ye gotta leavin them?”

“I never left them. On day, they took me out of my cage and Niki, as was patting my head and stroking through my feathers, told me ‘Zozo, my dear, it’s time to move out. We’re gonna give your cage to another bird. It’s as cute as you.’ Then a bald middle-aged man and a dumpy woman entered the garden. Niki kissed me, Bern tapped my head, and then handed me to that dull couple. Niki seemed so excited that day. I moved out to another house. They were not as rich as Niki and Bern, and they didn’t have garden in their house. They lived in an apartment. It’s a kind of funny construction, Hairy. People live on top of each other. Emilie and Albert didn’t love each other and they didn’t have a colorful box in their living room.”

“They ain’t kind?”

“They were caring but they were as dull as dishwater. Albert never kissed his wife, said romantic words to her or gave her fancy boxes. They never had parties. They had two sons, two naughty and meddlesome sons. The elder one, Brian, was very fond of tormenting animals and insects. The first day that I stepped my foot there, the little one, Bart, fled from me in panic and locked himself in his room. Emilie and Albert talked him into touching me and tried to assure him that there’s nothing to be afraid of. Then, he hesitantly approached me and stared at me with his beady tearful eyes. He extended his hand and touched me with his ice-cold fingers. Being touched by two trembling and unloving hands

was so annoying. But he got over it as time went on. I had no cage there. At nights, I had to sleep in a wooden basket. It was like the humble house that vagabond birds made for themselves on trees. It had nothing for enjoyment. There was no tree, no swing, and no nuts, just a tiny soft pillow. I had to eat the same food everyday. It was something like seed which had a bland taste. There was no variety of food. Emilie was so different from Niki. She was so antisocial. She didn't talk with me, and didn't have much friends. She never wore jewelry, or elegant dresses, like Niki. She just shopped, cooked, read books and yelled at his sons who were quite unruly and disobedient.”

“Whats jooelry?”

“*Jewelry*, Hairy! They are precious shiny objects. They are symbols of nobility and civilization.”

“Ain't we find jooelry here?” he asked in a silly voice.

“Of course not Hairy. Even if you find, they will be rough and not delicate. Niki bought them from special places. Once he took me there. It was a strange kind of place. Even the floors were shining. I could see my own picture on them. Emilie didn't own even a single shiny stone. She was not noble enough to wear them. They rarely talked to each other, I mean Emilie and Albert. They never fought. Albert just read paper. There was no love in this family Hairy.”

“Whats luvе?”

“It’s *Love* not Luvе. It means kissing each other, smiling at each other, buying gifts, and throwing parties to display your love. Bern did all these things for Niki. Niki was so lucky. Even the sun shone brighter in their house. Emilie was like a never-melting ice cube, she was so distant and passionless.”

“But they givin you food, ain’t that good?”

“But food is not enough. They couldn’t fulfill my soul. I mean they could feed my body but not my soul.”

“Sol? Strange! Food is everything, if you havin food and a place for sleep means you’s survivin ‘n lucky.”

“These matters are beyond you, Hairy. Don’t load up your mind with such trifles. I don’t remember how much time I’ve lived with them. But after a while, Bart didn’t fear me anymore. He called me Birdie. He confidently approached me, touched my beak, pulled my feathers and even talked to me. But he talked nonsense. The way he and Brian talked was totally different from Niki’s style. I didn’t learn a new word in their dull house. Their friends were also like themselves. When they got together they just talked. They never danced or drank. Children boisterously played, and I was their entertaining toy. I had to flap my wings to run away from those naughty children, and it was so tiring.”

“Why humans havin different name. It aint becomes difficult knowin all the names? How you been memorizin all de names?”

“Name is important, Hairy. And it’s also impolite not to call people by their names.”

“We ain’t havin name, and everything’s ok and we ain’t havin no problem.”

“Of course, you don’t need names, because you’re savage.” I muttered to myself.

“They ain’t luv you?”

“Good question Hairy. Now that I review, I think they didn’t. I had no cage, no colorful box, and no good food, nothing entertaining actually.”

“They put ye here?”

“Oh, no Hairy. They gave me to another family.”

“Why?”

“As I told you before, humankind has strong motivation for doing things that remains hidden for us. Everything was going on normal, even Bart didn’t fear me anymore. He even began playing with me. It was a stupid kind of play, though. One day, they took me to an apartment. An old man opened the door, and patted my head with a grim smile on his face. They put me on a wooden

drawer and began talking quietly to the old man. Then, they shook hands with the old man and left. Emilie and Albert even didn't say goodbye to me. My new owner was a lonely old man. His house was dim and sunless; the windows were covered with thick gray curtains. There was just a worn out sofa and a wooden armchair that I used to sit on its arm while the old man was reading books. My situation worsened in his house, Hairy. I moved out from a luxurious cage with golden bars to a cramped nest and then I became homeless. I had no place to sleep in. I ate whatever the old man ate on his dining table. I had to eat from a plate. On the first day, he told me that he was against caging birds, and that I was free to go wherever I wished. But I was reluctant to go anywhere. I got used to living with humans. Moreover, finding food and a warm house was really difficult for me. Nobody came to his house. He had no friends. He said his children all flew away from home to stand on their own feet. He said he taught his children to live independently and rely on themselves alone in life. I always thought what a crazy idea it is to live independently. It must be something very difficult and exhausting. But as I told you, human beings are complicated. He had a lot of books. There was a huge library in his house. As I had nothing to do, I entertained myself with books. Pecking at the papers, and sometimes sitting on the old man's shoulder and looking at his book entertained me. He read a lot. He never called me by any name. I tried to help him by repeating my names one by one for him, but he just smiled in

return and patted my head. I also didn't know his name. He listened to music a lot, but I didn't like his taste. It was really crappy. I loved the kind of music that Niki listened to. It was so eclectic and full of life. He didn't talk much. He just read books and wrote things. He talked at length once a week to some people who came to his house, encircled him, and keenly listened to him and wrote down things. I understood zilch from the old man's speech. Sometimes, I doubted of him being a human being at all. He read poetry for me. After a while, I knew them by heart. I couldn't understand the meaning, but they had music and made it easy for me to pick them up. It became dull after a while, though, but I have learnt new words and things from those poems. He was so different from other families. We were not even a family there, just he and I. Sometimes, I thought he was depressed."

"whats that?"

"Humans use this word a lot. As far as I have observed, people who have no partner, no friends and no parties are depressed."

"I havin my gang and my babies, so I ain't never depressed. But ye ain't have no gang."

"But I'm not depressed. The concept is far more complicated than it seems. Wipe it from your mind, Hairy. In the old man's house, I had no place of my own to rest upon. I had to sit on the armchair, on the kitchen drawer, on his bed sometimes, and even on his

books. He irritated me by forcing me to fly. Once, he took me to the terrace and threw me up in the air, and encouraged me to fly off. But I was unwilling to fly. You know Hairy, after living with human beings, I figured out that walking on two feet is more sensible and less tiresome than flying. One morning, as he was humming happily to himself, pulled back the curtains, and opened the window. A dazzling sunlight steamed in the room for the first time. He was unnaturally happy that day. He delivered a strange lecture to me, and said that he hated confining animals especially birds in the house. I had wings and I could determine my fate with these wings. Human beings had no wings so they were condemned to live on earth. It was a chance bestowed upon me by God and I should not spoil it. I didn't get what he was talking about, though. Then he lifted me with his both hands and moved towards the window. He lived on the seventh floor. All of a sudden, he threw me up to the sky. I flapped several times to stay in the air, but I was kept pulling down. I flapped harder and struggled to pull myself up. There were a lot of crows in the sky, with their ugly faces and dark feathers. They flew past me with their outstretched wings and tried to distract me. After a while, I got terribly tired, and couldn't beat my wings. As I folded my wings, I began to fall with my beak heading downward while whirling rapidly. As if the whole city, with those giant skyscrapers, were spinning around me. I can't remember the rest. When I woke up I was in a barred box. A white cloth was stuck tightly around my beak. I couldn't talk.

There were a lot of animals there. I constantly drifted off to sleep. Then I found my self here without the white cloth and that barred box. I thought to myself if I got here by myself or someone brought me.”

“Maybe humans again brings ye here.”

“Hairy I am so hungry. Can you find something for me to eat?”

“I ain’t know what ye eatin. We eatin this orengis. If you wanna eat, go up de tree and take yerself.”

“Hey pal, I can’t eat these junk food. I should eat nuts or seeds at worst.”

“Jonk food?”

“Nothing forget about it. I can’t lecture on what junk food is for you. What else do you eat?”

“Whatever growin on trees, in de winter what we findin on de ground.”

“Ok give me an orange.”

“Go up and get yerself.” Hairy said.

“Oh, common Hairy, you know that I can’t fly high above. The tree is so tall, and I may fall down again.”

Hairy stretched his thick arm out and grabbed a little orange. It was round with a rough surface and I was thinking hard how to eat this

round thing. I kept pecking at the fruit. A sticky sweet liquid sprang from it. It had a distinctive taste.

“Listen Hairy! I have an offer for you.”

“Offer? Whats ofer?”

“Offer is something two sided. It’s something like a contract. You do something for me and in return I’ll do something for you.”

“Ok, whats that?”

“Look, I’m sure my story entertained you. You were listening to it with great interest. It is obvious that you enjoyed my company. In exchange, you can provide me with food and a place to live. To cut it short, I want to stay with you and your gang.”

He narrowed his eyes, and remained muted for a moment, then said, “I gotta talkin with my gang.”

“Fine with me. I can also talk to them and explain my situation. I think I can convince them.”

“Ain’t ye can teach my children speakin like ye?”

“Sure, I can. I can even entertain them while you go out for finding food. I can teach them new things and make them civilized, and tell them amusing stories. There are a lot of things that I haven’t told you yet. I can entertain you at nights with my stories. I can teach you how to eat, sleep, talk, walk, and even how to live and

enjoy it fully. I also know so many poems by heart that I can recite them to you.”

“Ain’t ye can give my gang names. I wanna them becomin yoonique like me.”

“Sure, with pleasure.”

“What ‘bout yer gang, you ain’t wannna find yer gang?”

“Forget about my gang Hairy. From now on you are my family.”

Hairy shrugged and said, “talk ‘bout luv to my gang.”

“That’s *love* Hairy.”

THE END

Translations

Translation Challenges

مرا هزار امید است و هر هزار تویی!

مرا هزار امید است و هر هزار تویی!

شروع شادی و پایان انتظار تویی

بهارها که ز عمرم گذشت و بی تو گذشت

چه بود غیر خزانها اگر بهار تویی

دلم ز هر چه به غیر از تو بود خالی ماند

در این سرا تو بمان ای که ماندگار تویی

شهاب زودگذر لحظه های بوالهوسی است

ستاره ای که بخندد به شام تار تویی

جهانیان همه گر تشنگان خون من اند

چه باک زان همه دشمن چو دوستدار تویی

دلم صراحی لبریز آرزومندی است

مرا هزار امید است و هر هزار تویی

I have thousands hopes and all is you

Mohadese (Saye) Haji Shams Ali

English Literature, B.A., Payam Noor University, Varamin branch

Inception of happiness and end of anticipation is you

Many springs passed without you in my life

When you are spring, it's nothing but fall

My heart felt empty of all things except you

Stay in this home, Oh, you the immanent

Flighty moments are as a fleeting falling star

You are the laughing star at dark nights

If the whole world is so bloodthirsty toward me

I have no fears when you are on my side

My heart is a full jug of ambitions

I have thousands hopes and all is you

Mending Wall

BY ROBERT FROST

Mohadese (Saye) Haji Shams Ali

English Literature, B.A., Payam Noor University, Varamin branch

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,

And spills the upper boulders in the sun;

And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know

What I was walling in or walling out,

And to whom I was like to give offence.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,

That wants it down."

ترمیم دیوار

چیزی هست که دیوار را دوست ندارد.
همان چیزی که زمین منجمد را زیر دیوار، متورم می‌کند،
و تخته سنگ‌های فوقانی را زیر نور آفتاب می‌ریزاند،
و آنچنان شکافی ایجاد می‌کند که دونفر به زور می‌توانند از آن عبور کنند.

قبل از آنکه دیواری بسازم، از خودم می‌پرسم،
چه چیز را درون دیوار راه دهم و چه چیزی را خارجش نگاه دارم،
با این کار، ممکن است چه کسی را بیزارم.
چیزی هست که دیوار را دوست ندارد.
که می‌خواهد آن را خراب کند.

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English Literature, B.A., Payam Noor University, Varamin branch

*Next Issue's Translation
Challenge*

Next Issue Translation challenge

Richard Wright

With indignation

A little girl spans her doll, –

The sound of spring rain.

غزل شماره ۱۸۵ حافظ

دوش وقت سحر از غصه نجاتم دادند

واندر آن ظلمت شب آب حیاتم دادند

بیخود از شعشعه پرتو ذاتم کردند

باده از جام تجلی صفاتم دادند

چه مبارک سحری بود و چه فرخنده شبی

آن شب قدر که این تازه براتم دادند

بعد از این روی من و آینه وصف جمال

که در آن جا خبر از جلوه ذاتم دادند

من اگر کامروا گشتم و خوشدل چه عجب

مستحق بودم و اینها به زکاتم دادند

هاتف آن روز به من مژده این دولت داد

که بدان جور و جفا صبر و ثباتم دادند

این همه شهد و شکر کز سخنم میریزد

اجر صبریست کز آن شاخ نباتم دادند

همت حافظ و انفاس سحرخیزان بود

که ز بند غم ایام نجاتم دادند

Threshelf

Night and Day

By Virginia Woolf

Shiva Rohi

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Night and Day Virginia Woolf's second novel gives a picturesque account of how it actually feels to be born the daughter of a distinguished family, to be quite unfathomable when it comes to expressing your peculiarities to people who yearn to acquire a better understanding of you as they also get to know themselves. The novel's name itself represents what it beautifully struggles to get across through some effortlessly adorable words.

Virginia Woolf tries to make us aware of the distinction between the life of solitude and the life of society by highlighting its gradual changes, with accordance with what she has written, an astonishing precipice on one side of which the soul is active in broad daylight, on the other side of which it is pensively contemplative and dark as night.

Virginia Woolf verily believes that it's not easy to step from one (solitude) to the other (life of society) without undergoing some

fundamental changes through which Katharine Hilbery, the main character of this engaging story, blotted out unimportant moments, tempting ones, to embrace reality.

She appears to be emotional and understanding to Ralph as somebody who loves her but at the same time, she glories in her desire to be free, to stand against some hasty wills rushing blindly on, to study mathematics and astronomy related things with gusto though she's expected to be fond of literature and to a large extent a fan of William Shakespeare as her mother go on talking about him unceasingly, for hours.

What I personally consider quite phenomenal is, at times, I could relate myself to all the characters since they added their own diversity of mind and personality as mysterious complications worth reflecting upon.

Besides, to my mind, the majority of us fail to find and ascertain a good reason to love, to love with every fiber of our frames, wholeheartedly, as if we could hardly dissever our souls from its existence.

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Moreover, this novel aims to oust a parochial way of thinking from a large number of eyes imploring to smile at a lovely person who is able to love them back, to sacrifice everything as Ralph did, as the unified vision of him along with Katherine's gave them an opportunity seized through a seemingly undying torment which made them helplessly try to fulfill their sense of individuality simultaneously.

In the end, all I found puzzling, nicely puzzling, were those lines in which Virginia Woolf illustrated love vs delusion.

You know you're in love when it's as if something come to an end suddenly - gave out- faded - an illusion, probably a high expectation, and surprisingly when we think we are in love we make it up - we imagine what doesn't exist.

We invent stories of a person we can't separate ourselves from since our created image is what we need, what we are bereft of and what we want to be fraught with.

Always to be finding the other illusion, going off and forgetting about them, never to be certain that you cared at a specific moment, especially a momentarily pleasant one that made you stupidly think they also cared or they weren't caring for someone not you at all, the horror of changing from one state to the other, the horror of the night and its sheer darkness after being through the brightness of the day.

Being happy one moment and miserable the next...

That's the reason why we can't possibly belong to each other but we can daydream, we can wish to have another chance, to read more of Woolf, to overcome all those complexities, to pluck up the courage to love, to smile at the presence of glorious moments in which we fall in love with each other although it'd just be flogging another dead horse. Another insanely lovely desire is imminent to befall.

The Great Gatsby

By: F.Scott Fitzgerald

Atefe Mirzapour

TEFL, M.A., Shahid Beheshti University

One of the most prominent classics from twentieth-century literature, *The Great Gatsby* is an extremely acclaimed book by many critics and readers across generations and stands as the supreme achievement of F. Scott Fitzgerald's career.

The story focuses on the love between Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan, yet I believe that it is so much more than just a love story.

Fitzgerald makes use of several literary devices such as imagery to make each character come to life and create a unique personality that stays with the reader. He uses the first part of the book to build up each persona so that the later events in the book become more meaningful.

The novel's events are filtered through the consciousness of its narrator, Nick Carraway, a young Yale graduate, who is both a part of and separate from the world he describes. Upon moving to New York, he rents a house next door to the mansion of an eccentric millionaire (Jay Gatsby). Every Saturday, Gatsby throws a party at his mansion and all the great and the good of the young fashionable world come to marvel at his extravagance.

Despite his high-living, Gatsby is dissatisfied and Nick finds out why. Long ago, Gatsby fell in love with Daisy. Although she has always loved Gatsby, she is currently married to Tom Buchanan. Gatsby asks Nick to help him meet Daisy once more, and Nick finally agrees—arranging tea for Daisy at his house.

Soon the two ex-lovers begin an affair. At a luncheon at the Buchanan estate, Daisy speaks to Gatsby with such undisguised intimacy that Tom begins to suspect and challenges both of them.

The group decides to drive to the Plaza Hotel. On the way back, Gatsby's car strikes and kills Tom's mistress, Myrtle. Nick later learns that Daisy, not Gatsby himself, was driving the car at the time of the accident. George Wilson, Myrtle's husband, falsely concludes that the driver of the yellow car is the secret lover he suspects his wife had. George learns from Tom that the yellow car is Jay Gatsby's. He fatally shoots Gatsby at his pool and then turns the gun on himself. Nick arranges a funeral for his friend and then decides to leave New York_ saddened by the fatal events and disgusted by the way they lived.

Many consider *The Great Gatsby* to be depressing because, in the end, those who dream do not achieve their aspirations. However, the main message that Fitzgerald sends to us isn't that dreaming will lead to despair, but that chasing an unworthy dream will lead to tragedy.

The Alchemist

Paulo Coelho

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The Alchemist is a novel written by Paulo Coelho in 1998. It was originally written in Portuguese and published in English in 1993 for the first time. The novel tells about a struggle of a Spanish shepherd; Santiago, during his journey to pyramids of Egypt after his dream about a treasure located there.

The novel portrays the decision-making process done by Santiago to overcome his dilemmas. This novel has been exalted as a self-help book that has influenced the lives of many people all around the world.

Paulo Coelho has focused on the art of living, he is trying to tell us how to make the most of our lives and how to make it interesting by following one's dream or as it is quoted in the novel, by discovering one's personal legend. All human beings are capable of realizing their full potential and all of us should undertake the journey of our lives with love and care, in order to fulfill our desires.

The author puts an emphasis on the fact that one should not hold back and back off because of the obstacles on the way. During the process of the novel, we saw how

Santiago dealt with the obstacle he faced at the top of that mountain by doing the crystal job in the best way he could, he got to enjoy it and made a lot of progress there. The Alchemist narrates the story of success which shows how to set the goal of life and how to pursue it passionately.

We see Santiago leaving the comforts of home and giving one-tenth of his sheep to a wise man named Melchizedek, in order to help him overcome his dilemma of whether to pursue his dream or not. The wise man tells him everything in life has a price and more so a dream.

The lessons of life *The Alchemist* teaches us are not a few:

Life is sadness without having a dream, it takes a great deal of courage to pursue one's dream and the personal legend in the face of odds, the importance of listening to one's heart, the significance of learning through doing and most importantly, realizing the power of love.

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