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Critical Factors in English Teachers’ Professional Development in China – A Case Study

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Abstract

This case study is set in the context of globalisation, framing its analysis of issues relating to professional development of teachers of English language in China against the global background of English language teaching reform. In Asia generally, and particularly in China, where the focus of education in recent years has shifted from access to quality of teaching and learning, an existing plethora of underqualified teaching staff, mainly because of rapid higher education expansion, constitutes a major barrier to regular participation in professional development programs. Barriers identified as impacting on the provision of good quality teaching arose, largely, from the pressures due to the demands of curriculum reform and the often-changing expectations of university leadership, which highlighted tensions between a traditional reliance on the primacy of exam results and a newer demand for holistic development and lifelong learning. Following a review of the literature on aspects of teacher professional development, and a discussion of the current policy context in China, a range of findings will be used to illustrate common stakeholder expectations, as well as teacher beliefs and practice. The analysis of the narratives uncovers issues of identity and power, in the shaping of the participants’ practice and professional trajectories. The analysis provides illustration of how limitation in professional participation can result in limitation of innovative practice. Concerns regarding barriers to further development are also highlighted. The study offers recommendations to promote innovative practice which can support more effective teaching and learning.

Keywords: Professional development, higher education, China, English

Introduction

The impact of globalisation on higher education has been widely discussed (see, for example, Xu, 2005; Hassi & Storti, 2012; Shahidi & Seyedi, 2012; Zajda & Rust, 2016). While Altbach (2004) and Vandermensbrugghe (2002) caution of the inequality which globalisation may lead to in academia, others (Lo, 2011) note that non-Western countries may selectively adapt from the Anglo-American model what suits their needs when developing their national higher education systems.

Researchers such as Ngok & Guo (2008) have reported on China’s approach of “kejiao xingguo” (i.e., revitalizing China through developing science and education) which led to the launch of the 211 project in 1995 and 985 project in 1998. Project 211 is a project by the Chinese Ministry of Education that aims to raise the research standards of universities and refine strategies for socio-economic development. Project 985 is a project to promote the development and reputation of the Chinese higher education system, through funding certain universities to build new research facilities, hold international conferences, attract world-renowned faculty, and help Chinese faculty attend conferences abroad. Until recently, professional development of teachers has not been deemed to be of primary importance in China.

In common with educational leaders and policy makers elsewhere, who have tended to operate a myriad of top-down teacher professional development programs, rather than an inclusive training program involving the active participation of teachers as co-designers (Hardy, 2012), China has also relied on a one-size-fits-all approach to professional development of teachers. However, there is the dawning of a recognition that this needs to change.

Central to the debate regarding professional development programs are questions about what constitutes good quality teaching, how to develop (and subsequently evaluate) the teaching workforce and how to place students at the centre (Viete & Peeler, 2007; Chen & Fang, 2013; Peng et al, 2014). This paper seeks to contribute to the burgeoning research on teacher quality and teacher development in Asia by drawing on selected findings from a case study conducted at a university in China.
With a high focus on research performance, teaching and learning are often perceived to be secondary in importance to research in universities worldwide, and particularly Chinese universities. For example, promotion and evaluation processes still value research performance more than teaching performance in the classroom. This research-oriented tradition is a well-worn obstacle to faculty professional development on teaching and learning.

**Literature Review**

Language teachers’ professional development emerges from a process of restructuring teachers’ existing knowledge, beliefs, practices and reflections rather than just simply imposing fresh language teaching theories, methodologies and teaching materials on teachers. Therefore, language teachers’ professional learning is a complex process which requires knowledge in various disciplines, such as psychology, sociology and methodology. Strong motivation on the part of teachers and a willingness to embrace change are also needed for the process of professional development to be sustainably successful (Guan & Huang, 2013; Reynolds et al, 2015).

**Massification of higher education in Asia**

The massification movement of higher education across much of Asia is creating a challenge for government planners and higher education administrators in being able to offer high-quality instruction with an under-prepared faculty workforce. In many country contexts, faculty qualifications prevent them from being able to keep pace with the rising demands of higher education students (UNESCO, 2014). Increasing enrolments in most Asian contexts causes many higher education institutions to be preoccupied in meeting minimum academic provisions rather than being able to focus on the improvement of high-quality instruction and learning. Varying faculty member academic qualifications—such as inadequate English language-speaking abilities and practical expertise, or qualifications in the field—are key issues among many that prevent them from reaching higher academic standards.

In an effort to address these quality gaps, many Asian higher education institutions began to emphasize accountability and quality assurance procedures, with a special focus placed on teaching performance and research output (Hallinger, 2010). Rote learning has been increasingly recognized as inadequate and university faculty members are expected to play a larger role in inspiring reflective and innovative learning.

In many higher education institutions, professional development programs were established to help support various initiatives that promote effective teaching and research. These programs are still being conceptualized across many top Asian higher education institutions with varying degrees of success. Research findings suggest a number of barriers that these professional development programs are trying to overcome (Asian Development Bank, 2011).

First, the massification process of higher education often overloads faculty members with substantially more teaching responsibilities. The trend where faculty members are required to teach more classes continues, as does the requirement to become involved in many non-academic matters that concern student campus life and/or developmental issues. As a result, professional development programs are often viewed by many faculty members as a luxury; most faculty already have little to no “extra” time available for such personal skills development.

Second, salary structures in many Asian universities are based on the number of teaching hours faculty members complete each semester/term/quarter. For language teachers, remuneration is often lower than for those who teach other subjects. From a monetary perspective, this often puts professional development program initiatives in direct competition with actual teaching activities. The lack of a general incentives or rewards structure further exacerbates the situation, making it even more difficult to motivate participation in professional development initiatives.

Third, faculty professional development programs in Asia are underfunded and operate on lean discretionary budgets. Faculty members seeking academic/professional self-enrichment domestically or overseas have to resort to self-funding in many cases, which is another disincentive for participation in professional development programs in Asian higher education institutions.

**Issues of identity**

Varghese et al. (2005) have noted that there are three features of identity process. Identity is firstly understood as multiple, fluid and often conflicted in nature, and importantly includes the notion of agency to explain teacher choices and decisions. The second understanding is that identity is always related to social cultural and political contexts (Lave & Wenger 2002).
Finally, it is understood that identity is constructed and negotiated through language and ongoing interactions with others (Bucholtz & Hall 2004). Particular issues in studies of language teacher identity have included marginalisation, the position of non-native speaker teachers, and the nature of teacher knowledge.

Language teachers in particular position themselves both personally and professionally between two or more languages and cultures (Kanno 2003). These observations and issues have created a diverse research field but, as Varghese et al. (2005) note, do not constitute a coherent theoretical approach. While we acknowledge critique of its limitations in this context (Varghese et al. 2005), discussed below, we have chosen to use Wenger’s (1998) framework of the dual process of identity formation. This is described as the result of two processes, identification and negotiation of meaning. Identification comes from engagement (investing ourselves in our practice, as well as in relations with others), imagination (seeing our experience as part of a broader context - "images of the world that transcend engagement" Wenger 1998: 17) and alignment (connection to others when our practice is in line with a broader enterprise, involving power). Negotiation of meaning involves ownership of making meaning of experience, power processes, and, if the participant’s contribution is continually denied, results in marginalisation.

Narrative research has been recognised to be of particular significance in capturing language teacher development (Barkhuizen et al. 2013). It is understood that language teaching and learning focus not only on acquisition of a language, but on the interaction and development of a holistic and intercultural identity. Nevertheless, in individuals’ stories, the tension between educational beliefs is noted, for example, between the models of teacher as authoritative source of knowledge and of the teacher as facilitator, helping the student to make their own discoveries in learning (Wilson 1996).

**Educational technology**

Educational technology is an important aspect of professional development initiatives in Asian higher education institutions, with a special emphasis placed on research and instruction with multi-media support (Asian Development Bank, 2011; Azhar & Shahid, 2014). However, educational technology literacy among faculty—particularly embedding it into innovative curriculum design as well as transformative pedagogical practices—remains discouragingly at a low level and suffers inadequate attention from higher education administrators and government policymakers. Some faculty members, especially senior professors, remain educational technology adverse, and are often antagonistic to its strategic deployment at the institutional level. When it comes to language learning, there is often a significant lack of funding in educational technology, with the view that the textbook is the curriculum.

**Top tier universities vs the rest**

Geo-political and geo-economical diversities in Asia often make it difficult for professional development programs to establish unified standards and optimal training opportunities for all administrators, faculty and staff members, and students. The most robust professional development programs tend to exist within the top Asian universities, compared with lower-ranked institutions where professional development activities happen on a more ad-hoc and as-needs basis. Asian universities with the most salient faculty professional development programs have both centralized and decentralized measures adapted to best meet the needs of faculty research, teaching and learning.

Interestingly, there is a noticeable lack of rewards structures for innovative research, teaching and learning, even in the top ranked universities (Chapman, 2009). This is especially true for language learning. Incorporating professional development to faculty teaching and learning as a long-term strategy rather than a short-term resort has been a typical challenge in this region.

**Qualifications and experience**

In China, newly-hired higher education teachers often lack teaching experience due to limited teaching opportunities during their postgraduate studies (Wu et al, 2016). This has led to myriad teacher professional development programs in Chinese universities, with many deemed to have been unsuccessful, primarily because of the adoption of a one-day workshop approach to teacher development. Such an approach overlooks that learning and professional growth are life-long processes which build upon previous experiences, skills and knowledge. For native English speaker teachers, in many Asian contexts they still do not possess the qualifications necessary for employment in other parts of the world. There are encouraging signs that this is changing, but, due to the sheer numbers of students that need to be taught, it will take time. For both groups of teachers, it is clear there is a pressing need for meaningful professional development.
However, many researchers (Colbert, Brown, Choi & Thomas, 2008; Ryan & Cooper, 2010) have perceived such programs as something done to teachers rather than by them. In other words, they are often top-down programs that are planned and designed by higher education administrators whose aims and objectives have never been discussed or shared with teachers at the planning stage. Researchers such as Lee (2011) view the involvement of teachers in professional development at the planning stages as crucial to its success.

While it is not merely a matter of who is presenting in CPD seminars that makes the difference, the process of teacher learning can be enhanced by having teachers engage in professional sharing and critical reflection and by helping them connect knowledge to unique contexts. As teachers take a more active role in their CPD by engaging in professional sharing with their peers, they also build a collaborative culture and foster learning in professional learning communities.

**Societal changes leading to possibilities and opportunities**

Values can change in response to environmental possibilities (Littrell, 2005; Han, 2016). Social change in countries such as China and Korea, for example, including globalisation and neoliberalism, and their enthusiasm for high education are resulting in changes to ideas of good education and desirable teacher and student roles and identities. Their university culture is now said to be at the centre of a mixture of traditional values and current liberalism, individualism and egalitarianism. Lecturers seek to promote communication-based reciprocal teaching and learning, so their dominant teaching and learning theme is deemed to be constructivist (Han, 2007). Blended learning is being increasingly promoted, to increase feedback exchanges between the lecturers and the students. Given that all Asian societies are also changing under the influence of globalisation and modern ideas, their learners may share some similar values and expectations.

**Policy changes leading to possibilities and opportunities**

Masino and Niño-Zarazu’a (2016) conducted a systematic review to identify policy interventions that improve education quality and student learning in developing countries. They highlighted three main drivers of change of education quality: (1) supply-side capability interventions that operate through the provision of physical and human resources, and learning materials; (2) policies that through incentives seek to influence behaviour and intertemporal preferences of teachers, households, and students; (3) bottom-up and top-down participatory and community management interventions, which operate through decentralisation reforms, knowledge diffusion, and increased community participation in the management of education systems. Overall, these findings suggest that interventions are more effective at improving student performance and learning when social norms and intertemporal choices are factored in the design of education policies, and when two or more drivers of change are combined. Thus, supply-side interventions alone are less effective than when complemented by community participation or incentives that shift preferences and behaviours.

**Research context**

China is at a critical juncture in education reform. One in every five of the world’s college students is said to be in China (Zhao, 2016). The total number of college students in China in 2015 was 37 million, easily the world’s largest student population. The number of colleges and universities in China in the same year, 2015, was at least 2,900, according to the Ministry of Education (Zhao, 2016), with the number growing every year. According to the World Economic Forum, in 2017, the number of graduates from Chinese universities stood at 8 million, more than double that of the US (Stapleton, 2017). This has placed considerable pressure on the system to reform its teaching practices.

The university in this study, established in 2012, is a public institution with a student cohort of approximately 4,000 students. Thus, the university is expanding quickly, thanks in no small part to generous government funding. Goals are clearly defined by the institution, and this, in tandem with a dynamic leadership, is why expansion is happening successfully. A university with research, innovation and entrepreneurship as its mission, it has a male-female student ratio of 3:1. Chemistry, Physics and Communications Engineering are the top three programs studied by students. In the regular curriculum, the chief characteristics of the university’s undergraduate education are the high prevalence of small classes (twenty students or fewer), the expansion of English a medium of instruction, and the intensification of its math courses. The low student-professor ratio (1:10) provides students with abundant opportunities to interact with their professors and enhance their higher-order intellectual skills. Approximately eighty percent of the university’s graduates undertake graduate studies abroad, primarily in the US.
The university plans to intensify English education and to conduct all courses in English, to further its aim of mentoring its students as global leaders. To this end, students in their first two years are required to take intensive English courses. Upon entering the university, freshmen must take a placement test for English. All of this serves to increase the burden of expectations placed upon the English teachers. English teachers were, until two years ago, mainly native Chinese speakers, but now native English speakers comprise approximately two thirds of the English teaching faculty, the result of a university push to satisfy the demands of parents and students. Half of the English native speaker teachers are employed directly by the university, and half have been supplied by an outside recruitment agency, which is what many universities in China do.

This study takes place in the context of frequently changing policies and requirements for English language instruction as a subject. How does this impact teachers’ sense of professionalism?

Research question

This study addresses the following two research questions: (a) what are the opportunities and challenges for the professional development of teachers in a mainland Chinese university and (b) do Chinese and native speaker teachers of English face mainly similar, or different, opportunities and challenges in the field of professional development?

The first research question aims to explore the current situation on the professional development of teachers and what the opportunities of and challenges for the professional development of teacher educators are. The understanding of the responses to the first research question can be seen as a foundation for the understanding of the second research question.

Method

This study involved a longitudinal study for more than six months in a university in southern China, of five native English speaker teachers and five Chinese teachers of English language in the university. Observations, interviews with the teachers and with two trainers, in addition to document analysis, were employed to capture the teachers’ thoughts, actions and especially group interactions in trying to understand and implement this new professional development practice. The practice involved mentoring (Chinese teachers mentoring non-Chinese teachers, long-serving teachers mentoring newly-hired teachers), as well as continuous professional development (workshops, seminars, group reflection etc.) throughout the six months of the study.

All of the above facilitated narrative enquiry. Narrative is a pathway to disclose “how we see ourselves and how we view ourselves with respect to others” (Vasquez, 2011: 543). In this sense, the interview was an appropriate method, enabling teachers to reflect on any changes they experienced. The participants’ worldviews were disclosed and their experience and positioning with others and revealed the “evaluative and ideological” discourses embedded in their identities (Maybin, 2004:70).

Data analysis methods included: transcribing interview and observation data; writing analytical memos after each observation, interview and document analysis; keeping constant dialogue with the existing research findings and theories as well as the author’s own personal experience and insights. Throughout this research, a social constructivist approach was taken of these teachers’ responses to a top-down initiated reform practice. While keeping theoretical framework and concerns in mind, special attention was paid to these teachers’ native concepts. These concepts were used as the codes and categories for data analysis, in addition to other related concepts and theories in the existing literature.

As for the validity of the research findings, triangulation of different data sources from different participants was used. Preliminary findings were fed back to the participating teachers for verification and falsification, and findings were revised accordingly. As China is a huge country with a lot of regional disparities in education, it is not claimed that the findings from teachers in the university in the study represent all teachers in all universities in China, although they may shed light on the phenomenon under study.

Results and discussion

The study found that despite some clear views on how professional development can help teachers be more effective, it was also evident from the interview responses that there were barriers to ensuring quality, equal treatment and the future development of teaching. This largely centred around issues of continuous professional development and differences between native and non-native speaker teachers, as well as between those employed directly by the university and those
on secondment to the university through an outside agency. Issues of intercultural communication are the first ones to arise.

**Intercultural communication**

Xu, a Chinese teacher, was at first sceptical about being asked to mentor Amy, as she felt she wouldn’t be listened to. However, after two months, her attitude had changed completely:

‘Collaborating with Amy is my first experience of working closely with a non-Chinese colleague on English teaching and learning. Through her, I have learned many useful skills and activities and most importantly, I understand how the two of us share some of the same ideas about English teaching. Of course, we think differently about some things. Her comments prompted me to rethink many things that I took for granted, and her caring personality makes me, an older teacher, feel respected and treated as a mentor. This is a fascinating experience of intercultural professional learning. I think I’d like to do some teacher training in the future. I didn’t think it would work, but it has!’

Amy had a similarly positive experience with her mentor, Xu:

‘Working with Xu has been important to me in a number of ways. Firstly, it shifted stereotypes I had held, such as “all Chinese teachers teach by standing in front of the class and lecturing”, when clearly Xu didn’t teach that way at all! Secondly, I learned how I need to adapt to the Chinese context. I love the personal challenge, knowing that I need to learn a lot about this incredible culture, and I am so fortunate Xu is helping me navigate it. We each understand so much more about the other’s point of view.’

One of the positive results of this was that a renowned researcher in the field of intercultural communication was invited by one of the Chinese teachers to give a guest lecture to students at the university, as it was felt that students, just as much as teachers, could benefit from a greater awareness of intercultural issues.

**Stakeholder expectations and the role of teachers**

The University’s strategy is to ensure that the learning experience of students is a relevant fit in an increasingly globalized world. In particular, the university leadership wants to ensure that students are prepared for academic migration upon graduation, to undertake doctoral studies in English-speaking countries, at some of the world’s top universities. Students need to develop new knowledge, skills, and attributes which prepare them for this new world. This means, as Nick acknowledges, that they need to be taught in ways that are different from those traditionally associated with University education:

‘First, the world is changing, and our teaching methodology needs to keep pace, especially when it comes to technology. Second, our students are changing, and we need to be constantly aware of their changing needs and expectations. I’ve appreciated the workshops which deal with the areas I need to develop in, and would suggest we have follow-up workshops, refreshers, on those areas next semester. My students have benefitted too, and it makes me feel part of the team, the Centre and the university.’

Nick, an agency teacher, was one of only two agency teachers to regularly attend professional development sessions. When asked why there was such a low take-up rate amongst his colleagues, he believed that:

‘For so many agency teachers, not just here, but the ones I know in other universities, they won’t be involved because of the time commitment. They will just go and find another teaching gig in that time, as salaries aren’t that high in China. They know even if they don’t have good teaching evaluations they will be employed again next semester, because there is a great demand. Also, nobody will recognise them or reward them, so they figure why should they?’

It is clear from this that not everyone wants to avail of the opportunities afforded by professional development. This highlights the need to link student assessment of teaching effectiveness to professional development continual improvement. But then the question arises do these assessments necessarily translate into teaching improvement? These questions will continue to knock on our doors as we witness progresses of faculty professional development experimentation in Chinese universities well into the future.

Yohet, a Chinese teacher, found professional development to be effective and noted how it changes her perception of her role as a teacher:
'Before, I just came to class, taught the class, and left. Like most teachers, I didn’t always stay for office hours. However, I now realise that it’s important to be more accessible to students, and I think PD has helped me understand my role as a teacher is also pastoral.’

Wanda, one of the international training providers, was somewhat frustrated by her experience with the teachers:

‘What surprised me was that, generally, the Chinese teachers were more qualified in terms of degree level than the foreign teachers, but that everyone expected everything to be spoon-fed to them. There wasn’t the same level of motivation that I have encountered with groups of teachers of all nationalities in other countries, and perhaps it is because English language teachers do not seem to be as valued here in China. They seem to be expected to just teach anything, like robots, and this is the first experience for most of them of real professional development. By the end of the course, I noticed a difference, as they could see how they had improved, and I will make myself available online for them. They were surprised by that.’

It is clear from what Wanda is saying, which was reiterated by the second trainer, that teachers need to feel valued, and that they also need career development opportunities provided to them, in order to be motivated in their work. However, opportunities for many teachers as few and far between, as shall be discussed below.

Lack of a level playing field

Career development is important for most people in their field of work, and this is no less true for teachers. However, what emerged over the course of this study is that there is a dichotomy between opportunities available for Chinese and non-Chinese teachers, as Rob explains:

‘I want to do a good job, and I want to be acknowledged for it. However, there are absolutely no opportunities for promotion for me at this university. Only when the director of the language centre pointed out to university administration that it wasn’t fair that the annual teaching competition wasn’t open to non-Chinese teachers and argued for inclusion was this allowed to happen. Also, for English teachers, all the funding available for research, which isn’t as much for language as it is for other subjects, is only available to Chinese teachers. How unfair is that?’

Flynn, a Chinese teacher, also bemoaned the dearth of opportunities for career advancement:

‘Only because we have a language centre director who fights for our interests do we have a chance, but she encounters a lot of opposition. It is so difficult to move up the career ladder here, and I am ambitious, as are many Chinese teachers. However, we are just told to teach. There is a complete lack of understanding that teaching should go hand in hand with research, professional development and career opportunities. Because we are not mathematicians or chemists, it doesn’t seem to be important. But they will see that their good teachers will leave. I know some who are already making plans, even to leave the teaching profession.’

It is clear from the above that career inducements are not forthcoming to language teachers. Additionally, non-Chinese teachers are mainly employed on one-year contracts, unlike their Chinese counterparts, who have standard three-year contracts, thereby making sustainability of teaching and learning initiatives a much more difficult proposition, as well as making the argument for devoting more time to greater professional development opportunities one that is more difficult to advocate for. All of this can have a knock-on impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

Perceived barriers to improving the quality of teaching and learning

In line with other investigations on teacher education and professional development of foreign language teachers in China, we can find that the university administration wants the methods adopted in teacher professional development to follow the traditional way which emphasises the impact of such professional development on teachers’ pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill. This neglects the impact on the promotion for teachers’ cognition, emotion, attitude and self-development, and although the professional development in this university for English language teachers has endeavoured to address this, there is an uphill battle. This hinders the development of teachers to a certain extent. However, the many curriculum reforms being imposed by administration require teachers to renew teaching ideas, implement new curriculums creatively, update educational concepts, reset their roles and innovate in approaches of their professional development. All of this creates additional pressure on teachers who already feel overburdened.

Publish or perish pressure for Chinese faculty
To boost their research productivity, Chinese universities are putting great pressure on their faculty to publish in internationally indexed journals. However, the emerging publish-or-perish culture in China has been evolving differently for Chinese teachers of English, who, unlike their counterparts who teach other subjects, are not usually seen as either research track or tenure track, are expected to teach more classes than before, due to the increased number of hours of English language instruction for students, to greater numbers of students, and yet who are, in the words of three of the teachers in this study, viewed ‘as second class citizens’, expected to publish but rarely provided with the time or research grants their colleagues in other disciplines enjoy.

Consequently, the Chinese participants were reluctant to spend time on other academic activities, including professional development, as indicated by Eric:

‘The course designed for us was a very good one, particularly as we had some input into what we wanted to learn. However, I had to drop out of the course after a few weeks, because I need to complete my research and publish. If I don’t, I won’t be considered for future projects. I want to develop professionally, but I just can’t find the time. Research first.’

They also reported considerable work time devoted to writing, which resulted in fatigue and negatively affected family relations. The participants admitted that they had to rush to publish, and therefore were less likely to produce papers of better quality, as Jenny frankly states:

‘I know that I’m not producing the best quality papers, but I’m determined to be promoted. It’s so difficult for us English faculty, because we are not seen as tenure-track or research track, and yet we are evaluated every year on our research output as much as our teaching. I have no time for anything else in my life at work, so my students and my professional development are suffering, and my home life is suffering, trying to juggle it all.’

This serves to underscore Chinese universities’ increasing use of the number of international publications as a major assessment and incentive measurement of their faculties’ academic performance. Teaching and professional learning are still not receiving the recognition they deserve from administrators.

Recommendations

Improving university instruction and research quality is an area of growing concern for government policymakers and planners, higher education administrators, faculty members, students and the community at large. In this article we examined the global literature on this topic, with a specific focus on the professional development of teaching and research within universities. While many ideas can be learned from the university in this study, a few recommendations are highlighted that higher education administrators should consider when establishing or strengthening university-based professional development. Each of these recommendations is broad enough to apply to different country contexts as well as institutional types—regardless of whether the university is private or public.

It is no secret that teacher professional development is an essential element in the teaching and learning process and should have an effect on student performance. It is supposed to help teachers improve their skills, knowledge and teaching practices. Yet, most of the programs and courses planned for this purpose lack the engagement of teachers in the planning process and indeed, in other phases of the process also. What matters at the end is what teachers learn and acquire and the way they transfer this new knowledge into the classroom. One main aspect that policymakers have not probably well-considered in planning for educational reforms throughout the world in general and in China in particular is the lack of research studies in education, as research in science, engineering and mathematics has traditionally been more valued. Local studies based on real data in Chinese university contexts are essential if solutions for more promising outcomes are the ultimate goal of the reform.

Teacher professional development is planned and designed to help teachers improve their pedagogical knowledge and skills and then to translate their new understanding into classroom teaching and practices. Consequently, this improvement is expected to impact positively on students’ learning outcomes. Therefore, it is of high importance to investigate teachers’ existing knowledge and experiences and build on them at the planning phase of any professional growth program. Programs need to be customized to fit into the individual and subject-knowledge requirements. As it is the case with accommodating to students’ learning styles, literature is also replete with research studies that emphasize the necessity to match one’s teaching styles to his/her learning styles. Therefore, one size does not fit all when it comes to professional development.
Teachers’ beliefs and attitudes are major factors in any educational reform. Therefore, it stands to reason that teachers need to be convinced of the reasons for the change imposed on them. They need to believe in the credibility of any designed training course in providing them with new opportunities for learning, recertification and salary increments, as well as individual growth. If there are no career inducements for teachers, it is unlikely that professional development programs will have a wide impact.

Policy makers and university administration should be aware that learning is a long-term process. Assuming immediate positive results of students’ performance after a well-planned professional development program is by no means possible. Variables other than any specific program might have larger impact on students’ academic performance such as parents’ educational and social backgrounds, students’ motivations and interests, students’ learning styles or the classroom size. More importantly, the link between what teachers have learned and acquired in a certain professional development program does not necessarily have a direct impact on students’ academic performance. Teachers might have developed and gained other skills and knowledge that would affect the classroom teaching and practices in a different aspect. As a result, a well-designed follow up strategy of teachers’ development might provide a better understanding of what worked well in the training programs and highlight areas of concern to be tackled in the future.

It is more effective to have multiple professional development offerings rather than a single option. Multiple professional development approaches to improving teaching and research include individual counselling and mentoring services, online training seminars, podcasts, peer reviews; courses on optimal use of research and instructional best practices; access to the latest research and instructional software; and university wide training workshops. With the trend towards increasing teaching and research workloads of tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members, it is especially important that professional development reaches out, communicate, respond, and provide solutions, guidance and technical assistance. Professional development centres can help support all university personnel.

However, effective professional development requires top-level administrative support from the university, for example, a vice-chancellor or provost. This often helps secure the institutional and financial support needed to be able to outreach to the various schools, colleges and departments across large campuses. Regardless whether the institution is considered public or private, top-level administrative support is essential for long-term sustainable change and in ensuring that professional development is considered central to the university’s mission. Without top-level administrative support, universities often consider professional development programmes as secondary to the central research and instructional focus of world-class universities.

**Conclusion**

Possessing expertise in education reforms provides no guarantee of having the capacities, attitudes, and cultural sensitivities needed to facilitate change across cultural contexts, which at the policy level seems largely assumed. Universities that value student exposure to native speaker teachers may not want or require a teacher with an ambitious change agenda. Conversely, universities that aim to implement specific reforms, such as standards-based assessment or English medium instruction, may benefit from native speaker teachers possessing such expertise and experience. However, there needs to be a more level playing field in terms of opportunities provided to both native speaker and non-native speaker teachers, be that in terms of promotions, salary increments or opportunities for conference attendance, research funding etc.

So, while recognising the limitations in the data discussed, and despite the limited scope and exploratory nature of these findings, it is argued that this paper can still provide greater understanding of the current situation of teaching in universities within mainland China. Structural and financial inequality was evident in the responses, and strategies for further professional development were being compromised in some areas. The findings also support the view from Reynolds et al. (2015) that teacher behaviour is influenced by their underlying attitudes and values, although more research is needed on the way in which the formation and expression of such values shapes, and is shaped by, the historical, social and political context, in which they work. It can be argued that this is especially needed in developing country contexts where little such research already exists.

What this study highlights is that successful professional development efforts are based on relationships. This is especially true in the Chinese context, where networking operates at a more intensive and pervasive level than elsewhere. Those managing professional development must have leadership style characteristics that are consultative and collaborative.
Professional development administrators need to be able to adapt to the many unique challenges that faculty members and departments from many different backgrounds face, and also know how to work collaboratively with faculty members.

Professional development also needs to be able to reach out and meet the needs of individual faculty members. This one-on-one faculty mentoring and guidance model is often the most sustainable. Faculty members’ instructional and research needs are often so unique that they cannot be grouped into entire department-wide training seminars. Finding ways to best meet the various and disparate needs of so many faculty members is a constant challenge for professional development, yet, if viewed as an opportunity, long-term success can ensue.

References


Reading through the Lens of Music: African-American Literature and Music

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Abstract
Harlem Renaissance is a significant time when African-American writers took pride in their artistic traditions. In order to create an authentic image for themselves, they created remarkable standards in their literature and art. A new tradition, which changed the well-established boundaries of literary creativity, was gaining full recognition among African-American writers. These two genres had a huge impact in the times when the US was creating a cultural hybridity while the reconstruction of the mainstream meant an “open war” to classics. This paper will try to describe the extent to which Jazz and Blues aesthetics influenced into the African-American literature and how it was manifested in characters, structures, and themes that African-American writers promoted into their literary work.

Keywords: Jazz, Blues, African-American literature, Harlem Renaissance

Introduction
I. Music vs literature
Music constitutes an important aspect of African-American culture and literature. Spirituals, Blues and Jazz offer a broad spectrum of genres. Each of them pertains to a history of its own, closely linked to African roots.

The history of African-American people in the US is linked to suffering, slavery, humiliation and denial of human rights leading to the fight against segregation and racial persecution.

Spirituals, Jazz and Blues, particularly describe their history, but they also provide the strings of hope and strength to overcome the burden during slavery. The slavery songs bear witness of the sufferings, sorrow and relief that this phase is as transitory as their journey in this world while Spirituals connect them to God by offering them faith.

An African-American identity was an aim to be sought and accomplished by many African-American artists and writers starting from the end of the 1980s to the beginning of the 1990s culmination with the Civil Rights Movement. A new breadth of literary movement was evolving aiming at reinventing an African-American image and introducing it to the world as the “personality of the colored people”. The aim was more of a duty in the fight for their rights against segregation and cultural discrimination. It could be achieved by creating an authentic image while fighting for it and cherishing its value.

A new, authentic image meant new ideas impervious to time. The new generation’s response to the changes of post-reconstruction was accompanied by new means of actions, including here the success of Blues and Jazz music. Blues represented a shelter to their sufferings.

Jazz, otherwise called as a continuity of Blues, is stronger. Jazz is an emotion. It is unpredictable in its structure as improvisation, polyrhythm, call-and-response techniques suggest. The aim of the African-American artists was not only to create something authentic but also be part of the American culture. According to Murray, Jazz was a continuity and improvement of Blues. In this way, Jazz became a new way of expressing freely the emotions in each performance. This freedom stemmed spontaneity and creativity.
In order to establish a status in the American society, African-American literature gave a tremendous contribution to American culture. The new image constructed a literary creativity that consisted of a special structure juxtaposing the grammar rules, techniques and style long held as mainstream with classics. This image embraced another form of art – named as asymmetrical.

African-American writers were influenced by Blues and Jazz to write their poetry or novels. Blues literature had a fluid structure while Jazz also had a fluid structure, but yet more sophisticated and complex with strong images and complex syntax.

II. Methodology

The qualitative methodology will be used in order to compare and analyze the structures, characters and techniques. Descriptive and analytical aspects will also contribute to determining this approach. A close analysis of Blues and Jazz techniques and characters will be analyzed and compared to Blues and Jazz literature techniques and characters, in order to find out if these two constituted a voice of their own or literature was a stretch of music. The analysis will try to put forward the idea whether the music helped African-American writers in embracing the creation of a new identity or simply provided a means of abandonment of the old and welcoming the new.

III. The concept of the Harlem Renaissance

Harlem Renaissance is long considered the Mecca of African-American culture. Nevertheless, Harlem proved to be a strong concentration of diverse elements of people from many parts of the world, not only an African-American experience. By shifting the concept from “Old Negro” into the “New Negro”, many African-American intellectuals desired to alter the concept of “Old Negro”. The concept of being African-American had always been related to social discrimination and fear. African-Americans had been described more based on some stereotypes rather than for what they really were (Locke et al., 1925, p.3) Consequently, the “Old Negro” was convinced to see oneself inside this prism and, as a result, there was little chance of acquiring a true understanding of one’s real self.

A misconception of the “Old Negro” required for a re-orientation toward something new and more real- something that described the most quintessential aspect of an African-American life. In this way, the New Negro became a new way of thinking; a way of discerning the position that an African-American constituted in the USA rather than what he was made to believe for years. This re-evaluation of the way a “New-Negro” thought was a kind of feeling that came from within; something that was free from any outside influence. (Locke, 1925, p.4)

The “New-Negro” had to find the way to channel the new self-expression and a worthy approach to achieve it was through music and literature. The bond that bounded African-Americans together with people from other parts of the world was a strong one. A bond that united them in a common problem, namely the race. It enabled them to reconstruct the problem. The race was a name rather than a fact for many African-Americans. Harlem was a place of group-expression focusing on feeling toward life, past and future. As aforementioned, the purpose of many Harlem Renaissance writers was not only to reexamine their true self but also to express their viewpoints on future. It otherwise became, as Lock pointed out, a race capital. It enabled them to think what was theirs and what was bogus. It helped them not only become a whole strong body of equally-minded people who were struggling not only to make the African-American literature worth of American literary canon but also empower the African-American literature to contribute and enrich the American literature and art.

The “New Negro”, while changing perspective, was in a constant inner race while moving toward the objectives that had been set. According W.E.B Du Bois, the New Negro was in a double-consciousness. In Du Bois’ thought, it is the veil that grants Black Americans a double-consciousness (Du Bois, 2008). It is the feeling of non-belonging that mostly worried Du Bois. The feeling of not belonging, even to one’s home, and looking oneself through the eyes of another as “One ever feels his twoness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two un reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body” (Du Bois, para 3). Nevertheless, this strive was not all lost. Du Bois pledged to obtain the self-consciousness and empower African-Americans to regain their true best representation of themselves by being African and American at the same time without being judged by the color of their skin. Consequently, America would also benefit from African-Americans since cooperation would finally implore for a better America. However, it is this double-consciousness that made many African-Americans not capable of fully excelling in some fields of life since they were torn between the ideals of an African-American and the ideals the white society had imposed to them (Gutenberg, 2008). Through these trials and
errors, African-Americans managed to see behind the veil the true value of themselves - managed to revalue their self-respect and self-realization.

Only in this way America would be able to appreciate the true conformity to American ideals

Work, culture, liberty.—all these we need, not singly but together, not successively but together, each growing and aiding each, and all striving toward that vaster ideal that swims before the Negro people, the ideal of human brotherhood, gained through the unifying ideal of Race; the ideal of fostering and developing the traits and talents of the Negro, not in opposition to or contempt for other races, but rather in large conformity to the greater ideals of the American Republic, in order that some day on American soil two world-races may give each to each those characteristics both so sadly lack. (Du Bois, 2008, para. 12)

E. Bowen (1895) in his “An appeal to King” had the same idea about the cooperation among races in America. For Bowen, the veil was a king, an invisible one, who exerted power and control. Nonetheless, the revolution of morals had begun. The changes that the “New Negro” was undertaking were changes that would give positive changes in the society. Bowen also believed that the race problem was also of a wider range and one could not only focus on the race problem in America. He believed that the Negro should also encompass a wider definition of Race; the ideal of fostering and developing the traits and talents of the Negro, not in opposition to or contempt for other races, but rather in large conformity to the greater ideals of the American Republic, in order that some day on American soil two world-races may give each to each those characteristics both so sadly lack. (Du Bois, 2008, para. 12)

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Oh, that St. Louis woman with her diamond rings
She pulls my man around by her apron strings
And if it wasn't for powder and her store-bought hair

A major technique of Jazz was improvisation. The singer was free to improvise, to give a new version of the same piece of art. The Jazz singers called for a different tune and received a response. The call-and-response technique became a very useful technique in many writings of African-American literature. It enabled many writers to call for some kind of action or revolt and asked for a response from the reader. The message was like a hidden code that only African-Americans could understand and support. Meanwhile, it became very difficult to decipher by others. The message was gaining the qualities of a music coda- an afterthought of what was left from the past and what had yet to come in the future.

In “Weary Blues,” (1987) Langston Hughes requested the union between the author and the reader. The musician who was playing the weary blues was not a famous artist. Yet, he succeeded in mirroring the reality of that time. His notes on the keys create the feeling of anticipation and fair. It was fair but also determination to be free and authentic:

With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.
O Blues! (23)

Blues is the sound that moans. It is a revelation from the soul- the soul of an Afro-American seeking dignity. The Blues unites Afro-Americans together to this reality and unites them to sing to it. Blues also inspires them to sing to their past. The piano is a mirror of the pain that is “….coming from a black man's soul.” (23) Blues is also talent and strength.

Blues is embellished with a transformative force, which is ongoing and enriches. Music symbolizes a form of freedom, a form of expression and a quest for appreciation. Consequently, Hughes believed that Blues was a mixture of past and present.

Blues represented a rather dimmer picture of the situation in “Tornado Blues,” (Brown, 1901):

Destruction was a-drivin’ it and close behind was Fear,
Destruction was a-drivin’ it and hand in hand with Fear,
Grinnin' Death and skinny Sorrow was a-bringing’ up de rear. (68)

It displayed feelings of destruction, despair and fear. Following the common AAB rhyme as well as repetition, Brown’s voice was immediate, looking for an urgent response from African-American community. A voice Bowen and Locke had also acknowledged among African-Americans.

In “Jazzonia,” Hughes (1987) depicted Jazz as a new form of expression. He embraced new techniques in his writing such as repetition, rhetoric questions as well as improvisation as quintessential techniques of Jazz. “Jazzonia,” represented a story at a cabaret in Harlem whereby six musicians play Jazz music and another Afro-American was sitting watching the show as well as the girl who was dancing to the music. Her beauty is indescribable. Hughes compared her to Cleopatra’s beauty and boldness by posing rhetoric questions to the reader in the form of a call-and-response: “Were Eve’s eyes ….Just a bit to bold?” and “Was Cleopatra gorgeous in a gown of gold?”(24). Hughes calls the reader to take pride in what is African-American by constructing in this way what is theirs. Jazz is offered as a bold expression, as bold as the dancer's eyes. It is not only her eyes that are bold. She lifts high the dress of silken gold (24). In this way, Jazz and literature are creating a form of free expression for African-American literature; a free form probably going counter some norms. In “Cabaret,” Hughes intensifies the acceptance and identification of sexuality while in “Jazz Band in a Parisian Cabaret,” Hughes offers a more inclusive approach compared to “Cabaret” and “Jazzonia”. Jazz is for everyone rich and poor, lords and ladies. It is the music that touches the soul to everyone- the tune cries and laughs at the same time (106).

In “Harlem Dancer” by Mackay (1922) one remarks a difference. The dancer is as perfect as in “Jazzonia”. Her beauty and her movements are beautiful but she has to put “her false smiling face” in order to please the audience. It is the veil of Du
Bois or the mask of Dunbar that somehow makes the dancer stay in between two parts of the game. MacKay believed in the need to break free that wall in order to be appreciated and accepted. In this way, African-American literature would be supported and become an important part of American literature. It was a form of rebellion but also pride and recognition of one’s values.

As Hughes (1926) reflected in “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” : “... the Negro artist offers his racial individuality, his heritage of rhythm and warmth, and his incongruous humor that so often, as in the blues, becomes ironic laughter mixed with tears” (693). Jazz proved to be a new form of expression sometimes getting the form of rebellion or protest. Sometimes it became a single form of individual self-expression.

V. Conclusion

Many African-American writers shared the common belief that African-Americans had to give their contribution to the American culture and literature. In order to achieve this aim, African-American writers had to choose a new aesthetics that was different from white writers. In this way, they would not only prove their value but also contribute to the enrichment of African-American culture in general and literature in particular. Jazz and Blues aesthetics proved to be very effective ways of providing the audience with new pieces of writing accompanied by a new style. This quintessential form of expression would enable African-American thought to constitute an important part of American literature but it would make them feel proud of their identity and talent.

Music is presented as a form of expression to a people. Blues and Jazz were forms of expression of feeling, suffering, but also amusement. Blues music represents the suffering, the past of African-American history. The blueprint also represents a linkage between Afro-Americans to remember the past but also to appreciate what the future could bring. On the other hand, Jazz presents us a more complicated way of amusement or escapism from life's suffering.

VI. References


Means of Linguistic Expression in Frang Bardhi’s 'Apology of Scanderbeg - On the Occasion of the 550th Anniversary of the Death of the National Hero

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to the work “Skenderbeu” (Apology), written in Latin by F. Bardhi in 1636 and translated into Albanian 61 years ago from the famous Latinist, Stefan Prifti. The work aims not only evoking the resistance and the wars of our people against the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of the National Hero, G. Kastrioti, but also as a reflection of some of linguistic means, which this apologetic piece was conceived 382 years ago, at that high level of argumentation and protection of Scanderbeg’s nationality. As composers of this article, we are mainly based on the methods of text building with the data of disputation, mainly based on the documents and the historic truths that were inherited not only by the compatriots of F. Bardhi but from many historians and works of different genres as well, dedicated to the bravery of this great Albanian. Our discourse aims to highlight the expressive power of our language, to cover and address such major subjects, elaborated according to the laws of classical oratories, starting from the characterization of the opponent who faced F. Bardhi, from the recognition of mental and intellectual qualities and attributes, to the facing of irrefutable facts.

Keywords: apology, cleric, lexicographer, folklorist, Sare, Sarda, Mario Roques, Willy Kamsi, vocabulary, Tomku, opponent, imaging.

Introduction

After translating this fiery apology from prof. Prifti, with the above theme, concludes that deep reasoning, the alignment of historical events in the chronological order, and follow-up of the causes and consequences of the military and political

1 Bardhi, Frang. (1636), Georgius Castriotes Epirensis fortissimus ac invincitivimus” (Gjergj Kastrioti of Epirus, commonly called Scanderbeg, brave and invincible price of the Albanians”), With the generosity of the bright and Majestic Venetian Senate – In Venice, printed by Mark Gjinami.
actions of Skanderbeg's deeds. We have brought them here by Bardhi in such a way as to convince even the most determined opponents of the Albanians of the invincible prince of Epirotes, and is also called the hero in this work. To fulfill this sacred duty to his homeland, we learn that Bardhi had strong reasons that have pushed him to tighten the pen in his hand, for he did not succumb the desire to write a work and did not embarrass his own the country. For this purpose, we have traced the linguistic appearances: from the lexicon selection, the selection of literal and figurative meaning of the words, the collection of sentence building units, such as syntagma, and the entwining of the difficult phrases, as they are thought, with different functional components. Even though there are new syntactical structures, at the Apology of Bardhi, there are also present indirect structures of phrases, which start with predicative subordinate units and are seen as opportunities for complex sentences, with some stages of subordination, such as "So that all seem clear and that we clarify each confusion, I found it important to write here all the aforementioned letters taken from "Memories" of Piu II, as these letters contain many sentences written with wisdom and special care".(p. 65) On the other hand, we have followed with care the imaging and shape of the figure of Jan Tomku – one of the most honourable men, with an experienced judgment and knowledgeable man1 - by giving him a lot of merits, but without leaving behind the poignant and unrevealing irony, to be sent towards a desperate position, regarding logics and knowledge for the historical interpretation. Jan Tomku is not under the “rays” of Dalmatian shining, thus he is still desperate in “the dark corners of Bosnians”. Irony and satire, comparisons and highly attributed attributes are throughout Bardhi’s apologetic work, not just characterizing the opponent, but at the same time the quality of the classical style of apology, as a literary genre, written for centuries, since Greek and Roman antiquity2. Along with the great old orator of old Greece, we can not fail to mention the other speaker: the Cicero of ancient Rome, who laid the foundations of rhetoric and art of public speaking. Plutarch has devoted him almost a whole book, not only for his life and political activity, but also for the foundations he threw in this field.3 In this way, we could highlight the fact that the Albanian language in the mouth of the translator Prifti comes as powerful as the language of the oratory and apology - the Latin of the prelate of the XVII century, Frang Bardhi, the first apologist in our literature and author of the first bilingual Dictionary: Latin-Albanian, in 1635.

During the writing of this article, the method of comparing more data from the oratory and classical apology has been used, documentary evidence has been presented to support F.Bardhi in the discourse of the national hero’s defense, Gjergj Kastrioti, and is intended to point out as much the translator could have preserved the qualities and competence of the language in the receiving language, namely: Latin and Albanian, in other words, we aim at what was emphasized by the great semiotist, U.Eco, "To say almost the same thing."4

Bardhi and his translator of his Apology for Scanderbeg, S. Prifti

Frang Bardhi (1606-1643) was a senior Catholic clergyman, the first lexicographer of the Albanian language, folklorist, ethnographer and one of the best rapporteurs for the population of the province of Zadrima and beyond. He studied at the religious college of Loreto (Italy) and then served as bishop of Sapa (Zadrima). In 1635 he published the Latin-Albanian Dictionary, and in 1636 he drafted Apology for Skanderbeg5. Note that the first principal researcher of F. Bardhi’s work is the French albanologist Mario Roques6. After him, with regard to Bardhin, we list the Albanologists E. Cabej and M. Domi,
especially today, Bardhyl Demiraj, the critical publisher of the Dictionary and the young linguist Bardhyl Demiraj. And here is to be mentioned historian Willy Kamsi, who translated from French, the entry of the Dictionary, made by M. Roques.

Stefan Prifti (1910-1975) was a lecturer in high schools, a syntax linguist and one of the most prominent Latin scholar of Albanian culture. He translated M. Barlet's work "The History of Life and Works of Skanderbeg" (1964) and F. Bardhi's "Scanderbeg" apology. Stefan Prifti is the author of a textbook "Albanian Language Syntax" and author of many studies in the field of this discipline.

Regarding the Apology, M. Roques writes that "Frang passed through Venice and there, during a very short stay, he made it possible to print a work, that amny authors have talked about, but whose writings are rare and which was dedicated to Dogi and the senate of Venice. The works was dedicated to Scanderbeg and was assigned to publish a work finished four years before by Joannes Tomcus Marnavitius, archbishop of Bosnia, who wanted to relate Gjergj Kastrioti to the Marnavič family and to Bosnia." (... Frangu kaloi nëpër Venedik, dhe aty, gjatë nji qëndrimi padyshim mjafjt të shkurtë, bani që të shtypjej njivepërç, që shumë autorë e kanë çekë, por kësombllat e së cîlës janë të ralla dhe të cîlën ia kushtoi Dogijs dhe Senatit Venedikas. Vepra i kushtohej Skanderbegut dhe qe caktue për me qitë poshtë botimin që kishte bâ katër vjet më parë Joannes Tomcus Marnavitius, ipeshkëv i Bosnjes, i cili kishte dashtë me e lidhë Gjergj Kastriotin me familjen Marnavič dhe me Boshnjën). Without being separated by the French albanologist, Roques, we said that when he discovered and acquainted with the Apology of our writer, he did not pass without giving some of the linguistic features of the author he had observed during the apologetic text in Latin. He emphasizes that the booklet of Bardhi is of great interest; of course Latin os more emphatic but it tells about details in thoughts: the author is attacking, without being aggressive, but very ironic: it is seen that some critical documentary approach and linguistic care, as for example two words in Albanian and the idea that women preserve the national language more than men, go beyond the main topic. (...libri i Bardhitasht larg së qeni pa interesë; natyrisht latinistja asht shumë emfatike por difton Hollësi mendjeje; autor në të asht sulmues, pa qenë i vrazhdë me tepri, por shumë therës; zbulohet aty njëfërë atfësje kritike dokumentare dhe kujdesi gjihësor, p.sh. dy të çekuna fjalësh shqipe dhe ketë oore se gratë e ruejnë gjihën kombtare më tepër se burtat, të cîtët dalin më shumë prej vendit). Even the protagonist of the work, S. Prifti, whom Bardhi's adversary calls "the enemy of the pen", states that the language of the Apology, Latin, is pure and fluent, connected with classical rigor, a stark and stingy and merciless style , as is Bardhi's mind and heart in the defense of his national hero, who loves and worships so much.

From the beginning we must emphasize that any translator, in his intention, to pass through the translation, all the cultural transports that encompasses each natural language, as the creation of endless centuries of grace: from psychology, ethnography, in tellectual entity, etc. it is by no means necessary to know the concept of the semantic power of the language from which he/she takes the text ; this is why the modern linguistic language of the translation is appreciated by

1 Demiraj, Bardhyl. (2008), Dictionarium Latino-Epiroticum (Romæ 1635) Per R.D. Franciscum Blanchum, Botime Franţescane, Shkodër,.
2 Idem. (Prof.B.Demiraj in p.9: The up-to-date studies of F.Bardhi’s life and intellectual-religious activity as well as his work rely heavily on the biographical material that he collected during his archival research and the French librarian and French philologist Mario Roques ... Undoubtedly this homage can make as much work as Mr. Willy Kamsi (= WK), who is always in the spotlight, to whom I take the opportunity to express my deepest gratitude that allowed me to include in this edition exactly its translated version for the first time in Bul.Inst.Dyvj. of Shkodra (1964)
3 Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, (2009) Fjalor Enciklopedia Shqiptar -3, Tiranë,.
4Demiraj, Bardhyl.(2008), Dictionarium Latino-Epiroticum (Romæ 1635) Per R.D. Franciscum Blanchum, Botime Franţescane, Shkodër, f. 25.
Italian linguist Tullio De Mauro¹, who emphasizes that the semantic power of a code will be called the number of meanings it marks within its noetic field.

With Scanderbeg, in Bardhi's day, happened what the history of world art has known about the "war that had made seven Greek city-states for the homeland of the mythical poet Homer: Athens and Sparta, Teba and Corinth, Selamina, Smirna and Mikena etc., who have been fighting for centuries to make their own the poet of Iliad ..."

This is the reason, Bardhi tells the reader, for taking on the heavy burden: to put his naked truth in his eyes, even untamed, because it does not need to be painted and adorned with beautiful and false words², a goal that is also included in the subtitle of the work "Gjergj Kastrioti epirotas, commonly called Scanderbeg, a valiant prince over the brave and invincible prince of Albanians, returns to his compatriots and his homeland, by Frang Bardhi". For 15 days this apologetic³ work was drafted, which is also a panegirik⁴ (as it is understood in classical Greek literature) when the author was returning to Albania to reject the basic theses of a Bosnian bishop Jan Tomko who denied the Arber origin of Gj. Kastrioti. Love for his homeland and his people, love and respect for our truth and our National Hero.

The Structure of the Apology of Bardhi focuses on Tomko and his thesis: the facts that he brings and the genealogy of Margnavic family; all, according to our author, based on a part of the diploma, but that need to be examined. Bardhi starts the high courtesy of Tomko and lists some qualities of the Bosnian man: honorable man, with and a sterling judgement and main figure in knowledge; and immediately he declares that he would preserve the truth with respect and turns to some definitions on the topic of philosophy, by changing register and style, such as: the falsity of the diploma, Tomko invents with such ease, would have called himself Aphrodite's son with Ené and Zeus together with Alkesander; good at sophisms, empty assumptions, guesses in the wind, shamefully tries and deforms Tomk’s fantasies, writes lies about the truth, what is the irrefutable truth of history, does not mind, then he has spared, the inability of our adversary, he shakes us up, a man of logic, with a great name, who emphasizes that this degree is the war that had made seven ancient kings on the heavy burden: "I remember, in addition, that generous gesture to Romans by my famous Pirro, king of the Epirotes, when, as the armies in these areas had mercilessly overturned, he left them free as a gratuitous gift, all the captives he occupied, as a noble and kind man he was."³³

Then Bardhi chooses a heavy load of words "to show the opponent's place", or to say with figures, like: "How scary and ugly is in this case the mistake of our adversary .... "; if this foundation is overthrown, then all Margnavic or Tomkian buildings will fall to the ground and be covered in its ruins. ⁴³From the outset, one can see whether this degree is the birthplace of fantasy fiction. It is in the style of rhetoric and oratory that, in order to crush the adversary, even rhetorical questions are used, as Bardhi does: Because nothing other than inventions can be called the ones that are served here to replenish the splendor of Margnavic's already extinct? If these are true, as they really are true, then how do you agree with such castles, cities, camps and many other countless things of this kind with a city burned down, destroyed and almost done pillaging? Unanswered questions are within the content of controversial and apologetic discourse. It is enough to get acquainted with the text that closes the Apology, which has sequence after ordering some units built with rhetorical

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³"apology, speech or writing in defense of oneself, of others, of a doctrine, of a belief. "The Socrates' Apology"a dialogue where Plato presents the self-defense of the philosopher in his process: beyond: the apology of a regime, the apology of a crime. From gr.apolgh’a "word of defense")
⁴panegiric, in classical literature: a commemorative or ceremonial speech; in Christian literature: writing or speech on praise of a saint; of gr. Παναγελυχνός (logos) - we are talking about an assembly or gathering)
⁴Idem., p. 42.
questions, which are returned once more to Tomko, who already, at the end of this panegric discussion, has gone to the post of the unfortunate victor! (pp. 74-75) On the other hand, when Bardhi brings the opponent in front of himself, he turns to the singular "But if you, Tomko, desire greatness, scepter wreaths and imperial diadems, .....", the discourse reminds us of the famous Cicero oratory in front of the Roman Senate, when he addresses Katilina, against his plot to the Republic (until when, O Katilina, will .....?!) And then the "hall" of rhetorical questions!

The second part of the structure is filled with vivid historical facts and popular tales about Kastriots and Gjergji who proves what Bardhi wanted to defend, while also bringing evidence that prove the opposite of Tomku's unfounded theses and make him blush before historians and history, more in front of the truth, if Tomko wants it or not! In this part, we have to appreciate the profound historical knowledge and knowledge that our prelate is, even though he is so young when drawing up Skanderbeg's Apology. At the end of the work, the author comes back to Scanderbeg's own documents, especially in his diplomatic epistle, like the Prince of Taranto, Ragusa, or the Popes of Rome. The issue that the author calls the national hero sometimes Kastriot, once Albanian, once Epirotas, explains that Arbëria of that time was also called Epirus, as the kingdom of King Pirro.

In the text structure of Bardhi's Apology for Skanderbeg, apart from the close links of fact, sentence after sentence and phrase after phrase, there are also distinguished distance correlations, which arise only through phrases and paragraphs, which keep these sequences in continuity. This phenomenon, in our time, is studied by the linguistics of the saying, which is mainly related to the French language and the name of AntuanKylilorn 1. This linguistics begins after the programmed ideas of Emil Benvenist and Roman Jakobson by the end of the 1950s of the last century. According to the Albanian linguist at Paris -7 University, Prof.R. Pernaska, today, there is almost no linguistic phenomenon that is not treated by the language of the phrase, but this treatment does not intend to be final but is an attempt to come as close as possible to the linguistic truth, observing the strongest implementation of special language systems ...

Let us follow the logics of Bardhi’s apology in different sequences of paragraphs, where he brings a series of facts, which "nail" the opponents within his own "arguments". Our author is convinced that he is going towards the defeat of Tomku, who is away from the truth and builds the text with two views: the series of phrases and facts from many experienced historians and says: "Thus, based on many experiences and well-known authors, I will prove that the opponent will blush in front of eminent historians"; thus, it is an undeniable testimony towards the Bosnian one:

**That**, as with all these honours, titles and privileges, we acknowledge as special and old ones to the family we are considering...

**That** we do not have the purpose, because of this claim, declaration and decision, to create and to allow any right for the aforementioned great earl Tomko...

**That** it does not, in any part, fall in discrepancy and disagreement with declarative papers we mentioned above...

**Because**, even though Tomku says it iut loud, by saying that this town was under the rule of Haunis Marganoviç, he was included then under the rule of the Republic of Venice...

The linguistic logics of the author goes beyond, by connecting the above causes, otherwise: phrases which start with the connecting conjunction  4 **se** (sepsie -- English: because) with the final claim, thought and expressed with one rhetorical question, to the Bosnian Tomku, which is also shown here in a scheme: "Now, I cannot see what answer can Tomku give to them." ("Tani, se ç'përgjigje mund t'u japë Tomku këtyre, unë nuk e shoh."")

In the further cases, the phrases of the author have a continuity, because the argument is such that can not be included within a paragraph or a single statment and they can not be understood without one another. This happens when Bardhi refers not only to the archives of Venice, but especially, to those of Ragusam, a town in which the Kastriots have had stable relationships. And hereto, the author (at the same time the translator) has to express this in longer and more complex relationships. And hereto, the author (at the same time the translator) has to express this in longer and more complex

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sentences (phrases), often with an overlap of units in brackets, to base the found facts and this serves to him to defend the whole process. He writes: "Other arguments on the thought and many assumptions, not unimportant, are left aside; but I will speak in favour of this opinion the extraordinary importance of Annals of Ragusa, which should be praised by anyone who works on the field and knows the special care of Ragusians under the study of Orient issues" ¹

Of a special linguistic interest (not only as the job of the translator with the Albanian syntax from Latin) it is seen also the phenomenon of phrase fragmentation, as a structural display which meets the continuity of the phrase, for which our acclaimed linguist Prof. Mahir Domi, many years ago said: "Fragmentation is one of the main means of the interruptive style of writing. This way of organizing the phrase can be found in the spoken language, with an added value, taken from what is previously said. However, nowadays, in the literary language it is already a syntactical and stylistic means, used randomly." ²

In the example cited above from the Apology of Scanderbeg, the closed phrase at the number of footnote, the author-translator, has also added the phrase, passing to the above-phrase unit, which we are partly showing as follows: "Because Raguians (so that I can not speak about the other parts of the world, because it is known that they have penetrated to India and regions of Ethiopia, from which they bring to Europe incredible amounts of wealth), go all over the world and visit the loneliest shores of the East, Arabia, Egypt and other places and when they return, they have the greatest security and with ships loaded with goods."

At a glance, we are dealing with two phrases, but, for the syntax of our author, is only an expanded phrase, where the second unit, through the phenomenon of fragmentation, comes out on its own graphically but not on the semantic logic, because it can not stand without the first unit.

Even in French there are the same phrases for such units, which can not stand structurally and semantically without one another. ³

Although in a short time of generating the work, Bardhi is based not only on as many historians, but here also comes to us as a good connoisseur of the popular folk tradition, to prove the Skanderbeg's Albanian, since his emir was made of a part of the life of all his people, remembered as "Kuçedra (monster) e Arbërit", or the Dragon of Epirus or even the Athlete of Christ. In larger discourse measures, such as phrases or overlapping units, we say that the translator Prifti, as a proficiency in Latin, has remained true to the original, since periods with many predicate components with different syntax functions, and this is not the only one because of the structure of the source language, but for the simple reason that the style of the argument requires such a thing, such as: the construction of the divisional units with some scale of predicate structures, with direct and indirect constructions, with the intermediation of sentences that enter each other's tissue, and retrieve different references whenever it feels necessary through logical understanding. In addition, we observe that a general characteristic of apologetic prose is particularly evident with the phenomenon of the homogeneity of the syntactic component of the phrase, with the occurrence of the strings of functional homogeneous parts, or even with the word verse and intermediate class. As we read the phrase below, we find that the structure does not conform to the nature of our language, it is coinciding with Latin, as well as saying that we are acquainted with a text in the field of oratory and apology, for example, in the phrase below, the scheme of which clearly shows the structure of argumentative, polemic and apologetic thinking, where the cause and effect are coming in degrees, also being transmitted from one unit to another, as it appears in QOS II (Syntax Organization Center):

"E di //se do të dëshironje// që unë në këtë vepër të jem shpesh më i rreptë dhe më i mprehtë, // që herë të flas më shkurtër dhe herë më zgjatur, //që herë të jem më i ashpër e herë më i butë, diku më i rjedhshëm e më vërshonjës e dikuq më i prerë e më i kuryer në fjalët, //por// po të marrësh parasysh kohën e shkurtër, preokupimet, tronditjet dhe ngatërresat e tjera të panumurta,//në të cilit unë isha i mpleksur, //kur po shkruanja këto radhë, //atëherë do t’i durosht të gjitha me qetësi." (Bardhi, Aplogji, f. 14)

In English it is as follows: I know // that you would like// from me in this work to be more strict and vigorous, // that sometimes I speak short and sometimes I speak longer, // that sometimes I am rougher and sometimes I am softer,

¹Idem, p. 70.
somewhere fluent and somewhere more saving in words, // but, // if you consider tha short time, the issues, troubles and other inumerable problems, // in which I was involved, // when I was writing these sentences, // then you would bare everything calmly. (Bardhi, Apology, p. 14)

Conclusions

From this glimpse of one of the outstanding writers of the seventeenth century, Frang Bardhi, we emphasize that he was the first lexicographer of the Albanian language, author of a model apology, in Latin, for our National Hero, Gj. Kastrioti-Skënderbeu (Scanderbeg); folklorist, ethnographer and rapporteur with the Holy See, among the best known, about the social, demographic and religious status of a part of the population of our country.

- Apology dedicated to the historical figure of Gj. Kastrioti, proves that Bardhi was for his time an intellectual so formed with the knowledge of time, to be compared with historians, and scholars of various European-level fields.

- Bardhi, too, with this work for Skanderbeg's Albanian aspect, appears as a prominent cleric patriot who worked diligently and passionately, devotedly and selflessly to the preservation of the Albanian language, the traditions and the identity of his compatriots.

- Bardhi's activity, as a linguist and collector of folklore, to the extent that he could, shows that he went to Loreto's College of Propaganda Fide, with an initial education and there he received a profound educational, philosophical, philological and relational formation, lived with the vital requirements that his people had, not only as a spiritual guard but also by promoting them for knowledge and freedom.

- Such works, such as Latin - Albanian Dictionary and Aplogy for National Hero, Gj. Kastriot, were not compiled or even published in all Balkan peoples, but our author equated them to the European cultural levels.

- Barlet and Bardh's translator, prof. Stefan Prifti, as a first-time Latinist, an Albanian linguist, especially in the field of the Albanian Syntax, has been able to bring us with his translations a language work with such a culture and knowledge as has proved that Albania does not lack wealth and style in the face of the most used European languages, such as Latin.

- Not only our prominent translator as a Latinist, but any intellectual who can translate native or foreign language materials should know the semantics power of the language; even for our case, it is well-known that the noetic and Latin powers are far superior to the many long spoken European languages.

- A considerate reader and scholar understands that in some of the indications, such as: in lexicon and phraseology, our language has vast riches and synonyms, but in no few models of phrases and structures, Albanian comes simpler than other languages, not just classic ones.

Bibliography


“Signifying Monkey” – The Guardian of African Tradition

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Abstract

African oral tradition is much more than just a story. It is the history of one nation. It is a code of laws under which people live and die. However, the oral tradition is also a rich area of wordplays and high philosophy, which represent the foundation of today’s African and African-American literature. Proverbs, ritual songs, epics, all of this is the foundation of an advanced society. In reality, the keepers of the culture are griots - storytellers. In fiction, these are trickster gods in the shape of sacred animals. Only one of them is a cunning monkey, thanks to which a whole genre of double-thinking has emerged. The monkey is a shadow in the proverbs and inspiration for storytellers. The double-thinker and the representative of reason and justice through stunning wordplays. Two-voiced messages which are a feature of the highly advanced philosophical nation that possessed cultural richness even in the era of oral tradition. The tradition that still exists.

Keywords: African and African American literature, oral tradition, griots, African proverbs, signifying monkey

Introduction

The roots of African and African-American literature are found in the oral tradition of Africa and its many nations. History, customs, religious instructions, moral principles - everything is embedded into stories that have been passed on to the generations. Learning through stories and preserving national identity through myths is an indispensable part of the African man, both in the past and today. Oral tradition, even today in the era of modernization and technological advancement, is cultivated in the rural areas of Africa. Literacy is not a problem here. The younger generations are quite educated. The fact is that the language, alive, symbolic and melodic, is much more attractive in oral than in written form. For, as Mihail Bakhtin (1981: 294) says: "The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one’s own."

The attraction of playing with words is the most important characteristic of the African oral tradition. The narratives reflect life, even through the theme and speech of the narrator. Often the stories include music, songs and imitations of animal sounds. “The tradition of imitating animal speech is, in fact, so strong that collections from the earliest to the most recent have virtuoso pieces in which the story is almost totally told in sound effects.” (Roger, 1985: 25) In the dialogues spoken by animals, speech is adapted to animal voices. With this skill, the narrator gets more dramatic effects that capture the attention of listeners. He transmits a piece of reality in the story, helping the listener visualize the world he is talking about.

Depending on the subject, African narratives can be divided into several types: fairy tales, legends, myths, fables, parables, stories of origin, historical narratives and epics. In African society, historical narratives are of particular importance because they represent a treasury of cultural identity. Within the African oral tradition, all historical facts are remembered and transmitted through narratives. They usually talk about migrations of people, the establishment of villages, cities or kingdoms, and about some of the heroic acts of their ancestors. People can also tell about their own ups and downs that become part of the heritage of the family or local community.

According to the context in which they are performed, the narratives can also be classified into: ritual, sacred, and folk tales. (Robert, 2004: 629) If these stories are spoken in honor of certain historical figures and gods or during certain special events, as a part of the ritual, they are of great importance for religion, divination or magical treatment. Depending on the
main character in the story, it can contain sacred or secular elements. The same story can be interpreted in two different ways. If the main character is an animal, all its acts, attitudes and achievements are viewed with humor and is not taken very seriously. However, if the main character is a man, the message from the story is taken seriously and linked to social problems.

Griots and epics

Storytelling in Africa, over time, reached its more complex form as epic, which combined stories, poetry and singing. Epics are often sung or recited with musical accompaniment. The content of the epics is of historical significance because it shows the crucial periods of a nation. Certainly the most famous African epic is "Sundiata" of Mandingo people from Mali, which describes the arrival of the king Sundiata to power. What particularly characterizes the epic, among others, and what truly gives life to an epic storytelling are griots. The term griot is derived from the French word griot and means, in a broader sense, the narrator. Griot can be represented by various types of narrators, including "spokespersons, ambassadors, celebration leaders, tutors, praise-lovers, historians, scribes, musicians, composers, barkers." (Bowles and A. Hale, 1996: 77) The characteristic feature of the griots, even in narrative epics that are old for several centuries, is that they always try to adapt and modify the epic to the modern audience. For example, if a griot knows that the listener's ancestor was a famous military leader, this one will seek to praise him as much as possible. However, if he knows that the ancestor had a bad past and that there were some incidents, the griot will try to alleviate these events, if not eliminating them. Stephanie Newell sees it in the West African literature (2006: 61) "A canny griot adjust each performance to accommodate audience members and, in the process, earns a greater sum of money for his or her narrative, and also gains a reputation for sensitivity and eloquence." A good griot also knows how to put current events and moral debate into the context of historical narrative so that the audience does not notice distortion of historical facts.

Even within the epic, the voice of the greater and much older author of that story and the witness of a certain time can be heard. "Sundiata" with its first written edition by D.T. Niane from 1960 became the most famous version of this epic in Africa. Niane wrote the epic listening to the narration of the griot Djeli Mamadou Koujate from the village of Djeliba Koro in Guinea. In his honor, and in order to show readers the importance of the griots in African culture, Niane writes in the introduction to his book (2006: XXIII): "Formerly “griots” were the counsellors of kings, they conserved the constitutions of kingdoms by memory work alone; each princely family had its griot appointed to preserve traditions; it was from among the griots that kingsused to choose the tutors for young princes. In the very hierarchical society of Africa before colonization, where everyone found his place, the griot appears as one of the most important of this society, because it is he who, for want of archives, records the customs, traditions and governmental principles of kings."

Even Djeli Mamadou Koujate himself, as a griot, at the beginning of the epic addresses the audience with the words: “I know the list of all the sovereigins who succeeded to the throne of Mali. I know how the black people devided into tribes, for my father bequeathed to me all his learning; I know why such is called Kamara, another Keita, and yet another Sibibé or Traoré; every name has a meaning, a secret import. I teach kings the history of their ancestors so that the lives of the ancients might serve them as an example, for the world is old, but the future springs from the past. My word is pure and free of all untruth; it is the word of my father; it is the word of my father’s father. I will give you my father’s words just as I recieved them; royal griots do not know what is lying. When a quarrel breaks out between tribes it is we who settle the difference, for we are the depositaries of oaths which the ancestors swore.” (2006: 1)

Djeli Mamadou Koujate, after the introduction, begins with an epic where, at the very beginning, a listener encounters a new griot, Ball Fasséké, as a Sundiata's teacher, and later a royal adviser. As a witness to the events of Sundiata's reign, Fasséké becomes a historian and transfers his knowledge to the new generations of the griots. As a sign of gratitude for the unselfish help and support Sundiata appoints Faseke as a great master of ceremonies and decides that his tribe Kerta will continue to hire only the griots from the tribe of Koujate, to which belongs the Mamoudou Koujate. Moreover, the Sundiata gives Koujata the right to make jokes at the expense of all tribes, including the royal tribe Keita. By this decision, historically accurate or just invented by Djeli Mamoudou, the actual griot gets a monopoly over the history of the Keite tribe, which can also be included in many other, more comical, narrative genres than epic.

Familiar with political events and relations among people, a good griot must always be skilled with words. He must be the leader in the word play, while others listen enthusiastically. The master of two-voiceness in all African stories is a trickster god, sometimes even in the shape of the monkey. But, here, in reality, it is a griot. Therefore, it is no wonder that some sort of divine qualities are often attributed to the griot. He could do many things and was considered the right hand of the king. As Catherine A. Salmons (The Boston Phoenix, 2004) said: "In ancient times, the griot was not only the court musician,
bard, storyteller and oral historian, but also an official conciliator and spokesman for the king. Denoted a "master of eloquence," the griot could intervene at will in public debate; his words were expected to fall like honey into the midst of bitter argument, soothing conflicts between political factions - out of struggle and disquiet, the griot brought peace. He was considered the right hand, the mind, the mouthpiece of the king: A word from the griot was a word of implicit authority. As a musician, his skill with the kora was meant to extend the impact of his words. The griot played not just to entertain but to teach, and to uplift."

**African proverbs**

Proverbs play an important role in the education of people in Africa. Today there are over a thousand published collections of proverbs, and it is estimated that there are a total of about one million in total. (Nkulu – N’Sengha, 2009: 541) Proverbs are the most valuable philosophical and religious ideas of Africa. They are "memorable sentences of traditional wisdom reflecting a keen observation of human existence and conduct and a long experience of life throughout the ages." (Nkulu – N’Sengha, 2009) They represent the moral and practical wisdom of a nation. Through them, the people dealt with issues of education, religion, social order, family, morality, life and death. "Proverbs are a particular form of a skillful literary genre. They tend to be a compact statement of wisdom expressed in a poetical and enigmatic fashion. [...] Some take the form of a short maxim, dictum, adage, aphorism, or apophthegm. Others take the form of a riddle or even an allegory, legend, or song." (Nkulu – N’Sengha, 2009) Proverbs are extremely poetic. They often rhyme, are lyrical, use alteration, asonation, and other poetic techniques.

Many proverbs take the form of sharp comments at the expense of someone's behavior, but their meaning is skillfully hidden. Thanks to symbolism and metaphor, the message is not revealed directly to the listener. Consequently, verbal tensions are avoided, and problems are solved without calling out of certain individuals. In this case, the proverbs serve as an excellent tool in resolving the conflict. Like other literary forms, proverbs lose their meaning over time. Some are universal and immortal, others are lost in the past because of their impracticality, many appear in a completely new context.

Some of the proverbs dealing with questions of wisdom and the proverbs themselves are: "Fulani will lie but he will not make a lying proverb." Of Fulani people. With this statement, Fulani make it clear that they believe in the truthfulness of proverbs as the bearer of wisdom and moral lessons. Akani proverb "Wisdom is not in the head of one person." explains that knowledge is accessible to everyone. Another Akan proverb carries the same message: "Wisdom is like a baobab tree; a single person's hand cannot embrace it." The proverb of the Luba people, which speaks of human responsibility, is: "God gave you beauty and good character but you must help him, by taking care of yourself and constantly cultivating your virtues." The Baluba people have a saying about the lazy people: "Let the one who sleeps eat his sleep." Human dignity and self-esteem is the message Akan proverb: "All human beings are children of God, no one is a child of the earth." Chewa people have a proverb with a similar meaning - "Human beings are like sand out of which one cannot make a mountain." Baluba people emphasize the value of attractiveness with a proverb: "No one can put his arm into another person's heart, not even when sharing the same bed." The need to respect others, especially the disabled, is emphasized by the proverb: "DO not laugh at a crippled person, God is still in the creation process."

As stated before, the meaning of proverbs is sometimes skillfully hidden, which is a characteristic of the African oral tradition. Two-voiceness and wordplay is the basis for secular and ritual creation of practical wisdom. The material world expresses itself through the voice of the griots, and the spiritual dimension has its own hero in the shape of the cunning monkey. They all have the same mission, to help humanity, and the easiest way to accomplish this is through the proverbs – the textual link between the spiritual and the secular.

**The cunning monkey and the richness of African languages**

The richness of the African language is easiest and best seen in the stories full of symbols, secret messages, colorful characters and intertextuality. The lyrics, apart from the songs, are the bearers of the African oral tradition and best represent the complexity of African thought and words. Perhaps, now, logically the question arises as to the relationship between the monkey and the languages of Africa. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. In his book The Signifying Monkey says that over the centuries the monkey took upon himself the role of trickster god, and therefore the role of a guardian of the oral tradition. In the mythology of many African nations, the trickster god is the guardian of knowledge and language. He is a gift-bearer and master of wisdom. He is a cunning player in the game of wits and patron of the African oral tradition.

At the time of colonialism and enslavement of the African people, which caused taking them into the New World, it is thought that the god of deceit went with his people overseas in order to help them. He, based on the new continent, in addition to
the role of the cheater, takes on himself the responsibility of preserving the African tradition, and the role of a warrior who fights against slavery. With the task of uniting members of all African peoples subjugated by whites, the trickster god, known in every nation by another name and presented in another form, takes now a universal form in the image of a monkey. Among the nations of the Yoruba and Fon, the cunning monkey existed even earlier in folk tales as “Why Monkey Did Not Become Man” and “Monkey’s Ingratitude: Why One Does Not Deceive the Diviner”. While the boundary between mythology and folk tales was largely delineated by the characters of a trickster god and monkey, in the New World, both characters were united in a monkey.

But the true value of the monkey's character as a guardian of African tradition lies in his skill of creating confusion between the figurative and the literal. Gates calls the equivalent of trickster god in African-American culture the Signifying Monkey. The attribute of signifying was derived from Gates's perception of the meaning of the monkey, not only in the narratives, but in the African-American language in general. He says: "Signification", in standard English, denotes the meaning that a term conveys, or is intended to convey. It is a fundamental term in the standard English semantic order. Since Saussure, at least, the three terms signification, signifier, signified have been fundamental to our thinking about general linguistics and, of late, about criticism specifically. These neologisms in the academic – critical community are homonyms of terms in the black vernacular tradition perhaps two centuries old. By supplanting the received term’s associated concept, the black vernacular tradition created a homonymic pun of the profoundest sort, thereby making its sense of difference from the rest of the English community of speakers." (1988: 46-47)

Gate's Signifying monkey is a relatively new expression in the world of semantics and literary criticism, but its meaning and role has existed since ancient times. The cunning monkey of the enslaved African nation is the guardian of even older African linguistic heritage of the black continent. In this ancient world, the master of semantics was a trickster god. Gates primarily deals with the connection between the Signifying monkey and the trickster god of the Yoruba people - Esu. Esu, as the wise and cunning, contains contradictions and double meaning, literally and hidden meaning. As an example of this duality, and the need for harmony between the contradictions, the Yoruba have the myth of "Two friends". In this myth, two friends swore to eternal friendship, but during the oath they forgot to pray to Esu. Outraged, the trickster god decides to retaliate. One day while friends were working in their fields, Esu passed the road that separated them. He was wearing a black and white cap on his head, but one friend only saw the black side and the other only white. During lunch, friends began to talk about a stranger who walked over with a hat on his head. One claimed that he was wearing a black hat and the argument of friends who should live in harmony represents at the same time duality and unity, ambiguous and whole. The cap is not only an object, but also a reflection of Esu's personality as a trickster. Gates says: "Esu's two sides "disclose a hidden wholeness"; rather than closing off unity, through the opposition, they signify the passage from one to the other as sections of a subsumed whole." (1988, 30)

Esu’s two-color hat and the argument of friends who should live in harmony represents at the same time duality and unity, ambiguous and whole. The cap is not only an object, but also a reflection of Esu's personality as a trickster. Gates says: "Esu’s two sides "disclose a hidden wholeness"; rather than closing off unity, through the opposition, they signify the passage from one to the other as sections of a subsumed whole." (1988, 30)

Esu’s two-faced character, linguistic double meaning or named by Gates “double-voice” is known by Bakhtin “hidden polemic”. In a hidden polemic there are two voices where: “The other speech act remains outside the bounds of the author’s speech, but is implied or alluded to in that speech. The other speech act is not reproduced with a new intention, but shapes the author's speech while remaining outside its boundaries. Such is the nature of discourse in hidden polemic.” (Bakhtin, 1971: 187)

The narrator's skill to play with words in this way, but also the listener's skill to understand meaning and messages from a rich context, shows that the African oral tradition had a long and successful development process. Even before literacy, African society was already at an enviable cultural level. Respecting the word, transforming it and interpreting it through
symbols and concepts with the transferred meaning is not only the privilege of educated people, but these skills are represented on a daily basis in all social strata. Whether it's a song, a joke, a story, a saying, or an epic, the knowledge that is transmitted through them is available to everyone. They become the main weapon in the fight against oblivion. One proverb of the Ashanti people best describes the oral tradition of Africa with the words: “Ancient things remain in the ear.” (Berry and Blassingame, 1979: 241)

What is it so special that is transmitted for generations? Henry Louis Gates explains the meaning and goal of the story: “The stories that we tell ourselves and our children function to order our world, serving to create both a foundation upon which each of us constructs our sense of reality and filter through which we process each event that confront us every day. The values that we cherish and wish to preserve, the behavior that we wish to ensure, the fears and dreams that we can barely confess in ordinary language, the aspirations and goals that we most dearly prize – all of these things are encoded in the stories that each culture invents and preserves for the next generation, stories that, in effect, we live by and through.” (1989: 17)

Conclusion

What cunning monkey poses to African oral tradition, griots are for history. Reality and fiction were often intertwined, and the mystery, vigor and melody of language were most often found in practical proverbs. It was the place of the merging of the spiritual and the secular. The monkey ruled the stories inspired by religion and ritual practices. The griot mastered the knowledge of the language and the long-lost mysteries by keeping the memories of everyday life. Sometimes, in order to preserve the African tradition, the monkey and the griot would become one. In these situations, the two-voiceness would appear. Some scholars call it “signifying”. We can call it the beauty of the African oral tradition.

References

The Status of Writer Illustrators (Autorstrator) in the Position of a Writer and Illustrator in Postmodern Illustration Books

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Abstract

Postmodern illustrators are looking for differences. This distinction means attention to social state, gender, race, nationality, nature, geographical zone and etc. It should be noted that when postmodernism emerged in the fields of art, critics or addressees adjusted themselves with that and they took different interpretations for granted. The main goal of postmodern tendency could be "making clarification and opening doors to the facts created by ourselves". Most contemporary researchers and critics and all postmodern critics believe that any given artistic work has been created by a great number of artists so that the addressees can make different interpretations. In applied illustration art, which is in debt of late postmodern approaches, a type of illustrated products in the form of books entitled postmodern graphical novel should be a masterpiece. The complicated approach in creating single narrative frames, on the one hand, and the relationship between these frames, on the other, is the core points of discussions in the perspective of graphic novel or compiled illustration. One of the most significant features of producing a postmodern work for children can be the creator of that work i.e. the writer illustrator. In this line, the state of this writer-illustrator has been questioned.

Keywords: the illustrator a poet, a philosopher, a historian, narrator, designer or a semiotician.

Introduction

The Game of Language

It is better to have a retrospect to answer this question when Lyotard brought up language games with denying meta narratives in postmodern condition. This hypothesis resulted in extension of local narratives in thoughts, philosophy and art. "When meta narratives are disregarded, we face a set of disharmonized language games, and the purpose of postmodern should be a fair treatment with them i.e. to allow them to be heard in their own language". (Malpas, 2003) local narratives claim to be universal so that they seek to express some limited and unique issues and thoughts. This approach has spread out like other arts in illustration and the interaction of two languages of illustration and written in the form of book can be found today. The narrations which talk about ideas, preoccupations, and individuality of their creators themselves, and the writer-illustrators walk beyond the predetermined rules to show some new "language games". These games share the perspectives and individuality of the artist with others and they are affected by some elements such as society, geography, culture, nationality, religion, gender, ideology and etc. The way to breakout the rules and constitute new ones are different in illustrations. Lyotard has used "Philosophical investigations (1953) by Ludwig Witgenstein and introduced three rules for this term (language games): 1- The rules are not legitimate on their own, but they are contractual, implied or overt among the players. 2- If there are no rules, there is no game. In other words, a minor change in the rules can't change the nature of the game. If a 'move' or chunk is not accepted or acted upon, they can't belong to the game which determine and identifies those rules. 3- The third assumption has been mentioned based on what went aforementioned; each chunk should be considered as a 'move' in the game (Lyotard, 1983). On this line, it can be perceived in postmodern illustration compiled books; the narration creator will offer new rules necessary for the condition. Therefore; the reader will face new environment and narrations in the method of the specific illustration which can be influenced by the application or the concepts meant by the creator.
One of the best examples of postmodern compiled illustration books can be “Willy’s pictures” by Anthony Browne. A significant characteristic of this work is using the phenomenon of appropriation in the narration to turn it into an exclusive narration/game with the integration of Willy’s narration. The narration, initially, starts with Willy’s interest in pictures; “Willy is interested in pictures, he looks at them and he knows that each picture narrate a story”. Willy is sitting behind his desk with a brush in his hand and smiling at the spectator. In the other frames, Willy shares his paintings with the readers. Each picture is a kind of interpretation by Willy or Browne through famous works of art, and these art pieces are used to narrate the story. At the bottom of each picture, there is a title in capital for the picture and Willy expresses his feelings or explains about the narration below each picture. In fact, Browne plays with the rules of classic paintings, for the favor of Willy, a chimp created and born in postmodern era and this chimp welcomes the roles suggested by the writer-illustrator. Willy, as the main character of this visual narration/game, narrates an adventure in each frame and he is a part of this narration/game. In the meantime, his “moves” work as the game rules. He is situated in some different eras in each frame and he paraphrases the concepts, the rules of the narration/game and his beliefs (picture 1). what is important for the reader in this step is difference and change; the difference between this picture and the original one, and the change/motion which has been created by the writer-illustrator necessarily. This is has made Browne’s work unique and it is separated from other classic and modern works. If the reader is familiar with such works, he will make a communication between the original work and Browne’s transparence and the reflections, created by the original work, can’t be taken for granted. From the other side, changes and differences are revealed strongly in such works, and the text, as a part of work, expresses the feelings, narrations and the chimp’s perspectives encountering each picture. In this situation, as the reader commutes between the original work and Browne’s, it can benefit differences and changes because what makes him refer to the classic and modern paintings is just he visual similarity of the picture. The addressee finds the new environment and space pleasant and in this way, he looks at classic and modern paintings and artists. Therefore; changes and differences or “moves” play an important role as the perspective or individual narration made by the writer-illustrator. If these “moves” are essential in such a postmodern compiled illustration work, the determined role of new rules and language games, as a person who has defined them based on their application, finds an important state. When we think about classic and modern art and painting, we pass Browne’s ideas and at first we pay attention to Willy’s narration. Willy is a familiar story and this name is associated with Browne. Assumingly, if we are not familiar with Willy’s stories, the moment we look at the pictures, we are immediately affected by what Browne has created for us. For example, the chimp, his age and size, his clothes, his relationship with other elements and characters, changes of the pictures and the like are the features which we are absorbed to. Browne, as the author of this compiled illustration book, has taken classic and modern works of art from museum walls to the pages of his book, as a “medium”, a new bed to exhibit art in the modern era. He has cleverly defined a new frame for each picture and placed them inside the pages of his painting book in order to emphasize his presence and perspective. He has used the phenomenon of ownership in postmodern art to emphasize the creation of any artistic work created by a number of artists and to facilitate different interpretations by the addressees (Barrett, 2012). These interpretations depend on the game rules created by Browne himself.

Indeed, the role of the author can’t be denied and rely on the infinity of meaning, the writer-illustrator is the person to determine the game rules to open up the ways for different interpretations. Foucault believes that the writer facilitates cancerous and dangerous spread of reasons in a world in which not only resources and wealth, but also words and reasons are economized. The writer is the main source to economize multi-meanings (…………), he is a practical reason that we limit it, eliminate it and select it by culture. In sum, we block the circulation and changes, free composition and analysis, and reconstruction of free dreams(Foucault, 2013). In general, in discourse, postmodern compiled illustration books, we face two disciplines of sign language and picture and each of them provide us with different data, and they also affect out interpretation of the narration. The constitutor of these game/discourse rules is one person who manages all the discourse discipline pragmatically. In this situation, written sign discipline is moving ahead chronologically, but the iconic discipline is location based. In the book “The Red Tree” by Shaun Tan, this pragmatic interaction and agreement can be vividly observed. Initially, we encounter a picture and we read the elements based on the locations in the framework, the proportion of the frame and the size of the book are definable and they influence the relationship between the elements in the frame, the little girl, the red leaf, airplanes, human-like creatures and etc (picture 2). The text, in this part, is placed in the frame as a part of the picture. Our reading and interpretation depends on our concentration and focus on the location based picture. In this line, chronological signs are attended as a part of picture and during the reading phase, and the interaction with these visual signs, based on location relationships in the frame, are altogether redefined. This situation is to disrupt the predetermined rules for the favor of language game or localized narration which aim to be heard or seen in their own language. Their own language means the language of the work’s creator, and the addresssee is affected by this
subject or narration. In the next frame, the boxes are in smaller sizes rhythmically. What makes us follow these pictures can be their accidental and rhythmic setting, and something is occurring in each box and it makes us move on to the next one. The texts which go along with the pictures shouldn’t be disregarded because a neat combination of the relationship between the text and picture can lead to some concepts such as expectancy, futility, repetition, and the position of the main character who represents human being. We are helped out and guided by such concepts and this means the interaction between a text and picture (picture 3). Behind such a pragmatic interaction and agreement, there is a writer-illustrator who has the main role and organizes the visual and written elements, the man character (the little girl), the size of frames, proportions, sentences and words in the text and the like.

Game of signified

Barthes brings up a text with multi-meaning; a text which can be present or not in a work. The work is in hand, but the text in the language. In this respect, the role of the writer is faded away and Barthes mentions the following as the main features: non-consumable, mutlicity, paradox, symbolic, transitory, incalculable and unpredictable, as well as irreversible. He believes that signs can help to approach the text and experience it. A work consists of a signification. Two significations can be considered for such a signified: it is either vividly revealed so that it belongs to literal science i.e. terminology or it is hidden so that it should be sought out, hence; moving to the arena of interpretations. In short, a picture carries a meaning so that it reflects the sign civilization. A text moves signified backwards continuously, a text is almost motionless, its arena is a signifier arena; a signifier shouldn’t be regarded as the first part of meaning or a materialistic transition, but it should be considered as a consequence. On the same line, the infinity of a signifier doesn’t refer to an unmentionable assumption with an unnamed signified, but it refers to a type of game (Barthes, 2013). Based on this hypothesis, the readers are free to open up the reasonability process of a text regardless of signified and to carry it as far as they would like. Such an approach makes the addressees forget the author. If the author relies on the game of signifiers and postpone the signified in the work, the work shouldn’t be treated idea-centered. In this situation, personal meanings and concepts of the writer-illustrator, whose ideas have been the bases of this illustration work, are lost altogether, and the language games and local narrations which have been seen or heard in one way or another lose their whole meanings. Indeed, such characteristics- infinity of signifiers- should be found in the text in order to make the addressee have an interaction with that and to turn to the writer of this text. For better clarification, we can consider “The Three Pigs” by David Wiesner. What makes this work stands out can be the anarchy found in this familiar type of narration; the escape of these pigs from their destiny and their usual narration. In this situation, the main idea of the writer-illustrator moves ahead of addressee’s critical reading and the addressee goes along with the creator (picture 4). Wiesner also shows a type of forming the meaning by a number of people in the postmodern art through some narrations in visual language. In this process, the writer-illustrator determines the game rules by the formation of such meanings, the starting point, the middle, the climax and the ending of the story, the characters, the method to represent the pictures, the size of frames and boxes, the views, plans, appropriations and etc. and each of them affect the desired meaning and concepts of the work. For example, the environment in which the pigs are put in their story and other stories is a colorless area/white, infinite and full of pictur

At this point, we don’t want to deal with Barthes’ reasonability, but the iconic and symbolic signs are placed in a discourse based setting for a common purpose. This shared aim prevent explosion and spread of meaning considered by Barthes because postmodern works can live in a game of signified and in line of concepts, interpretation and commentaries, not in the game of signifiers. A compiled illustration work is a composition of approaches, discourses, genres, and different viewpoints dependant on the creator’s ideas and thoughts. In fact, this is the postmodern language game which speaks in the language of its creator- language of pictures.

Language of pictures

Every picture uses a method of explanation and a system of discourse. The moment something is placed in a box or frame, discourse is imposed to it and attention is made to express that this picture defines something from the creator’s view. Therefore, a picture shows presence and what could be absent emerges the way that the speaker would like. This presence carries some traces of the presenter. The visual speaker is a medium between the viewer and the world that is hidden from the viewer and/or it is present is a different way(Shairi, 1393). In this situation, a trace of the presenter means personal methods used by the presenter or writer-illustrator in order to organize visual discourse or local narrations. Some methods
which distinguish him/her from others, since any artist or writer-illustrator has been trained and grown up us a special society or culture, his/her work can reflect different thoughts, societies and cultures which form their individuality.

In the first frame of “The Red Tree”, after conveyance, we can see the main character on a stool in a plain, having an amplifier like a cone with closed eyes and sad face in the center of the box. Shaun Tan has designed a human character (a little girl) which is made by two triangles and for him, being a human is more important not the gender or other qualities. This little girl doesn’t belong to any time or location so that the viewer is not led to any culture or geographical zone. She is the representative of humanity. She is redefined according to the location she is put in with the red leaf carrying along. In this frame, the letters fall out of the amplifier to the outer side of the frame, and this situation represents chaos and downfall of written signs along with the changes in the application of the amplifier as a messenger to indicate the inability of this little girl to shout her own internal thoughts. Shaun Tan has used light contrasts in her hair and clothes to show her chaotic and anxious internal and these features come with her inability to show her inner thoughts, feelings and making relationships. However, this characteristic is the result of her presence is an environment which is shown by expressionist lines of the plain, tough contrasts of cold and warm lights, and the girl has a role which is set in line with her own feelings and spirits. Selecting a vertical frame in line with the location of the character, the break of this line in the upper one-fourth of the frame and background indicate a preventive force to express feelings. The cold color used in this section might show a sensitive and fragile part of the girl which doesn’t allow her to talk. That is why the words fall on the ground and out of the frame (Picture 5). In another picture of the book, the girl is at the beginning of a road with her back to the viewer carrying a big dice in her hand. At the other end of this road, there is giant creature having a sand clock. The relationship between this creature and the long road and this dice-carrying girl can be defined based on the location signs which finally can lead to a local narration taken from a creative thought (Picture 6). The most import event happening to the viewer is the pause which is made due to some unexpected things in the pictures. This pause brings around some many questions that lead the addressee focus and contemplate on the work. The more the spectator concentrates and the more he spends time on the inter-relationships of the signs, the better he can read in the narration. In this picture, the building with their shadows over the road or the girl’s path can be of more attention due to their vertical features. The giant creature is composed of whatever found on the road, a road which highlights the girl’s determination to destiny (dice), her suspicion and dependence due to some light and dark parts on the road. The presence of a vane and the wind which agrees with the giant, a semi-cloudy sky in the background of the red leaf increase the doubts. The signs placed in the reticular frame of the main picture are considerable; some elements such as a spider, the sun, card game elements, a sand clock, an owl, a bow, a compass and etc. These signs can be defined and interpreted based on the technique and method or representation, placement, size, relationship with the surrounding environment, thought-philosophy ideas of the creator and the reader. When this pause and question are made, the narration happens through this magnificent picture and the reader tries to find out the relationships between the elements and read the pictures. A narration which is triggered initially from the personal thoughts of the writer-illustrator and the reader continues that through reading and understanding the place of the picture.

Writer-illustrators use some methods to define local narrations better. In some picture, we might come up with a set of relationships and elements taken from different situations such as the final picture of the Three Pigs. In this picture, three pigs, a cat and a dragon are having a soup together on a table. In the background, in the window frame, the wolf who made them escape is sitting in a smaller size. Although the dragon has occupied more space than the other characters, the cutting and his part of body out of the frame has made a balance among these characters. In addition, a balance of the environment has been made through using cold and silent colors in contrast to the warm colors of these pigs, the cat and the golden flower on the table. Even the grey pig is as important as the other characters in this frame. Each character points out at this pig in one way; the dragon with his head, the pig on the right and the cat with their eyes, and the pig on the dragon’s lap with his feet. The triangular forms on the dragon’s body take our eyes to the window, the wolf and the written signs. Wiessner has intelligently designed the pictures and environment in that none of these characters has priority over the others; a set of different situations which is taken from one position, a local narration and a different environment. Finally, a new local narration is made out of which the reader tries to make an interpretation based on the main idea(picture 7).

Sometimes, in contrast to what went before, there is a dominating element in pictures and other signs just refer to it. In one frame from The Red Tree, the picture of a semi-cloudy sky is reflected on a closed window, and a flying wonderful car is in the sky. When this flying car is placed in the window frame, it means there is a visual emphasis. The colors in this frame talk; the tangerine color of the clouds against the blue sky, and also the placement of the colors can take our attention to the flying car. On the other hand, the girl’s imploring looks and the placement of the red leaf increase this emphasis (Picture 8). In this picture, all the elements and signs toward the flying and wonderful car have a narration. Each of these elements
and signs carry a meaning and they organize other signs in the frame of the picture and make a relationship with them and try to have new and different meanings, concepts and local narrations.

The number of local narrations formed in compiled illustration works depend on the elements in the framework (people, animals, things) and their relationships. Sometimes, two elements and sometime more elements can lead the organizational relationships between symbolic signs (words), and in some frames, no sign has priority over the others. The writer-illustrator uses any sign or approach to express his/her own local narration in order to share his/her idea, view or individuality. Sometimes in one book, the frames are different based on their structure, technique, subject, characters and such elements and the reader is always surprised. At this point, what we know as a narration finds a new definition. This one relies on the writer-illustrator’s main idea and symbolic and iconic signs. In this regard, a new language game is formed according to these interpretations and commentaries out of the formed relationship among them.

Result

Compiled illustration is the result of postmodern approaches to art and philosophy, an era which is the indicator of profound changes in perception and social behavior. Instead of making attempts to interpret some facts with some specific parameters, postmodern artists reflect a complicated world (Goldstone, 2008). This world heavily depends on the relationships of the signs so that they are definable. Writer-illustrators are well-familiar with different art periods, and they are capable designers who are well-matched with their own thoughts and they can clearly visualize their ideas. They know stylistic contracts and technical approaches so that they change them or break them whenever necessary. Their priority is expressing their own views and transferring a message. Despite all differences and variations found, the meanings of their works arise from where this work is composed. A writer-illustrator, knowing this subject uses these signs courageously in a visual relationship. These signs can have a local narration inside. This writer-illustrator wants to make the addressee understand his/her concepts through such local narrations or individual thoughts. In these narrations, the addressee follows an idea which is brought up by the writer-illustrator and continues it in a bed of interpretations and commentaries. The writer-illustrator invites the reader to look at the world with its wonderful pictures differently, and he is freed to take his other steps. In this respect, the writer-illustrator shares individuality with the addressee which is taken from a set of approaches, ideas, and thoughts learned in the passage of time and society and these have granted meaning to his identity.

References


CHILDREN’S LITERATURE CITED

Pictures

pic 1 (Willy’s pictures, Anthony Brown)

pic 2 (The Red Tree, Shaun Tan)

pic 3 (The Red Tree, Shaun Tan)

pic 4 (The Three Pigs)

pic 5 (The Red Tree, Shaun Tan)

pic 6 (The Red Tree, Shaun Tan)
pic7(The Three Pigs)

pic8(The Red Tree, Shaun Tan)
All Too Human: Recontextualizing Deleuze and Levinas on Art

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Abstract

Although they elaborate it differently, both Levinas and Deleuze appeal to the notion of rhythm as decisive for understanding art. Drawing on their analyses I discuss the work of several artists featured in a current exhibit showing at the Tate Britain, All Too Human: Bacon, Freud and a Century of Painting Life. In addition to Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud, I discuss the work of Paula Rego and Lynette Lydiam-Boakye. Vlad Ionescu suggests that a productive approach to writing about art after Deleuze and Guattari would be to inquire into ‘how constellations of sensation modify our perceptions of the world’ (2017, p. 22). I take up Ionescu’s suggestion, but also recontextualize it in order to offer a politicized account of how the exhibit is framed. At the same time I draw on feminist and race theory to discuss the work of Rego and Lydiam-Boakye, thus also recontextualizing Levinas’s and Deleuze’s analyses of art. The questions this paper addresses include: What makes these paintings work, and how do they function? How do their aspects and rubrics operate? What creates their rhythms? How do they operate as an assemblage?

Keywords: Art, Philosophy, Rhythm, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, Paula Rego, Lynette Lydiam-Boakye, Levinas, Deleuze, feminist & race theory

Introduction

Clearly there are major philosophical differences between Levinas and Deleuze, perhaps most obviously, the fact that while Deleuze embraces a philosophy of immanence, Levinas casts suspicion on immanence as the sphere of the same, the totalizing world of the said, as opposed to the saying, and the ethical call of face that breaks through immanence, transcending totality. So too, while art plays the role of prolegomena to the infinite ethical demand placed on the I by the other, such that its anarchic force is ultimately found to be in need of tempering by a philosophy that answers to the ethical relation, there is no such subordination of art to philosophy in Deleuze, who prefers to envisage the relationship of one art and philosophy as one of transversal. In this paper, I want to put aside this undoubtedly fundamental philosophical divergence in order to focus on a striking similarity in how rhythm plays a key role for both Levinas and Deleuze in their conception of art.

In order to provide an initial sketch of the role accorded to rhythm by Levinas and Deleuze, I will focus on the texts in which I think the continuity of their accounts in this regard is most evident, namely Levinas’s discussion of Maurice Blanchot in ‘The Servant and Her Master’ (1989) and Deleuze’s discussion of painting in Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation (2017).

The rhythm of poetry Levinas finds in Blanchot is not unlike that which Deleuze finds in Bacon’s art, whose images are not for the sake of representation. It is a saying that unsays itself, a language that does not totalize. Levinas identifies in Blanchot’s Waiting Forgetting a tautological rhythm which punctuates dialogue itself, because of the monotonous droning which immediately closes off the avenues of communication (1989, p.152). For Deleuze, it is in the differentiations of colour between Bacon’s triptychs that he ‘discovers rhythm as the essence of painting’ (2017, p.xiv). According to Levinas the ‘language of poetry becomes for Blanchot a language which contradicts itself. . . . Affirmation is followed, often in the same proposition, by its negation. Saying lets go of what it grasps’ (1989, p.156). Describing the functioning of Blanchot’s language, Levinas says, ‘The silence which occurs does not put a stop to the rustling’ (p.154). Blanchot’s ‘discontinuous and contradictory language’ (p.156) conveys the sense in which language undoes itself: ‘in place of the beginning, [there is] a sort of initial void, an energetic refusal to let the story begin’ (p. 22) p.153). For Levinas, ‘Blanchot calls into question the seemingly incontestable claim of a certain sort of language to be the privileged bearer of what is meaningful . . . Does the meaningful depend on a certain order of propositions, constructed according to a certain grammar so as to constitute
a logical argument? or does meaning cause language to explode and then signify amidst these fragments? . . . Waiting
Forgetting refuses to grant the philosophical language of interpretation . . . the dignity of the ultimate language.’ (p.153). Levinas sees in ‘art and poetry that exceptional event – that sovereign forgetfulness – which frees language from its servitude towards the structures in which the said prevails (p.153). For him, ‘Poetic language gives sign without the sign being a bearer of signification through relinquishing signification’ (p.156). Quoting Blanchot, Levinas says, ‘No-one here wishes to be bound by a story’ (p. 22) p.157).

If the rhythm of Blanchot’s language consists for Levinas in affirming and then negating, in saying then letting go, for Deleuze, the shifting tensions between each painting in Bacon’s triptychs according to which structure, figure and contour relate to one another perform a similar function. It is the ‘coexistence’ of the ‘movements’ between these ‘three basic elements’ (2017, p.24) of Bacon’s painting, structure, figure and contour that constitutes ‘rhythm’ (p. 25). Indeed, it is ‘rhythms alone that become characters’ (p. xiv). In a first movement, which goes ‘from the structure to the Figure’ the contour first isolates the figure ‘in a completely closed word’ (p. 24). Here the contour appears as ‘a round area, an oval, a bar, or a system of bars’ (p. 24). Then in a second movement, from the figure to the material structure, the contour changes . . . acting as a deformer’ (p.24). It ‘turns into the half sphere of the washbasin or umbrella, the thickness of the mirror . . . The Figure is contracted or dilated in order to pass through a hole or into the mirror’ (p. 24). Then the figure ‘tends to return to the field of color, to dissipate into the structure . . . through the intermediary of the contour, which no longer acts as a deformer . . . thus this most closed of worlds was also the most unlimited (p.24). Just as Levinas follows the back and forth, contradictory movement of Blanchot’s language, which affirms then negates, so in this series of variations or transformations effected between the structure, figure and contour, so Deleuze finds in Bacon a completely closed world and the most unlimited of worlds, he sees the contour as acting to deform the figure, yet no longer acting as deformer.

It is the ‘confrontation’ (p.xiii) between the figure and ‘large fields of color’ which ‘are themselves divided into sections or crossed by tubes or very thin rails, or sliced by a band or largish stripe’ and which as such form ‘armature, a bone structure’ (xi), it is ‘their solitary wrestling in a shallow depth, that rips the painting away from all narrative but also from all symbolization’ (p.xiii). Beyond ‘narration’ (p. 50) and ‘figuration’ (p.96), for Deleuze, Bacon’s paintings do not represent or signify, but express the ‘violence of sensation’ (p.xiii). For Levinas, Blanchot’s ‘literary writing proper provides above all a new sensation’ (1989, p.153) and in doing so it explodes the instant, letting the instant die so that time has to begin again, rather than engaging in the coherent language of philosophy, which joins up the past, present, and future, in a language of retention and protention, the language of consciousness, that of the transcendental ego, the language of the same (see Peters, 1997). Blanchot’s language interrupts the continuity and coherence of philosophy. ‘Poetry’, says Levinas, ‘can be said to transform words, the tokens of a whole, the moments of a totality, into unfettered signs, breaching the walls of immanence, disrupting order’ (1989, p.156). It undoes the ‘structures of language’ (p. 156). Bacon’s painting ‘breaks with figuration’, and, with the possible exception of Michelangelo, Deleuze thinks that never has anyone done so by ‘elevating the Figure to such prominence’ (2017, p.xiii).

Deleuze’s emphasis is on invisible forces, sensation and the differential rhythms that are themselves the only characters in painting rather than representation and meaning, and Levinas’s emphasis is on the alterity and exoticism of art as interrupting and breaking through the totality of coherent meaning, where the rhythm of art imposes itself as captivating, has a hold over us, so that ‘there is no longer a oneself, but rather a sort of passage from oneself to anonymity.’ (1987, p. 4) On the surface, the potential for a politically inflected Deleuzian or Levinasian infused account of art might seem unpromising. Yet I want to ask: what if it were not representation or coherence as such that was at issue, but rather the circulation of variants of one dominant narrative, which becomes so dominant that other stories cannot be seen as legitimate—cannot be seen in any meaningful sense? What if the sensation that both Levinas and Deleuze take art to uncover can bring into view new concepts of what it is that can be represented, narrated or rendered philosophically intelligible?

As indicated above, Levinas subordinates art to the authority of philosophy ultimately, and as such does not attempt to introduce a new approach to art although this does not prevent others from rescuing his insights about art from his overall framework. As for Deleuze, what might we say is his approach to rejuvenating art history or aesthetics, and how might we develop this approach to provide resources for a raced and gendered approach to art?

A feminist or raced approach, we might assume, would require reference to a feminist or raced agenda and to a specific constituency of viewers that might be understood as a pre-existing culture. Such approaches might also be understood to
require that images be representative of certain communities or ideas. In what follows I want to complicate such assumptions.

Ionescu formulates Deleuze’s goal in his approach to the arts as not a question of interpreting ‘the visual arts as a practice that mirrors pre-existing culture’ but rather a question of determining ‘the potentiality of visual arts to modify the view one has of the world’ (2017, p.26). Ionescu tends to set up an opposition between ‘the self-referential position where artworks are interpreted as representing the environment from where they emerged’ and Deleuze’s ‘intensive model where various artifacts generate an atlas of sensations that spread cross-historically and cross-culturally’ (p.28). If art is not understood as mirroring pre-existing culture or self-referentially, we might surmise that there is little scope for developing a Deleuzian account of art that is also feminist or responsive to issues of race.

A tension is evident in how Tuinen and Zepke negotiate the complicated relationship between aesthetics and politics. They gloss the political as an area of life ‘largely determined by human consciousness’, one that does not ‘tend to play a decisive role’ in Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of art works as ‘expressions of immanent and abstract forces that animate all aspects of our world, and indeed what is not ours, the cosmos’ (2017, p.7). By way of explanation, they go on to explain that forces ‘do not obey “ideas”’ but rather ‘emerge through the materials that actualise them, through the abstract movements, machinic relationships and often unconscious and inorganic motives of “matter-force”’ (p.7). Note that in this articulation of forces as distinct from that which would obey ideas, almost by default, the political is aligned with ‘consciousness’ and ‘ideas’ are pitted against the ‘unconscious’. At the same time, Tuinen and Zepke acknowledge that the work of art expresses ‘force according to its own conditions’ and that these conditions ‘can, through the processes of expression, themselves change’. They can also ‘include the political’. Yet, in their (quasi-Hegelian?) assumption that the political can be broadly aligned with that realm of life that is determined by human consciousness, and in their suggestion that, by contrast, the forces that get expressed through art do not obey ideas, in effect they have cordoned off all kinds of ways in which art might operate politically. Given that politics is cast on the side of human consciousness and ideas on the one hand, and is implicitly opposed to art, which for its part is cast on the side of the immanent expression of forces, there might seem to be little possibility of investigating the ways in which the conditions in which a given work or art is allowed to flourish or not are infused with both political and aesthetic assumptions.

Yet there is a large body of work indicating that far from involving human consciousness, or being formulated as coherent ideas, discrimination and prejudice often operate in ways that are unconscious (Sue, 2010). There is also significant scholarship suggesting that feeling, emotions and affects are politically laden (Berlant, 2004), so that to invoke feeling as opposed to meaning is somewhat heavy handed. This in turn suggests that art which is capable of tapping into forces and feelings that are often unconscious might well be implicated in the political, that the political valence of art is not restricted to representing the environment from which it emerged or to mirroring pre-existing cultures, but might also be capable of modifying the view one has of the world. It might be just as capable of migrating cross-culturally, perhaps cross-historically as any other art. Perhaps the oppositions Ionescu sets up—either representation or sensation, either emanating from a particular culture, or capable of modifying the world, need, then, to be rethought.

As he goes on to develop his investigation into Deleuze’s relation to art history and his manner of writing it, Ionescu’s account provides hints as to how works of art can both be implicated in representation of a particular culture and possess the ideological power to break away from it, and to disturb rigid forms of life.

According to Ionescu, Deleuze’s contribution to art history is to construe it as ‘essentially a constellation of sensations’ where ‘this constellation is a force that can overcome historical delimitation’ (2017, p.28). For Deleuze, art can, Ionescu claims, ‘still represent the culture that created it but it has an artistic value precisely when its intensity breaks with its environment and affects other ages, cultures and people. . . the object of art is an anonymous force that has the potential to migrate through the world’ (p.28). Art is ‘a process of “weaving” sensations that disturbs any enclosure of life in rigid forms’ (p.28). Although he does not elaborate the claim, for Ionescu, Deleuze’s ‘impersonal and transitive conception of painting has an ideological power: this culture of transformative repetitions and perpetual transitive processes resist the stability that systems of power implement on language or the body’ (p.33).

At one point, although they refrain from providing it themselves, Tuinen and Zepke also situate, and perhaps even call for, such an investigation, when they say,
While a politicised art history is clearly possible (ie T. J Clark), and arguably fundamental to feminist art history or ‘new art history,’ it generally tends to follow the political commitments of those artists discussed . . . rather than develop an aesthetics as political strategy. Certainly the militant Guattari insisted that the aesthetic paradigm was first of all political (2017, p.17)

I would not so much want to develop an aesthetics as a political strategy (which might result in the subordination of aesthetics to a particular politics), but rather to keep a space open in which the conditions under which certain art works might be said to express certain forces can be interrogated. For how these conditions are understood, as well as how forces of certain artworks ‘not only to express, but also actively construct’ a [Bersogian/Deleuzian] open and changing whole (duration) (p.10) is itself open to political dispute. In this sense, it would be necessary to say that the very identification of a minor, as opposed to a major, literature (or art) can be a contested question, so that to take up a term such as ‘minor’ is not necessarily merely a question of applying a Deleuzian concept that was invented in relation to a singularity, and thereby turning it into a generality or into the ‘conformity of a law’, as Ionescu maintains it is (p. 21). If what constitutes the field of literature, or the sphere of art are themselves not stable arenas, but rather are contested, neither can the meaning and application of terms such as ‘minor’ be taken for granted.

Whatever else we can say about the relationship between politics and art, it is one in which both terms must remain contested. What constitutes politics and what constitutes art must remain, to some extent, in question. One of the ways in which politics operates to support the status quo is to deny that certain claims or certain spheres of life, among them the aesthetic, are political. Accordingly, part of the work of politics is to demonstrate that the conditions that facilitate the expression of a work of art are in fact political, and not just the way things are. It is not a question of either reducing the work of art to narrative or generating new concepts, but of modifying the world in such a way that new narratives can become intelligible, can begin to be seen, that their prior invisibility can also be registered and that new concepts might be formulated in the wake of their new visibility.

The vehicle I have chosen to explore the contested site that art constitutes is an exhibit at the Tate Britain, All too Human, which features the work of Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud and includes other artists such as William Coldstream, Euan Euglow, Paula Rego, Stanley Spencer, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakey. The title of the exhibit performs a reference to Nietzsche’s Human, all too human, subtitled: A book for free spirits. In citing Nietzsche, are the curators of the exhibit calling up the foibles of us mortals who take ourselves for gods (‘so that you finally stop wanting to be the only god’ says Irigaray? (1991, p.25). Are they also bringing into question the ease with which we seem to replace one god with another (the all too human displacement of religion/fetishism/commodification/corporate markets . . .)? Is there a sense in which at least some of the artists featured in All Too Human, gathered together under an exhibit title that recalls Nietzsche, manage to avoid a similar fate? I would say that there is.

In the decadent languid sorrowful sweep of David Dawson’s aquiline limbs, echoed by the muted colours of Eli the dog, curved into tranquility beside David in Freud’s 2003-4 David and Eli, what is it that haunts Lucian Freud? Is it David’s apparent complete lack of proclivity for worship of any kind of deity? Is it David’s apparent carelessness, almost laziness, indolence, as if he has drunk one too many glasses of liquor, or has just awoken from the torpor of a Sunday afternoon slumber? Perhaps he has just had sex and is bathing in its afterglow. Perhaps he is simply tired of posing for Lucian. Perhaps he has been dreaming. Perhaps he is coming down from being vaguely aroused in a nonchalant sort of way. Whatever it is, there is something liquidly alive in this painting, something that stays with me long after I walk away from it, following me out of the gallery and into my life, just as David’s foot dangles from the chaise-longue, which refuses to entirely contain the labile quality of his supine figure, his slightly dishevelled, aging, far from perfect and slightly sagging body. Eli’s head hangs off the divan too, mirroring David’s foot.

A plant stands next to David and Eli. The leaves of this large plant in its off-white wicker container are spiky to a point, but some of them droop, like David’s penis, its leaves are as green and brown as David’s flesh is pink and red and brown and white. Freud has applied the paint so thickly at certain strategic points of David’s body, his knee, for instance, that it almost cracks, there are globules, knobs of paint, creating a surface that would be rough to the touch, so worked over are some portions of David’s flesh. Impasto. Not only, then, is Freud exploring David’s animality, in aligning him with Eli. He is also exploring his plant-like features. In this sense he might be said to be approaching what Deleuze would later interrogate as becoming-animal, or becoming-plant.

Deleuze and Guattari ask in Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature: ‘Isn’t it rather that the acts of becoming-animal cannot follow their principle all the way through—that they maintain a certain ambiguity that leads to their insufficiency and condemns
Freud’s figure is not quite human, more animal than human, almost plant-like, but its way of being not quite human is vastly different from how Paula Rego’s figures, also included in the exhibit, are not quite human. Foreshortened, contracted, compressed, there is something doll-like about these figures, something that resonates with the large, placid eyes staring out of the flattened face of Freud’s *Girl with a kitten* (1947) in which the hands of a frizzy haired woman, all blue and grey and brown, hold a kitten in a stranglehold. Yet the cat is unperturbed, its green eyes staring out calmly at the viewer, while the girl’s eyes look off at an angle. All very controlled. Very mellow. Very calm. Almost too calm. Skin like porcelain, wide almond eyes. Only the fizziness of her hair is not calm. Rego, on the contrary, stages her figures in bustling rooms, in busy and demanding scenarios.

Within the large frames of her paintings there is none of Freud’s serenity borne of his singular focus. There are regimes to be glimpsed, rubrics looping together her disparate, distended bodies, loosely tying the figures to one another in misunderstood, unconceptualized, perverse relationships, as if the emotions which preoccupy each of the figures in their own way disconnect them from one another even while stemming from their shared, compacted histories. Each figure is caught up in their own affective world, bound to the others only through their uncognising differentiation. There is laughter, power, aggression, determination, ridicule, derision, complicity, submission, boredom, torpor, exhaustion, carelessness. And there is refusal. There is a wrist caught in a hand, an elbow that has given up flailing, the twist of a head, a reckless almost smile, the straightforwardness of just standing one’s ground with sturdy feet, akimbo, and not giving up on one’s desire—however problematic it might prove to have been at some future as yet unmarked point in the passage of time that is, inevitably, to come.

There is a darkness to these paintings. Whose is the suit hanging in *Shipwreck*? It is small enough to be a boy’s, but no boy appears in the painting, only a man. Has it shrunk? Why are the drawers of the cabinet so higgledy piggledy, what’s a parrot doing perched on the chair, who is the dog in the foreground snarling at? Is it us? Why is a black doll sitting on the floor amidst open books and files? What is a blue urn doing besides the open drawers? Why is a carpet climbing up the wall, where’s the ladder, buttressed right up against the chair, upholstered deep red, in which both of the central figures of this painting are located, reaching up to? The dark-haired woman seated in the chair looks off to her left. She is underneath a man who lies across her, eyes closed, fast sleep; she supports his weight. She cannot be that comfortable. He must be heavy. Her bare legs are apart, her feet in black shoes, planted on the floor help bear the man’s weight. The man is peaceful, oblivious to the chaotic room around him, lost to the world. And she seems to be taking everything in her stride.

Is this the same woman pictured in the second of this triptych, seated under a large hair-dryer, her daughter, perhaps, sitting by her side, gazing upward into the mirror, into which her mother also looks? I think so. Although unlike her daughter, we cannot see the mother/the wife’s reflection in the mirror. Curiosities populate this painting too. This time a gold coloured ashtray, shaped like a monkey. Vestiges of Portuguese and British colonial slavery regimes. The woman same woman, perhaps, is wearing a black jacket and bright green skirt, looking askance in the first picture of this triptych, a response—a riposte—to Hogarth’s *The Marriage a la mode*. Here too mirrors reflect figures whom we do not see otherwise in the painting. In the foreground a child, sprawled in her white dress on a chair, caresses a dog with her foot. In one of the mirrors a woman in underwear is removing her tights while a man, his back turned to us, looks on. In the middle of the painting a man crouches for solace against the older woman to whom the woman in the black jacket might be conversing. Behind them a still older woman looks aghast. At what exactly, it is unclear. At the woman in a state of undress, whose mirrored reflection we see in the background of the painting? The decaying stages of a marriage, perhaps. And yet, there is something robust, at least about the woman in the final painting. Of course, none of these questions are ultimately answerable, and nor should they. As Deleuze puts it, ‘painting itself is beyond all narration’ (2017, p.50).

Although Rego might have been pigeon-holed into a representative framework, and might even have contributed to allowing herself to being pushed into such a framework through her own commentary, it could be argued that what matters above all in her paintings are the ways in which the energy that flows through the figures she depicts interacts with the force fields within which they are situated. There is, for example, in *The Bride*, a naked sadness, a solitary refusal, an acute discomfort, an intensely private rebellion against invisible forces made visible, the forces of decorum that organize this bride into strictures she escapes, fleeing her wedding dress cage. For Deleuze, rhythm, ‘appears as music when it invests the auditory level, and painting when it invests the visual level’ (2017, p.32), and it is rhythm itself that would constitute the Figure’ (p.51). The rhythm invested in this painting is one of flight, it is a minor reterritorialization. It is a throwing off of shackles, a
withdrawal from convention, a re-assignment of oneself away from marriage in the midst of it. It is a wrenching of the body away from everything that would tame it, manipulate it, and control it.

Rego’s figures are orchestrated by forces over which they do not seem to be in control, by a web of calculation and desire to which they are in thrall, and which only becomes visible through their facial and bodily reactions, their torpor, their amusement, delight, ironic detachment. Desire overwhels them, fear paralyses them, or indulgence overcomes them. The passions that circulate from one to another are not so much indicative of a story that is being narrated involving characters in relationship to one another as of the intensities of the passions themselves that course through them. The figures themselves are at the mercy of these forces, cowed by their strength, assaulted by them, rendered diminutive in their efforts to navigate them, incapable of distinguishing themselves from the fields of emotive forces that seem to flow so freely and excessively, binding these figures to one another even as they hold them apart. Racked with emotion, they are mere vessels. The social/psychic mores, and their transgression of them, that throw them together and keep them apart from one another dictate their movement and their stasis.

There are variety in which the figures in this exhibit might be said to depart from their figurations, deviate from the human, becoming almost non-human, almost inhuman by being all too human. Stanley Spencer’s *Nude Portrait of Patricia Preece* (1935) departs from the historical conventions of female nudity, an uncompromising, confrontational expression in her eyes, the insistent networks of tiny blue blood vessels tracing their way across her sagging, spreading, very large breasts. Not pendulous. Pendulous is a word men who don’t have breasts tend to use for women who do. To use such a word for a breast makes it sound like some kind of appendage, which just happens to be tagging along with the rest of the body, an optional extra. The two breasts are different shapes from one another. The left breast, to the right of the painting, slides off to the side, as if trying to escape the vision of the painter altogether. How much this has to do with the uneven angle of the shoulders, the right one held higher than the left is hard to tell. The more one looks, the more one finds the lines in this painting to be crooked. Patricia’s eyebrows are almost demonic. Her left eye, like her left breast, looks slightly off to the side. It is hard to tell whether in fact her right breast is really larger than the left, more bulbous, or if it is merely angled differently due to the poise of her shoulders, which make the left breast wander almost out of the painting. In the middle of her chest, the skin has a high colour, almost as if it had been scratched due to an itch, and is slightly irritated. Lines furrow the skin of her belly, one line appears just beneath her breasts, cut off from vision by the bulging fullness of the breasts. Some traces of navel hair creep up toward the brown hollowed dent of her tummy button.

There are other paintings of female nudes (or almost nudes) in the exhibit, but none confront the viewer in the way that Spencer’s painting of Patricia Preece does. They are too vague, somewhat apologetic. William Coldstream’s *Seated Nude* (1952-3) is rather washed out. The figure is a bit wan. Coldstream’s *Seated Nude* of 1973-4 is depicted from a sideways angle, mouth slightly ajar, a little disconcerted, smallish breasts, solid thighs, the model doesn’t look too comfortable. She is not at ease. As I’m contemplating her unease, on one of my visits to the Tate Britain, the voice of a seven or eight-year-old says from behind me: Is that a man or a woman? I can see the point of her question. There is something that could be read as conventionally masculine about this figure, whose pubic area is hidden from view due to the angle in which she is seated in relation to the viewer. There is something angular about her shoulders, her chest, something that is not coded as conventionally feminine in the way she allows her lower lip to drop, in such an unselfconscious manner. What do you think it is asking a mother-voice behind me. The child is unsure, that’s why she asked the question. It’s a woman! Comes the follow up. In the beat of time that passes between the question and the response I resist turning around to engage the child in a discussion about sex, gender, trans issues and so on. My guess is the mother wouldn’t appreciate such an intervention. So I let it go, drifting along in my thoughts about the ease with which this question is answered, about how Freud’s question, am I a man or a woman, am I an obsessive or a hysterical has been forestalled for this child’s reading of Coldstream’s seated nude. I wonder if it is foreclosed forever.

There’s a painting by Euan Uglow, *Georgia* (1992). Georgia is not nude, but she might as well be. Her simple, white, tight fitting dress, with its three bands of red around the cuffs and the neck reveals that she is bra-less. Her nipples protrude beneath the material that clings to them. She looks rather bored. There’s an intense eroticism about this painting, and it is the only one of the exhibit that even begins to approach the confrontational air of Spencer’s Patricia, whose eyes, under those quizzical, offbeat eyebrows, would almost burn a hole in your soul if you let them.

For his part, Bacon exploits the boundary between the human and the inhuman still further. Taking body parts and stretching them out along planes and axes they were not meant to be stretched across. Contorting the body into impossible, inhuman positions, tying it up in itself, spreading it out from itself, like butter spread on burnt toast. His paintings have the rasp of a
knife across the crisp surface of overdone toast. And that dog. Bacon calls it simply Dog (1952). Dog paces in a circle, as if in a compound. Hunted. Caught up in his own demise. No barbed wire encircles him. Only his own infernal constriction. Only a not quite hexagon shape against a red background, a floor of sorts, containing a painted green circle, within the bounds of which dog turns on himself. Deleuze (who does not discuss this particular painting) might identify this as the isolating contour. Except for one of his hind legs, which falls just outside the circle. Dog looks hot, thirsty, parched. His red tongue hangs out. The whole canvas has a torrid feel to it, perhaps because of all that hessian, giving the impression of a desert, of sand. Bacon said his paintings were about sensation. The sensation here is heat. And fear. And constriction. Beyond dog, in the middle distance there is a thin blue line reaching from one side of the painting to the other (is this thin blue line the sea?), across the hessian coloured canvas, which looks as if it has hardly been painted. A solitary palm tree accompanies the thin blue line of the sea. In the far distance is a further single black line. A horizon. Dog has none of the passivity of David's Eli, all of the tautness of fear and watchfulness, as if it might have been beaten. Such intensity, coiled into the curve of its back. Waiting, just waiting for something else bad to happen. Almost human.

There is something almost comic about this piece. Between the red not-hexagon and the thin band of sea are several cars, all black, proceeding in both directions along what must be a highway. They are like toy cars, with multiple black lines trailing from each of them, tapering off, indicating the speed at which they travel. Similar lines indicate the motion of dog, whose face is darker than the rest of his body, which is so cowed.

Like Dog, the figures of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye are also tense and watchful, but for more diffuse reasons. How do the subtle and shadowy ways in which Lynette Yiadom-Boakye’s figuration of race and sometimes ambiguous gender help to recast racialised and gendered regimes? Two of her paintings book-end the exhibit, almost a footnote, all but an after-thought. bel hooks says somewhere that African-Americans are often appended to the end of feminist syllabi. The course is about ‘us’, but then there’s a nod, right at the end to the others. Not a nod that makes the others central, merely a nod that acquiesces to share some space with these others, space ‘we’ still control, space we ‘allow’ these other into, as if it were ours to give. This feels a bit like that. Lynette Yiadom-Boakye’s paintings flank the exit door. You could almost miss them altogether, on your way to get coffee.

Still, they are there. That’s something. There is a restlessness about the figures in these paintings, a quiet, self-contained energy pulsing through them, a disdain in the way they place their hands on their hips, as in The Host Over a Barrel, or form a diamond with their fingers, as in Coterie of Questions, sitting pensively, or standing, waiting for an unseen event, a car, a person, for time to slip silently away into something unexpected. Is there a car, shining its headlights from outside the frame of the painting, lacing a brightness around three figures, all wearing short, dark, sleeveless dresses, all, more or less, with their backs to us? What are they waiting for? A feeling of not being quite at home. A looseness but one that is studied, deliberately assumed. An attitude taken up for the world. Masks adopted for the purposes of survival. Like the ‘large rings and medallions’, ‘the big puffy coats and full-collared leathers’, like the ‘gilded bamboo earrings’ Ta-Nehisi Coates recalls being worn by the ‘extravagant’ boys and girls on the Baltimore streets of his youth, who stood around pumping music ‘from boom boxes full of grand boast and bristle’ covering their fear with loudness and bravado (2014, p.14-15). Each of Yiadom-Boakye’s figures strikes a pose. A very deliberate pose.

Even if first appearances might suggest something approaching flippancy, it would be a mistake to read anything casual in the way these figures, black on grey, stand their ground. They are not so much silhouetted against the darkness of the night as cast in chromatic progression against it, limbs outlined against the murky, hazy, uncertain backgrounds in which they are set. What one sees, if one looks for a while, is forbearance. Endurance. Fortitude. And weariness. A certain lassitude permeates these images. Like they have just witnessed one of the series of all too many all too frequent all too human micro-aggressions Claudia Rankine describes so painstakingly, with such precision in Citizen: An American Lyric (2104). They have just been overlooked at the cash register in a drugstore. Rendered invisible, negligible, non-existent. Oh, I didn’t see you. No, I really didn’t see you. Or they are about to be. Or they will be the next day, or the day after that. The daily grind of racial diminishment, Rankine calls it.

The steady drip, the pressure of life, of just trying to survive, of getting by. Drips that cumulate in pools, sometimes pools of tears, sometimes of blood, caused by knives. Or guns. These figures might very well have just witnessed a murder. They might be about to witness one. They hold this knowledge in their stances. The precarity of
their lives. It is not for nothing that they are wary. In their stances they defend themselves against what might happen. Against what all too easily might happen, against what all too often keeps happening, will keep on happening unless very many intricately interlaced things change, things that are woven into the very fabric of society, things that get so easily passed over by those of us who can pass over them all too readily. The unwary ones. Lack of horizons, lack of possibilities, systemic failure of the very basic provision of what most of us consider to be necessities, not luxuries. Health. Care. Sanitation. Food. Safety. Security. Accommodation. Sanity. Being able to live lives that are not caught up in trying to ascertain things that need to be taken for granted, to fade into the background, in order to free oneself up for the pursuit of education, art, intellectual activities, earning a decent living. In order, we might say all too simply, to succeed in life.

One might say that an atmosphere of submission permeates this painting, but that one of perseverance, overcoming, survival is in ascendance. We could express this In terms of what Deleuze refers to as the diastolic and the systolic, in terms of a ‘crescendo, or simplification, climbing, expanding’ and ‘adding value’ meeting a ‘diminuendo or elimination (descending, contracting, systolic, removing value)’, and creating a rhythm with a third element, perhaps the attendant element, the damp misty haze of the night air, in which the balance of the diastolic and systolic is played out, and into which it dissipates.

There is patience, waiting, watching, passivity in their forbearance. Watchfulness. As if time itself were suspended, as if it stood still. ‘The instant . . . reverts to tranquillity in waiting’ says Levinas, ‘Neither anticipation nor impatience, ‘waiting waits for nothing (1989, p. 51). There is little action, little movement in Lydiam Boakye’s paintings. Time is distended. Hours might have passed, and still these figures would be arranged in their poses, watching and waiting. To see what might happen. As if their narratives are not of their own making, as if they are mere spectators in someone else’s show, a show that they have decided to bring to a halt. As if the continuity of time itself were forestalled by their very restless stillness, through which they offer resistance. Here it is not so much a matter of resisting the stability that systems of power implement but rather a matter of remaining still in order to resist the dynamism of systems of power that operate as if those who withstand it don’t exist. There is a jadedness, a wariness to be sure, but there is also a steadfastness, an affirmative we shall not be moved.

It is in a zone of indeterminacy that the correlation and difference of Levinas and Deleuze on rhythm in art might be placed. For Levinas, every art work is a statue, which slices through time, immobilizing it, freezing it, according it a truncated rhythm of its own, a rhythm that transports the viewer. The art work interrupts time, as if creating a stoppage. There is at once a proximity and divergence when it comes to how musical rhythm is taken up by both Levinas and Deleuze and re-envisioned in relation to visual art.

In the context of the exhibit, one might call it an assemblage, All too Human, it might be said that Rego and Lydiam-Boakye operate as protagonists of minoritarian art, and that Spencer and Uglow approach such a status. If Ionescu is right to suggest that Deleuze’s approach to art can be characterized as a ‘constellation of sensations’ understood as a ‘force that can overcome historical delimitation’ I have sought to demonstrate how Lydiam-Boakye, Rego and Spencer in different ways have mobilised sensations, constellated them in such a way as to bring into view figures who have typically been relegated to the background of art history. In rendering visible the rhythms in which they are caught up, and how these rhythms are a function of specific temporal modalities that infuse these works (frenetic and conflicted, in the case of Rego, whose figures seem to contract under the very weight of the passionate regimes in which they labor; passive, watchful, slow, almost a stoppage of time, wary, cautious, steadfast in the case of Lydiam-Boakye’s patient, world weary but also potent stances) I have tried to illustrate how such work can in Ionescu’s words ‘still represent the culture that created it’ but have artistic value precisely because of a transformative energy and ‘its intensity breaks with its environment and affects other ages, cultures and people’. In doing so, I hope to have fleshed out the sense in which even as Rego and Lydiam-Boakye, who put female and black bodies at the centre of their paintings, and in some sense represent specific communities, they do so not in order to present forms that are homologous with and reducible to a certain constituency or culture, but in order to precisely allow these figures to break out of such scenarios, and to migrate elsewhere. Such migrations might unsettle the stories we tell ourselves about majoritarian and minoritarian figures, stories that continue to haunt in some predictable ways even Deleuze’s renewal of art history.

References


Direct Method for teaching Arabic language in Tongxin Arabic college of Ningxia in China

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Abstract

It is known that teaching methods are very important in the teaching foreign languages. This research aims to explain the direct teaching method for Arabic language in Tongxin Ningxia in China, and how to implement it and the problems encountered by the Arabic teachers during the teaching. The researcher used the inductive method to explore various ways of teaching Arabic language and adopted the historical approach to uncover the historical development and development of this college, as well as teaching the Arabic language in it. And the field approach to highlight the problems faced by teachers of Arabic language and students in the teaching and study of Arabic language at the Faculty of Arabic Language in Tongxin on the method of observations and interview. The researchers also used the descriptive approach in the collection of information related to it, as well as the analytical approach to obtain the results of the effectiveness of direct teaching methods using by questionnaire. The researcher selected 100 students and 10 teachers from this college. The data were analyzed using spss program. And Statistical processing was performed using the frequency distribution and percentage. The results of the research show that even though methods of teaching Arabic are multiple, there is no typical way in teaching, each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. But according the result, the majority of students and teachers found that direct teaching method is highly encourage to be implement during Arabic class.

Keyword: Direct method, Teaching, Arabic language.

Introduction

The teaching methods of foreign languages are famous and widespread in the world, especially for English. As for the teaching of the Arabic language, has many ways, there are many researchers have written researches related to this topic to benefit for teaching of Arabic, but the fact that the teaching methods of the Arabic language is different from other foreign languages relatively, and this is due to the characteristics of Arabic language and its advantages, Arabic is a rich and fairly accurate language.

The direct method of teaching one of the foreign languages, as described by Rushdie Ahmed Taima (1986) as characterized by four entrances, the most important points are: Distinguish them in natural order in learning language skills that begin with listening, speaking, reading, writing, since the individual writes only what Read, and read only what he uttered, and speaks only what he listened to. In short, the direct method is compatible with the learning of the mother tongue.

The researchers believe that the direct method is the best way for the students who are non-native speakers. The teacher did not seem to think very well, and as the designer, the lessons should prepare all the readiness to benefit the students from teaching which they like the material they teach. But there are a lot of teachers and lecturers know what they teach, but they do not know how to teach. Therefore, we need to discuss this topic. Hence this research helps teachers of Arabic to know the direct method and how to use it, especially for teaching Arabic speakers.

One of the researchers taught Arabic for Chinese students at the Tongxin Arabic Language College ten years ago. Through this long period, we noticed that the students are weak in the four basic Arabic language skills: listening, speaking, reading
and writing. This is because of lack of efforts and lack of information, therefore the teachers implement the single teaching methods alone, seldom use the direct method during their teaching Arabic language. The researchers realized the importance of the direct method in teaching Arabic language, especially for students who are non-native speakers.

This study focus on clarifying the purpose of the direct method, its importance and its advantages in the teaching Arabic language by using it for students who are non-native speakers and tried to solve the problems in the Arabic language college of Tongxin.

**The statement of Problem**

There are many problems in applying the direct method to teaching Arabic language for most teachers and students in the Tongxin Arabic Language College in China. Those problems makes researchers to study this topic. Those problems are: Lack of good knowledge of the direct method and lack of implement this method in the teaching Arabic language; most of them apply single method often during the lectures, namely the method of translation and grammar; the lack of appropriate teaching method for the direct method of teaching Arabic language at the Tongxin Arabic Language college. And the students are very week in speaking and listening even thought they had learned Arabic language for long time already, all problems which mentioned above lead to difficulties in the application of the direct method.

**Objectives of the research**

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1- To Simplify knowledge for the direct method of teaching Arabic language.
2- To explain the importance of the direct method in teaching Arabic for non-native speakers.
3- To demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages of the direct method in language teaching.
4- To evaluate the effectiveness of the direct method and problems of application in the teaching of Arabic language at the Tongxin Arabic Language College.

**The importance of research**

The importance of this study is divided into a theoretical and an applied point of view, and in theory it is the identification of the direct method of teaching Arabic language to non-Arabic speakers, their importance, their advantages and disadvantages and the understanding of the direct method and how to use it in teaching.

On the practical side, this study is a way to solve the problems faced by teachers of Arabic language for non-native speakers, and encourage them to implement the direct method of teaching to improve their level of education and the ability of students to speak proficiency at the Faculty of Arabic Tongxin.

**Research method**

This research relies on the inductive method to collect data and information related to direct methods, their origin and characteristics, as well as the information related to the backgrounds of the Tongxin Arabic Language College, its origin and the level of teachers of Arabic language. The researcher is based on the observation of the problem of application of the direct method in teaching Arabic language. The researcher selected 100 students and 11 teachers from this college. The researcher is based on the observation of the observation to the practical problems of the direct method of teaching Arabic language. The researcher collects the information related to the interview of the teachers and students at the Arabic language school in Tongxin.

Besides that, the research dopants on the descriptive approach to a deep study of the direct method, describing it exactly in terms of definitions and characteristics, and clarifying practical obstacles and difficulties in its teaching through analyzing previous studies and collecting information and references.

It also depends on the analytical method of resurrection by collecting all the questionnaire by answering Arabic and Arabic language teachers in Tongxin and analyzing the questionnaires to solve the problems related to the direct method.

In order to obtain effectively information, the researchers choose the sample in a simple random way. The total number of Arabic language teachers who teach at the Tongxin Arabic Language College is 10 teachers, including 8 teachers who
received a bachelor's degree and two teachers with a master's degree. The sample size of the students is 100 students. The researchers also randomly choose 50 students in the second year and 50 students in the third year. And the statistical analysis program SPSS is to conduct the numerical analysis, graphs, tables and percentage, and then the researchers present the findings. And analyze to extract evidence and facts.

Analysis of questionnaires

The purpose of this research is to examine the problems presented in the application of the direct method of teaching Arabic in the Faculty of Arabic Language in Tongxin. In order to achieve this goal, the researcher conducted the questionnaire on the sample members of the teachers of Arabic language and students in this college.

The sample population of the teachers consists of 11 teachers who teach the Arabic language, and their students who study in this school from different classes in three stages: the first, second and third year. The researcher chose these students for different information.

The number of questionnaires distributed to the students in this college was one hundred (100), ie 30 for the first year, 40 for the second year and 30 for the third year. The response rate was 100% for students and 100% for teachers.

Analysis of teachers' questionnaire

The questionnaires distributed to these teachers included twenty questions related to the different issues that we can identify as follows: 1) Six questions in the first section aimed at obtaining general information about the teachers' personalities; 2) Eleven of them in the second part of closed questions Which relate to their views on the practical problems of the direct method of teaching Arabic; 3) Three questions, including the third section of the open questions on how to solve these problems.

Through the analysis, the researcher obtained the following valuable information:

General Information:

The ratio of teachers and teachers in the college is not equal first. This indicates that most of the teachers in the college have a beautiful patience in teaching the Arabic language, which requires patience more than other materials. Therefore, the educational qualifications of the teachers in this college are high and reasonable. Because most of them have a bachelor's or master's degree, accounting for 73%; 64% of the teachers have more than five years of experience in education, and most of the teachers in the college do not care about their individual development, because 56% of teachers do not participate in training courses always, or never participate in. While most teachers are busy in education, they do not have enough times to study general teaching methods and to study the direct method of the particular.

Closed questions

The answer to opinions about the direct method, etc., is required to determine the extent of approval. The result of the answers is summarized as follows:

All teachers know about the direct method almost, their proportion has reached about 91%. But the number of teachers who use the direct method in teaching Arabic for beginners 8 teachers, has reached about 74%, and this indicates that the extent of application of this method in the college is relatively large, but limited to the primary stage only.

- 65% of teachers see that their students are not excellent in the skill of speech, this means that the ability of students in the skill of speech need to upgrade and development is an urgent need for them.

- Most teachers see that the main problem faced by students in speaking Arabic is the lack of the appropriate study environment, and 55% of them admit that individual teaching methods. Also of the problem is the task. 65% of teachers often rely on the method of translation and grammar in teaching Arabic.

- 65% of teachers believe that the direct method does not take into account individual differences among students.

- Most teachers confirm that students do not have a strong desire to learn Arabic, which leads to weakness in the skills of four, where the number reached eight, representing 73%.
- Nine teachers agree that the specialized books, especially the direct way incomplete in the college, and the proportion of 82%. Perhaps this is an original reason for the weakness of knowledge in this way and mastery of the college teachers.

- Seven teachers in the approval of the direct method does not suit all the materials of the Arabic language, and their proportion is 64%. Perhaps this is one of the disadvantages of the direct method.

As for the view of "the practical problems of the direct method in the Tongxin Arabic Language School is the teacher's lack of interest in using them." Most of the teachers do not agree with this view, and they numbered six person where he got about 55%.

Open Questions

1- The direct method is the best way to increase the speech skills of other speakers. What do you think of this talk?

From the teachers' answers, we learned that eight teachers fully agree with this view. Their argument: The direct method urges them to speak and express more. And three teachers do not agree, one believes that the direct method is useful and effective in education without doubt. In this way students can get used to the linguistic environment and listen and speak until they think the target language from the beginning of studies, so they can understand and raise their level of expression. But on the other hand does not see the researcher that this method is appropriate for each professor or student because this method neglects to help the mother tongue, if there is some difficult information in education, it is easy to occur this misunderstanding and waste time also. The other said: This method helps students to strengthen their ability to speak and verbal expression on the one hand and on the other hand it also benefits students in their ability to listen. But this method is not suitable for teaching all materials for the Arabic language.

The third is that the direct method is very suitable for beginners and not suitable for students in the second and third year, teachers must be associated with other methods in the teaching of Arabic speakers.

2- What are the practical problems of the direct method in the Tongxin Arabic Language School?

The researcher summarizes the teachers' answers as follows:

Teachers use the traditional method of teaching Arabic, which is fundamentally dependent on grammar, not on everyday language practice and is committed to translation methods, so they may not have time to speak Arabic in and out of the classroom.

Teachers cannot use Arabic at all times because they are limited. The ability of students to understand Arabic is weak if they learn the direct method without the help of the mother tongue.

Non-application of the direct method in some professors. Because of the lack of linguistic environment and lack of cooperation and response between students and professors, because students in our college are still young in their age and are weak in Chinese language also makes them do not understand what the professor taught.

The application of the direct method requires teachers to have abundant experience, and the professor with abundant experience can make the lesson atmosphere active and therefore students want to express without fear and concern.

Most teachers do not know how to apply the direct method well and not understand the direct method of understanding correctly at the professors. Many of the Arabic language teachers do not have references to modern teaching methods, especially the direct method.

Students lack the desire to study and are not determined to study.

3 - What are the ways to solve the practical problems of the direct method?

The researcher summarizes the views of teachers in this regard as follows:

Teachers should speak Arabic while teaching and their students should speak Arabic from the beginning of the study even in a few words and in simplified terms. However, teachers should encourage their students to speak the simplest sentences or words in Arabic and to participate in language activities, especially in Arabic.
Teachers should reduce the explanation of grammar in the mother tongue and interest in translation when the lesson. They do not correct their mistakes, even though they exist.

Teachers must first study this method so that they know what they mean.

The college should encourage teachers to use the direct method during teaching.

Creating the linguistic environment inside and outside the college between the teachers first and then the students and inventing the corner of the Arabic language once a week.

The faculty must be equipped with various tools for use by teachers in the direct way.

**Analysis of students’ questionnaire**

This section deals with the analysis of students’ questionnaire on the application of teachers to the direct method in this college. Which:

What is a common method used by teachers to teach?

The method of grammar and translation in the teaching of faculty members from the perspective of students is a common method where he got 70% followed by the direct method and 14%, then the method of reading, which is 9%, and then the method of communication and the proportion of 5%, while the audiovisual method, % Just. In general, we note that direct method is not a common method in college.

Which way would you benefit the most?

Shows that the method that benefits the students more is the method of grammar and translation where he got 52%, followed by the direct method, 20% of students benefit from this method, then the audiovisual method was 13%, and the method of reading is only 8%.

What methods does the professor use to explain new words and difficult phrases?

47% of the students say that the teachers use the reference to explain the new words and difficult phrases, followed by the representation where he got 28%, and the fees considered by the third rank was up to 20%. The least chosen method is the sound, which is only 5%. This shows that teachers have a variety, most of them reference. However, both representation and graphics play an important role in direct method use, and sound as well. The song was a favorite way of teaching the language, but it seems that it was not used by professors at the college.

Any material taught by the professor in the direct way?

The answer is that the material used by the teachers is the direct method of the first level is the conversation where he received 69%, while the second place was followed by 12%, followed by reading and construction, each ranked third, or 8%. The rules use this method in which the lowest ratio is only 3%. Therefore we note that the direct method used in this college is not available.

What language activities do students prefer?

The language activities designed to be preferred by the students in this college are watching Arabic films where 40% have been obtained. This will benefit the application of the direct method. Thus, speaking Arabic in the classroom or outside it is the second rank of the preferred activities, and amounted to 31%, and then summarize the text before the pupils, the proportion of this activity 24%, while reading the Koran

Each day he won the last rank and their proportion of only 5%. This is very small for those who study the language of the Qur'an, because it is known that the Arabic language is the language of the Qur'an itself, so we do not neglect it in teaching.

What activity does the teacher do while teaching?

The questionnaire shows that 3% of the students believe that the activity of the teacher during the teaching is linguistic puzzles, and 7% of the students see him as a match between the students. Many of them say that the activity is Arab
rhetoric, where it got 38%. And 6% of them consider the Arabic song, and most students believe that the reading contest is the activity taken during teaching.

If the professor used the direct method length of the quota, can you accept this method?

The questionnaire shows that only a small number of students wish to do so. Their percentage is only 15%. This indicates that these students are strong in listening and speaking skills, as well as their high capacity on both sides. 21% of the students are accepted, 18% do not accept at all, while the percentage of others who accept them has the highest percentage of 46%. However, the condition is that the professor needs to explain some words in Chinese. This tells us that they are weak in listening and speaking and are dependent on the mother tongue.

How to answer the questions posed by the professor in Arabic?

The questionnaire shows that few students answer the questions directly in Arabic, where they received 14%. Most of the students cannot answer the questions directly, but they think about their objectives first and then answer them in Arabic, 79%, while 9% of the students understand the purpose of the questions. But they cannot answer in Arabic, and weaker than that are some students see that they do not understand the intent of the questions and does not answer them. From this conclusion, the researcher sees that the development of the linguistic idea is very important, so it needs to use the direct method of urgent need.

How do you usually save new words?

The result of the questionnaire explained that the methods of memorizing the new words among the students are varied. 31% of the students take the method of reading the word in high volume several times in order to memorize it. Many of them memorize the short sentence in which the required word is given. 36% of them are speaking with their friends. And the remaining students read these new words while writing them on the book. The researcher sees that each student has the method of memorizing the new words. If the teachers use the direct method, the students will be sure to memorize the words.

What is the main problem you face in class when the teacher uses the direct method of teaching?

The answers show that the main problem faced by students in the class is a weakness in the hearing of some students and reached 27%, and half of them consider that the lack of vocabulary is the main problem, and 17% of students think it is weak speech, 6% of students think it Due to non-habituation. In view of the analysis of this question, the researcher noted that all students face the problem in applying teachers to the direct method.

Discussion and Analysis

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire, we have identified the types of problems and obstacles encountered in the course of the Arabic language in general and the direct method especially among the teachers and students at the Tongxin Arabic language college. In this regard, the researcher will present the findings through the presentation and analysis of questionnaires. We can summarize that the direct method faces practical problems in the Tongxin Arabic Language College as follows:

1- Most of the problems and difficulties of Arabic language education in the Tongxin Arabic Language College are lack of capable educators and teachers with experience and experience in the art of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. Because 64% of teachers have more than five years of experience in education, but most of them do not care about their individual development. 56% of teachers do not participate in or never participate in training courses.

2- 70% of the teachers use the traditional method of teaching the Arabic language, which depends mainly on the maintenance of grammar, not on the practice of daily language, and depends on the way the Arabic words translated characters into Chinese. This indicates that there is no appropriate Arab environment inside and outside the college. This may be a major reason why students do not speak Arabic very well and that they are very ashamed when using Arabic in the classroom or outside.

3- The inconsistency of the distribution of the number of shares among teachers, the researchers believe that some teachers have many quotas, and they do not have sufficient times to study the modern method of high level of education.
4- Most students have difficulty learning Arabic and the most important problems are hearing and speech impairment. Because 75% of students do not want the professor to use the direct method length of the lesson, this tells us that they are weak in listening and speaking and relying on the mother language. As well as 65% of the teachers see that their students are not excellent in the skill of speech, this means that the ability of students in the skill of speech need to upgrade and development is an urgent need for them.

5- Lack of strong desire of students in the study, which makes them have difficulty in speaking Arabic, and this is why the head leads to believe that the Arabic language is more difficult than other subjects. And the shortage of participation of students in associations or linguistic activities.

Conclusion

This research has reached the end door after the researchers had made the utmost efforts in reviewing the books related to teaching methods of the Arabic language, especially the direct method and collecting information and analyzing it.

After analysis, the researchers presented practical problems for the direct method in the Tongxin Arabic Language College and some treatment methods, as well as some valuable suggestions addressed to the teachers, the learners and the college administration as well.

Therefore, the researchers will benefit greatly from this research, either in the field of the concept of the direct method and its characteristics or in the field of teaching methods in this college. Finally, the researchers hope that modest work will create a new path in this regard, and benefit others who practice Arabic language teaching or wish to study the direct method completely and comprehensively.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the results mentioned above, the researchers mention some of the following suggestions and recommendations:

1- For the Department of Education: Working on the development of teachers' training curricula: Through the presentation and analysis of the questionnaire, it was clear that all of them recognized the urgent need for training courses to teach Arabic as a second language to improve their performance. These teachers cannot do their job in language and science at best unless they have received a sufficient share of educational and cultural preparation, especially in the art of teaching Arabic.

2- For the Tongxin Arabic Language College:

1) The Dean of the Department of Education should consider to reduce their heavy loads so that they can devote their efforts to the educational process and research.

2) The College should follow the best method of raising the level of performance among teachers of the Arabic language by sending them to training courses or scientific seminars or workshops to teach Arabic language to non-native speakers, especially in teaching methods and methods. As well as their training on teaching methods in general and the direct method in particular.

3) It is necessary to provide the creation of a room for teaching aids, in which audiovisual aids are collected from tapes, films, television screens, recording devices, web boards and other modern teaching aids for teachers to use in their education.

4) The College should encourage teachers to carry out research studies that are directly related and applied in the Tongxin College of Arabic Language. They should avoid using inappropriate teaching methods.

3- For teachers:

1) to practice the direct method of their students in the primary stage and that students return this method from the beginning of the study to develop the idea of language. And avoid from traditional methods inherited.

2) to understand the characteristics of the direct method is a good understanding, namely that the teacher uses the Arabic language only in the process of teaching without other languages, and much of the dialogue and conversation in Arabic between the teacher and students, so that the teacher role model for students should initiate the conversation in Arabic.
4- For students:

1) to address the psychological problems facing them such as laziness and lack of diligence and desire and inclination to study all individuals can deal with them himself.

2) to train themselves to practice the skill of listening to the Arabic audio materials always to enable him to acquire this skill, we have been able to master the skill of speech to the degree of speech that approach the words of the owners of the language themselves.

3) To initiate the expulsion of oral questions in Arabic on the subject of the study and to participate in the language activities in which the college is held or by the teacher in the classroom or outside.

References


Method of Analogy (Uslub Al-Tashbih) in Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric: the Analysis and Comparative Study

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Abstract
This research aims to analyze the similarities and differences of Method of analogy (Uslub Al-Tashbih) between Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric. The researchers implement the inductive method to collect the relevant knowledge about method of Analogy in Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric, as well as, apply the analytical descriptive approach and the comparative approach to analysis and contrast the similarities and differences of this method in both Rhetoric. As a result, the researchers found that even though there are different ways to express in two languages, but the purpose of the expression is very similar in both rhetoric. The most similar points of method of Tashbih in both rhetoric as a follow: In the Arabic rhetoric, there are four components: the source, the target, the indicator of resemblance and the similarities, but in the Chinese rhetoric there are only three components: the source, the target, the indicator of resemblance. This also led to the different methods of Tashbih. As for the types of Tashbih, the species of Tashbih in Chinese are much more than Arabic rhetoric. In conclusion, this study had a value and new aspects to continue to study according to the result which is found.

Keywords: Method of Analogy (Uslub al-Tashbih), Rhetoric in Arabic and Chinese

Introduction:
Rhetoric in Arabic Language is a kind of Arabic linguistics, which is a way to express emotions and make language more meaningful. There are three different types of Arabic rhetoric, and the method of analogy belongs to smart rhetoric. (Ibu manzura, 2012) The smart rhetoric implements different ways to express the same meaning. (Al-Qazwani, 2009) The method of analogy is a comparison of things with similar meanings and at the same time, use analogy words to make their relationship more clear. (amin, 1992)

However, Rhetoric in Chinese language has number of different types, and the method of analogy is just one of them. Therefore, In Chinese, it is more clear and easier to express the meaning by analogy. (wu li quan, 2016)

The main objective of this research is to explain the meaning of analogy in Arabic and Chinese languages, and explore the similarities and the differences of analogy between Arabic and Chinese. What's more, this research also will helps learners to understand analogy in Arabic and Chinese as a whole, clarify the types of rhetoric in Arabic and Chinese, and the similarities and differences between these two languages.

Statement of Problem
This research mainly discusses the topic in the field of linguistics, especially in Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric. This research aims to analyze the similarities and differences of style of analogy (Uslub al-Tashbih) between Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric. Previously, there are a lot of researches talking about the topics only in the area of Arabic rhetoric or in Chinese rhetoric, and at the same time there are amount of researches discussed about the similarities and differences of rhetoric between
Arabic and Chinese. However, there is no single research analyzing the similarities and differences of method of analogy (Uslub al-Tashbih) between Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric in detail. Therefore, this research is innovative in this area.

Research Methods

This research will implement the inductive method, the analytical descriptive method and the comparative method to analyze and contrast the similarities and differences in these two languages' rhetoric. This research has collected many different sentences containing Arabic and English analogy (Uslub Al-Tashbih).

Inductive method

Collecting the relevant knowledge about method of Analogy in Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric by using this way.

Analytical descriptive method

Analyzing the composition of analogy in Arabic and Chinese, studying them separately, and drawing a conclusion regularly.

Comparative method

Analyzing and contrasting the similarities and differences of method of Analogy in Arabic and Chinese Rhetoric by using this way.

Discussion and Analysis

In this part, researchers will discuss and compare the analogy (Al-Tashbih) between Arabic and Chinese. The examples are as follows:

Comparison of the composition of analogy (Al-Tashbih) between Arabic and Chinese

1) The composition of analogy (Al-Tashbih) in Arabic

The analogy (Al-Tashbih) in Arabic is composed of four parts: Al-Mushabahu (المشبه) , Al-Mushabahu bih (به المشبه) , Ada’tu al Tashibih (أداة التشبيه) and wajihu al-Tashbih (وجه التشبيه). Al- Mushabahu refers to an target which is intended to be described, Al-Mushabahu bih refers to a person or thing which is described, Ada’tu al-Tashbih is a word or phrase which is contacting between Al-Mushabahu and Al-Mushabahu bih to express the relationship between them, and wajihu al-Tashbih is word that is illustrated similarities between Al-Mushabahu and Al-Mushabahu bih. Sometimes, Ada’tu al- Tashibih (أداة التشبيه) and wajihu al-Tashbih (وجه التشبيه) can be deleted. For example:

(The true will is just as sharp sword.) (Chen Yaozhong, Yu Xiaozhen, Zhou Wenju, 2001)

(Your magnanimity is just like seas and oceans.) (Chen Yaozhong, Yu Xiaozhen, Zhou Wenju, 2001)

In first sentence above, Al-Mushabahu is "true will" (الزمالة السماحة), Ada’tu al- Tashibih is "just as" (كما), the Ada’tu al- Tashibih is "sharp sword" (شبه السيف) , and there is no wajihu al-Tashbih in this sentence.

However in the second sentence above: "You" (أنت) is Al-Mushabahu, "seas and oceans" (بحر السماحة) , Al- Mushabahu bih, wajihu Al-Tashibih is "magnanimity" (المالمة السماحة), and there is Ada’tu al- Tashibih in this sentence.
2). The Composition of Chinese Analogy

The Chinese analogy is composed of three elements: Al-Mushabahu, Al-Mushabahu bih and Ada’tu al- Tashibih. Although there is the concept of “wajihu al-Tashibih” in Chinese analogy, but it is not a part of analogy in Chinese language. For example:

Time is a sharp sword. (Headline, 2017) Al-Mushabahu of this sentence is “time”, the Al-Mushabahu bih is “sharp sword”, and Ada’tu al- Tashibih is “is”.

Long journey tests the power of horses, and hard history tests heroes. (qing shao nian bi du cong shu Wei yuan hui, 2009)

“Long journey tests the power horses” is Mushabahu, “hard history tests heroes” is Mushabahu bih and there is no Ada’tu al- Tashibih in this sentence.

3). The similarities between Chinese and Arabic analogy

Analogy in Chinese and Arabic all have the concepts of Al- Mushabahu, Al-Mushabahu bih and Ada’tu al- Tashibih, and their meanings are all the same. Both Al-Mushabahu and Al-Mushabahu bih are all indispensable, while sometimes, Ada’tu Al- Tashibih can be deleted.

4). The difference between Chinese and Arabic analogy

There isn’t a concept of “wajihu Al-Tashibih” in Chinese Rhetoric, and it is not a necessary element of analogy, which is the difference between Chinese and Arabic analogy.

A comparison of analogy types between Arabic and Chinese

According to the four elements of the analogy, Arabic analogy ( Al- Tashibih) can be divided into Al-tashibih al- mursal (التشبيه المرسل), Al- tashibih al-muakad (التشبيه المؤكد), Al- Tashibih – mufasil (التشبيه المفصل) and so forth.

According to the meaning, Chinese analogy can be divided into “ming yu” (simile), “dao yu” (reversed analogy), “jiao yu” (compared analogy), “bo yu” (sustained analogy), etc.

The similarities of analogy types in Arabic and Chinese

Although the types of method of Arabic and Chinese analogy are totally different, but there are still some similarities in categories.

There is Al-Tashibih Al-Mursal (التشبيه المرسل) in Arabic rhetoric, which is similar to “ming yu” in Chinese rhetoric. For example:

His forehead is as bright as a minute surface. (Chen Yaozhong, Yu Xiaozhen, Zhou Wenju, 2001)

Chu yang xiang hao bi chu dou zi, fei chu bu ke. (Silly sight just like breakouts, which cannot be avoided.) (qian zhong shu, 1980)

These two sentences are typical similes. Al-Mushabahu, al- mushabahu bih and adat-al -Tashibih are very prominent and belong to the same category. At meanwhile, analogies in Chinese are similar in Arabic as Al-Tashibih Al-Muakad (التشبيه المؤكد).
Da wang zhuang zhe ge zhen di cheng wei yi ke rui li de tie ding, lao lao de ding jin le huang wei bing tuan de nao men xin. (Dawangzhuang has became a sharp nail and firmly pushed into the heart of Huangwei Corps.) (Shao Jingmin, 2007)

Adat-al- Tashbih are not mentioned in these two sentences, but the relationship is very clear. Tashibih Al-Tamthil (تشبيه المقلوب) in Arabic and “duo xiang yu” (sustained analogy) in Chinese have some similarities, which are all use many sides of Al- Mushabah, overall image or multiple Al- Mushabah Bih to describe Al- Mushabah. For example:

المتردد في الأمور يجدنه رأي هذا ورأي هناك كريهة في مهب الريح لا تستقر على حال. (Those who act indecisive are at the mercy of numerous thoughts, like a feather of the tuyere.) (Chen Yaozhong, Yu Xiaozhen, Zhou Wenju, 2001)

The al- Mushabib Bih in the first sentence is "ريشة في مهب الريح" (the feathers of the tuyere), which is an overall image. The al- Mushabiah Bih in the second sentence is “xu” (catkin), “xing” (stars) and “fei xiang de jing ling” (flying fairies). In addition, Al-Tashbih Al-Dhamni (التشبيه الضمني) (the connotation analogy) in Arabic and analogy in Chinese are same.

(When it comes to a disaster, it shows the true quality of the hero, and the blazing fire makes the gold brighter.) (Chen Yaozhong, Yu Xiaozhen, Zhou Wenju, 2001)

The streams of all sides have been merged into rivers, and the creation of the working people everywhere has become a splendid civilization. (Qin Mu, 1961)

These two sentences do not have the usual form of analogy. Readers can only experience the significance of analogy by understanding their meanings. At last, Al-Tashbih Al-Majhalub (التشبيه المقلوب) (reversed analogy) in Arabic has similar meaning with the “dao yu” (reversed analogy) in Chinese.

(The wind is gentle, like his character.) (Chen Yaozhong, Yu Xiaozhen, Zhou Wenju, 2001)

Although these two sentences invert the position of Al- Mushabib and Al-Mushabib Bih, they still express the same meaning.

2). The differences between Arabic and Chinese analogy types

As mentioned above, the difference between the basic types of Chinese and Arabic rhetoric causes the difference between Chinese and Arabic analogy types. The biggest difference in the Chinese and Arabic analogy types is that Chinese analogy divides the types of analogies by sentence meaning and analogical meaning, while Arabic analogy divides the
analogy types through the sentence structure. Chinese analogies have the concept of analogy (using the opposite side of Al-\textit{Mushabah} to serve as a foil to its characteristics), which is a phenomenon that does not exist in Arabic analogy.

3- Comparison between analogical purpose in Chinese and Arabic

Although he cultural background, customs, and language habits of the Arabic and Chinese are different, there are many similarities in the expression of analogy and the purposes of the analogy are all consistent: confirming the status of Al-Mushabih, beautify or ugly the image of Al-Mushabih, strengthening the tone of sentences, and increasing the activeness of words.

Conclusion

Although there are many difference in cultural background, customs, and language habits between Chinese and Arabic, there are many similarities in the expression of the analogy. Although the types of method of the two analogies are different, the analogical purpose of them are all to better express emotion and strengthen mood. The study of similarities and differences between Arabic metaphor and Chinese metaphor is of great significance to the researches of these two languages in the future.

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Storytelling and the Inculcation of Virtue in Learners on Cognitive Science, Communication Theory and Virtue Ethics

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Abstract

South Africa is in its 24th year of democracy and is beset with ethical challenges that threaten to derail the young republic. As always, educators have a primary role to play, especially with regards to the ethical education of the youth. While rule based ethical approaches (deontology) have become less popular due to the recognition of human beings and their ethical systems as products of their environment (e.g. German Historicism), virtue ethics has made somewhat of a comeback. Virtue ethics allows people to focus on the virtues valued within their community and the attainment thereof, rather than the implementation of universal rules. The interdisciplinary field of cognitive science, especially cognitive psychology, further supports the use of virtue ethics. Recent research within cognitive science has shown that much of our behavior is subconscious, guided by habit or pre-learned schemata as frameworks of expected behavior. This holds that behavior is not primarily guided by conscious obedience to a set of rules. In other words, we do not think and then act but rather act subconsciously and then think afterwards (deliberate on our behavior). Therefore, in order to change behavior we need to address the habits or schemata that guide behavior. Virtue ethics is especially useful in this regard because it places the focus on virtue and its attendant habits or schemata when changing behavior. The article then argues that educators can use storytelling (communication) to inculcate virtue in learners. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) better known within the field of strategic communication management in conjunction with narratology from the perspective of cognitive science are further fleshed out, resulting in a practical proposal regarding the communication of virtue to learners.

Keywords: Virtue, learners, storytelling, ethics, communication