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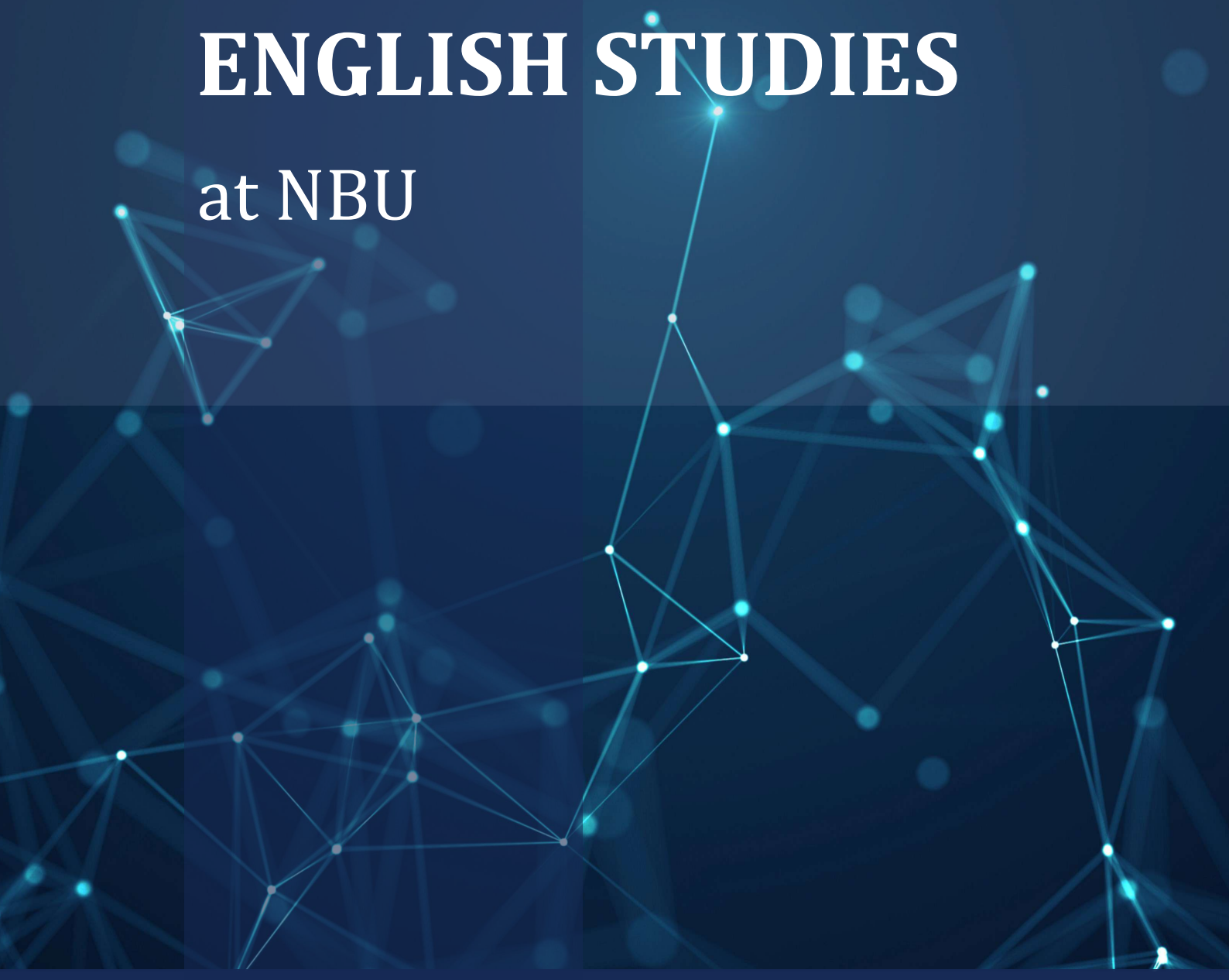

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CONTENTS

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EDITORS' MESSAGE

Boris Naimushin,
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Stan Bogdanov,
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Let your dreams take flight in the new year!

As we wrap up 2023, we send our best wishes for the holidays and the New Year! We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our authors, reviewers, and readers who have supported us throughout this year's journey. Your unwavering dedication and valuable contributions make *English Studies at NBU* a vibrant platform for your latest research!

We are delighted to introduce this Issue 2 of Volume 9 of *English Studies at NBU* with articles on translation, language testing, foreign language teaching, literature, and a book review.

Have a sparkling New Year!

Stay tuned for more exciting updates and insightful articles in the forthcoming issues. As always, your feedback and suggestions are invaluable to us.

Cheers and Happy 2024!

Boris and Stan

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IT TAKES THREE TO TANGO: HOW A CUBAN BALLERINA INTERPRETED FOR CASTRO AND KHRUSHCHEV

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Abstract

This text launches a series of articles under the image-based project *'With the Aid of an Unidentified Interpreter: Putting Names to Faces on Historical Photos'* dedicated to the history of high-level interpreting. Here, the quest is to identify the interpreter at the two encounters between Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro at Harlem's Hotel Theresa and at the Soviet Mission in New York on 20 and 23 September 1960 based on a photo from the personal archive of Khrushchev's assistant Vladimir Lebedev. This interpreter turned out to be Menia Martínez, a historic figure in Cuban ballet. Educated at the Vaganova School in St. Petersburg (Leningrad), she was proficient in Russian. The text looks at other professional and unprofessional interpreters who worked with the two leaders before, on, and after this trip to New York and whose work contributed to the development of Cuban-Soviet and East-West relations. The discussion draws on available visuals, memoirs, newspaper sources, and unclassified documents placing the discussion in the wider context of international relations at the time. The author is grateful to Menia Martínez, who, in a telephone conversation, has helped in clarifying some of the aspects of the matter under investigation.

Keywords: consecutive interpreting, history of conference interpreting, high-level meeting, translation studies, image-based research, autobiographical subjectivity

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Notes: [1]An earlier and partial version of this paper was presented at the *Applied Linguistics: Current Trends and Prospects* Conference, 18-19 November 2023, *St. Kliment Ohridski* University of Sofia.

[2]The author and publisher may have not traced properly the copyright holders for the photographs before publication and apologize for this apparent negligence. If notified, the publisher will be pleased to rectify any errors or omissions at the earliest opportunity.

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This text launches a series of articles under the image-based project '*With the Aid of an Unidentified Interpreter': Putting Names to Faces on Historical Photos*'. Browsing through archives with historical photos of high-level meetings, I noticed that captions often fail to identify interpreters by name. As a result, I set out to make a small contribution to putting names to the faces of unnamed interpreters in historical photos. The project grew out of my interest, as an interpreter trainer, in the history of interpreting as a whole and more specifically, the history of high-level interpreting. My own experience of working as a freelance interpreter for the Administration of the President of Bulgaria in the period 2009-2019 has also stimulated this interest. I also found inspiration for my project after reading a volume titled "*Framing the Interpreter. Towards a visual perspective*" (Fernandez-Ocampo & Wolf, 2014), an interesting example of image-based research in translation and interpreting studies.

The photos in this article are used under the provision of fair use of properly credited publicly available copyrighted material for non-profit academic research (see e.g., UN Photo Usage Guidelines, n.d.), with screenshots from videos falling under the 'transformative use' category. "English Studies at NBU" (ESNBU) is a Diamond Open Access journal, which means that no fees are charged to either authors or readers.

Castro, Khrushchev, and their interpreters in New York

This article aims to identify the interpreter(s) (Spanish-Russian or English-Russian) at the two meetings between Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev in New York in September 1960, where they participated in the 15th session of the UN General Assembly. Among the highlights of the event were Khrushchev's shoe-banging incident on 12 October 1960, during the 902nd Plenary Meeting, and Castro's second longest timed speech in the UN history on 26 September (269 minutes)[1], which he started with a promise to speak slowly and be brief, in order "to cooperate with the interpreters" (General Assembly, 15th session: 872nd plenary meeting, 1960). The meeting between the two leaders at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem was described as "a curtain raiser" to the 3 p.m. opening of a historic U.N. General Assembly on 20 September 1960 (Nikita Pays, 1960).

[1] The record for the longest speech (8 hours) was set in 1957 by Krishna Menon while defending India's rights to the disputed territory of Kashmir before the U.N. Security Council.

The Cuban delegation arrived on 18 September by plane; Khrushchev and his entourage sailed into New York on 19 September. The two leaders first met at 12.14 p.m. on 20 September at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem (Pérez, 2010; Vstrecha N.S. Hrushheva, 1960), in Castro's room No. 929 (Núñez Jiménez, 1998), where the Cuban delegation had relocated after being moved out of the Shelburne Hotel, despite an offer of free accommodation at the nearby Commodore Hotel (Castro Quarrels, 1960; Andrews, 2015). One newspaper source mentions a visit of Cuba's Foreign Minister Raúl Roa Garcia to the Soviet Mission in the morning of 20 September 1960 (Nikita Pays, 1960), after which Khrushchev "suddenly," according to his memoir (Khrushchev, N, 2016), decided to visit Castro in Harlem (Soviet Premier Visits, 1960). However, unclassified documents from Russian archives unambiguously demonstrate that this meeting was carefully planned (Hershberg, 2019). These documents include, for instance, records of conversations between Sergey Kudryavtsev, Soviet Ambassador to Cuba, with Foreign Minister Raúl Roa García (14 September 1960) and with Fidel Castro himself (15 September 1960), in the run-up to the General Assembly. Khrushchev went to the Hotel Theresa without Viktor Sukhodrev, his official English-Russian interpreter, and, in fact, without any interpreter, because he knew that Castro had included in his delegation a person who spoke Russian. I could not find any photos of Raúl Roa and his entourage at arrival or departure, and no mention of this meeting can be found in the available eyewitness accounts. It is impossible to say at this stage whether communication was via an English-Russian or a Spanish-Russian interpreter. On 23 September, another meeting between Castro and Khrushchev took place (Pravda, No. 269, 25 September 1960), this time for dinner at the Soviet Mission to the UN in New York, on Park Avenue and 680 Street. Both leaders also met at least once at the UN headquarters.

There is a wealth of literature on the two meetings, especially the first one. However, an initial investigation as to the identity of the interpreter yielded no results. Google searches in English, Spanish and Russian with keywords "Fidel Castro", "Nikita Khrushchev", "interpreter", "translator", "Hotel Theresa", "Harlem", "United Nations", "1960" in various combinations yielded results including Carmen Zamora, Juana Vera García (Juanita Vera), Nikolay Leonov, Ovsep Manasarian, Galina Utekhina, Viktor Sukhodrev, Oleg Troyanovsky, Yuri Vinogradov, Oleg Darusenkov, etc. These and other professional and unprofessional interpreters worked with the two leaders before, on,

and after this trip to New York and contributed to the development of Cuban-Soviet and East-West relations. However, there was no information about a Soviet or Cuban interpreter at Khrushchev's meeting with Castro at the Hotel Theresa in September 1960. The problem is that you only get results when you know the name of the interpreter and search in Spanish for "Name + traductora" or "Name + interprete". But at this initial stage, the name of the interpreter was still unknown.

Khrushchev travelled to New York with Viktor Sukhodrev, a prominent interpreter and diplomat at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Sukhodrev also had a degree in French from Moscow State Linguistic University; however, there is no evidence that he spoke or ever studied Spanish. Viktor Sukhodrev accompanied the Soviet delegation a year earlier, in 1959, when Khrushchev became the first Soviet leader to visit the United States; Oleg Troyanovsky, a future Soviet ambassador to Japan and China, was the second interpreter. Both interpreters can be seen in action during the 1959 visit in "Khrushchev Does America," a documentary by Tim Toidze (2013). In September 1960, Troyanovsky and Sukhodrev were again among the members of the Soviet delegation. In a photo at the ABC archive, Sukhodrev (in the middle) can be seen interpreting for Khrushchev and Castro at the UN on 20 September 1960 (Torremocha [Photograph], 1960).

In their memoirs, Sukhodrev (2008) and Troyanovsky (2017) provide no details with respect to the meetings at the Hotel Theresa or the Soviet Mission (Sukhodrev devotes several pages to the shoe-banging incident). Neither does Nikolay Leonov, Khrushchev's trusted Spanish-Russian interpreter. General-Major Nilolay Zakharov, assuring Khruschev's security during the visit, does not mention interpreters at the Hotel Theresa in his memoir (Zakharov, 2016). My conclusion is that interpretation during these two meetings was predominantly Spanish-Russian, and that the interpreter most probably was a member of the Cuban delegation.

The problem is that back in early 1960s, Russian was not a popular language to learn in Cuba, and very few people, if any at all, could speak it, let alone act as reliable interpreters. Dmitry Yazov (1924-2020), Marshal of the Soviet Union, commander of the Soviet ground forces in Cuba's Oriente Province during the Cuban Missile Crisis, working directly with Cuban Defense Minister Raúl Castro, says in his memoir that

"nobody knew Russian in Cuba at all at that time" (Jazov, 2015). Faced with a complete lack of military Spanish-Russian interpreters, the Soviet instructors relied on the language skills of 35 Moldovan soldiers (out of the contingent of 2,500 Soviet troops).

To improve the situation, a group of Soviet fourth-year students of Spanish translation and interpreting from Moscow were sent on a one-year internship to Cuba in 1961. Later, in 1964-65, one of these former students, Ovsep Manasarian, was among the interpreters for a group of high-ranking Cuban army officers sent for training to the Academy of the General Staff (Manasarian, 2016). Back to Cuba, he interpreted for Soviet military advisors and worked in close contact with Raul Castro and Che Guevara. Alongside English, Russian was introduced as an obligatory subject in the preuniversity Camilo Cienfuegos Military Vocational Schools (EVMCC) established in September 1966 (Handbook on the Cuban Armed Forces, 1979). But in 1960, finding a Cuban person proficient in Russian was a difficult task. Luckily for Fidel Castro, such a person had returned to Cuba from a five-year stay in the Soviet Union just in time for the trip to New York.

A photo from a personal archive

Searching for photos of Khrushchev and Castro in New York in September–October 1960, I came across two images in Rutov (2013). The article discusses Castro's 40-day visit to the USSR in 1963 and displays photos taken from another article (Samye jarkie momenty, n.d.), which actually does not feature **Figures 1** & **2**. In Rutov (2013), they are accompanied by a caption stating "*Hrushhev i Kastro v neformal'noj obstanovke*", i.e., 'Khrushchev and Castro in an informal setting', without specifying any date or location.

The scene in **Figure 1** looks like an informal meeting between the two leaders. **Figure 2** seems to be taken before or after the meeting; available documentaries such as "Fidel en Nueva York" (1960) confirm that it was taken after the meeting, outside the Hotel Theresa in Harlem (**Figure 3**). One of the other two persons present in the room in **Figure 1** had to be an interpreter because Khrushchev simply did not speak any foreign language.

Figure 1

The first meeting between Castro and Khrushchev at the Hotel Theresa on 20 September 1960

Note. [Photograph], by Vladimir Lebedev, 1960

Figure 2

Castro and Khrushchev outside the Hotel Theresa after the meeting on 20 September 1960

Note. [Photograph], by Vladimir Lebedev, 1960

The young woman in **Figure 1** can be seen next to Fidel Castro and Khrushchev exiting the Hotel Theresa in **Figure 3.**

Figure 3

Castro, Khrushchev, and a lady interpreter outside the Hotel Theresa, 20 September 1960

Note. From *Fidel Castro in the US, 1960* [Screenshot].

It is difficult to conclude from a silent video footage whether the person standing between Castro and Khrushchev in **Figure 4** is interpreting or just saying something to Castro. I think this person is Honorio Múñoz Garcia (1910-1977), a famous Cuban journalist (Hernández Serrano, 2016), founder of the Union of Cuban Journalists (UPEC), director of the school of journalism in Havana. And I am also not sure whether he is the same person with the one sitting first from left in **Figure 1**.

Figure 4

Castro, Khrushchev, and Honorio Múñoz (center) outside the Hotel Theresa after their first meeting on 20 Sept. 1960

Note. Castro, Khrushchev, and Múñoz outside the Hotel Theresa [Screenshot]. From *Fidel en Nueva York en 1960.*

The source of **Figure 2** by Lebedev is a short article dated 28 January 2009 on the Russia Today website. The article announces that it unveils the first public display of "exclusive photos of Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro made by the Soviet leader's personal assistant Vladimir Lebedev in 1960 in New York and in 1963 during Fidel's trip to the Soviet Union" (Khrushchev and Castro: insider photographs, 2009). However, the article features only **Figure 2**, not **Figure 1**. In reply to the query about the other "exclusive photos", the RT's Copyright Clearance and Permissions Office replied that they had been unable to find other photos in their archives. They also added that **Figure 2** had been used in their article without permission. On the other hand, they assumed that Vladimir Lebedev had taken the photos as part of his official duties and therefore the images may well be in the public domain.

Known for his passion for photography, Lebedev would take photos alongside professional photographers at official events and, more importantly, at informal events where official photographers were not always admitted. For instance, Sergei Khrushchev (1991, p. 135) describes how Lebedev took pictures with his camera during the telephone conversation between Nikita Khrushchev and three Soviet cosmonauts on a Voskhod program flight on 12 October 1964.

Coming back to the caption in Rutov (2013), it did not take me long to realize that **Figures 1 & 2** had nothing to do with Castro's 1963 visit to the USSR, where his official interpreter was Nikolay Leonov (1928-2022), a senior KGB officer and Latin America expert. Leonov, who met Raul Castro in 1953 and Fidel Castro in 1956 (Fraguas, 2022), later penned their biographies (Leonov, 2015; Leonov & Borodaev, 1998). He was the official interpreter of the Soviet delegation to Cuba in February 1960 headed by Anastas Mikoyan, First Deputy of the Council of Minister of the USSR, then the number two man in the Soviet hierarchy (Leonov, 2006; Samye jarkie momenty, n.d.). However, Leonov was not a member of the Soviet delegation to the Fifteenth session of the UN General Assembly in 1960.

According to the unclassified Record of Conversation between N.S. Khrushchev and Prime Minister of Cuba Fidel Castro (1960) in the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History, V.S. Lebedev was present at the meeting at the Hotel Theresa; no female name is mentioned:

> The conversation lasted 40 minutes. Present at the conversation were: F. Castro's adviser [Antonio] Núñez Jimenez, V.S. Lebedev, A.I. Adzhubei, P.A. Satyukov. Recorded by: [Signature] (V. Vinogradov).

Such Records or Memorandums of Conversation are usually prepared by the interpreter(s) working at the event. According to Viktor Sukhodrev (1999; my translation),

> It was the interpreter's duty to keep the record of the conversation - almost like a transcript. The negotiator can talk for five or ten minutes, and you sit there with a notepad and take it all down. And then you interpret. The record becomes a major reference document. Now in the archives, I am convinced, there are kilometers and

> kilometers of sheets that say, "Recorded by V. Sukhodrev." After the meeting with Kennedy, I dictated 120 typewritten pages…

In this case, the record was prepared by a V. Vinogradov. Below is the list of the USSR representatives and alternatives accredited to the Fifteenth session of General Assembly (General Assembly, 15th session: Appendices, 1960, p. 754; bolded by me, hereinafter BBM):

> USSR. Representatives. N. S. Khrushchev, A. A. Gromyko, V. A. Zorin, A. A. Sobolev, S. G. Lapin, **S. A. Vinogradov**, A. A. Soldatov, Mrs. Z. V. Mironova. Alternates: M. I. Kuchava, P. D. Morozov, A. A. Roshchin, N. I. Molyakov, P. M. Chernyshev, K. G. Fedoseev, L. I. Mendelevich, A. E. Nesterenko.

Sergei Ivanovich Vinogradov (1907-1970) was a Soviet diplomat, Ambassador of the USSR to France (1953-1965). Boris Pjadyshev (1932-2018), a Soviet and Russian diplomat and political analyst, then a young graduate of the prestigious Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), was a member of the Soviet delegation to the Fifteenth session of General Assembly. After the departure by plane of the official delegation headed by Khrushchev on 13 October, he and two other colleagues stayed on (the first part of the fifteenth Assembly met from September 20 to December 20, 1960) and then sailed back to Europe on *Liberté*, a French liner. His colleagues were Vladimir Krylov, V.A. Zorin's assistant, and Yuri Vinogradov, whom he describes as “the master of English translation” (Pjadyshev, 2008). In Paris, they were invited to stay for 10 days in the French capital by Ambassador Sergei Vinogradov who was eager to learn how things had developed at the UN after his departure with the official delegation.

As for Yuri Vinogragov, he was a high-level interpreter at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and later an Ambassador to Sri Lanka (1991-1993). The photos of 29 November 1962 from the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (e.g., Rowe, 1962). do not mention Vinogradov by name. However, two Memorandums of Conversation between President Kennedy and Anastas Mikoyan of 29 November 1962 (Keefer et al., 1996a and 1996b), and a Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Anastas Mikoyan of 30 November 1962 (Sampson, 1994) list Yuri Vinogradov as the interpreter on the Soviet side. I have no access to the original of the Record of Conversation between N.S. Khrushchev and Prime Minister of Cuba Fidel Castro (1960) to check whether “V.Vinogradov” is written in clear print or there is room for

interpreting a handwritten Cyrillic "В" (V) as "Ю" (Yu). Otherwise, we will have to search for a third "Vinogradov" in the Soviet delegation.

There are also photos by Alberto Korda (Alberto Díaz Gutiérrez, 1928–2001), Castro's long-time official photographer working for *The Cuban Revolution* newspaper, and the author of the iconic image *Guerrillero Heroico* of Che Guevara. Unfortunately, the photograph from Castro's room at the Hotel Theresa captures the two leaders in a friendly hug with no interpreter in sight (Korda, 1960a).

Fidel Castro himself spoke enough English to successfully communicate with journalists and even deliver a lecture to an audience of several thousand people during his visit to Cambridge and Harvard Law School Dillon Field House (Harvard Law School, 1959). Ralph D. Matthews, one of the journalists present at the meeting between Fidel Castro and Malcom X, a prominent African American Muslim leader, at the Hotel Theresa on 18 September 1960, testifies that Malcolm came with an English-Spanish interpreter, who "would translate longer sentences from Malcolm X into Spanish and Castro would listen alertly and smile courteously," also communicating "in his curious brand of broken English" (Matthews, 1960). At the meeting with Nehru (Korda, 1960b), "Fidel addresses Nehru in English, with difficulty, and relies on the translation by the young Raúl Roa Kourí" (Núñez Jiménez, 1998 in Báez, 2009, p. 318; my translation). When Ahmed Sékou Touré, the first president of Guinea (1958–1984), visited Cuba on October 13, immediately after addressing the General Assembly, Raúl Roa Kourí acted as an interpreter during his meetings with Castro and Dorticós (Cuba's president from 1959 to 1976), and also during his TV appearance (Kourí, 2018). Raúl Roa Kourí also testifies that Che Guevara spoke good French (Kourí, 2018).

The book that resurfaced forty years later

By some strange twist of life, the book (or, at least, the first volume of it) that helped me identify the name of the interpreter in this quest first came into my hands back in 1983, when I was in my final year of school. At that time, we lived in a neighborhood close to the Cuban Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria. Three or four families of Cuban diplomats lived in our building, including the Ambassador himself. That's how I was introduced to Cuban Spanish. One day, my Cuban friends took me to the Embassy

where they had afternoon classes in Spanish. To further improve my Spanish, I was given a copy of the recently published *"En marcha con Fidel–1959"* by Antonio Núñez Jiménez (Núñez Jiménez, 1982). I do not actually remember reading the book, but it surely spent several months on my desk and the image of its front cover had been floating in the back of my memory ever since until it resurfaced forty years later.

I remembered about the book when I learnt that Antonio Núñez Jiménez was present at the meeting at the Hotel Theresa (Record of Conversation between N.S. Khrushchev, 1960). In fact, I tried to get hold of the memoirs, if any, by all participants in the two meetings. I searched for the book on the Internet, and I found out that there were in fact four volumes of it (1959, 1960, 1961, 1962). And I also learnt that Antonio Núñez Jiménez was a famous Cuban geographer, speleologist, archaeologist, scientist and revolutionary, which had escaped my attention when I was fifteen years old.

The second volume that I needed was published in 1998. I could not find it online; fortunately, large excerpts from it (as well as from the other three volumes) have been published in a collection of texts titled '*Así es Fidel*', edited by Luis Báez Hernández (1936-2015), a famous Cuban journalist and author of several books about Fidel Castro (Báez, 2009). And '*Así es Fidel*' is available online.

To my knowledge, "*En marcha con Fidel–1960*" by Núñez Jiménez (1998) is the earliest primary source mentioning the name of the interpreter at the meeting between Castro and Khrushchev at the Hotel Theresa (Núñez Jiménez, 1998 in Báez, 2009, pp. 314-315; my translation, BBM):

> Four cars arrive and Khrushchev gets out of the first one, forced to pass through a cordon of journalists and security agents. After a cordial embrace, we enter the hotel. Fidel is waiting in his room No. 929, where he will have his first meeting with the Soviet leader, in which we, Foreign Minister Raúl Roa and the author, participate. **Comrade Menia Martínez, Cuban ballerina, serves as a translator.**

The second primary source (El día que Fidel, 2003; my translation, BBM) lists no author and provides a link to a non-existing site titled 'Terra Colombia' (http://salud.terra.com.co):

> Five days after our stay in New York, Fidel asked us what places we had visited in the city. Carlos Franqui replied: We haven't even left the hotel, because we don't even have a dollar to pay for a cab. Fidel said to Celia: Well, let's give some per diems to these poor ambassadors, US$25 each. And with these minimal per diems, I bought a pair of Florsheim shoes in a store on the first floor of Theresa and **I had a few dollars left to invite translator Menia Martinez to a restaurant in the Italian quarter for lunch**.

Figure 5

***Original caption**: In the Assembly Hall shortly before the meeting got under way, Premier N.S. Khrushchev (right), Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Premier Fidel Castro, of Cuba, are seen greeting each other.*

Note. Castro and Khrushchev at the UN Assembly Hall [Photograph], UN Photo, 20 September 1960

The description of the meeting between Castro and Khrushchev in the UN Assembly Hall on 20 September 1960 (El día que Fidel, 2003; my translation, BBM) is supported by **Figure 5** and the UN video 864th Plenary Meeting of General Assembly (1960):

> As I crossed into the space occupied by the Soviet delegation, I saw Nikita Khrushchev signaling me to come closer. “Are you from the Cuban delegation," he asked me. “Yes,” I answered. “Please take me to greet Fidel Castro,” he asked. Accompanied by Khrushchev, I went down the same staircase I had previously used with Fidel, to the first row, where we were welcomed by a surprised Castro.

> **The Russian and the Cuban exchanged cordial phrases with the help of a translator**, agreeing to meet that same evening at the residence of the Soviet delegation on Park Avenue.

The "translator' was Viktor Sukhodrev. The person wearing dark glasses and a white suit is José Pardo Llada, a famous Cuban journalist and radio commentator, who in 1961 defected to Colombia. The passages above must have been taken from one of the books he wrote in exile (e.g. Pardo Llada, 1988, 1993).

Pardo Llada is also the author of a booklet published in 1960, in which he describes the meetings of Fidel Castro with Khrushchev, Nasser, Nehru, and Tito. Unfortunately, there are no scans of pages 18-19 with the description of the meeting with Khrushchev at the Hotel Theresa on Ebay.com, so at this stage it is impossible to say whether he mentions the name of the interpreter.

The third primary source is an article by Raúl Roa Kourí (2018), a diplomat and writer, son of Foreign Minister Raúl Roa García, ascertaining the fact that Menia Martínez also interpreted at the second meeting (Kourí, 2018; my translation, BBM):

> The Soviet delegation invited our delegation to a "friendly and fraternal dinner" at the headquarters of its Mission to the UN, then located at 67th Street and Park Avenue… **Menia Martínez, Cuba's first ballerina, who had studied in Leningrad, served as interpreter for Fidel**, who occupied a small sofa next to Khrushchev. The rest of us crowded, standing or sitting, around the two leaders.

This second informal meeting between Castro and Khrushchev took place on 23 September (Pravda, No. 269, 25 September 1960), this time for dinner at the Soviet Mission to the UN in New York, on Park Avenue and 680 Street, with exchanges of Russian cigarettes and Cuban cigars, and "countless toasts with vodka" (Núñez Jiménez, 1998 in Báez, 2009, p. 315-16; my translation). Viktor Sukhodrev, Khrushchev's official interpreter during this visit, confirms that Castro's gifts to the Soviet delegation included several boxes of Cuban cigars (Sukhodrev, 2008).

According to Pardo Llada, the first toast was raised with "Caucasian white wine", after which Fidel took the floor for an hour and a half with detailed stories about the attack on the Moncada Barracks, the imprisonment on the Isla de Pinos, the travel to Mexico and the arrival at the Sierra Maestra (El día que Fidel, 2003). The meeting was cut short by Khrushchev's remark that "what you are telling us is very interesting but remember that tomorrow is a very busy day, and we should leave that story for another occasion" (El día que Fidel, 2003) (my translation).

Unfortunately, the only photo of the meeting at the Soviet Mission on 23 September 1960 which I have been able to find (Figure 6) does not show the interpreter.

Figure 6

Nikita Khrushchev, Fidel Castro, and Raúl Roa at the Soviet Mission to the UN in New York, 23 September 1960

Note. Nikita Khrushchev visits USA [Photograph], TASS Photo by Vasily Yegorov, 23 September 1960

Menia Martínez: *a pas de trois* in Harlem

The fourth primary source is the account of the meeting by Menia Martínez herself. On 25 November 2019, Cubans residing in Belgium and staff members of the Cuban Embassy to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union, gathered at the Cuban Embassy in Brussels to pay tribute to Fidel Castro (Fidel por Siempre, 2019).

The article goes on to say that the audience was deeply moved by the presentation by Menia Martínez, president of CUBABEL, the Association of Cubans Residing in Belgium, as she told the story of her high-level interpreting stint in New York on 20 September 1960. There is also a video recording of her presentation on YouTube (Martinez, 2019) in Spanish with French subtitles. In the caption to the video, no information is provided about the time and date of the event. I first found the video and then the article (Fidel por Siempre, 2009), which provided the missing data.

Menia Martínez (b. 1938) went to the Soviet Union in 1955 and stayed there till 1960. In an interview (Martínez, 2010), she says that when she left Cuba on a trip to Europe as a teenager (her parents wanted her to see Paris, and she planned to go to Warsaw for a Youth Festival[2]), she had no plans of going to Russia. However, the Bolshoi Theater company happened to be in Paris at that time, and she went for an audition. After a long wait, she finally got a telegram from the Ministry of Culture of the USSR (at that time, she needed a translator to read it, and she received the confirmation in Bucharest) informing she had been awarded a scholarship to study at the Vaganova school. After she arrived and settled in the boarding school, she was introduced to "a Russian teacher who did not know any Spanish, so the classes were based on pantomime" (Martínez, 2010; my translation):

> At the beginning I cried a lot, I missed my family, I dreamed of the palm trees and the sea... For me it was a big change, new customs, new food, everything was different. But thanks to the students who were very affectionate, everything was easier, they told me that with the Russian teacher I would not learn anything, that I should hang out with them in the street, go to the cinema, which helped me a lot.
>
> It was five years before I returned to Cuba, but it was not only a matter of weather, in fact I remember the first day I saw snow, I was in a Russian class, I left my books and went downstairs, the whole school looked out the window to see the Cuban eating the snow, and of course I got a sore throat.

It is difficult to imagine an untrained person going for a spontaneous audition at the Bolshoi Theater company on tour in Paris. In fact, Menia started her dancing career at an early age. At the age of 13, she was more interested in "becoming a musical

[2] The 5th World Festival of Youth and Students (WFYS) was held from 31 July to 15 August 1955 in Warsaw, capital city of the then Polish People's Republic.

performer, since I liked to sing, or perhaps a dancer in musical theater, which didn't exist in Cuba in those days." (Martínez, 2012(b); my translation). She was the first student to be offered a scholarship at the newly created Alicia Alonso School, and she soon started dancing in the Dance Company of the Cuban Ballet. So, she was well prepared for the Bolshoi Theater audition. In an interview, she says that it was Nicolás Guillén (Nicolás Cristóbal Guillén Batista, 1902–1989), Cuba's national poet, who encouraged her to enroll at the Vaganova School (Martínez, 2012(a)).

She studied dancing together with the 17-year-old Rudolf Nureyev and they are believed to have had a relationship (Kavanagh, 2007). She also gained popularity as a singer, recording several vinyl discs with Cuban songs, and giving live performances. In another interview, she recalls that this was a very important stage in her life (Martínez, 2023). When Juan Marinello (Juan Marinello Vidaurreta, 1898–1977), Cuban Communist intellectual, writer, poet essayist, lawyer and politician, came to Moscow, Menia performed Cuban songs for him, "I still have a photo of myself and Marínello, together with the great musician Achataríanas, and the director of the place handing me flowers." (Martínez, M. (2012b). It took me some time to figure out that "Achataríanas" is in fact Aram Khachaturian, a prominent Soviet Armenian composer and conductor. The photo of Khachaturian talking to Menia Martinez after her performance at the Central Actor's House in Moscow, with the timestamp of 17 April 1959, is in the RIA Novosti archive (Aram Khachaturian and Menia Martinez [Photograph], 1959).

Menia returned to Cuba in 1960, after the victorious Cuban Revolution, to become a star of the Cuban National Ballet and would later dance with Maurice Béjart. In 2013, she went to St Petersburg to participate in the quinquennial festival dedicated to the memory of Rudolf Nureyev. Currently, Menia Martínez works as a classical dance teacher and artistic director at the *Conservatoire de la danse de Bruxelles,* and as a teacher, rehearsal director, and assistant choreographer at the *Víctor Ullate Ballet – Comunidad de Madrid.* She is also honorary president of the *Académie de danse & musique Yantra.*

In the video, Menia says that Fidel Castro asked her to join the delegation because she knew Russian (she also spoke English), with no additional explanation. She was told to stick to Núñez Jiménez, whom she had known from her childhood years. One morning, she was told to get ready because Nikita Khrushchev was coming to see Castro and she

was supposed to interpret at the meeting. When Khrushchev arrived, Castro introduced her as a Cuban interpreter. And Khrushchev corrected him by saying 'a Spanish interpreter'. 'No, she is Cuban', said Castro.

She also tells two other anecdotes about her stay in New York with the delegation. The first story took place when the delegation was leaving the Shelburne Hotel for the Hotel Theresa (Menia mistakenly refers to them as the Sheraton Hotel and the Victoria Hotel respectively). She was walking next to Castro with a small suitcase. When journalists asked her what was inside, Castro told her, 'Tell them there's a bomb inside'. The second story happened at the Hotel Theresa. One night she and Alberto Korda, the official photographer of the Cuban delegation, whom she met on the plane to New York, went out to a nearby jazz club. The following day, after listening to her account, Castro said they would all go to the club in the evening.

Conclusion

The interpreting stints performed by the young Cuban ballerina Menia Martínez on 20 and 23 September 1960 is an interesting example of a successful unprofessional interpreter involved in informal, but nonetheless high-level and high-stakes talks that defined Cuban-Soviet relations for decades to come. Luckily, the camera of Vladimir Lebedev, Khrushchev's personal advisor, captured Menia Martínez interpreting at the first meeting between Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev at the Hotel Theresa on 20 September 1960. And it has been an honor and privilege to talk on the telephone with Menia Martínez and be able to ask questions to the only remaining witness of the historic meeting at Harlem's Hotel Theresa.

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ON THE VERGE BETWEEN RETRANSLATION AND REVISION: REVISITING TRANSLATIONS OF MODERNIST NOVELS IN TÜRKIYE

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Abstract

This research aims to elucidate the underlying forces that propelled the first translators to reprocess their texts within the framework of modernist literature, and to reveal the nature of these reprocessed texts as retranslations or revisions. The corpus of this study is composed of modernist novels *To The Lighthouse* (1927), *Lolita* (1955), *Heart of Darkness* (1899), and *Nightwood* (1936). The first translators of these novels into Turkish felt the need to reprocess texts over long periods. The second versions could be classified as retranslations according to the characteristics outlined by the retranslation hypothesis. However, considering the limitations of this hypothesis, particularly regarding retranslations from the 2000s onward, it seems insufficient to explain current dynamics. To establish a clear differentiation between revision and retranslation, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of the first and subsequent versions. Based on the analysis, it has been determined that there are limited but significant changes in the revised texts. While the number of alterations may not reach statistical significance to label them as "retranslations", they can be categorized as "revisions." It has been concluded that the triggering factors behind the revisions are related to the changing sociocultural factors, patronage and the habitus of the translators.

***Keywords*:** retranslation, revision, retranslation hypothesis, habitus, modernist novel

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The reprocessing of literary texts within literary systems is a common practice, especially when they are in circulation for a long period of time. The nature of the end product of this reprocessing may change depending on the situation. It can be retranslated, which is generally mistaken for an indirect translation or revision. By definition, retranslation as a product refers to the translation of a text that has already been translated multiple times, either in the same or in a different language. Indirect translation involves intermediary texts that act as intermediary source texts. The definition of indirect translation involves three languages in *the Dictionary of Translation Studies* (Shuttleworth, 1997). Therefore, indirect translation is the translation of an already-translated text. Although some researchers accept indirect translation as a form of retranslation (Gambier, 1994; Bauer, 1999), both the definition and triggering factors differ. Indirect translation is deemed necessary, especially when the original text is not available or a translator from the original language, especially for a rare language, is not available. Moreover, the strategies applied in indirect translation favor acceptability – in which target norms prevail- as there is no original source text available for the translator (Shuttleworth, 1997:76). Revision, on the other hand, is implemented for the existing translation to fit into the changing ideological, stylistic or linguistic changes as well as the preferences of the first translator (Koskinen, 2019: 315).

The research on retranslation dates back to the theoretical essays of Paul Bensimon (1990), Antoine Berman (1990), and Yves Gambier (1994). Andrew Chesterman used the arguments of these scholars to present a descriptive theory called the "retranslation hypothesis". However, the hypothesis lacks empirical data on retranslation, making it superficial in terms of its applicability to different text types. Considering the changing nature of retranslations, especially after the 2000s, this hypothesis failed to adequately elucidate the dynamics observed in contemporary retranslations. According to this hypothesis, the first translations have the mission of introducing the works in an assimilative way, whereas retranslations are more source-oriented and foreignizing. As research on retranslation began to focus on case studies, some research fit into the pattern of the hypothesis. However, most research after the 2000s shows its inadequacy (Vanderschelden, 2000; Venuti, 2003; Brownlie, 2006; Desmidt, 2009; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2015).

The main reason for retranslation asserted by the hypothesis is that the first translations "age" with time, requiring the production of retranslation (Berman, 1990). However, the notion of an "aging" translation alone does not sufficiently highlight the rise of retranslations as it can also serve as a valid justification for revisions. The primary indicator of this "aging" is outdated language. Instead of complete retranslation, translators may find it more beneficial to engage in linguistic revision, which would prove advantageous for publishers in terms of profitability. In this sense, the motivations for revision can be the same as those for retranslation, and revision is as complicated as retranslation (Koskinen, 2019, p. 320). However, there is limited research on revision overshadowed by the abundance of studies focused on retranslation, leading to a lack of understanding of the motivations and processes of revision.

To examine the translation dynamics of modernist works in Türkiye, particular works from different epochs of modernism have been selected because of their frequent retranslations in recent years, highlighting the widespread interest in exploring the different renditions of these texts. This study examines the first translators who introduced the text to Turkish and reprocessed their work afterwards. These translators exhibited patterns attributed to the retranslator with their second texts within the retranslation hypothesis. By revising, editing, and updating their first translations, their subsequent versions differed from the first text. However, as "reprocessed texts can have many shapes and sizes' (Koskinen, 2009, p. 317), it is a matter of question whether these processes qualify as retranslations or revisions. In this respect, the motives for these changes are scrutinized with regard to translation patronage (Lefevere, 1992) and the translators' habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). To reveal the characteristics of the subsequent versions, an analysis was conducted by comparing them with the first versions produced by the same translator.

The First "Retranslator" or "Revisor"?

This study focuses exclusively on modernist literature because of the belief that retranslations of this particular genre will yield diverse outcomes. This study focuses on a corpus of four modernist novels that have been translated into Turkish. The translators of these novels felt the necessity of revising their texts. Based on the analysis of a corpus composed of the first translations and every other (re)translation of these texts available

in the literary market, it can be argued that the subsequent versions produced by the first translators could be considered as "first retranslations," thereby transforming them into "first retranslators." There are multiple reasons for this assertion. Firstly, the subsequent editions by the first translators share resemblances with modern retranslations, particularly those produced after the 2010s. They are more source-oriented and foreignising, aligned with the characteristics assumed by the retranslation hypothesis. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in retranslations in Türkiye driven by the financial motivations of the Turkish literary market. The positioning of these versions suggests that they occupy roles similar those to of other retranslations from the same period within the Turkish literary scene. Finally, for most of the works in the corpus, there is no retranslation between the first and second versions of the first translator even if the period is pretty long, which makes them the “firsts” again with their second versions.

Based on these assumptions, it is necessary to clarify their differences from ordinary retranslations to evaluate them on a different basis. Their main difference from ordinary retranslations is that they seem to use the first translations as a basis instead of the source text. In this case, the first translations seemed to function as source texts.

To classify these versions as either retranslations or revisions, it is important to establish a clear distinction between them. It is commonly believed that revisions have less complex characteristics and are designed to improve existing translations. However, a revision may or may not focus on adding omitted parts or rectifying mistakes in the first translation. This is not solely meant to eliminate problematic sections from the existing translation. The choice to retranslate or revise belongs to the translator in this corpus, which can also be affected by genre or gender (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2015). To detect the nature of the reprocessed texts, changes in the second versions matter the most because at least half of the texts should be altered to present a new translation in the first place. As these versions are not new translations and were not created from scratch, their levels of similarity or divergence were analyzed to test this hypothesis. These changes were directly related to the period between the two translations. As this period of time is generally long, it is accompanied by sociocultural changes, as well as the accumulated experience of the translators. Therefore, the changing habitus of these translators seems to be as crucial as patronage.

The long period of time between the first translation and its retranslation or revision is also related to the habitus of the first translator. In a Bourdieusian sense, cultural capital is the "physical embodiment of the habitus" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 92) and it changes over time. Bourdieu refers to habitus as a "feel for game" for a player who "just knows" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 92). This "feel" pertains to the translator's intuition, which evolves with experience. The study on retranslation is assumed to have a "temporal nature" (Koskinen, 2009, 322). This study asserts that revision also has a temporal nature, and this temporality is related to the translator's (revisor's in this case) personal history. As translators produce more text, they gain insight into style and meaning, resulting in the use of a more contemporary language compared to their earlier versions. Consequently, translators can grasp nuances more easily. The first translators of the corpus in this study may have felt the need to revise their texts based on their changing cultural capital. Moreover, a translator's expertise in a single author may also lead them to develop their insight into that specific author. The corpus of this study is composed of a translator specializing in modernist authors, and their first translations are presented during their early careers. However, the second version comes after a long period of time. These translators are chosen to be studied because they are both influenced by external situations such as the preferences or instructions of translation patrons on a larger scale and their accumulated experience results in different choices than the first versions.

The aim of this study is to discover whether the second versions can be called "retranslations" and whether the first translators can be called "first retranslators." In light of the examples presented below, the degree of changes in both style and form are discussed to reveal the nature of the reprocessed versions as well as the position of the translators.

Comparative Analysis

Naciye Akseki Öncül

Naciye Akseki Öncül holds the distinction of being both the earliest translator and retranslator of a modernist work in Türkiye. Specifically, she translated Virginia Woolf's literary masterpiece *Deniz Feneri*, which was the only modernist work featured in *Tercüme*, a renowned journal published by the *Translation Bureau*. This translation

makes her the first translator of modernism in Türkiye. She was a senior student in the Department of English Literature during the translation process (Yazıcı, 2010:61). In other words, she was inexperienced, and this translation was one of her first. It is worth noting that this monumental translation of *Deniz Feneri* was initially released by the Ministry of National Education in 1944 as part of its publication. In 1981, Akseki Öncül revised the text, which was subsequently published by İletişim Yayınları in 2000.

For comparative analysis, the translator's first translation of 1944 is referred to as Target Text 1 (TTE-1), while the second version published in 2000 is referred to as Target Text 2 (TTE-2). The original version of the source text is abbreviated as ST.

Example 1

ST: "No, she thought, putting together some of the pictures he had cut out - a refrigerator, a mowing machine, a gentleman in evening dress - children never forget." (2000, p. 151)

TT-1: *"Oğlunun kestiği resimleri- bir buzdolabı, bir orak biçme makinesi, farklı bir erkek resimlerini- toplarken, "Çocuklar hiç unutmazlar," diye düşündü."* (1944, p. 97)

TT-2: "*Oğlunun kestiği resimleri- bir buzdolabı, bir çimen biçme makinesi, fraklı bir erkek resmi- toplarken, çocuklar hiç unutmazlar diye düşündü."* (2000, p. 82)

This example is important in terms of showing both the translator's cultural knowledge and the spelling mistakes often encountered in the first translation. The expression "evening dress" in the source text is usually associated with evening dresses worn by women. To accurately understand the meaning of an evening dress worn by a gentleman, the translator must possess extensive knowledge and understanding of the cultural context from which it originates. In the first translation, where "*farklı bir erkek*" is used to convey this expression, the translator creates a certain level of ambiguity. This choice obscures and weakens the intended message inherent in referring to an evening dress specifically worn by men. On the other hand, considering the frequent spelling mistakes prevalent in the first translation, it is also possible that this expression is intended to be used as "*fraklı*" rather than "*farklı*" as stated in the retranslation. This translation, which is not known whether it is a deliberate choice or not, has been updated

in the retranslation as "*fraklı*", thus fulfilling the meaning of "evening dress" in the source text. Hence, to enhance the clarity and accuracy of retranslation, a source-based approach has been adopted.

Example 2

ST: "Teaching and preaching is beyond human power, Lily suspected. (She was putting away her things.) (p. 157)

TT-1: *"Lily "Ders vermek de, va'zetmek de insan kudreti yetmiyen bir şey galiba" diye düşündü. (Fırçalarını ve sehpasını kaldırmaya başlamıştı.)"* (p. 70)

TT-2: *"Öğretmek de, öğütlemek de insan gücünü aşan bir şey galiba diye düşündü Lily. (Fırçalarını ve sehpasını kaldırmaya başlamıştı.)*" (p. 64)

Updating the language used in the previous version is a possible motivation for translators. This motivation seems valid in this example. "Teaching and preaching" in the source text are rhyming. "Preaching" is translated as "*va'zetmek*" while "power" is translated as "*güç*". Both target texts retain the rhyme. The only difference is in the language use. The second translation presents an up-to-date language that makes the text easily understandable to readers of all ages. In this context, one of the main arguments of the retranslation hypothesis, "aging" translation is a motivation for new translation, seems valid for this translation.

Example 3

ST: "But it may be fine – I expect it will be fine,' said Mrs. Ramsay, making some little twist of the reddish-brown stocking she was knitting, impatiently." (2000, p. 69)

TT- 1: "*Mrs. Ramsay ördüğü fes rengi çorabı elinde bükerek sabırsızlıkla "Ama belki de iyi olur… Bana kalırsa iyi olacak" dedi*". (1944, p. 5)

TT-2: "*Mrs. Ramsay ördüğü kızılkahverengi çorabı elinde bükerek sabırsızlıkla,"Ama hava belki de iyi olur- bana kalırsa iyi olacak," dedi*". (2000, p. 19)

The example presented in this context affirms the proposition that modifications occurring within language and culture necessitate a revision of the translation. The term "reddish-brown" in the original text was translated in the first translation as "*fes rengi*," which alluded to a particular shade associated with men's headwear during the Ottoman period. This choice of terminology reflects the cultural context, and customs have changed in the Republic of Türkiye. The translator may have felt the need to update this expression because of both the substantial time gap between the two translations and the effect of clothing reform during this period. In the retranslation, the same expression is rendered as "*kızılkahverengi*", which is a more valid counterpart of the source phrase in the contemporary context.

The translation strategies of the first translation seem predetermined because of the status of translation within the target literature. In the context of translation patronage in Türkiye (Lefevere, 1992, 15), it is apparent that, alongside the prevailing economic factors, ideological aspects also played a substantial role in retranslation. The aim of *The Translation Bureau*, which is an initiative founded by the Minister of Education Hasan Ali Yücel, in 1940 was to create a native literary system via translations of Western and Eastern classics. *The Bureau* facilitated modernization through the "imported" translations. The predetermined strategies of this first translation were to enhance domestication, mask foreign elements, and ensure a fluent reading experience to create the illusion of transparency. These strategies play a crucial role because this translation was also the first modernist work in Türkiye, with an introductory function of the movement.

The most striking feature of the second translation is the modernization of the language. It is obvious that most of the changes in the second version are related to this aim, considering the significant time gap between the two translations spanning a period of 56 years. Such a modification can be interpreted as an imperative response to the socio-cultural transformations as well as the evolving competency of the translator over these years as she was a college student at the time of the first translation. Akseki Öncül adjusted her approach from a target-oriented to a source-oriented translation strategy in time. The change in translation strategies may be a result of the opportunity to freely reflect on her competency in translation without the limitations of other agents involved in the translational process. However, the overall changes do not seem enough to call this version a “retranslation”. The modernization of language is a part of the extended

revision. Nevertheless, this version seems to have provided an example for subsequent retranslations in terms of translation strategies, as the subsequent retranslations of the novel are quite similar to the revised version of Akseki Öncül.

Fatih Özgüven

Fatih Özgüven, called "the translator of modernism" due to his extensive translations of modernist authors, emerges as a pivotal contributor within the field of retranslation. Özgüven demonstrated his mastery of Vladimir Nabokov's writing style through his translation. Nabokov's controversial work *Lolita*, making Özgüven the "first retranslator" is focused in this study. Lolita's reception, which revolves around the topic of child abuse, garnered significant criticism during its first translation. Gönül Suveren was the first translator of this late modernist work into Turkish. Nevertheless, this translation has undergone substantial censorship and abridgment by the translator. Afterwards, Özgüven managed to produce a more faithful and comprehensive rendition of the source text. The first translation by Özgüven was published in Can Publications in 1982 and its retranslation was published by İletişim Publications in 1999 and is still in print today. There are only a few distinctions between the first translation by Özgüven and the subsequent retranslation. Nevertheless, a significant distinction exists, as demonstrated in the following example. The first translation is referred to as Target Text 3 (TT-3), whereas the retranslation is referred to as Target Text 4 (TT-4).

Example 4

> ST: "Look here, Lo… We are not rich, and while we travel, we shall be obliged we shall be thrown a good deal together. Two people sharing one room, inevitably enter into a kind how shall I say kind".
>
> "The word is incest," said Lo…" (2008, p. 192)
>
> TT-3: "*Buraya bak, Lo… Zengin sayılmayız, bu yüzden de gezilerimizde, zorunlu olarak – demek istiyorum ki, aynı kaderi paylaşacağız. Bir odayı paylaşan iki kişi kaçınılmaz olarak bir çeşit -nasıl söyleyeyim- bir tür ilişki içine-*."
>
> *"Kızılbaşlık derler ona", dedi Lo.* (1982, p. 164)

TT-4: "*Buraya bak, Lo… Zengin sayılmayız, bu yüzden de gezilerimizde, zorunlu olarak – demek istiyorum ki, aynı kaderi paylaşacağız. Bir odayı paylaşan iki kişi kaçınılmaz olarak bir çeşit -nasıl söyleyeyim- bir tür ilişki içine-"*

"Baba kızın yasak aşkı" derler ona, dedi Lo". (1999, p. 138)

The translation of "incest" as "*kızılbaşlık*" caused great controversy in the target culture. Since "*kızılbaş*" is a term that refers to the Alewi population in Türkiye, the use of this expression in the same sense as incest seems to have been the main factor that triggered the second version. During our conversation with the translator and his interview discussing the topic, he mentioned that this text was translated during the initial stages of his career, just as Akseki Öncül. He admitted that this error could be attributed to a lack of experience at the time and he corrected it. His explanation for this mistake is as follows:

"The first edition of Nabokov's 'Lolita' was published by Can Publishing in 1982 with my translation. Due to my ignorance and illiteracy, I made an unforgivable, grave mistake that came to the fore on social media. I immediately corrected this mistake in the following editions."[1]

Based on these statements, it becomes apparent that Özgüven's transition was primarily driven by his intention to rectify the significant mistake in the first translation. His raising awareness related to this specific problem led him to rectify his mistake even if there was not a controversy at the time of the publication of the revised version. As he only rectified a few points of the first translation, even if these points are matters of importance, this second version can only be called a "revision", not a "retranslation".

Sinan Fişek

Sinan Fişek is a proficient translator who has produced numerous translations in his career. This research will primarily focus on Fişek's translations of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which exhibits distinct characteristics associated with the early

[1] The full interview can be found kere: https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/lolita-romaninda-ensest-kelimesini-kizilbas-olarak-ceviren-fatihozguven-affedilmez-bir-hata-haber-1534976

modernist period. The novel *Heart of Darkness*, written by Joseph Conrad and originally published in 1899, was first translated into Turkish by Fişek in 1976. The translation was subsequently published by Yeni Ankara Publishing House and remained in circulation for approximately two decades, until 1994. Fişek translated the same text again, and this translation was published for the first time in 1994 by İletişim Publications.

The comparative analysis below aids in shedding light on how and why a second version is deemed necessary. In this analysis, the first translation made by Sinan Fişek in 1976 will be referred to as Target Text 5 (TT-5), and the second version made in 1994 as Target Text 6 (TT-6).

Example 5

> ST: "A horn tooted to the right, and I saw the black people run… A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path". (pp. 33)
>
> TT-5: "*Sağ yanda bir düdük öttü, zencilerin kaçıştıklarını gördüm… Arkamda hafif bir şıngırtı işitip başımı çevirdim. Altı zenci tek sıra olmuş, patikayı tırmanıyorlardı*". (pp. 40)
>
> TT-6: "*Sağ yanda bir düdük öttü, siyahların kaçıştıklarını gördüm… Arkamda hafif bir şıngırtı işitip başımı çevirdim. Altı siyah adam tek sıra halinde zorlanarak patikayı tırmanıyordu*". (pp. 89)

Heart of Darkness, a renowned literary work that delves into the theme of colonialism, prominently incorporates numerous anthropological expressions in its narrative. A noteworthy instance can be observed with the phrase "six black men," which has undergone revision. In the first translation, this expression was rendered as "zenci"; however, it has been revised to "*siyah adam*" in the retranslation. The translator may have deemed this change necessary due to the controversial nature of the "*zenci*" which can be back translated as "negro". Given the negative and discriminatory connotations associated with the term, it appears that the translator made a deliberate choice to mitigate this negativity by employing the phrase "*siyah adam*." To elaborate further, it

can be inferred that the underlying reason for the second version in this particular situation is deeply rooted in sociological and political factors.

Example 6

ST: "Ave! Old knitter of black wool. Morituri te salutant." (pp. 24)

TT-5: "*Ave! İhtiyar kara yün örücüsü. Morituri te salutant*". (pp .31)

TT-6: "*Ave siyah yün örücüsü ihtiyar. Morituri te salutant*".* (pp. 82)

*(Lat.) Selam… Ölecek olanlar seni selamlıyor.

Here, Conrad provides a deepening of the novel by resorting to intertextuality with the Latin expression he uses. The original text presents the salutation used by gladiators during ancient Roman times when they crossed in front of the emperor. In the source material, this expression is given in its Latin form. In the translations of the expression, the same expression is preserved in Latin. The only difference between the two target texts is that a footnote is added in the second version. The inclusion of this footnote serves to bridge the cultural gap and provide clarity for the target audience.

Example 7

ST: "How do you English say, eh? Good-bye. Ah! Good-bye. Adieu. In the tropics one must before everything keep calm.' . . . He lifted a warning forefinger… 'Du calme, du calme.' (pp. 27)

TT-5: "*Siz İngilizler nasıl dersiniz? Good- bye… Tamam! Good- bye. Adieu. Tropikal ülkelerde her şey sakin olmalıdır. … İşaret parmağını dikkatli ol anlamında kaldırdı…* ***Du calme, du calme. Adieu*****"**. (pp. 33)

TT-6: "*Siz İngilizler nasıl dersiniz? Good-bye… Evet! Good-bye. Adieu. Tropikal ülkelerde her şey sakin olmalıdır. İşaret parmağını dikkatli ol anlamında kaldırdı… 'Du calme, du calme, adieu.*' "* (pp. 84)

*(Fr.) sakin olun, sakin olun, elveda.

In the first translation, it is interesting that “goodbye” and “adieu” have the same meaning but only one of them is emphasized. On the other hand, the foreignness of these phrases is preserved as they are not translated into Turkish. In the second translation, the same expressions are preserved but a footnote is added again to clarify the meaning for the target audience. Fişek has exhibited greater discernment and selectiveness, particularly when it comes to anthropological terminology.

There are only slight changes between the two versions of Fişek, which are not enough to qualify the second version as a “retranslation”. As Özgüven, Fişek rectified the problematic sociocultural terminology. The triggering factor for both translators to revise the first versions seems to tone these terminologies down by adapting to the standards of the target society.

Aslı Biçen

Another first retranslator within the scope of this corpus is the writer-translator Aslı Biçen, who has authored many translations. The work that made Biçen the first retranslator is Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood* (1946) which is considered an important work of late modernism. Biçen is the only translator of this work in Turkish. This work, which is recognized as an important piece of lesbian literature, may not have been retranslated into Turkish because of its theme and the fact that the author's copyright has not yet expired. *Nightwood* is considered by Dylan Thomas as "one of the three greatest prose texts written by a woman" (cited in Winterson, 2007: 23), showing the high quality of the work. Biçen translated the work for the first time in 1994, and this translation was published by Ayrıntı Publishing. The retranslation of this work was published by Sel Publishing in 2018. To understand the factors that led Biçen to create a contemporary version, it would be useful to look at examples from both translations. Her first translation is referred to as TT-7 and the second version as TT-8.

Example 8

> ST: “Yes, I, the Lily of Killarney, am composing me a new song, with tears and with jealousy, because I have read that John was his favorite, and it should have been me, Prester Matthew! (2006, p. 94)

TT-7: *"Evet, ben Killarney* Leylağı, gözyaşları ve kıskançlık dolu yeni bir şarkı besteliyorum kendime, çünkü onun gözdesinin Yuhanna olduğunu okudum, oysa ben olmalıydım, Rahip Matta*!"** (1994, p. 86)

*İrlanda'da Kerry iline bağlı bir kasaba (translator's note)

** Mathew, yani Matta dört İncil'den birinin yazarıdır, Yuhanna da bir diğerinin (translator's note)

TT-8: "*Evet, ben Killarney* Zambağı, gözyaşı ve kıskançlık dolu yeni bir şarkı besteliyorum kendime, çünkü gözdesinin Yuhanna olduğunu okudum, oysa ben olmalıydım, Rahip Matthew*!"** (2018, p. 111)

*Julius Benedict'in bir operası, Lily of Killarney. (translator's note)

**Mathew, yani Matta dört İncil'den birinin yazarıdır, Yuhanna da bir diğerinin (translator's note)

Intertextuality by alluding to various literary works is a frequently employed technique in modernist novels. The expression "Lily of Killarney" used by Barnes in the source text is translated as "*Killarney Leylağı*" in the first translation, and a footnote is added to this expression. The footnote explains only the expression "Killarney" as "a town in County Kerry in Ireland". In the second version, the same expression has been changed to "*Killarney Zambağı*". However, the important change in this translation is made through a footnote. The translator acknowledged the presence of intertextuality in the source text, specifically referring to Julius Benedict's "Lily of Killarney" being translated as a song. Therefore, this update seems to have been made both to get closer to the source text and to convey the correct reference to the target reader. This revision seems to be deemed necessary as a part of the evolving habitus of the translator, as she realized the intertextuality after the first translation.

Example 9

ST: "I said the world's like that poor distressed moll of a Jenny, never knowing which end to put its mittens on, and pecking about like a mystified rook until this

particular night gave her a hoist and set her up at the banquet (where she has been sitting dumbfounded ever since)" (1946, p. 97)

TT-7: *"Eldivenlerini ne taraftan giyeceğini bilemeyen, ve bu özel gece onu yüceltip de (o gün bugündür hayretten dili tutulmuş bir halde oturduğu) şölen sofrasına yerleştirene kadar ortalıkta şaşkın bir karga gibi eşelenmekte olan şu zavallı, acılı Jenny karısına benziyor bu dünya dedim"* (1994, p. 89)

TT-8: *"Şu zavallı, gergin Jenny oruspusuna benziyor bu dünya, dedim, eldivenlerini neresine giyeceğini bilemeyen, şaşkın bir karga gibi etrafta eşelenen; bu özel gece onu yüceltip (o gün bu gündür hayretten dili tutulmuş bir halde oturduğu) şölen sofrasına yerleştirdi"* (2018, p. 114)

In this example, it can be observed that there is a minimal difference between the two expressions. This extends to both target texts as a whole. In the first translation, phrases were substituted with synonyms, or lengthy sentences were divided into shorter ones. What draws attention here is the difference in the translations of the expression "moll of a Jenny". In the first translation, this expression is associated with slang as *"Jenny karısı"*, whereas in the second version, it turns into an insult as *"Jenny oruspusu"* which is closer to the ST in meaning. This revision seems to be related to the evolving awareness of the translator regarding her first translation with an urge to render the text closer to the ST.

Example 10

ST: "Sorrow fiddles the ribs and no man should put his hand on anything; there is no direct way. The foetus of symmetry nourishes itself on cross purposes; this is its wonderful unhappiness" (p. 95)

TT-7: "*Acı canı oyalar, hiç kimse hiçbir şeyden emin olamaz; dolambaçsız bir yol yoktur. Simetri fetüsü çapraz amaçlarla beslenir. Bu onun muhteşem mutsuzluğudur*" (s. 87)

TT-8: *"Acı insanın kaburgasını keman gibi çalar, parmağını hiçbir şeyin üzerine koyamazsın; doğrudan bir yolu yoktur. Simetrinin fetüsü birbirini kesen amaçlarla beslenir, bu onun harika mutsuzluğudur"* (p. 112)

Compared to the first version, the second one holds slight differences. The domesticating strategy in the first translation of "sorrow fiddles the ribs" is changed to transfer the true meaning of "fiddle" and "ribs". The second version is more source-oriented as shown in the other examples of Biçen's translations. These changes do not create that much of a difference in terms of meaning and they are just a few overall. For this reason, the second version seems to be a revision to get closer to the source texts' stylistics. This change of strategy is related to the accumulated experience of the translator in time. As she gains more and more insight, she can be capable of grasping and transferring the nuances.

Conclusion

This study focuses on the first translations and revised versions of the same works of modernist literature in Türkiye. By carefully choosing texts from different epochs of modernist literature and the culture specific examples of ten different translations, the aim is to obtain more comprehensive findings. *Heart of Darkness* is an example of early modernism, *Lolita* and *Nightwood* serve as examples of late modernism, whereas *To The Lighthouse* exemplifies the pinnacle period of modernism. Furthermore, these literary works effectively demonstrate the broad scope and diversity of modernist themes. *To The Lighthouse* explores the themes related to the World War and feminism, whereas *Lolita*, *Nightwood* and *Heart of Darkness* delve into more sensitive topics such as pedophilia, homosexuality and postcolonialism respectively.

The crucial common point of the analyzed translations is that the first translators later revised the same works, driven by a personal desire to update their first translations. It has been asserted that the first translators turn into "first retranslators", a neologism of this study. However, based on the examples presented above, this assertion is invalid as all of the second versions are revisions or extended revisions, not retranslations.

A notable distinction typically exists between the first translator and the retranslator. However, this study goes beyond that by differentiating between the roles of a retranslator and revisor, thereby creating an opportunity to explore their respective positions with each other. The retranslator or revisor is expected to take a stance toward

its predecessor, the first translator. Research has demonstrated that when the revisor of a text is also the first translator, their approach and techniques towards translation may vary. The same translator can adopt different perspectives towards a text over time due to the evolving experience. As a result, the qualities of both the first translation and subsequent revisions can differ based on changes in the translator's cultural capital.

The findings of this research indicate that revisions are conducted to rectify errors, incorporate omitted and censored content, and enhance the use of source-oriented and foreignizing strategies. These actions align with the goal of improvement. However, it is important to note that not all revisors adopt a linear progression approach when making these changes. The process of revising is not limited to addressing missing elements. However, the corpus of this study proves the individual choices of the revisors in favor of improvement.

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THE DUTIFUL DAUGHTERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE: PSYCHOSOCIAL TOPOLOGY OF THE BRITISH HOSPITAL IN SMYRNA

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Abstract

Scholarship on the accounts of the Western travellers about the Ottoman Empire focuses on some commonly known writers only, and *Ismeer, or Smyrna, and its British hospital in 1855, by a lady [M. Nicol]* remains neglected. It is a diary written by a lady-nurse, Martha Nicol, who worked in the British hospital in Smyrna, during the Crimean War. She is tightly bound in with the imperial ideology and by reconceptualising the space in the hospital, the lady-nurses help the British soldiers achieve a sense of continuity between their home back in England and the host culture about which they know very little. By playing a formative role to transpose this hospital to a homely space in a foreign territory, the lady-nurses function as psychic and cultural stabilisers. This essay aims to decipher how the hospital space functions as an ideological heterotopia of deviance, and how the lady-nurses contribute to its power to inspire the idea of "at-homeness" in the soldiers and retain the ideological structuring mechanisms in this distant location by exploring the textual evidence in the book. This essay will also explore how power and ideology are contextualised in the psychosocial topology of the hospital.

Keywords: topology, Smyrna, travel literature, Martha Nicol, heterotopia

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The scholarship on the accounts written by the Western travellers about their experiences in Turkey or the Ottoman Empire focuses on some commonly known writers only (like Frederick Burnaby, Alexander Kinglake, Lord Byron, Lady Mary W. Montagu, and Julia Pardoe) and the majority of these accounts still remain neglected. *Ismeer, or Smyrna, and its British hospital in 1855, by a lady [M. Nicol]* (1856)[1] is a good example illustrating the latter case. It is a diary written by a lady-nurse, Martha Nicol, who volunteered to work at a hospital in Smyrna in the Ottoman Empire, during the Crimean War. She starts her trip on March 3, 1855; arrives in Smyrna on March 28, 1855; and stays there until December 1, 1855. Scholarship on Nicol's *Ismeer* is rather thin. One of the possible reasons for this narrowness seems to originate from small-scale scope of its publisher. The text was published only once by a small London based publishing house, James Madden which, back then, was not considered to be having access to a wider audience. In addition, this text is the only published material by Nicol, who could not establish herself as a travel writer by writing other accounts of the East. In fact, the critics cannot fully agree on the identity of the writer and whether the text was really written by Martha Nicol: "though the authorship of *Ismeer* has yet to be confirmed, consensus is that it was written by a nurse, Martha Nicol" (Kocabıyık, 2023, p. 51).

One of the earlier secondary texts that mentions Nicol's memoir dates to 1856. This review can be accepted as the first informative writing on the conditions of the nurses and the British hospital in Smyrna and the anonymous writer of the review claims that Nicol's text "should at least be made acquainted with the name of 'A Lady'" (Review of *Ismeer, or Smyrna, and Its British Hospital in 1855,* by a Lady, 1856, p. 501).

[1]This memoir *Ismeer, or Smyrna, and Its British Hospital in 1855 by a Lady*), which might also be accepted as a travel account, is thought to have been written by a nurse. However, in her own text or the other sources, one cannot find a clear proof that this account was written by Martha Nicol. In his study on medical history, Shepherd (1991, p. 432) points out that "one of the lady nurses published her recollections *anonymously* but the domestic details she gives are not very informative [in terms of the conditions of the hospital]". Philip Mansel (2010, 366) too reinforces the anonymity of the mentioned nurse in his research on the Levantines and the Ottoman lands, but in his research on Muslim women in Izmir he cites the above-mentioned account as Martha Nicol in his bibliographical notes. In her article "*Cumhuriyet Öncesi Dönemde İzmir Hastanelerinin Mekansal Gelişimi*" (Spatial Developments of Izmir Hospitals before Republic), Didem Akyol Altun (2014) relies on Martha Nicol's account as a proof of her historical analysis. Despite this acknowledgement of the anonymity of the memoir, there seems to be common agreement among the scholars to refer to the writer as Martha Nicol. In this essay, we will follow this consensus and take the narrator as Martha Nicol for the sake of textual coherence.

Among the other secondary sources that mention Martha Nicol's *Ismeer* is Anne Summers's doctoral dissertation, "Women as voluntary and professional military nurses in Great Britain. 1854-1914", which refers to Nicol while covering the English nurses not only in Eastern hospitals but also in other parts of the world. The central focus of this thesis is mostly on the sisterhood movement of the nurses back then.

Dimitrios Kassis (2018) also devotes an entire chapter to Nicol in his book on British women travellers; he underlines her role as a representative of the British Empire among the rival Christian nations in Izmir.

Our discussion of Nicol's text departs from the previous discussions as it attempts to decipher how the hospital space functions as an ideological heterotopia of deviance and explores how power and ideology are contextualised through her account of the psychosocial topology of the hospital rather than the text's relation to the wider social context of her time. Our discussion concerns itself basically with topological implications in the text and goes into other perspectives only as much as this topological discussion allows.

During the Crimean War, an increasing number of losses and wounded soldiers necessitated the British side to establish new hospitals in and around the region. Allied countries (Britain and France) chose the strategic spots for their new hospitals where they could easily have access to İzmir, Çanakkale, and Istanbul. The Crimean War was crucial in terms of the development of modern nursing, especially due to the contributions by Florence Nightingale; however, the fact that these nurses were working in the overseas hospitals implied many hardships for both the hospital staff and the soldiers. William Howard Russell, *The Times* war correspondent from 1854 to 1856, described the terrible neglect of the wounded and pointed at the differences between the facilities provided for the British and French soldiers. He asked: "Are there no devoted women among us, able and willing to go forth to minister to the sick and suffering soldiers of the East in the hospitals of Scutari? Are none of the daughters of England, at this extreme hour of need, ready for each a work of mercy?" (Brimacombe & Waters, n.d.). The narrator in the book seems to be one of these "devoted women" who responded to Russell's call.

Martha Nicol, the narrator, gives in her memoirs an account of what she goes through as an English lady-nurse in Smyrna. She is also the focaliser in the book that is integral to establishing the ideological coordinates of the space both in and outside the hospital. Therefore, it is the focalizer that will be put under scrutiny in this essay to reveal how the psychosocial topology of the imperial ideology is retained in a far distant hospital. Her account masks the "problematic production and reproduction" of the social space and "its contextualisation of politics, power and ideology" in Edward Soja's (1989) words (p. 12). It functions as an ideological mechanism under the guise of an observational account, and this essay will explore how power and ideology are contextualized through her account in the psychosocial topology of the hospital.

Our second focus in the essay will be the formative role the lady-nurses play in the hospital, which is turned into a little Britain, in exile. The hospital offers the soldiers the sheltering qualities and the normalcy of the home through the mediation of the lady-nurses. This is a transposed home to them. By reconceptualizing the space in the hospital, the lady-nurses help the soldiers achieve a sense of continuity between their home back in England and the host culture about which they know very little. By playing a formative role to transpose this hospital to a homely space in a foreign territory, they function as psychic and cultural stabilizers. They also become mediators for the soldiers between the maternal space and the cold walls of the old Turkish hospital to achieve a sense of belonging and nurturing. Therefore, this essay also puts under scrutiny the constituent and constituting dynamics between the soldiers and the lady-nurses. Interestingly enough, the paid nurses have a more professional standing in their treatment of the soldiers and are distant from them. Their conduct remains within the limits of their job description without any emotional involvement.

Smyrna as a space of the heterotopic cultural cacophony

Her diary focuses mostly on her experiences in the hospital as she has limited access to host cultures in Smyrna, which accommodates a bunch of ethnic heterotopias that are not in touch with each other. In fact, during her stay, there are ethnic conflicts in the social background, but the narrator in the book seems not to be fully aware of them, or she doesn't offer any insight into social conflicts or social specificities. She gives these details with a clinical detachment.

Like the other lady-nurses, the narrator shows unquestioned obedience to male authority figures in the hospital and never problematizes their decisions. What she is lacking in her account is the subversive attitude to be found in a Mary Shelley to the British mainstream discourse. Without an unquestioned submission to the practice of the authorities, Mary Shelley would have found many points to turn on their heads. However, the narrator's observations are a far cry from a subversive vantage point. She is blind to the imperialist motivation behind their existence in Smyrna. She genuinely believes that they are there to help the destitute and the oppressed. Her unquestioned and blindfolded acceptance of and submission to the Imperial ideology assumes farcical overtones at times as in the following quotation:

> Our country, I am proud to say, always takes part with the oppressed; that her actuating motives are always and all right, I cannot undertake to say –I hope they are: but of all the titles Britain has earned, to my mind, the proudest and the best is, "the refuge for the destitute and friend of the oppressed." (Nicol, 1856, p. 313)

Mary Shelley or another alert mind would have found to say other things about the locals, too. Such a questioning mind would have definitely caught the resonances of cultural, social, historical, and ethnic diversity surrounding her. However, the lady-nurse, the narrator, in the book acts as a dutiful daughter of the British mainstream discourse and willingly refrains from the substantial material lying beyond the observational truth. She cannot see the Frankensteins in her discourse, likewise, she remains blind to the Frankensteins of Smyrniote heterotopic spaces, too.

Smyrna, despite its local cultural polysemy, is part of the "East" for the narrator, and right from the beginning there is an implicit sense of hierarchy between the narrator and the people of the "East." In such a context, one should also be aware that this intercultural encounter takes place within a Eurocentric frame of thinking. Although her Eurocentrism is not foregrounded in her voice, her account reproduces many of the dichotomies in Western thought, and a subversive reading of her account tells that this Eurocentric mode of thinking is at the centerpiece of her account. In this context, it can be said that western norms are integral to the perceptions of the narrator, and the West and what it stands for are taken as the measure of everything. At this point, it can also be asserted that there is an asymmetrical voicing of the Western and non-Western

perspectives as the members of the local community are not allowed to speak in their own voice.

The narrator's conception of the city space is characterized by detachment, indifference, and, as stated above, Eurocentrism. The Smyrniotes are called a 'motley crowd' (Nicol, 1856, p.139) by the narrator as they are rather heterogeneous in nature: they are composed of the Orthodox Armenians, Catholic Armenians, the Jews, the Greeks, the Turks, the Levantines, the Croats, the missionaries, etc. There are tensions between them:

> These Romish Armenians are a very small body in Smyrna; but the Armenians belonging to their national church are very numerous, though not so much as the Greeks; and the different sects all hate each other with a bitter hatred. I have heard Greeks call Roman Catholics "dogs," as they passed each other on their way to their respective churches. The inhabitants of Smyrna who are neither Turks, Jews, Greeks, nor Armenians, call themselves "Catholiques," and are from all parts of the world, French, Austrians; Prussians, Italians, Spaniards, Hungarians etc.; but many of them have been so long resident, that they seem quite to have forgotten their origin, and know nothing except that they are Smyrniotes. (Nicol, 1856, p.175)

As she doesn't have the desire to penetrate into their cultural reservoir, she cannot fully understand these conflicts, and these cultures remain as a closed book to her. She cannot go beyond her psychosocial boundaries as the exotic other in these heterotopias and cannot merge into the other side of the polarity. The following quotation illustrates the unbridgeable gap between the subjective and the social in the narrator's case in Smyrna:

> I felt as if I was walking "in the Arabian Nights," and should hardly have been surprised if I had been asked to step into Aladdin's palace, or met the African magician at any moment: and this feeling I had whenever I went into it, and up till the time we left. (Nicol, 1856, p.18)

Imperial ideology establishes its surveillance mechanisms when the lady nurses have the chance to penetrate into the host culture through certain ways like the dress code, and at times through obligation to walk and pay visits in groups (Nicol, 1856). External threats from the Greek highlanders also force them to live and act within the confinement of the hospital or the house provided by the hospital authorities. They can rarely take walks on their own, they are usually accompanied by their friends or superiors. This too acts as a barrier to their unmediated contact with the host cultures in Smyrna.

Still, being a woman, the narrator has better access to the domestic sphere of the ethnic heterotopias, but even in these sections of the book, she remains aloof to what she observes. Her lack of emotional involvement in these scenes triggers questions about her superficiality in her account of what she sees. Is it because she is scared of being judged if she is involved? Is it because of an implicit sense of hierarchy to be found in all such encounters between the East and the West? Is it simply because she cannot see beyond the surface reality? Is it because she has to repress such emotional involvement even if it is there in these encounters? Her narrative account mostly revolves around the medical and religious services offered to the patients. This might be the only material she is allowed to speak about by the dominant discourse she comes from.

Another reason for her inability to read the host cultures might be tied in with her gender. Being a woman, she hadn't had a university education, or she seems to be without any access to classical literature. Although she is in the cradle of ancient civilizations in Smyrna, and she is exposed not only to the cultural/ethnic heterotopias but also to historical ruins from ancient times, she is unable to see their Classical resonances. Compared to the accounts in the travel literature that developed around the Grand Tour, her account sounds rather superficial and monolithic. In such a context, in her depiction, she cannot benefit from the rich reservoir of Classical allusions, an opportunity that might have been employed better by her contemporary male counterparts or by other intellectual women like Mary Shelley. If it were an intellectual observer in her shoes, we would hear the multi-layered and polysemic account of the cultural genealogies surrounding her in the form of ruins. However, these ruins remain as ruins for her, and she cannot penetrate into them. The following account gives an idea about the superficiality of her reaction to these culturally and historically significant places:

> On the hill, and amidst the Jewish tomb-stones, are evident remains of a ruined temple; some marble pillars are still to be seen, and many of the monuments seem also to have belonged to the building, which is said to have been a temple of Cybele.
>
> The site of the ancient church is supposed to be within the enclosure of the Genoese fort.
>
> The upper part of the town is full of remains of antiquity, cornices and entablatures built into the walls of the present houses; and not far from the fort, in a Turkish cemetery, are some very old pillars, with part of a wall still standing, which seems evidently to have belonged to a Christian church. But considering the former grandeur of Smyrna, there are

> wonderfully few remains of ancient splendour to be found, nor are there apparently many tumuli. In a field near the Caravan-bridge there are a few, some of which have been opened. I saw one or two sarcophagi which had been found there, and which the possessor assured me were upwards of two thousand years old. (Nicol, 1856, p.193)

When some of their friends have the chance to go to Ephesus, the lady-nurses want to hear about the place. The exchange between them is interesting to show the lady nurses' inability to penetrate to the historical resonances of the location: "as we found the general reply was "'We saw some broken pillars, cornices, and blocks of marble, evidently the remains of great temples and buildings,' we consoled ourselves, for these were also to be seen near Smyrna" (Nicol 1856, p.263). This shallowness also shapes the way she depicts her immediate surroundings. Without resorting to Classical allusions or symbolism, without benefitting from the cultural, historical, and philosophical resonances of these historical sites, she feels content with her observational empiricism.

She conceives the social space as fluid and mobile, and cannot map it due to her outsider position. Therefore, her depiction of the space remains amorphous. There is no interpenetration between the subjective and the objective, the social and the private in her account in the wider context of the city. Even if there is such a penetration, it is not given voice in the text. except for a few details about her involvement in the trivialities of life like his visit to Boudja[2] where she spends a few weeks with a British family in their enclosed garden, her conceptualization of the social space in the city tells that she is interested in the rationalistically accountable data.

The lady-nurses vs the paid nurses

Right in the beginning, one of the things that is emphasized in her memoirs is the fact that she is not a *vouée*, but 'an English lady, who goes of her own free will, and without any vow' (Nicol, 1856, p.3). She goes to Smyrna with the other lady-nurses who don't have any medical training to be able to work at a hospital and who are without an official job description/contract, that is, they are not *vouée*. This difference between the lady-nurses and the paid nurses seems to be very important, particularly from the perspective of the soldiers. She pays special attention to differentiating their own position from the position

[2] Boudja was in the outskirts of Izmir at that time. Levantines called this district 'Paradiso.'

of the paid nurses who keep their distance from the soldiers and do their professional duty without any emotional involvement (Nicol, 1856). They get close to the soldiers only as much as their medical tasks require. However, it is not the case for the lady-nurses who cannot remain emotionally indifferent to the soldiers, and who can go beyond the professional constraints. In fact, there are no professional limits in their case, as there is no job description (doing what the doctors and the nurses tell them is the only job description to them) or any official contract. Officially they don't exist because they don't have a place in the hierarchical chain. Their outsider position in the hospital, however, makes all the difference in their relationality with the soldiers. They go into not only intersubjective but also intrasubjective involvements, in which unconscious mechanisms are at work, with the soldiers.

She doesn't define herself in the way the others see her, not as part of a charitable foundation, a Sister of Mercy, etc. but as 'a British woman, who had little to do at home, and, having no fear of disease, was willing to be of what use [she] could to our poor soldiers wished to help our poor soldiers' (Nicol, 1856, p.19). She also says: 'I carried with me a great amount of enthusiasm for the work I was to be engaged in and looked forward with immense heroism to the privations I expected to endure' (p.19). She opts for this 'new and exciting work' rather than 'pursue the uneventful monotony of daily doing good at home' (Nicol, 1856, p.27). She is not there for religious reasons, for her 'religious teaching had been very small' then (Nicol, 1856, p.79). Once she vaguely hints at her loneliness when she sees there are no letters to her: 'it really seemed as if I had been ill-used by all the world, both by the world who had not written to me, and by those who had written to others' (Nicol, 1856, p.119). We are given no biographical background about the narrator, about her motivation to go to Smyrna other than the above explanation, which is given in rather restraint terms. This explanation might not sound convincing given the amount of discomfort she suffers during her journey to and her stay in Smyrna. Whatever the real motive is, in between the lines we feel that working as a lady-nurse provides an empowering space for her, particularly in her interaction with the soldiers and the Levantines of the city. This space assumes some ontological significance for her, as will be explained in the following pages.

As a woman too she remains a closed book to the readers. This tells that she learned her lesson in the mainstream discourse to repress her emotional and irrational

side. She never loses her psychological unity or is never overwhelmed by emotional outbursts. The only emotional reaction that comes from her is her empathy for the patients or her reaction to the dead bodies in the funerals of the local ethnic groups. Somewhere in the text, she refers to a "handsome" soldier who lost one of his legs, but she goes no further. We don't have ample evidence about her amorous attachments or inner conflicts or depressed or ecstatic moments. In this sense, although she is among her co-patriots, she refrains from any intense intersubjectivity that might be possibly experienced in this social context.

The text opens with an apologetic tone of voice for two reasons: first, this is her "only authorial attempt." She demands tolerance for her authorial shortcomings, which was a common habit among the women writers at the time due to lack of self-esteem and anxiety about their reception as a writer. Second, being a lady-nurse, they are not given any acknowledgment by the other nurses with official training and position, and by the hospital authorities. She always speaks with the awareness of her marginal position. A case in point is, when they arrive in Smyrna, although the paid nurses are offered lodging in the hospital, the lady-nurses find that there has been no attempt to provide lodging for them. They benefit from the hospitality of a Levantine family, the Zipcys:

> We literally had not a hole to go to, the hotels could not have taken us in; and we should have been in the streets under the pelting rain, if it had not been for them. I cannot tell whether the British consul was aware or informed of our position; for during all the time I was in Smyrna I never saw him, nor, so far as I am aware, did any of the others.
>
> On our arrival we had been told that General Storks had received such vague instructions about us, he did not know whether we were to be provided with furniture, or to provide ourselves, or, in fact, anything about us; and it was also reported to us that the Purveyor had said, when applied to for the requisite articles of furniture, "These women came out to put up with barrack fare; and if there is not a house for them, let them live in tents." (Nicol, 1856, p.78)

They stay with the Zipcys for some time, and then, are transferred to a local house that doesn't have any amenities except for a bed and room to be shared with other lady-nurses. In fact, this house is full of all sorts of bugs and is poor in terms of basic hygienic standards. What happens to one of her friends illustrates their discomfort:

> … on getting up she found, as she described it, her bed absolutely peppered with bugs of no ordinary dimensions, who scampered hither and thither with amazing velocity; but in five minutes, upwards of fifty were captured, and such things were not uncommon. They were terribly annoying to the patients in the hospital, and so were the mosquitoes by night, and scarcely less so the flies by day. (Nicol, 1856, p.234)

Moreover, this house is outside the hospital compound, they walk to/from the hospital as a group due to security reasons. Another interesting example of their marginal position in the medical world is that in the forthcoming months when they want to offer their service under the supervision of Florence Nightingale, she declines their service saying that "she had no occupation *for ladies*" (Nicol, 1856, p.177).

In the hospital, both the doctors and the nurses look at them with a sense of superiority and reservation as the following quotation reveals: 'I had frequently heard, from many of the doctors, that they did not, at first, at all like the idea of ladies being employed at the hospital. They thought we should be a mere useless encumbrance, and always in the way' (Nicol, 1856, p.86). Despite their marginal position at the hospital and their 'placeless place' in it, their workload is inestimable at times:

> The one which fell to my lot had from sixty to eighty patients; and I must say, I felt a little strange just at first, on finding myself the only female, save my nurse**,** among so many sick soldiers. But how soon self is forgotten, when you are in the midst of sickness and suffering, and know that people are depending on you for relief! The fear, horror, and disgust which would probably affect an inactive spectator, have not smallest place in your mind, and you have but one feeling left—pity, and a desire to alleviate pain. (Nicol, 1856, p.34)

Their sacrifice comes with a cost. They risk their lives in the dire conditions of the hospital, which is understaffed, and which tries to operate in a limited number of wards: 'Death Seemed very near to us then; we have already lost two orderlies, and many of the nurses were lying at the gate of death. Miss A--- had made an almost miraculous escape, and was not yet out of danger from relapse' (Nicol, 1856, p.55). However, in the course of time, their contribution to both the organization and running of the hospital is appreciated by the doctors, if not by the paid nurses.

This common negative attitude to the lady-nurses, in the beginning, puts them into a vulnerable position, and the narrator needs to speak for the lady-nurses and justify their right to more respect than the paid nurses as follows:

> …as these ladies were undertaking an unusual work, they ought, as it were, to lay aside their position, habits, and feelings, and descend to the level of servants. Now there would, perhaps, not have been much harm in this, although I think it would decidedly have been productive of less good, as I shall endeavour to shew afterwards. But the real evil was done to the nurses, who fancied that according to our descent in the social scale, was to be their ascent, and that by some process unknown, on their going out to the East, they were to become ladies; and this for a time produced ill-will and bad feeling in some, but many of them were too sensible not to see things very soon in their proper light. (Nicol, 1856, p.25)

Hospital space as a psychosocial topology

Space is not a vacuum to be filled in by the human agency, but is a context for the interplay between power, politics, and ideology, as in Soja's words. It is never free from different forms of relationalities which are consistently reconstituted on slippery ground. Foucault states on space as follows:

> Space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live inside a void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be coloured with diverse shades of light; we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely superimposable on one another. (as cited in Soja,1989, p.17)

Space in the British hospital in Smyrna assumes different resonances, as it is not only a hospital in the outskirts of the Turkish mainstream discourse, but it is also a war hospital in the East, in a totally foreign unmapped cultural territory. It involves both social and psychic resonances for the soldiers and the staff. The division between the host and the home cultures is never crossed over due to the confinement of the soldiers and the hospital staff within the walls of the hospital. The hospital staff has limited access to the host cultures, and these encounters take place within very short time spans. They usually mix with the Levantines in the city, not with the local ethnic groups. Therefore, the hospital can be taken as a heterotopia which, Foucault asserts, are spaces of abnormals, deviants, and in a more general sense, those experiencing a crisis by

challenging the established order of things (Foucault, 1986). Foucault also uses the metaphor of the ship to describe heterotopia. He notes that a ship occupies,

> a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack…it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens… from the sixteenth century until the present. (1986, p.162)

In accordance with Foucault's definition of heterotopia or ship as heterotopia, "a place without a place," the British hospital in Smyrna can be taken as a heterotopia of deviation. Although the British authorities are not in a colonial context, they are searching for "precious treasures" on an international ground. This is a war hospital whose physical structure is not mobile, but whose occupants, whether they are the medical stuff or the soldiers, move "from port to port, from tack to tack." They drift from one war zone to another, and are located on the outskirts of the local mainstream discourse "as the deviants" since they belong to another epistemological background. Foucault also asserts that heterotopia either takes the produced reality to a place or alters the present reality with a created illusion (Foucault, 1986). In this heterotopic space of the hospital, the tragic reality of the soldiers is imbued with the illusion of at-homeness or alleviated by the psychic implications of the lady-nurses.

The narrator never needs to establish a contact in the true sense of the word with other heterotopic communities because it is only physically she is away from Britain, but psychically she is still located in British mainstream discourse within the walls of the hospital. In this sense, she never leaves the home territory of Britain. Accordingly, any news from Britain consolidates their connection with home:

> All camp proceedings and telegraphic despatches were eagerly devoured; and any notice of the Queen, or thought and care of Her Majesty for the soldiers, was a subject of immense satisfaction and gratification…
>
> How pleased the patients were to hear of the Prince of Wales and Princess Royal sending two of their pictures to be sold for the Patriotic Fund! They never could be done speaking of it, saying, with tearful eyes - God bless them! Her Majesty will never want soldiers while there are such princes. (Nicol, 1856, p.120)

In their reciprocity in the hospital, the traditional hierarchies in Britain are at work in the form of female subordination and male hegemony. In fact, all the lady-nurses

maintain their subordinate roles to the doctors and fathers, who are all male. The boundaries of the hospital are kept by the male members of their community while the internal uncanny space is turned into a homely place by the lady nurses.

The houses the narrator stays in can never assume the features of inhabited space, a home. She drifts from one house to another without feeling at home. The practice of gendering place in the traditional sense, that is, turning the space into a homely place takes place not in the house but in the hospital. Irony in her case is that the institutional public space becomes the homely place that she helps to establish. A textual detail at this point might be interesting to look at. These lady-nurses refuse to cook or do the house chores for themselves in the houses they are accommodated. However, they don't hesitate to cook for the soldiers if necessary (Nicol, 1856). Although they do almost all the tasks involving filth, bacteria, and smell like shaving the soldiers who have not washed for months (for obvious reasons), they refuse to do housework for themselves and demand that the hospital authorities hire servants to run the house. What they do at work is incomparable to house chores in terms of difficulty and cleanliness as the following account given about another lady-nurse indicates:

> Her first work had been to cut off his hair, which she described as a perfect mass of vermin, as also his whiskers and eyebrows; while from off the bed they were brushed in myriads, and had to be swept up, and the floor washed afterwards. When she had finished, and made him as comfortable as she could, he looked up in her face, and said, "I believe you are not a human being but a [sic] angel!" And this was no isolated case, for there were many such. (Nicol, 1856, p.34)

Their work ethic is difficult to understand. Is it because they take whatever they do for the soldiers as part of their profession? Why is doing the same thing at 'home' humiliating, then? Or to put it differently, doing manual labor is not acceptable at 'home' [because they come from socially higher segments] but it is done willingly, without being asked, in the work environment. The only justification for their sacrifices might be a psychological explanation: they feel empowered at the hospital, so there is interesting psychological reciprocity going on in their relationship with the soldiers. The fact that the soldiers are dependent on them becomes a source of psychological gratification for the lady-nurses:

> We had become accustomed to attend to their daily wants, and felt that they so entirely depended on us for their comfort, that it made us feel a painful blank when they were no longer with us, to be cared for. A most wise provision of human nature it is, which makes us lean with kindness to those whom we have befriended. I fear the converse, however, is also true –that we never forgive those we injure. (Nicol, 1856, p.157)

Protective asylum of the hospital is closely associated with the maternal features suggested by the lady-nurses as it is the lady-nurses that create the nourishing and healing maternal environment for the soldiers. In this reciprocity, the soldiers (male members) are provided for by the lady-nurses. The implications of the word nurse in English as a child carer might be referred to here as the fact that she is nursing the soldiers might also imply, that she is providing for their emotional needs. Sometimes they demand more food or medicine, which can also be taken as the Lacanian demand, which has a double function:

> …because the object which satisfies the child's need is provided by another, it takes on the added significance of being a proof of the Other's love. Accordingly demand too acquires a double function: in addition to articulating a need, it also becomes a demand for love. And just as the symbolic function of the object as a proof of love overshadows its real function as that which satisfies a need, so too the symbolic dimension of demand (as a demand for love) eclipses its real function (as an articulation of need). (Evans, 1996, p.36)

Their demand for things is an objectification of their demand for more affection from the lady-nurses. Very suitably, one of the soldiers wants to stay at the hospital although he is "ordered home":

> …when he recovered the use of them slightly, he was ordered home, and he entreated to be allowed to remain, saying, "that he should nowhere be so well attended to, and that his mother even, if he went home, could not do for him all the ladies were doing." Another man wrote to his mother, saying, "fine ladies and the best of doctors had come out from London to attend on him!" (Nicol, 1856, p.129)

Sometimes the soldiers 'pretended they could not eat, on purpose to be pampered' by the lady-nurses (Nicol, 1856, p.108). The text reveals many other examples of emotional attachment to the lady nurses. One day, for example, the narrator is late for the ward, and one of the soldiers "beckoned [her] to him the moment he saw [her], and when

[she] went up he burst into tears, and said, 'I thought you were never coming more'" (Nicol, 1856, p.43). This intrasubjectivity is noticed by the professional medical staff:

> Dr. Meyer had a great objection to the ladies making "pets" of particular men; and, indeed, I am sure it would have had a very bad effect; for I saw, in the most trifling matters, they were particularly jealous if one received the smallest attention which the other did not. (Nicol, 1856, p.99)

The lady-nurses represent the English maternal body that gives them healing affection. Their presence signifies the uncanny feeling of at-homeness experienced with the mother:

> One of the ladies, on going into a ward to attend to two poor men who had to be fed every half-hour, observed a boy on one of the beds eyeing her most wistfully; so she went up, and asked him if he wanted anything: "Yes," he replied, pointing to what she had been giving the other, "I would like some of that, I have had nothing from the hand of a woman yet, I believe if I had something from the hand of a woman, I would get well…
>
> Many an expression of gratitude and kindness followed us that day, and many an exclamation of "It does my hearth good to see an Englishwoman again!" We returned from our first day at the hospital, tired and pleased, and interested…
>
> He let me feed him in silence; and I was going way, confirmed in my impression of his sullenness, when a most fervent exclamation, in the richest Irish brogue, of "God bless you! you're a fine woman!'' arrested my attention; and on turning round, I saw him looking after me with tears in his eyes. I found, afterwards, it was not sullenness, but astonishment at seeing the trouble I took with D--- which made him look at me in the way he did. (Nicol, 1856, pp.64-65)

In the context of the hospital due to this psycho-topology, the boundaries between the psychic and the social, the domestic and the anonymous are further blurred. By creating a home environment in the social space, the lady-nurses enable the soldiers to expel the external threats or the threats of the battlefield from their minds. In the context of the hospital, then, the traditional dichotomies between home and away, the known and the foreign, the West and the non-West, the domestic and the social, the maternal and the threatening outside public space are annihilated. Interestingly, the providers of this psychic dimension, the lady-nurses are unaware of the implications of their existence to the soldiers, and their psychic significance goes unnoticed.

In their relationship with the soldiers, the traditional roles are reversed at times. The soldiers are reduced to the position of the subordinate in this reciprocity. It is the nurses that are mobile, and have access to the outside world, and the soldiers are confined to the walls of the hospital which closets them from foreign society and its threats. However, the nurses are allowed to enjoy their limited freedom outside the hospital if there is no threat from the Greek highlanders. In this case, the hospital feminizes the soldiers due to their confinement and due to their reliance on the lady-nurses.

Hospital space is a space of relationality and intrasubjectivity as it offers intimacy, security, care, and affection to the hospitalized soldiers. As stated above, the hospital signifies the maternal body to these soldiers, and it becomes a little Britain for them. On the other hand, every one of them knows that what the maternal zone of the hospital provides for them is transitory. Hospital complicates the dichotomy between the private and the public as it's also characterized by anonymity. It seems to be a liminal space between the battlefield and their home country, Britain, achieved in a foreign territory. Thus, the hospital space metamorphoses into a psychosocial topology which also reveals how imperial ideology maintains itself and endures external threats outside Britain. It is also a transposed space that bears within itself double consciousness regarding its transitoriness (they can stay there for a limited time period) and its potential to transgress this transitoriness due to enduring maternal elements that are deeply buried in their unconscious. Then, the hospital is a physical but also a psychic space/ topology for these soldiers, which is a placeless place.

Conclusion

In this essay, what we have tried to analyze is the diary of a lady-nurse who is confined most of the time to the four walls of the hospital or accommodation offered to her by the hospital, and this bears in itself the risk of giving an unbalanced perspective to her views. Similar encounters in the Turkish context of the early 19th century might have taken place rather differently. Our focus on her account sacrifices diversity to specificities of this particular encounter, and as stated earlier, the question of how adequately she depicts the East is out of the scope of this essay.

In the narrator's account, Smyrna is depicted as an open space of heterotopias, but she is not disturbed by this heterogeneous space or does not try to homogenize or fix it or penetrate into any of these heterotopias in her account. Being an outsider, she cannot see beyond the objective reality of social space in Smyrna, and in the absence of any significant psychological penetration, she acts like a Cartesian viewer of the observational truth. However, as we tried to discuss in the preceding paragraphs, this clinical detachment itself is heavily imbued with an ideological standing.

She has a different conception of space within the walls of the hospital. The dynamic space of the hospital provides a context for the soldiers to recreate new relationalities which are shaped, to a large extent, by the lady-nurses. The lady-nurses offer emotional and psychological energy to survive in an estranging culture to their alienated, traumatized and displaced minds and bodies, and the transitory space of the hospital provides them with feelings of at-homeness. In the closed space of the hospital, the traditional gender hierarchy in Britain is established. That is, this transitory place is ruled by the military's heteronormative roles and hierarchies. In this context, it is left to the guardian spirit of the men to secure the safety of the hospital and the lady-nurses turn the unmapped foreign space into a British place. The lady-nurses as a metonymic extension of the British interiority in the hospital help the soldiers establish a collective psychic space where their conscious and unconscious mechanisms intersect. This intersection leads to the dissolution of the public /private division in a foreign territory, and this dissolution also hints at how the British imperial ideology maintains its structuring coordinates outside Britain. As a result, due to their being closeted in the safety of the hospital and its relationality, the hospital assumes the features of a socio-psychic topology in Lacanian sense where the internal merges into the external or the features of Foucauldian heterotopia, a placeless place.

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INCREDULITY TOWARD HEROISM: ACKROYD AS A GALLANT STORYTELLER AGAINST THE HEROIC TRADITION

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Abstract

Heroism as an unremitting subject conquers and even haunts literature as well as history. Historical and fictitious heroes are guiding spirits of human beings regardless of time and geography. Historians and writers have so sternly adhered to the ideals of heroism that this fascination has been transformed into hero worship dating back to antiquity, bringing heroism to the forefront as a metanarrative in history and literature. Particularly contributing to the undying predicament of literature caught between the ideal and the real, causes of heroism have been largely left unquestioned putting heroes in the shoes of a messiah. Peter Ackroyd (1949-), renowned for his historiographic metafictions fashioned within postmodernism, dares to challenge this unimpeached -ism in *The Fall of Troy* (2006). In the novel, Ackroyd rewrites the history of Troy and introduces an eccentric half-real hero, Heinrich Obermann, against celebrated heroes of history and literature. Accordingly, this paper reads heroism as a metanarrative and delineates how Ackroyd sketches an atypical hero by acting contrary to traditional heroism and heroic literary tradition in his vibrant postmodern parody, *The Fall of Troy*.

Keywords: Peter Ackroyd, *The Fall of Troy*, postmodernism, heroism, metanarrative, parody

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Heroism and Hero Worship Bewitching the Earth

The words of Victorian novelist Mary Mitford of Napoleon: 'Oh, what a man!... I would have given a limb…to have been concealed somewhere just to have heard him conversing and dictating' (Houghton, 1954, p. 309) unmistakably depicture what heroism meant in the Victorian era. When making a mention of heroism, one cannot miss the Victorian period. Heroism was a serious concern in the Victorian period as echoed in the words of Edmund Gosse: 'The Victorians carried admiration to the highest pitch. They marshalled it, they defined it, they turned it from a virtue into a religion, and called it Hero Worship' (qtd. in Houghton, 1954, p. 305). It was the time when hero worship was thought to be 'the basis of all possible good, religious or social for mankind' and people took 'the great ones of the earth' (Houghton, 1954, p. 305) like Napoleon, Nelson, and Wellington as models and wrote copious books such as *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, *Lectures on Great Men* and *The Red Book of Heroes*. In his famous series of lectures, "On Heroes and Hero-Worship", Thomas Carlyle recapitulates Victorian heroism as such: 'A hero is an exceptional man, so different in degree from the rest of us that he seems almost different in type […] a revelation of God, hero worship is a religion; or more exactly, the basis of all religion' (Ousby, 1982, p. 157). Thus, Victorian writers created ideal figures to attract readers, and, in Steckmesser's words, they turned into 'professional hero makers' (1997, p. 249) which can be traced in Alfred Lord Tennyson's great poems "The Charge of the Light Brigade", "Ulysses" and "Morte d'Arthur".[1]

Hero worship, which was at its pinnacle in the Victorian period, dates back to ancient Greek religion. The term "hero" in Homeric Greek describes the mortal progeny of a human and a deity. It later refers to a deceased person who is worshipped and offered sacrifices at his tomb or a shrine due to his reputation or his peculiar manner of passing away, which gives him the authority to aid and defend the living. The word heroism

[1] As a rarely seen example, William Makepeace Thackeray's classic novel *Vanity Fair*, with its subtitle "A Novel without A Hero", embraces a critique of traditional Victorian heroism alongside Thackeray's unconventional stance towards the idea of hero and hero worship. The novel features imperfect Captain Dobbin as a hero who is honest and brave yet ugly and clumsy with large hands, feet, and ears, a closely cropped head of black hair, and a lisp. In the novel, Thackeray questions the concept of heroism and the Victorian inclination to create heroes as such: What qualities are there for which a man gets so speedy a return of applause, as those of bodily superiority, activity, and valour? Time out of mind strength and courage have been the theme of bards and romances; and from the story of Troy down to to-day, poetry has always chosen a soldier for a hero. I wonder is it because men are cowards in heart that they admire bravery so much, and place military valour so far beyond every other quality for reward and worship? (1998, p. 283)

derives from the Greek *hērōs*, meaning protector or defender, referring to a demigod. The line between a hero and a god was not always sharp-cut as a hero was more than a human but less than a god (Parker, 2001, p. 306). Heroes are designated by Campbell as 'support for all human life and the inspiration of philosophy, poetry, and the arts' which serve as 'a vehicle for the profoundest moral and metaphysical instruction' (1949, p. 257). Campbell further proposes that the images by which heroes survive have been 'brooded upon, searched, and discussed for centuries: they have served whole societies, furthermore, as the mainstays of thought and life' (1949, p. 256). The bequest of the grand tumuli of heroes left from the Bronze Age manifested in Greek oral epic tradition in Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Stretching to the 20th century, hero worship becomes the title of the 111th episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1992). Heroism indeed has seized the movie screen with copious films, to exemplify, among others, *Ulysses* (1954), *Hercules, Samson and Ulysses* (1963), *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), *Hercules* (1983), *Young Hercules* (1998), *Alexander the Great* (2004), *Troy* (2004), *Beowulf and Grendel* (2005) *Odysseus: Voyage to the Underworld* (2008), *The Legend of Hercules* (2013) and *Thor: Love and Thunder* (2022).

Largely associated with war in the modern world, heroism, yet, seems to divide people into two opposite ends, especially in World War I. Even England, considered to be the most rewarding country after the war, lost more than two hundred thousand soldiers on the front of the Dardanelles (*Çanakkale*), and the country split into two as those for war and those against it. This great divide is found expression in the poems of Rupert Brooke (1887–1915), Wilfred Owen (1893–1918), and Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967) who participated in the war and experienced its trauma. The war caused the extinction of a generation of England, the loss of 20% of the population of France, and the loss of 13% of Germany (Parsons, 2010, p. 37). According to Hynes, this great loss of England is almost a crack in time and separated the present and the past. The atmosphere of heroism and optimism that triumphed in the first days of the war in England later left its place to despair and pessimism (Hynes, 1997, p. xiii). While heroism and patriotism came to the forefront before the war and in the first years of the war, many people like Sassoon, who experienced the true colour of the war and had to face the trauma of it for the rest of his life, labelled the outbreak of the World War II as a nightmare.

The war was also instrumental in the rise of two isms that were influential in many fields, especially in literature and art. Modernism, which was triggered by the tragedy of World War I (1914–1918), altered people's perceptions of reality, and was supplanted by postmodernism due to the upheaval brought on by another war, World War II (1929–1945). Despite their distinctions, both movements foregrounded the plurality of reality, and postmodernism, especially, has questioned metanarratives, to name a few, religion, history, and science, which shape people's perception of reality which found expression in Jean-François Lyotard's famous definition of postmodernism as 'incredulity toward metanarratives' (1984, p. xxiv). It is again Lyotard who coined the word "metanarrative" or "grand narrative" to describe a theory that attempts to provide a totalizing, comprehensive explanation of different historical events, experiences, and social and cultural phenomena by appealing to universal truths or values. That is metanarratives are totalizing narratives about human history and objectives that serve as the foundation for and justification for knowledge and cultural practices. Postmodernism considers metanarratives as tools used by people to exert power over others. Then, in postmodernism, metanarratives appear as ideological concepts that reflect the perspective of the leading group and culture as, I argue, in heroism which largely reflects the dominant group's ideology. The idea of a metanarrative as an all-encompassing explanation or justification for why we do and what we do has come into question with the development of postmodernism. Peter Ackroyd is amongst those postmodernists, including Jeanette Winterson and John Banville, who makes use of storytelling to accentuate the existence of different realities by blurring the lines between fact and fiction and questioning metanarratives. In *The Fall of Troy*, Ackroyd questions history and history writing as metanarratives and rewrites the renowned story of Troy by tracing the footsteps of Homer, the hero of his protagonist Heinrich Obermann, an ardent storyteller like his creator. Rewriting history, Ackroyd dwells on heroism extending to hero worship which has existed ever since antiquity embracing, among others, Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, and Napoleon alongside Beowulf, Hectors, Achilles, and Hercules. Ackroyd introduces his hero Obermann, a bulky, middle-aged archaeologist, by several postmodern tactics such as pastiche, intertextuality, and parody, in contrast to those celebrated heroes. The reader, to exemplify, observes him, hilariously, swimming across the Hellespont and competing in races around Troy. By doing so, Ackroyd reconstructs

and questions heroism which I read in this paper as an example of a postmodern metanarrative.

Ackroyd and His Postmodern Stance on History and History Writing

Even though it is a term that cannot be fully defined, postmodernism has shaken the values of people, their perception of reality, and their beliefs in science, religion, identity, and history. In line with the concept of relativity, postmodernism argues that reality is a man-made concept that reaches us through interpretations, and there are different truths rather than a single truth, and different histories rather than a single history. In *The Fall of Troy*, Ackroyd, with the story of the archaeologist Heinrich Obermann, depicts the view of postmodernism on history, specifically centering on heroism. In the novel, Ackroyd treats history as an epistemological narrative written by humans and draws attention to the elements of fiction that transform the historical facts defended by historians into historical narratives by removing the border between fact and fiction. The novels of Ackroyd, an English biographer, poet, novelist, critic, and the winner of the Somerset Maugham Award and two Whitbread Awards, who started his career by writing poetry and biographies of celebrated literary figures such as T. S Eliot (1984), Charles Dickens (1990), William Blake (1995), Geoffrey Chaucer (2004) and William Shakespeare (2005), are among the best examples of historiographic metafiction, a term coined by Canadian literary theorist Linda Hutcheon in the late 1980s and incorporates fiction, history, and theory. Hutcheon defines historiographic metafiction as: 'those well known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages, [and to] the theoretical self-awareness of history and fiction as human constructs' (1998, p. 5). Biography writing also formed the basis for Ackroyd's novels, to name a few, *Hawskmoor* (1985) and *Chatterton* (1987), displaying the problematic view of postmodernism towards history writing. As Brian Finney notes, writing about Eliot helped Ackroyd to apply postmodern techniques imitation, and pastiche in his works (1992, p. 245).

Blurring the line between fact and fiction, Ackroyd-renowned for the quantity of his output, and the variety of styles adopting copious voices-typically questions history writing and its authenticity by creating different narratives of historical texts. Zekiye Antakyalıoğlu defines Ackroyd's novels as 'intertextual and parodic reproductions of

histories illuminating his ideas on the indeterminacy of historical discourses" (2009, p.20). Similarly, in his thirteenth novel, *The Fall of Troy*, Ackroyd attempts to reveal the narrative structure of history writing, which is shaped by people's interpretations and imagination, according to the postmodern view, just like the writing of a literary work that is frequently mirrored in his hero Obermann's words: 'I am here to re-create Troy' (2007, p. 84). Not tallied in his main oeuvre, *The Fall of Troy* (2006) does not get the spotlight off itself particularly compared to his well-received historiographic metafictions such as *The Great Fire of London* (1982), *Hawksmoor* (1985), and *Chatterton* (1987). Yet, as I argue in this paper, *The Fall of Troy* is worth attention by its critique of heroism and hero-worship, everlasting concerns of human beings.

Pursuant to the characteristics of historiographic metafiction, which Hutcheon lists in her *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, the most central features of biography and novel are that they both remove the boundaries between storytelling and history and emphasize the linguistic elements of writing and the fictionality of the world. These attributes couple Ackroyd together with other postmodern historiographic novel writers. As discussed by Raymond Federman, to Ackroyd, history is a kind of reflection into which anything can be included since the past can be read and inserted into any desired meaning. For Ackroyd, history is also about something that never happens as it is portrayed, and its inside is invisible to outsiders. Therefore, there is no limit to what can be said about history within reason. Ackroyd believes that historical narratives are merely versions of what actually happened. For him, every event or life story can have different versions, which raises some questions about the most reliable and the true version (1993, pp. 9-10). In *The Fall of Troy*, as Federman claims for *Chatterton*, Ackroyd shows us how other versions of a life story can be edited and rewritten with its hidden parts. Similarly, Sue Gaisford says of Ackroyd: Historical accuracy is of no importance to Ackroyd. For him, there is no limit to separating real and imaginary, biography and novel. For Ackroyd, there is only a wide road where all troublesome truths gallop on his neck as he fearlessly swings his wide-bladed sword as builds his exotic stories out of nothing (2006). Thus, postmodern historiographic novel writers, like Ackroyd, in Serpil Oppermann's words, 'create interesting and brand-new accounts of different historical periods, societies and people. These can be considered as new expressions of historical texts' (2006, p. 51). In a like manner, Hayden White accentuates the narrative feature of

history writing as follows: 'Real events should not speak, should not tell themselves. Real events should simply be and narrative is the solution for the studies of translating knowing into telling' (1987, p. 2). Postmodernism, then, considers history writing as a process created by human beings that is at the center of the historiographic novel. That is, the historiographic novel, in Hutcheon's words, encompasses 'a problematized rethinking of the nature of […] historical documents" (*Critical Discourse*, 1988, p. 378) which comes to flesh and bone in *The Fall of Troy*.

Ackroyd's Obermann as A Postmodern Eccentric Hero

Reflecting on the different narratives of historical texts and questioning history writing, Ackroyd 'discursively reconstructs the historical reality on which his novels are grounded especially by using the gaps and ambiguities he detected in the official history', and shows 'how the history writing expands to multiple and variable meanings' (Oppermann, 2006, p. 76) as in *The Fall of Troy*. The gaps regarding The Trojan War such as the uncertainty of its location and the mystery of the Trojan horse take us to the true identity of Obermann, the protagonist of *The Fall of Troy*. When Hissarlik and Troy are mentioned, the first name that springs to mind is Heinrich Schliemann (1822–1890), the 19th-century German archaeologist, who is identified with Hissarlik and Troy excavations. Schliemann thought about many different places before deciding on the location of Troy in Hissarlik thanks to British Frank Calvery, who bought a part of the region. Even today, many scholars have doubts about the location of Troy. However, since Schliemann's excavations in Hissarlik in 1871, neither more popular alternatives have been proposed for the location of Troy, nor have these alternatives been widely accepted. In parallel with White and Hutcheon's views on history writing, *The Fall of Troy* tells the story of Heinrich Schliemann, who turns into Heinrich Obermann, and his efforts to find the old city of Troy by taking Homer's *The Illiad* as his guide. Heinrich Schliemann was the first to claim to have found the location of Troy. As in *The Fall of Troy*, it is his father who tells the story of Troy to young Schliemann. Fascinated by the story, Schliemann decides to rediscover Troy and comes to Turkey in the early 1860s. Using Homer's work, *The Iliad* as a map, Schliemann resolves that the Trojan War took place in Hissarlik, the Dardanelles (Çanakkale). Rewriting the story of Troy and Schliemann, Ackroyd reveals the narrative feature of history writing. More importantly for the purpose of this paper, Ackroyd challenges traditional heroism and presents Obermann, an atypical hero, a

heavy-set, middle-aged, bald archaeologist, gripped with old stories, especially with those of Homer.

Before switching to Ackroyd's brilliant postmodern hero, it would be appropriate to flick through the characteristics of a traditional hero. A hero is typically someone who exemplifies great bravery and strength and might put his life in danger or give it up for the greater good. A hero must demonstrate virtues and upstanding morals and overcome struggles. A typical hero embarks on a journey, whether it be actual or metaphorical, where he must use his abilities to go through difficulties, and battle monsters, and other forms of evil, proving that good ultimately wins over evil. Heroes can also adopt a more contemporary form where they do not travel physically but dive into a deeper spiritual journey without ever leaving their hometown. Besides the classic heroes such as Gilgamesh, Odyssey, and Beowulf, there are modern heroes such as Luke Skywalker and Harry Potter. Luke Skywalker from *The Star Wars Series* has to put forth the effort to fend against bad powers in order to keep the universe free from oppression. He displays some traditional heroic traits in a contemporary setting when he battles Darth Vader and saves Princess Leia. Harry Potter faces countless obstacles over the course of the seven volumes in the series, which put his bravery, wit, and emotional stamina to the test. Harry's involvement in these trials is meant to demonstrate that virtue ultimately prevails over evil, which, in the context of *The Harry Potter Series*, primarily manifests as Lord Voldemort and his adherents. The major features of heroes can be listed as follows: Valor, strength, conviction, resolution, helpfulness, candidness, and moral integrity. In a study conducted by Gash and Conway (1997), children listed the traits of their favorite heroes as such: beautiful, brave, brilliant, caring, confident, dresses well, friendly, gentle, good, good-looking, helpful, honest, kind, loving, loyal, rich, skillful, strong and warrior. The children gave names to heroes from a variety of fields, including family, movies, television, politics, religion, music, sports, and other broad categories. Yet, it is noteworthy that they chose beauty, fame, good looks, and wealth as essential qualities of heroism. The fact that heroic figures are frequently portrayed as being beautiful, pretty, or good-looking in fairy tales, cartoons, or motion pictures, however, may not be surprising (Eco, 2004; Klein & Shiffman, 2006).

Appertaining to Ackroyd's hero Obermann, all the traits of traditional heroes are ruined. Obermann is neither young, handsome, nor honest. He appears as a 55-year-old

bald archaeologist regarding archaeology as an instinct rather than science. He is sometimes a hero under the protection of Gods and sometimes is the God himself but always a storyteller. Obermann identifies himself not only with heroes but with Greek Gods such as Zeus and Poseidon. Such a God is worthy of a goddess. At the beginning of the novel, our middle-aged hero marries Sophia Chrysanthis, a young Greek woman. The very reason for marrying her is that she knows ancient Greek and can read Homer's texts. He frequently describes his wife as a Greek goddess. Throughout the text, he tries to prove to his wife that he is strong, agile, and young and has nothing short of heroes. For example, when his young wife warns him that he eats too much at breakfast, Obermann tells that it is okay since he is very healthy and agile: 'I am tough. I am energetic. Who else do you know to swim in the sea at dawn? Or ride an hour before breakfast?' (2007, p. 9). He, recently married, takes his wife to the Dardanelles where he excavates to find Troy. When the couple arrives in Hissarlik, Obermann, pointing to the people digging the ground, says to Sophia 'I am opening a new world […] and it is like a scene of battle […] We are the warriors beating on the gates' (2007, pp. 31-32). He hence refers to the new history he is writing by categorizing himself with the heroes fighting on the battlefield.

Heroism, yet, should not be only in words but manifest itself in actions. In Chapter 7, the reader witnesses Obermann determined to become a hero and swim across the Hellespont, which Sophia thinks is impossible. Obermann is resolute to show his heroism to his wife: 'I will swim on your behalf. I will be your champion' (2007, p. 62). I read this swimming venture of our hero as a parody of the famous swimming scene in *Beowulf*. Beowulf swims for seven nights and dodges various sea monsters, and finally comes to shore. This story is one of the narratives Beowulf tells King Hrotgar to verify that he can defeat Grendel: 'When the going was heavy in those high waves, /I was the strongest swimmer of all' (Greenblatt, 2006, lines 533-534). Beowulf adds: 'My sword had killed/ nine sea-monsters. Such night dangers and hard ordeals I have never heard of/ nor of a man more desolate in surging waves' (Greenblatt, 2006, lines 574-577). Beowulf's story turned out to be positive as he beats Breca in this swimming match and later kills Grendel. As for Obermann's, it cannot be said to be positive, however, he declares himself immortal just like Beowulf: 'We are immortal here! We will conquer the land now. I will swim across the Hellespont and proclaim it to be ours!' (2007, p. 63).

As a part of the parody, Obermann unbuttons his shirt and pants to expose an old-looking bathing suit below. Sophia bursts out laughing: 'It is what my father wears!' (2007, p. 64). Obermann replies: 'Your father is fit. So am I' (2007, p. 65). He enters the water while calling Poseidon, then shouts and doves headfirst into the waves. As he moves toward the island, the water speckles all around him. Sophia has never witnessed such a ruckus and sees the men laughing and pointing at Obermann from a neighbouring fishing boat that is jogging on the water while they are repairing their nets. He possesses the appearance of a little sea monster as he gurgles and snorts in the depths. In a short period of time, he arrives at the outcrop of rock. He hoists himself up onto it and starts leaping around, waving, and calling to her like a child who is happy to see her. Then he doves back under the water and swims toward the coast. A few moments later, she notices him waving from the water once more, but there is something strange and frenetic about the gesture. He then vanishes below the surface. He is having some sort of trouble. He surfaces once more, but he is not swimming. She cannot hear what he is saying to her due to the strong wind. She then starts yelling and waving at the fishermen who are still repairing their nets. She points at Obermann while yelling 'Imdat! Imdat!' [Help] (2007, p. 58) in Turkish. Her cries for assistance alert one of the men, who directs the others to the swimmer. They quickly grab their oars and head in his direction. Obermann once more submerges beneath the water. Then she observes them squeezing Obermann aboard.

Notwithstanding this swimming adventure described by Ackroyd is cut short, it is not much different from the swimming story that Beowulf tells for lines exaggeratedly. Obermann has a cramp in his foot but he is saved which is a miracle by Greek Gods to him: 'I know. It was a miracle […] Athene was watching over me. She saved me from the sea-god, just as she saved the heroes of Greece. I am under her protection!' (2007, p. 66). Then, once again, Obermann puts himself in the shoes of heroes, particularly in Beowulf. After Beowulf, it is time to become the God-like Achilles, the peerless hero of all times:

> His Mars-like presence terribly came brandishing his spear.
> His right arm shook it, his bright arms, like day, came glittering on
> Like re-light, or the light of heav'n shot from the rising sun. (2002, p. 475)

These are Homer's words for the Greek hero Achilles right before his encounter with Hector in *The Iliad*. The fight between Achilles and Hector, the Trojans' best warrior,

in the Trojan War is one of the cherished heroic accounts in history and literature. As Homer explains, Hector is the oldest prince of Troy and a formidable warrior. After Hector murders Patroclus, a close friend of Achilles, Achilles and Hector clash. Achilles pursues Hector back to Troy while slaying other Trojans. When they arrive at the city walls, they come face to face, and Hector, unexpectedly, resorts to flight. Achilles javelins Hector in the neck and kills him in the duel. One of the most significant moments in *The Iliad* occurs when Hector dies, which marks a turning point in the renowned epic. Hector's largely discussed flight transforms into a quizzical chase by the pen of Ackroyd since Obermann's next heroic act is to race with young Thornton around the circuit of Troy. Alexander Thornton is an English archaeologist who comes to Troy to work on the clay tablets Obermann and his team discovered, which might put an end to his excavations. Taking Thornton as his rival, Obermann proposes a duel to him: 'I challenge you to race with me three times around the circuit of Troy. Just as Hector and Achilles did. They ran three times around the city in heroic contest. Shall we be heroes? Shall we follow their steps?' (2007, p. 192). Thornton accepts the duel and Obermann gives their route in line with Homer's description in *The Iliad*:

> So be it. You have spoken. Tomorrow we will run where Homer has described. They began before the great gates of Troy, just beneath the wall. They passed the watch-tower and the wild fig tree before they came upon a wagon track and the two fair flowing fountains that feed the Scamander. They passed the washing tanks, where we have found the stone cisterns. That is our course. (2007, p.193)

Expectedly, the prize will be 'immortal glory' (2007, p. 193) and Obermann has already chosen the role of Achilles, the winner, for himself and says to Thornton: 'As do we all. In justice, as Hector, you are allowed to begin the race. I give you thirty seconds' (2007, p. 193). The next chapter, Chapter 21, consists of a parody of the famous fight scene between Hector and Achilles. As the narrator states, Obermann and Thornton appear the following morning in shorts and linen shirts in front of the stone blocks of Troy, much to the amazement of the Turkish workmen. They are given a metal cup filled with spring water. When compared to Thornton, who is still young enough to preserve his slim and strong frame, Obermann is a heavy-set man with the typical stoutness of middle age (2007, p. 194). Obermann says to his son Telemachus, the name of the son of Odysseus in Greek mythology: 'You will go ahead of us and supervise the course. You will observe our progress, like the gods who watched the flight of Hector. You have the start

of thirty seconds, Mr. Thornton' (2007, p. 194). Sophia is taken aback by her husband's poise. In a ten-mile race, how could he possibly compete with this fit young man? In the early morning sun, he is already sweating. However, he appears enthusiastic and committed: 'You will be the fawn, Mr. Thornton, and I will be the hound. Once you have started from the covert, on this bright morning, I will track you through the glades and groves' (2007, p. 194) again referring to Homer. Thornton starts to sprint around the track. Obermann counts out loud for thirty seconds while keeping an eye on him. Then, after giving his wife a kiss, he runs after him. He races much faster than she anticipates, cutting through the air with ease. However, he keeps a little chance of catching Thornton, who runs with the speed and focus of a trained runner.

The two men vanish from view. Thornton ultimately re-enters the view, moving at a slightly slower pace but showing no signs of pain. Obermann shows up a few minutes later; he develops a steady, rather quick pace that seems to fit him: 'I am fit!' he calls to Sophia. 'My daily swim has toughened me! I am an eagle darting through the clouds to the plain!' (2007, p. 195). Sophia is shocked when, after the third circuit, Obermann comes out by himself. Even though he is still in the distance, she beckons to him: 'Where is Alexander?' (2007, p. 197). Obermann does not respond until he stands next to her: 'Hector is sprawled in the dust.' 'Why? What has happened?' 'I did not wait to discover' (2007, p. 197). Obermann chuckles, but his gait remains unchanged until he arrives at the stone blocks marking the finish line of the race: 'Achilles has triumphed! […] Where is the wreath for the victor? Do you not wish to congratulate your glorious husband?' (2007, p. 195). Obermann wins the race, and what happened to Thornton remains a mystery. According to his account, a huge boulder of unknown origin was thrown at him and sprained his ankle. For Obermann, who has nothing to do with honesty, this is no excuse and the winner of the race is himself just like Achilles, most probably by a trick. The race is also likened to the story of the hare and the tortoise in Aesop's Fables. Obermann says, referring to Thornton: 'The hare is limping, but he is still healthy' (2007, p. 174). According to the story, Obermann is a turtle who is not expected to win, while Thornton is a rabbit who is likely to win but loses. That is how the middle-aged and arrogant Obermann considers himself to be a god-like hero and compares his race with young Thornton to the heroic fight between Achilles and Hector. That is how Achilles and

Hector's struggle in the Trojan War is amusingly parodied by Ackroyd. Making use of parody, Ackroyd entertainingly involves the reader in his questioning of heroism.

Ackroyd takes his questioning of heroism and parody to the extreme as his hero sets his sights not only on being a hero and a god but also on a goddess. In chapter 19, Obermann organizes an expedition to Mount Ida, 'the place where the seed of all Troy's woes was sown […] [and] Athene, Aphrodite, and Hera contested for the golden apple?' (2007, p. 173). It is the story of the judgement of Paris in Greek mythology. Aphrodite, Hera, and Athena, the three most beautiful deities of Olympus, compete for the reward of a golden apple addressed 'To the Fairest'. The event where Paris has to choose between Aphrodite, Athena, and Hera for who is the fairest and most attractive is known as The Judgement of Paris. He decides on Aphrodite since she promises to give him Helene, the most beautiful woman, as his wife, which results in the kidnapping of Helene and triggers a series of occasions that brings about the Trojan War. Obermann, obsessed with storytelling, Homer, and Greek mythology, tells the story as such:

> There is always truth in these ancient stories. Athene appeared to Paris in shining armour and promised him supreme wisdom if he awarded the prize to her. Hera appeared in all the majesty of her royal state, and promised him wealth and power. Aphrodite approached him with the enchanted girdle around her waist, and promised him a bride as beautiful as herself. (2007, p. 174)

Obermann, looking at the ruins of Troy, which was destroyed out of the relationship between Paris and Helene, copies this famous story in a way that can be considered as a foreshadowing of the relationship between his wife, Sophia, and Thornton. In Obermann's story, Sophia takes the place of Paris, and the goddesses are replaced by Obermann himself, Thornton, and the priest Harding. The prize is a marble head. Obermann says to Sophia: 'Sophia, you must choose between us and award it to the most deserving […] We will line up before you. Mr. Harding is the most devout. I am the most adventurous. Mr. Thornton—well, he is the most handsome' (2007, p. 182). They are in front of the three alder trees, and the full moon gives them the appearance of soundless and unmoving figures of marble for a brief moment. Between them and Sophia, the sculptured head is on the ground. With this parody of the celebrated Greek legend, Acroyd changes the roles of men and women, inflicting quite a wound on male-oriented heroism.

At the end of the novel, like a typical epic hero, Obermann dies and a funeral ceremony is organized for him. This burial also reminds many attentive readers of Beowulf's famous burial. Beowulf fights a monster to save his country despite his advancing age and pursuant to the heroic paradox, which requires living and dying heroically and finally becoming immortal, and dies in a heroic manner. A unique kind of burial worthy of Beowulf's glory is arranged. In accordance with tradition, Beowulf is placed in a pyre prepared for him and burned. His ashes, with smoke reaching the sky, are placed in the mausoleum. Nobles and his people gather around the funeral in great mourning:

> The Geat people built a pyre for Beowulf,
> stacked and decked it until it stood foursquare,
> hung with helmets, heavy war-shields
> and shining armor, just as he had ordered.
> Then his warriors laid him in the middle of it,
> mourning a lord far-famed and beloved.
> On a height they kindled the hugest of all
> funeral fires; fumes of woodsmoke
> billowed darkly up, the blaze roared
> and drowned out their weeping, wind died down
> and flames wrought havoc in the hot bone-house,
> burning it to the core. (2006, lines 3137-3148)

The death of our hero Obermann is very sudden but similar to the story of Paris and Helen, it is all because of a woman. Realizing that what her husband is telling her is just stories that have nothing to do with reality, Sophia elopes with Thornton. Obermann, who is chasing after them, is struck by his own horse, Pegasus, which his son Telemachus rides and causes his death. Following this abrupt death scene, the novel comes to an end with the funeral of Obermann in Troy just like the funeral of Beowulf at the end of Beowulf. Sophia decides that Obermann should be buried in Troy, to which he devoted his life:

> The men and women who had worked at the excavations lined up in two processional rows, between which Obermann was carried to a great mound placed in the center of the palace courtyard. The pyre was constructed of wood and cloths soaked with naphtha, upon which Leonid, Thornton and Kadri Bey placed the body […] Leonid then lit the pyre with a flaming brand. The cloths and the wood burned quickly, and Obermann was enveloped in flame. The constant wind had dropped. The watchers remained silent as a thin column of smoke rose towards the cloudless sky. (2007, p. 215)

Like Beowulf, Obermann's corpse is placed on a pyre and burned. This is a form of death attributed to heroes as an Anglo-Saxon tradition. A structure, typically made of wood, known as a funeral pyre, is used to burn a body as part of a funeral ritual or execution. A body is put on or underneath the pyre, which is subsequently lit on fire, to perform the cremation. The term "pyre" (the anglicized form of the Greek word for fire) is also used to refer to the altar flames that were used to burn animal sacrifice portions as an offering to the gods in ancient Greek religion. Funeral pyres were also used in Germanic and Roman culture (Fernando, 2006). In line with the parody, Obermann is accompanied on his last journey by simple clothes, not by magnificent shields or helmets. Also, it's not a dragon that kills him, but a simple horse. However, Obermann's ashes, like Beowulf, reach the sky with the easing of the wind. That is how the funeral scene of Obermann transforms into a parody of the funeral of Beowulf. Thus, the immortal heroes Beowulf, Archilles, and Hector become fictitious characters whose heroism is questioned in the story of Acroyd and his hero Obermann, where harmless horses replace the fierce beasts with which the heroes fight and heroically die. By doing so, it needs hardly mention that Ackroyd takes his side and prefers the real over the ideal in the undying dispute of the literary realm.

Final Remarks

While it is questioned from time to time, heroism is an inevitable part of history and literature due to its vital role in real life. Heroes are essential components of stories because they give readers a major figure who embodies virtue, morality, courage, and strength. Readers grow to trust and identify with them. The classic stories, epics in particular, provide readers with an illustration of a morally upright person they can aspire to be like, a role model to imitate. In *The Fall of Troy*, Ackroyd playfully centers on heroism and hero worship which has existed ever since antiquity and turned into a religion in the Victorian period. Not only Victorians but copious writers stick to this concept of heroism and accordingly to a certain definition of a hero, creating a heroic literary tradition dating back to classic literature transforming heroes into the messiahs of literary texts. Today, the concept of heroism, which is often mentioned with war, can be read as a metanarrative since it reflects the ideology of the powerful group, as it has recently manifested in the Ukraine-Russia war. If we pay regard to the fact that World War I could have ended much earlier, but that it was continued for years in line with the

interests of those in power and cost the lives of countless people, and that perhaps the most significant motive for continuing the war was heroism, heroism appears as a very well-told, influential and everlasting metanarrative.

In *The Fall of Troy*, Acroyd dwells on heroism as if to prove Lyotard's definition of postmodernism as incredulity toward metanarratives. In parallel with the theories of Hutcheon and White, Ackroyd pictures the questioning point of view of postmodernism against history writing in the framework of heroism. In this context, Ackroyd foregrounds that both history and history writing are man-made and fictional in which the border between history and storytelling, and fact and fiction are removed. Ackroyd depicts an archaeologist who substitutes stories for scientific knowledge and believes in imagination over science. To Obermann- a half-real character-, a parody of the 19th-century German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, archaeology is a matter of instinct and Homer's *The Iliad* is a historical document. It is also important that as the subject of his novel, Ackroyd chose the story of Troy, which is a cult in both history and literature, through which he aptly questions the accuracy of historical facts while emphasizing the narrative structure of history. By Ackroyd's story of (re)construction and questioning of heroism, the reader is introduced to Obermann, an unconventional hero- ugly, clumsy, tricky, undignified- put against traditional heroes- handsome, honest, strong, dignified- and heroism. Although Ackroyd's favor is almost apparent, it is unquestionably up to the reader to choose between the ideal and the real, especially regarding those heroes in literature.

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HEDGES AND BOOSTERS IN 19TH CENTURY BRITISH FICTION

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Abstract

Hedges and boosters are two important sources of linguistic devices to express tentative evaluations and to mitigate solidarity with readers. Men and women have different tendencies of using these linguistic devices. Women are usually considered to follow a personal and polite style whereas men are more competitive and assertive. Hence, gender-preferential features of women and men are one of the prerequisites of understanding the functions of hedges and boosters. One relatively neglected aspect of gender-based studies of these linguistic devices is fiction. In this paper, we explored male and female English writers' use of hedges and boosters in HUM19UK Corpus, a corpus of 19th century British fiction. We calculated a statistically significant overuse in the deployment of hedges and boosters by female writers in the 19th century, which is an indication of a new writing style adapted by the female writers in that era. However, the most common items of hedges and boosters were identical in both corpora.

Keywords: hedges, boosters, gender, literature, fiction, nineteenth century

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Linguistics devices utilized to reflect feelings and evaluations play a critical role in the maintenance of spoken and written discourse. To be able to identify these devices, we need to look at the context in which they occur (Hyland, 2005). Among these linguistic devices, hedges and boosters as sub-categories of metadiscourse can convey many different kinds of evaluations. Hyland (2000) states that hedges like *might, probably* and *seem* indicate a tentative assessment of referential information while boosters such as *clearly, obviously,* and *of course* enable writers to reflect conviction and to display their involvement and solidarity with listeners or readers.

A number of factors such as gender, genre, and register may shape the deployment of hedges and boosters and the main concern of the present study is to reveal the effect of gender on the employment of these two linguistic devices in fiction. In his influential study, R. Lakoff (1973) identifies the features of women's speech. Attitudes and referential meanings are conveyed by the way we use language. The marginality and powerlessness of women can be understood by how they are expected to speak and how they are spoken. Women's speech is closely associated with euphemisms due to their dependent roles to men. Their personal identity is traced by the use of lexicon and syntax. This is supplemented by R. Lakoff (1973) when he identifies several linguistic features specifically attributed to women. These features are the indicators of women's social role as reflected through their linguistic behavior (pp. 53-57). Indeed, several studies complement the fact that gender differences are important delimiters in linguistic adoptions in language. To explicate, Ehrlich (1990) studies a handful of canonical writers in utilization of authorial style in their explication of point of view. Though not particularly focusing on gender of the analyzed authors, she concludes that "Woolf's texts display a greater variety of cohesive devices than Hemingway's and James' do" (p. 103). Yet, Livia (2003, p. 156), in contrast, assumes that "no convincing linguistic evidence has yet been provided to indicate the stylistic characteristics of each". This is a slippery and much debated ground. Hence, G. Lakoff (1973, p. 471) seems quite right when he uses the word 'fuzzy' for his newly coined linguistic device 'hedges' – "whose meaning implicitly involves fuzziness words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy". Based on this definition, it can be understood that hedges refer to the modification of words within propositional content.

Investigating hedges and boosters as two important linguistic devices of discourse in women's and men's speech, Holmes (1990, p. 201) identifies pragmatic functions of particular items "*tag questions, you know, sort of, I think* and *of course*" and finds that these items convey different functions serving as verbal fillers, "devices which facilitate the smooth flow of the discourse by providing the speaker with planning time, or as conversational lubricants in interaction, encouraging easy turn-taking between participants". Women use hedges to reflect their comments confidently or to mitigate solidarity with the listeners. Contrary to R. Lakoff (1973), women do not employ them to express uncertainty. She defines boosters as assertive strategies putting pressure on conversations, so they should be excluded from any discourse analysis between women and men.

A tremendous amount of previous research has been done on hedges and boosters in different academic contexts. As for Hyland (2000), hedges and boosters are the reflections of doubt and certainty of writers about their evaluations and arguments. Hedges are the reflections of toning down potentially risky claims for readers to be rejected and boosters highlight what writers consider to be correct. Variations regarding the employment of these two devices have been studied by many scholars in research articles (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2016; Farrokhi & Emami, 2008; Hyland, 1998) in postgraduate genres (Akbaş & Hardman, 2018; Taymaz, 2021) and in undergraduate essays (Alward et al., 2012; Serholt, 2012).

Recently, scholars have examined metadiscourse in literary texts. Sadeghi and Esmaili (2012) observed metadiscourse in two original English novels and in their simplified versions and found no significant difference between them regarding the use of metadiscursive items. Boroujeni (2012) showed that metadiscourse was scarce in translated novels compared to their original ones. In a corpus of short stories written by three American writers, AlJazrawi and AlJazrawi (2019) analyzed metadiscursive items and revealed two functions of these items: coherence and persuasion.

Although the use of hedges and boosters have been examined in several academic contexts and in some limited literary texts following corpus-based approaches, scholars have understudied the employment of these two devices in fiction. Questions have been raised by G. Lakoff (1973); R. Lakoff (1973) and Holmes (1990), but very little is currently known about the use of these devices in literary genres. Thus, this paper attempts to examine the employment of hedges and boosters by women and men writers of English

in the novels in the 19th century and how hedges and boosters words could be utilized in the automatic classification of the authors' genders. Since we have ample data from 19th century novels written by English native speakers, we are in a good position to investigate the use of hedges and boosters in fiction, as well as how gender influences the use of these linguistic devices. The following research questions constituted the essence of the study:

1. What are the distributions of hedges and boosters used by male and female writers of English in the 19th century?

1.a. Is there a statistically significant difference between male and female writers of English in the 19th century regarding the employment of hedges and boosters?

2. What are the 10 most common of hedges and boosters used by male and female writers of English in the 19the century?

3. Can a machine learning (ML) algorithm automatically identify the gender of an author when trained with hedges and boosters words labelled with the gender information both with unsupervised and supervised classification methods?

Methodology

Corpus

Given the research purpose of examining the deployment of interactional metadiscourse in fiction, HUM19UK Corpus (2019) was chosen as the corpus for its accessibility, and representativeness. Created between 2016-2019 as a collaborative project between the University of Huddersfield (UK), Utrecht University (the Netherlands), and University College Roosevelt in Middelburg (the Netherlands), HUM19UK (19th Century British Fiction Corpus) available at https://www.linguisticsathuddersfield.com/hum19uk-corpus covers 100 novels written by different writers in the 19th century. Totaling 13.590.557 million words, it consists of novels written by 50 female and 50 male writers. To maintain the representativeness of 19-century British fiction, one text per year was added to the corpus roughly. The published version of the corpus consisted of machine-readable versions of the novels which contain all the sections of the novels but some parts such as prefaces by the author, epigraphs, content pages were enclosed in angle brackets (i.e. < >) so that they can be ignored by the corpus tools but can be found if required. In the original corpus, the file name of the text was represented by the year of its publication.

Livia (2003) proposes three methodologies to examine gender issue in literary texts. The first one includes a comparison of fiction written by men and women and identification of men's and women's writing styles. The second approach concerns linguistic gender system of different languages and their influence on literary texts. The third approach is pertinent to language and gender in fiction provided by translators and translation theorists.

In the present study, we adapted the first approach suggested by Livia (2003). In the same vein, since we also assume that "there are conventions of masculine and feminine style which any sophisticated writer, whether male or female, can follow" (Livia, 2003, p. 156), the ultimate objective is to prove this point from another microscopic viewpoint of two linguist features. Since the present study aims to examine the influence of gender on the use of hedges and boosters in fiction, the corpus was subdivided into two specialized corpora: female and male subsets. At this point, the tags for the authors' gender helped us for this division. The female subset included 6.845.815 million words while the male subset has 6.744.742 words. The coding of the corpus in this study was arranged as the year of the publication, the gender, and the place of the text in the corpus. To illustrate, 1805-M-1 represented the first text in the male subset written in 1805.

Data Analysis

As an instrument to analyze hedges and boosters in the corpus, we adopted Hyland's taxonomy (2005) of metadiscourse. The taxonomy suggests two types of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional. The first one is related to organizing the propositional content based on the readers' expectations while the second one is mainly associated with the ways of engaging readers in texts and mitigating authorial stance. Interactional metadiscourse has 5 sub-categories: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers. In this study, we focused on hedges and boosters.

In the first phase of the study, the frequency counts of 80 items of hedges and 48 items of boosters were calculated using AntConc, a text analysis and concordance program by Anthony (2022). All cases were manually checked to ensure that they had a metadiscursive function, and a sample was double-checked by a colleague working independently. The occurrences that were not functioning metadiscursively were excluded. The frequencies of the overall and ten most common items in each corpus were

normalized to 1000 words. Log-likelihood (LL) statistics were applied to analyze whether there was a statistical difference between these two corpora.

In the second phase, to support the findings of the previous phase, we computed the Cosine-Delta scores of (Evert et al., 2017) all hedges and boosters words in the corpus and labelled the resulting document-term matrix with abbreviations F (for female) and M (for Male). Next, we plotted the corpus with MDS (Multi-Dimensional Scaling), an unsupervised classification method to observe whether the hedges and boosters utilization of the authors can be distinctively mapped in the visualization. Finally, we run supervised classification, a machine learning technique that involves training a model to classify input data into predefined categories based on labeled training data. For the purpose, we employed SVM (Support-Vector Machine), Naïve-Bayes, and Logistic Regression algorithms to find out if gender classification is salient from machine learning perspective. The second phase jobs were carried out with the relevant libraries (*stylo()* package (Eder et al., 2016)) of *R* statistical computing language.

Results and Discussion

The table below illustrates the total number of occurrences of hedges and boosters in the two corpora. Female writers employed more hedges (16.2) and boosters (12.5) than male writers. In the male corpus, hedges and boosters were found 13.9 and 11.2 times, respectively. The Log-likelihood analysis also proved an overuse of hedges and boosters in the female corpus. The observed value of +1232.75 and +965.91 showed a significant difference in the deployment of hedges and boosters in the female subset.

Table 1

Hedges and boosters in the corpus

	F		M	
	n	n/1000	n	n/1000
Hedges	111.522	16.2	94.084	13.9
Boosters	861.46	12.5	72.592	11.2

n: raw frequency of hedges and boosters
n /1000: frequency of hedges and boosters per 1000 words

Hedges and boosters were clearly overused by female writers in the 19 the century but were they simply the sign of uncertainty as R. Lakoff (1973) claimed? Holmes (1990, p. 202) reports that these devices are "used by women to assert their views with confidence, or as positive politeness devices signaling solidarity with the addressee". As Kennedy (2017)

explains, the Victorian Era witnessed a tremendous change in literature perspectives presented through various forms and styles. Easley (2004) draws our attention to the contribution of women writers to British literature. In this era, women chose a new path as writers in a male-dominant world. They constructed their identity and influenced literature culture. Some women writers preferred anonymous publication to decrease feminine voice and identity. Apparently, women writers in this era had the opportunities to express themselves in new ways more freely in fiction. In this new era, where the feminist style is distinct, female characters are portrayed as assertive and self-confident.

Our findings are evidence of this shift from the passive female presence to a more conscious presence of female writers. The overuse of hedges and boosters concerns the new ways of female writers to communicate their doubts and certainties. In other words, they are linguistic devices of women writer's consciousness strategy for presenting their stance and characters in the novels. Secondly, they seem to be a politeness strategy for pending acceptance by the readers. To receive the approval of the readers, women writers might create a space for them in their novels with the use overuse of hedges and boosters.

The second concern of the study was to identify the 10 most common items of hedges and boosters in the two corpora. As shown in Table 2, *would* and *could* as hedging items were the most frequently observed items in both subsets. Apparently, modals got the highest ranks in the table. The other items, which were mostly adverbs, were found at low frequencies. Although we observed an overuse of hedges and boosters in the female corpus, the most common 10 hedges were identical in the two corpora.

Table 2

Ten most used hedges

Items	F		M
	n/1000		n/1000
would	3.4	would	2.9
could	2.6	could	2.1
should	1.6	should	1.4
might	1.2	may	1.0
may	0.9	might	1.0
quite	0.6	quite	0.5
perhaps	0.5	perhaps	0.5
rather x	0.5	almost	0.4
almost	0.4	appear	0.4
appear	0,3	rather x	0.4

In English, modals are commonly applied to express modality, which displays the speaker's or writer's opinion towards the propositional content. They are non-factual utterances, and they indicate the speaker or writer's comment on the truth of the propositional content (Hardjanto, 2016). For Hyland (1994), modals are the most typical means of hedging. Going back to the 19th century, our case, the abundant use of epistemic modality (e.g. it could be seen) are one of new tools of the feminist style Livia (2003). The extracts below, drawn from the two corpora of the present study, indicated subjective possibilities stated by the characters which fall outside the propositional content of the utterance with the use of modals. Boicu (2007, p. 18) states that modals like *can*, *may*, *must*, and *should* show "potential existence or occurrence of events, acts or circumstances." The first three examples displayed potentiality that did not exist in the actual world. Suffice that, the use of *should* in the extract (4) limited the hearer's freedom of action implicitly, which is an example of negative politeness. The speaker here wanted his/her decision to be accepted.

(1) Had I done more than my duty in that," replied Thaddeus, "such words from your majesty *would have been* a reward adequate to any privation; but, alas! no…

(Female subset)

(2) She had loved him, passionately loved him, and he was certain she *could not be* so utterly changed.

(Female subset)

(3) Living apart from her husband, she *could not be* expected to forswear society, and doubtless she would see Milvain pretty often.

(Male subset)

(4) But whether the banquet was to be given by the bride's grandfather or by himself,-he was determined that there *should be* a banquet,…

(Male subset)

A quick glance at Table 3 shows us that, verbs as boosters were mostly preferred by both groups of the writers. Sharing the same frequency counts of 1.6 per 1000 words, know was the most common item in both corpora, followed by never. Think, must, and find were the other frequently applied items at above 1.0 occurrences. Similar to the employment of common hedging items, the 10 items of common boosters were typical in both subsets.

Table 3

Ten most used boosters

Items	F		M
	n/1000		n/1000
know	1.6	know	1.6
never	1.6	never	1.3
think	1.5	must	1.2
must	1.4	think	1.1
find	1.0	find	1.0
always	0.7	indeed	0.5
believe	0.5	always	0.4
sure	0.5	believe	0.4
indeed	0.4	show	0.3
really	0.3	sure	0.3

Broadly speaking, boosters are the reflection of speaker or writer's confidence towards the truth of the content. We may discover how they function in our corpora by concentrating on some examples. In (5), the speaker believed that what he/she said was a fact. It is an example of assertive speech act suggested by Searle (1979), which binds the speaker to truth of utterance. In the next example, the speaker established a point of equilibrium between the assertivity of the truth of the content and his/her personal thought with the use of know as a booster and difficult as an attitude marker. In a way, the speaker made the message perspicuous. The item never was common in both corpora as illustrated in (7) and (8). The employment of the item did not let the hearers to negotiate the speaker's assertions. In the two corpora, we observed a frequent use of the item with modals in both the present and the past form.

(5) You *must know* that I am a wandering beggar-girl, without home, parents, or friends...

(Male subset)

(6) It was difficult to *know* what to do for the best for Mary.

(Female subset)

(7) Now the Diamond could *never* have been in our house, where it was lost, if it had not been made a present of to my lady's daughter; and my lady's daughter would *never* have been in existence to have the present, if it had not been for my lady who (with pain and travail) produced her into the world.

(Male subset)

(8) We shall *never* be able to take a reasonable view of this question till we get rid of that ridiculous phrase…

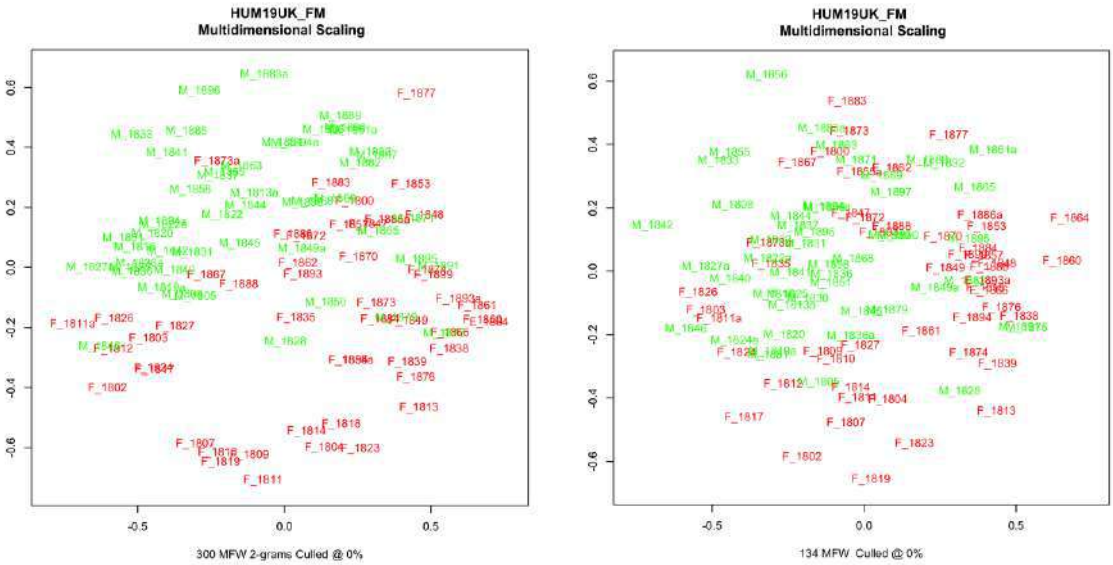
(Female subset)

In the final analysis where we make both unsupervised and supervised automatic classification of gender based on aforementioned features, it is seen that the results are quite consistent with the findings in the previous step. In fact, the previous research on the linguistic differences of gender in language production is further supplemented with our findings. Figure 1 shows the unsupervised MDS classification of the corpus in which a rough stylistic comparison of 300 most frequent (MFW) bigram features is made on both subsets (in the visual on the left) and another comparison of hedges and boosters usage by both genders (in the visual on the right) is given. See how gender distribution in both plots is roughly consistent with each other.

Indeed, gender specific language is not a myth. While a general comparison of an even unrefined stylistic choice clearly indicates the authenticity of this myth, it is further supported with the roughly similar distribution of hedges and boosters features in the corpus in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) visualization of general stylistic choice and hedges and boosters distribution



The separation is not perfect in line with Livia's argument that linguistic choices might have been copied by any skilled author. Yet, we can safely generalize that different linguistic choice by different genders is a general tendency in this limited case of fictional language. The case should ideally be supported by the supervised classification as well in which gender labelled corpus is fed into three state-of-the-art machine learning algorithms (SVM, Naïve-Bayes, Logistic Regression). Theoretically, these algorithms learn

the associated labels in vector space by looking at the Cosine Delta scores and later, tries to blindly identify to which label the features belong. Table 4 gives the classification results of each supervised classification method on two different sets of features with the best performing methods highlighted.

Table 4

Supervised classification results

	Evaluation Metrics					
	300 MFW Bigram Features			Hedges And Boosters Features		
	CA	Precision	Recall	CA	Precision	Recall
SVM	**0.840**	0.842	0.840	**0.680**	0.681	0.680
Naive Bayes	0.800	0.800	0.800	**0.680**	0.680	0.680
Logistic Regression	0.780	0.784	0.780	0.630	0.630	0.630

The metrics used to evaluate the performance of the machine learning models in this study include classification accuracy (CA), precision, and recall. When the 300 most frequent word bigrams were used as features, the SVM model achieved the highest classification accuracy at 0.84 (by percentage), followed by Naive Bayes at 0.80, and Logistic Regression at 0.78. However, when Hedges and Boosters features were used, all models performed slightly worse, with SVM achieving the highest classification accuracy at 0.68, followed by Naive Bayes at 0.68, and Logistic Regression at 0.63. Whether this gap between 84% and 68% accuracy is due to the limited size of the corpus needs further scrutiny with a more comprehensive and refined corpus. The reduced result for hedges and boosters is not surprising considering the very low number of items analyzed compared to more than 300 bigram features for general stylistic mark. Anyhow, we can conclude that hedges and boosters are salient features in determining the authorial gender of fictional language. The porosity of distribution and distance might be attributed to the general feminine tendency both in thematic and linguistic planes in Victorian literary landscape. It is well known that the 19th century literary actors are prominent in their high regard for sensational, serialized literature and epistolary form. Thus, a general utilization of hedges and boosters as the defining elements of the period literature might illustrate the power mechanisms from which the oppressed parties tried to overcome through their distinctive linguistic choices. Truly, the certainty, doubt, assertiveness and confidence or lack thereof can be the significant factors affecting the use of salient metadiscursive features.

Taken together, we found that female writers of the 19 the century in our case created a new writing style. Hedges and boosters are prominent features of this style. The overuse of them in the female subset enabled us to claim that women writers in the 19 the century were more assertive in their convictions than male writers were. They also attempted to view consensus with their readers by the use of hedges. However, both female and male writers made use of similar items of hedging and boosting.

Conclusion

In both oral and written discourse, we are surrounded by linguistic conventions, the usage of which convey different communicative functions. Hedges and boosters are two prominent metadiscursive items. Hedges are the tools of negotiating the state of the claims and evaluations of knowledge with the readers while boosters highlight the commitment of the writers to their claims as well as showing solidarity with the readers. Previous studies about the employment of hedges and boosters have been limited to academic contexts. Undertaken form a gender-based perspective, the present paper dealt with the employment of hedges and boosters by English female and male writers in the 19th century. We adapted corpus-based approach supported with machine learning methodology and used HUM19UK Corpus (2019) to examine hedges and boosters in the 19th century.

The 19th century English Literature is specifically called as the Victorian Era. In this era, there was a shift from masculine dominant literature to a more feminine one. Women writers some of whom are considered to be the milestones of the 19th century English novels were welcomed by the English society. The professional writing of female novelists led to a change in the literary style. Drawing on our analysis, we found that one of the main features of this style is the more frequent employment of hedges and boosters by female writers. Although we observed a statistically significant overuse of hedges and boosters by female writers, the common items of hedges and boosters used by female and male writers were identical, which might be explained by the new construal of the feminine dominant literary style.

The findings of this study revealed the importance of genre-based studies in understanding the use of hedges and boosters as a key aspect of showing solidarity and tentativeness of the thoughts. However, this study offers some insight into the use of these devices in a limited literary era with a limited size of hypothetically representative corpus

of fiction whose authors are gender-labeled. Hence, wider-scope diachronic analysis of hedges and boosters or other linguistic devices is essential to reveal the gradual changes in the English literary community.

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THE RECURRING ISSUE OF AVIATION ENGLISH TEST VALIDITY: ECHOES FROM TEST-TAKERS AND ASSESSORS OF THE ENGLISH FOR AVIATION LANGUAGE TESTING SYSTEM IN ALGERIA

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Abstract

The English for Aviation Language Testing System (EALTS) is one of the international tests for pilots wishing to operate in international airspace. This test presents a wide range of difficulties for Algerian pilots, but little research has been conducted to estimate its validity. This paper seeks to answer two questions: (1) What are test-takers perspectives on the EALTS test construct? and (2) What is the assessors' perception of the testing procedure and test validity? A descriptive study was conducted using qualitative data from a semi-structured questionnaire for ten pilots and a semi-structured interview for three certified assessors and four university researchers. The authors used 'first-hand' data from the targeted sample to cross-check results' validity through triangulation. The results show specific difficulties from an affective dimension, such as stress and anxiety caused by inefficient preparation and unfamiliarity with test tasks. A different interpretation of ICAO descriptions using the rating scale is another issue noted by assessors. Additionally, technical issues with the computer-based listening test and non-compliant features of the test contents with features of the target situation language use are among the main issues noted by both test-takers and assessors.

Keywords: ESP, Assessment, Aviation English, test validity, test design, aviation phraseology, language proficiency

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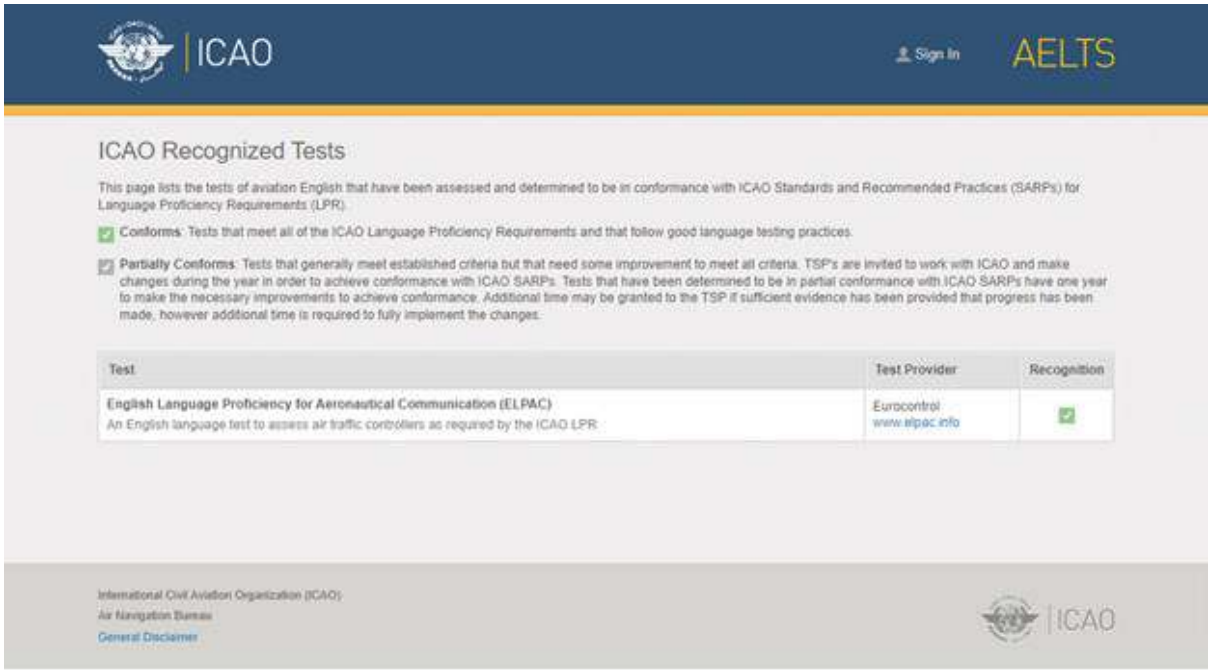
Following the adoption of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (also known as Chicago Convention) in 1944, the ICAO recommended the use of the English language as the international language of aviation (Annex 10, Vol. I, 5.2.1.1.2). As a result, any radiotelephony conversation held by aeronautics professionals in international airspace must be in English. Therefore, it is highly required for all aviation personnel, most notably pilots and air traffic controllers (ATCs), in international airspace, to communicate effectively using the English language. Pilots must demonstrate their communicative proficiency by taking a standardized language test recognized by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). A shortlist of recognized tests can be found online, and test providers must rely on one of them. The EALTS (English for Aviation Language Testing System) is not one of these tests (see. Figure 1), yet it has been administered as an internationally recognized test since 2008, particularly in Algeria since 2015.

Figure 1.

Aviation English Tests Recognized by the ICAO



Note. Screen Capture by T. Assassi, December 8th,2022. https://www4.icao.int/aelts/Home/RecognizedTests

The Aures Aviation Academy is the exclusive test provider in the country. Nearly three hundred (300) candidates sat for the test in two years (president of the academy). The significance of the study stems from the significance of the test and its effect on candidates' performance and licensure to be operational pilots. Communication is one

of the major safety concerns in the fastest-growing industry nowadays. Communication-related issues have been identified in the literature as a main contributing factor in several incidents and accidents, as summarized in Table 1, Cookson (2009), Cushing (1994).

In March 2013, ICAO held a Language Proficiency Requirements (LPRs) Technical Seminar designed to assist States and the industry with the implementation of the safety-critical language provisions (ICAO, 2013). At the seminar, Nicole Barrette, Technical Specialist (Training and Licensing standards) explains that the implication of this is that all pilots and controllers involved in international operations that do not share a common language must have stated on their license their level of English language proficiency. Flanagan (ICAO, 2013), AELTS Manager, also adds that language is a component of communication and the ability to speak at a certain level of proficiency to communicate with each other if something unexpected occurs is essential. As a result, test providers and assessors must eliminate any discomfort or confusion before tests and ensure candidates share their real language level with minimal impeding factors. Since "clear communication is critical because of the potential safety repercussions of misunderstandings" (Cox & Karimi, 2022, p. 183), and most of the tests are not recognized by the ICAO (Alderson, 2008), what constitutes aviation English test validity? And who validates these internationally recognized tests? ICAO did not design or develop any aviation English tests; however, their description of proficiency requirements can be used for designing different types of tests, namely, proficiency tests.

After checking the ICAO website to see the officially recognized aviation English tests, we noticed that only one test is recognized, as shown above in Figure.1. To be sure of the data we received, we checked the website repeatedly during the first 6 months of 2022. After, we confirmed the information with the head of the local aviation academy that provides the test, to receive the same answer stating that the test is recognized in Algeria and several other countries around the world even if the official website does not confirm the information. Accordingly, the EALTS follows the description of proficiency requirements set by the ICAO EALTS Handbook, (2012). Many researchers specializing in applied linguistics have investigated assessment in aviation English (Fowler et al., 2021; Garcia & Fox, 2020; Knoch, 2014; Dusenbury & Bjerke, 2013; Moder

& Halleck, 2012; Alderson, 2010; Douglas 2001, 2000). By the same token, Friginal et al., (2020) claim that investigating communication between pilots and air traffic controllers to elicit pedagogical implications for aviation English educational programs has been an important aspect for applied linguists. However, there is still "little confidence in the meaningfulness, reliability, and validity of several of the aviation language tests currently available for licensure" (Alderson, 2010, p. 1). Kim and Elder (2014) confirm the importance of eliciting information from different stakeholders who are well-placed to assess communication in the aviation field. From this point, there is a growing need for test validity given the immense importance of communication in aviation operations and eliciting information from the concerned parties, mainly test-takers and assessors. This study addresses the key issue of test validity through information from the target situation. We draw the data from test-takers' performance in the test, in addition to certified assessors' and aviation English teachers' views on the testing process and its compliance with the ICAO linguistic requirements. Therefore, the study addresses the following two fundamental questions: (1) what is the test-takers' perspective on the EALTS test construct? And (2) what is the assessors' perception of the testing procedure and test validity? The research paper begins with a general overview of the literature on aviation English tests. Next, a description of the research procedure and the case under investigation is provided. Finally, a discussion of the main findings concerning the main issues faced by test-takers of the EALTS and assessors'/professors' perspectives on the test are debated. Elicited suggestions and recommendations were also elaborated. The study sees if the test complies with the Language Proficiency Requirements of the ICAO, if it mirrors Target Language use, and if it manifests real-life situations using test-takers and assessors' perspectives.

Literature Review

In this section, an extensive literature review has been conducted to explore what was already discussed concerning this research problem, that is to say, the issue of testing validity in aviation English assessment procedures as a high-stakes test and the compliance of the internationally recognized tests with the ICAO Linguistic Proficiency Requirements (LPRs). To follow the chain of events, there is a substantial increase in the demand for air travel around the globe. This has led to a significantly high demand for flight training. Subsequently, the training programs for novice pilots and ATCs must

follow very strict standards considering the safety issues, most notably communication-related incidents and accidents. "Inadequate English language proficiency is a significant safety issue that causes delays in progress and could even prevent international student pilots from completing their flight training" (Fowler et al., 2021, p. 27). As the de facto language for international aviation talk, communicating in English among the aviation community has become a major concern given the percentage of non-native English speakers NNES compared to native English speakers NES. Miscommunication on radiotelephony might occur due to problems related to the speaker, problems related to the channel, and/or problems related to the listener (ICAO, 2010). First, the problems related to the speaker include propositional failure (*e.g., inaccurate assumptions about shared background knowledge with the listener), encoding failure (e.g., wrong choice of vocabulary or grammar mistakes*), or delivery failure (*e.g., pronunciation problems or inappropriate speech rate*). The problems related to the listener can be due to decoding failure (*e.g., language, attention, memory problems*), interpretation failure, which can be a consequence of the speaker encoding problems, and feedback failure.

Research has also shown that the testing policy lack of fit with pilots' and ATCOs' real-life communicative needs might lead to construct underrepresentation (Douglas, 2014; Kim, 2012; Kim & Elder, 2015), which may in turn: i) threaten the validity of implications drawn from test scores; ii) impact individuals, on teaching and learning activities and testing policies and practices; and iii) bring about potentially deadly unintended consequences (Messick, 1989).

Safety concerns due to the breakdown of communication in aviation have led many researchers to pinpoint the ins and outs of communicative issues and the application of ICAO's linguistic requirements. Fowler et al., (2021) found that the number of reported incidents due to inadequate English language proficiency did not decrease after the 2003 ICAO LPRs' strengthening procedure. They reported data drawn from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) between the years 2009 and 2019.

The flight crew involved in the famous Tenerife accident were highly experienced airline pilots. KLM 4805 Captain Jacob Van Zanten had approximately 11,700 total flight hours, with 1,545 hours on the Boeing 747 (NASB, 1978). This led us to consider that if

highly experienced pilots with that many flight hours can fall into such a breakdown of communication, novice pilots who must communicate in English as a second or foreign language are more likely to commit more serious communication errors. To back up this claim, a more recent accident was reported by the Transport Safety Board of Canada (2018). On March 17, 2017, two Cessna 152 aircrafts dedicated to training were involved in a fatal mid-air collision 1.7 nautical miles east southwest of the Montreal St. Hubert Airport (CYHU). As Fowler et al., (2021) indicated, student pilots had 135.8 and 39.5 total flying hours. They added that the accident was a result of a breakdown of communication, as both international student pilots were neither native speakers of English nor French, the main languages used in Canadian airspace.

Serious safety concerns in the aviation industry, especially those caused by a breakdown of communication, have been discussed in the literature. Yet, much more open discussions are needed. The teaching, learning, and assessment of aviation communication that led to licensure for pilots to be operational require much more effort and openness. Regarding testing for licensure, which is the last and most serious step to effective communication in the target situation, much more research is needed to shed light on test performance issues, test constructs, and test validation. Unfortunately, there are few aviation English assessment programs available to evaluate NNES flight students for aviation English proficiency. There are also very few aviation English training programs are available for those who are unable to demonstrate proficiency (Fowler et al., 2021)

The test design process and validation have been very hot and sensitive topics given the seriousness of the damages they cause if administered poorly, and the effect the criticism may cause on one of the most flourishing fields of business, i.e., the aviation industry. According to previous studies (Alderson, 2008; Moere et al., (2009); Alderson, 2010; Dusenbury & Bjerke, 2013), test construct and validation is a highly technical and stern procedure. The studies concluded that test validation is a must since most of the available tests nowadays are not validated by any organism, yet recognized by national authorities and are currently operational. One of the most discussed causes of the validation issue is elaborated by Moere et al., (2009), stating that although the ICAO manual is informative, little information is provided about the development and theoretical rationale for the rating criteria, they added that this can present a challenge not only to test designers but will lead to poorly operationalized criteria then to different interpretations

of requirements. By the same token, different tests, as we can notice currently, designed using the same criteria, could exhibit variation in task requirements and scoring, they added. Eventually, the test validity and reliability may be put in question.

Test-takers' feedback and perception as domain experts with relevant work experience play a major role in the validation process of high-stakes tests. As a sign of test validity, although test-takers' perceptions are extensively discussed and argued that in Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), their feedback as domain experts can provide insightful details as far as effective communication in the target situation is concerned (Katsarska, 2021; Borowska, 2018; Elder, 2007; Douglas, 2005, 2000; Douglas & Myers, 2000; Jacoby & McNamara, 1999; Lumley & Brown, 1996; Brown, 1993); however, face validity and appearances are the only evidence for eliciting test-takers' perception (Davies et al., 1999).

Brown (1993) studied test-takers' feedback on a tape-mediated oral proficiency test of Japanese in the tourism and hospitality industry. She found that test takers' feedback was of paramount importance in eliciting the type of language needed in the industry. She concluded that feedback from domain experts can serve as a source of validity for tests and must be considered by policymakers to determine the relevance of the test construct to the target language use; therefore, deciding the test appropriacy for determining its validity for the target situation's communication. Elder (2007) compared the Occupational English Test (OET), a test for measuring health professionals' communicative competence, and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) designed for measuring academic proficiency. The two tests are used interchangeably for screening purposes of health professionals' registration process. The fifty-three health professionals who took both tests shared their feedback on the nature of the tests and their compliance with the communicative requirements in their fields. They believed that even if the IELTS is a valid test for measuring general English proficiency; the OET is a more efficient test to measure their specific professional communicative competence.

On a different note, Bassette (2005) studied test-takers' objections to mandated proficiency testing policy aiming at ensuring public servants' proficiency in English and French in bilingual regions under the Official Language Acts in Canada. The test-takers'

feedback as domain experts revealed negative perceptions of the test, which they claimed was unfair, subjective, and irrelevant to their target situation. This shows that feedback from domain experts can be negative and create a challenge for test validation. In the Australian state of New South Wales, Murray, Riazi, and Cross (2012) consulted domain experts. Their study investigated 105 internationally qualified teacher test-takers' attitudes toward the Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT). The professional screening test administered in the abovementioned state faced more objections from teachers who had experience teaching in Australian schools than those with no teaching experience. The test-takers' dissatisfaction might be rooted, according to the authors, in the teachers' newly acquired expertise, resulting in confidence in their skills to work more effectively in the target situation; thus, claiming that PEAT did not meet their needs.

Zhou and Yoshitomi (2019) investigated test-takers' perceptions of 64 Japanese university students who took the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). The researchers assumed that negative test-taker perception may influence students' test performance by decreasing test-taking motivation. The assumptions were not verified, but the authors revealed students' reservations about computer delivery.

Relatively closer to the field of aviation and the current study, Knoch (2014) revealed that Native English Speaker pilots presented a larger number of criteria encompassing the ICAO guidelines when asked to evaluate speech samples from several aviation English tests. The criteria include non-linguistic factors, such as purely technical awareness, professional experience, and differences in training levels. On the same train of thought, Kim and Elder (2014) analyzed 400 questionnaires and 22 interview sources from Korean airline pilots and air traffic controllers, investigating both the construct of the English language proficiency test for these aviation professionals and the ICAO proficiency testing policy. The test developed and administered in Korea, in domain experts' opinion, lacked a fit between the policy construct and the reality, in addition to the strong disapproval of the ICAO's advocated construct and the test itself from language users in the target field. The authors added that eliciting the views of such stakeholders who are well-placed to determine efficient communication in the target context is of paramount importance.

The ICAO Linguistic Requirements

Communicative competence is defined as the appropriate usage of language between participants in a specific social context or situation (Hymes, 1972). Communicative issues have always been and still are a concern to civil aviation policymakers. Breakdown of communication, which is more than just grammatical formations, but more of a working aspect of language use (Assassi & Benyelles, 2016, p. 167) is crucially important in aviation radiotelephony; in other words, it must be avoided at any cost given the catastrophic consequences to which they may lead. The following table shows three examples of aviation accidents that were caused by a breakdown of communication.

Table 1.

Three Major Crashes Caused by Breakdown of Communication (Assassi, 2016, 2020)

Dates	Aircrafts	Companies	Effects	Victims
1977	Two 747 Boeings	KLM (Royal Dutch Airlines) & Pan American Airlines	Collided on the runway in Tenerife	583
1990	Boeing 707	Avianca Flight	Crashed into a village due to fuel exhaustion near the JFK airport	73
1995	Boeing 757	American Airlines	Flew into a terrain in Cali	159

The reason behind this focus on the working aspect of language, English in this case, is to shed light on fluency and interaction as well as not only the knowledge of grammatical rules and a set of lexical items that marks out a competent language learner/user. Equally important, the ICAO linguistic requirements focus on fluency and interaction, giving the significance of the very limited talking time on radiotelephony that is counted in seconds only. This is indicated in the ICAO (2006) and the Civil Aviation Authority (2016), both manuals of radiotelephony communication, that encourage brief and straightforward messages that reduce the risk of errors and misunderstanding. There is a six holistic descriptors chart on which Aviation English Certified Assessors must rely to evaluate candidates' language based on six levels of proficiency, as it is shown in Appendix A.

The rating scale starts with level one labeled as (Pre-Elementary level 1) and ends with level six (Expert level 6). Every holistic descriptor (Pronunciation, Structure, Vocabulary, Fluency, Comprehension, and Interaction) has six levels of mastering the descriptor itself, as shown in Appendix A. Accordingly, every descriptor focuses on specific language aspects. Pronunciation considers the degree of effect of mother tongue interference, rhythm, stress, and intonation on the clarity of the message. Structure focuses more on the relationship between the grammatical and sentence patterns, and the precision of the delivered message; so, the clearer the message is in terms of structure, the better the level of the candidate will be.

As for vocabulary, the descriptor considers common, concrete, and work-related lexical items. However, covering a wide range of vocabulary will help the test takers' final scores and level. Fluency, as a descriptor in aviation English, refers to the appropriate use of tempo, discourse markers, and connectors with little to no interference with the quality of the information. Following vocabulary, comprehension requires the understanding and successful deciphering of common, concrete, and work-related topics; furthermore, it is highly required to be familiar with and comprehend a range of speech varieties and registers, particularly on the unexpected turn of events, i.e. non-routine situations such as incidents and accidents. Finally, interaction as a skill requires the pilot to maintain a clear and continuous flow of information exchange by checking, clarifying, and confirming data until the communication is satisfactory to both ends. To sum up, it is compulsory for aeronautics professionals while operating in international airspace to make sure they send and receive very clear messages, as it plays a major role in ensuring the flights' safety.

The English for Aviation Language Testing System (EALTS)

The EALTS is a language proficiency test. It is recognized and administered around the world to test native and non-native speakers' language proficiency to fulfill ICAO's linguistic requirements in aviation. The EALTS is:

> A multi-level, English for Aviation language testing system designed to assess the language proficiency of commercial flight crew, recreational pilots, and air traffic controllers in the context of aviation and aeronautical communications for ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements compliance. The EALTS measures and reports proficiency in the skills of speaking and listening across all levels of the ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale from Pre-Elementary Level 1 to Expert Level 6. (CAA, 2012, p. 2)

It is important to note that the EALTS is not the only aviation English test administered in Algeria. However, after a closer look at different tests, the researchers (author 1) decided to consider the EALTS out of convenience; in other words, as a certified assessor of the test, author 1 had access to data and respondents.

The EALTS consists of a listening and speaking test. Two language skills are the most important in the target situation. The listening test takes up to forty minutes of testing time (individual test), it is a computer-based test in which candidates listen to aeronautical communication recordings and then listen to recorded questions. After that, they choose one of three main options: positive, negative, or not mentioned, depending on the availability of the information in the recordings (conversation/question), i.e., if it exists and it is correct (positive), if it exists and it is incorrect (negative), and if it does not exist at all (not mentioned). The candidates are allowed to take notes at all stages of the tests (both listening and speaking). The speaking test on the other hand (paired test) is divided into three main tasks. Each task must be limited to an average of seven minutes.

In the first task, the interlocutor assessor sits facing the two candidates, the assessor asks simple questions related to common, concrete, and work-related topics such as: What is your job? Where do you work? Where have you had your training? And how many flight hours do you have so far? The second task focuses more on asking for information and confirming existing data. The candidates sit back-to-back and then listen to an indistinct recording of aeronautical communication between aviation professionals who are operational at the time of the communication. The candidates listen to the recording, which is divided into short segments and exchange information, clarifying and confirming to one another what they have heard until they are satisfied with the general and detailed information on the recording. The last task is related to the professional reaction in non-routine situations. The assessor provides each candidate with an unusual scenario and then allows them one minute to prepare their responses. An example of a non-routine scenario is *you are flying from Algiers to London, and while on-cruise you experience a sudden depressurization*. Each candidate reads back the scenario and talks about what s/he should do. In the end, candidate 2 asks or comments about something her/his colleague has said. It is essential to note that the objective of the EALTS test is to assess candidates' language comprehension and performance only, without marking or judging their specialized knowledge in aeronautics or their operations.

In the Algerian context, very scarce attention was allotted to a thorough investigation in the field of aviation English. Apart from the work of Mekkaoui (2013), Mekkaoui and Mouhadjer (2019) who investigated the communicative issues faced by Algerian pilots in their jobs and language proficiency needs of ATCs in Algeria, in addition to Assassi (2017) who suggested a course based on formulaic expressions to reach communicative competence in aviation English courses, no other studies have focused on aviation English so far. As for aviation English tests, no research has been conducted even if, from 2014 until January 2023, three aviation English tests have been administered in the Algerian context, which is the *English Language Test for Aviation* (RELTA) designed by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), *English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication* (ELPAC) by EUROCONTROL, and *English for Aviation Language Testing System* (EALTS) administered by Language Testing and Assessment Services (LTAS) and approved by the UK Civil Aviation Authority. These tests were recognized by local authorities in Algeria. Thus far, no research has been conducted to check the validity and reliability of the tests in Algeria. This study is conducted to elicit information from stakeholders and not to criticize the validity or reliability of the EALTS; however, the information we provide may or may not affect the test credibility or offer additional information to avoid malpractices in the testing process and avoid any issues that may jeopardize test takers scores and later communication performance in the target situation.

Research Methodology

As a response to the increasing concern over the validity of high-stakes tests, namely aviation English tests, in addition to the safety-related apprehensions in the aviation industry, the literature review sought to provide a firm foundation for the research design and a rationale for the research questions. The study aimed at providing additional contextual information by answering the following overarching research question First, what is the test-takers perspective on the EALTS test construct? And (2) what is the assessors' perception of the test's procedure and validity?

To answer the research questions, we opted for a qualitative approach within the framework of a case study. As a descriptive study design, we aim at eliciting data of a qualitative nature to understand respondents' perspectives and opinions to pinpoint problems they face before and after sitting for the pilots' English proficiency test. This

will help future research suggest solutions and recommend practices that may diminish the negative impact of these issues in different aviation English tests.

The seventeen participants in this investigation are (i) ten licensed pilots who work for the two national companies in Algeria (Air Algerie and Tassili Airlines), two of them are captains and eight first officers; more details provided below in the analysis section; (ii) three aviation English teachers who have been trained and certified as assessors of aviation English by EALTS experts (Civil Aviation Authority in the UK); (iii) and four university professors from Biskra University in Algeria specializing in applied linguistics, language teaching, and assessment. Participants for this study were chosen out of convenience. The pilots had a testing session together, and all the assessors were present on the day of the test. The pilots come from different companies and with different flight hours, i.e., flight experience, which gave more saturation to the data collected. The assessors have been operational for three years with the testing center and the aviation academy, which gave them much to share about the test construct, procedure, and objective. The professors'/researchers' perspective as experts in assessment, language teaching, and ESP is essential to put high-stakes tests such as the EALTS under investigation and provide feedback on the test's validity and reliability concerning the target situation.

The study outcomes are based on the responses collected through a semi-structured questionnaire designed for teachers and assessors to have a specialized and experienced view of the issues under investigation. A semi-structured interview is selected for candidates (pilots) to give them more freedom to respond comfortably and to ensure the quality of the obtained data. Finally, as the researcher is an assessor himself, a participant observation process based on rubrics designed in an observation grid is chosen for the sake of checking the validity of the responses and the reactions and facial expressions of the candidates as the latter plays a major role in the display of emotions and attitudes. The observation procedure is for confirmation purposes only; no new data was collected nor reported further through observation. The observation process was launched after the administration of the questionnaire and interview so we could cross-check obtained information based on codes and themes we already collected and analyzed. Qualitative data were analyzed using codes and then shaped into recurrent themes based on the preset codes from research questions.

The Study

Test-takers Perspectives

Interviews are seen as rich data and source provider. We can observe this data collection tool from two angles, the researchers' and instruments. angles First, it provides the researcher with in-depth information that might not be elicited by other research instruments. Second, the researcher, as an interviewer and most notably in a face-to-face situation, can notice much more and can provide a contextual and an emotional basis to interviewees' responses. Duff (2008, p. 134) clarified "Interviews are one of the richest sources of data in a case study and usually the most important type of data to be collected. Interviews provide the researcher with information from various perspectives." In other words, interviews provide resourceful information, especially in discussing controversial issues in education. The researchers designed a semi-structured interview for ten (10) pilots working for both national aviation companies. All these pilots must pass the test so they can remain operational in their positions. The interview, in this case, is chosen mainly because of its flexible and rich nature, particularly when dealing with a specialized sample (pilots). The questions are designed to check test-takers' background information, such as professional and linguistic backgrounds, in addition to their perspective on the EALTS test construct, process, and compliance with the ICAO linguistic requirements. Also, we tried eliciting information from the participants before and after the test to give them the chance to share ideas in a more organized manner. In a nutshell, we tried answering the following question: what is the test-takers perspective on the EALTS test construct?

Before the Test

According to the researcher's practices as an assessor, we have noticed that the majority of pilots in this country working for both national companies are males. Nine out of ten pilots were males. These numbers are closer to the ones shared by the FAA's Aeronautical Center (December 31st, 2020 data), indicating that only six percent of U.S. pilots are females.

Another question is designed to have a clearer idea of our respondents' age, rank, and flight hours since the beginning of their professional careers. It is worth noting that the candidates excluded flight hours during their training. The data are summarized below.

Table 2.

Candidates' Age, Rank, and Flight Hours (Hs)

Age Range	**25 - 34**	**35 - 44**	**Older than 45**
Number of Candidates	06/10	02/10	02/10
Rank	**First Officer**		**Captain**
Number of Candidates	08/10		02/10
Flight Hours Range	**4000 – 5999 hours**	**6000 – 7999 hours**	**More than 8000 hours**
Number of Candidates	05/10	02/10	03/10

The current English language level of respondents who are directly involved in the research process plays a major role in the identification and analysis of their linguistic needs, or as labeled in ESP, needs analysis. The following table shows the collected responses from pilots concerning their language levels.

Table 3.

Candidates' English Language Level

Level	**Respondents /10**
Beginner	02/10
Intermediate	06/10
Upper-Intermediate	02/10
Advanced	00/10

Most of our candidates chose "intermediate" as their current language level (six out of ten). on the other hand, only two pilots labeled their level in English as a beginner and two as upper intermediate, while none of them believe that they have advanced foreign language proficiency.

By questioning current English language courses taken by test-takers in our study, we wanted to have a general idea about the efforts our candidates make to learn the language given its importance for their professional careers. Five (5) pilots responded negatively, whereas 2 of them were taking private courses in local schools, but they were not satisfied yet they claimed they attend regularly. Three pilots, of a younger age, explained that they prefer to be self-taught using mobile phone applications and educational websites.

All the respondents are aware of the ICAO linguistic requirements and what is necessary to ensure a smooth transition of information and avoid any breakdown of communication. We noticed during the interview and after their responses that communication is crucial to ensure flight safety.

As far as standardized and high-stakes tests are concerned, the responses varied from one respondent to another. What is common between the pilots' careers are the main standardized tests taken in this country such as the middle and secondary school standardized tests. However, two pilots took other tests as they used to work with law enforcement (national gendarmerie) as helicopter pilots. Three respondents took standardized tests abroad during their training as they claimed. The researcher had to elaborate on the question to help respondents sort standardized tests from other types of tests.

Passing a specialized aviation English language test is imperative for their careers and mainly to be operational with their companies. All the pilots sat for tests before, RELTA (RMIT English Language Test for Aviation) is provided by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Experienced pilots sat for the test multiple times. Six pilots said that they had failed the test recently, and they decided to try with a different test provider. As for the main reasons behind failing the test, respondents mentioned that in addition to lack of preparation and anxiety, RELTA assessors considered specialized aviation knowledge besides language knowledge in scoring, which made it more challenging for test-takers. Respondents' answers showed that they were tested by subject specialists rather than language specialists.

Apart from the brief elaboration the assessors gave concerning the testing process, candidates had no previous knowledge about the test construct, its phases, or the testing methods. The candidates who sat for the RELTA test before had a closer idea of what was expected from them in the EALTS test. Consequently, the respondents answered negatively about taking the EALTS test before.

After the Test

The candidates had similar responses as far as the testing process and content are concerned. They believed they encountered some difficulties within the listening test, more precisely, with comprehension. Two of the candidates faced more difficulties as

they declared they felt very anxious, and it affected their performance in the speaking test. The two most experienced pilots (Table 3) said that they faced technical issues with the computers as they could not have a solid grip over the mouse and the listening devices and that impeded keeping up with the questions and suggestions in addition to the short time allotted to answering.

The candidates (10/10) declared that anxiety, shyness, and fear of committing mistakes, which are related to both language and specialty content mistakes, had a considerable negative impact on their language production and performance. Cushing (1994) classified pilot/ATCO communicative problems into language-based and problems not based on language. This indicated that not only language problems caused a breakdown of communication, but other issues as well may cause misunderstanding. This reflects the test as well because such ESP high-stakes tests for licensure are designed to test language in real-life situations (target situation). For him, the communication problems based on language that he identified were problems of language (e.g., ambiguity, homophony, intonation), problems of reference (e.g., uncertain reference, uncertain addressee), problems of inference (e.g., implicit inference, lexical inference, unfamiliar terminology, false assumptions), and problems involving repetition (e.g., partial readbacks). The communication problems not based on language that he lists are problems with numbers, problems with radio, problems of compliance, and other general problems. Therefore, the communication problems might be caused by confusion, stress, and anxiety, which may affect negatively language production and cause a breakdown of communication.

As for preparation, candidates agreed on the importance of preparation and three of them focused more on preparation and how sitting for such a high-stakes test requires both mental and linguistic preparation. As stated earlier in this section, more experienced candidates (Table 3) faced technical problems related to audiovisual aids during the listening test. One pilot declared “even if the assessors [helped us install] all devices, we faced some issues with these devices and [keeping up with] the fast pace of the recordings and the limited timing given for answering questions”.

The candidates also focused on the issue of the listening test. They stated that there is a lack of concordance between the test contents and the target situation requirements. As an example, none of the recordings were in any regional accent; also,

the recordings were all in standard phraseology (orders, requests, advice, permissions, approvals), which does not comply with real-life situations in aviation communication. In their day-to-day operations, candidates faced several instances in which plain English, defined by ICAO (2010, p. x) as "the spontaneous, creative and non-coded use of a given natural language" was the main form of aviation talk used during most of the conversation. Plain English, in this case, requires much more time and cognitive effort from the candidates to decode meaning, which is not recommended in aviation talk and may cause safety concerns, especially in busy airspace.

Another issue the candidates faced is the clarity of recordings. Although clear communication is not always guaranteed in radiotelephony, candidates believed that in addition to not being allowed to listen to recordings more than once, the recording quality, timing, and confusing answer options affected their answers negatively. Field (2019, p. 1) argued, "testing second language listening proficiency validly and reliably has always posed a challenge." The challenges faced by test developers when writing test specifications for listening tests include deciding whether the candidates will be allowed to listen to the text more than once (Taylor; Geranpayeh, 2011), issues related to task authenticity (Brindley, 1998; Lynch; Mendelsohn, 2010; Wagner, 2014) and to memory (Wu, 1998). The candidates declared that both native speakers and proficient non-natives usually use plain English in routine situations, which complicates communication for them. Subsequently, such scenarios must be a part of the listening test, given the importance of these situations in avoiding a breakdown of communication. Concerning the cognitive requirements of the listening test, the options provided for the test-takers after listening to the recordings "*positive, negative, and not mentioned*" were mentioned repeatedly in their responses. For them, it was quite confusing to choose *negative* or *not mentioned* to answer if the information in the question was incorrect (e.g. recording: phase of flight "take off"; the question: phase of flight "landing" = **negative**) or the information is not mentioned (e.g. recording: altitude 35,000 feet; the question: altitude not mentioned = **not mentioned**). The candidates still found it confusing even if the assessors clarified the options before the test and they were allowed to take notes given the very limited time they must answer at the end of each recording. Consequently, it is imperative to consider the complexities of cognitive processes required in listening so that "the cognitive processing activated in the test taker by a test task corresponds as closely as possible to what they would expect to do in the (…) listening context" (Taylor

and Geranpayeh, 2011, p. 96). Finally, on a question related to the assessors' performance, nine pilots added that there were no problems understanding or interacting with assessors, while one candidate said that he sometimes could not follow what was said due to the assessor's fast speaking pace.

As for test-takers' suggestions, three respondents shed more light on the mental discomfort they faced and proposed more preparation, more time, and a practical side of the preparation in the form of tryouts or a mock test. Four candidates out of ten objected to the random selection of the pairs who take the test together, and they said they prefer to sit for the test with someone they know to feel more at ease and comfortable. Three candidates showed their concern regarding the listening test and the unclear audio materials (recordings). Concerning the audiovisual aids used during the listening test, two candidates proposed a tentative test on the same computers as the official test so they can get used to the devices (mouse and headset). Finally, the second phase of the speaking test, in which candidates sit back-to-back, caused some comprehension issues for six candidates who did not quite understand the process, even if they answered positively during the test protocol elaboration by the assessors before the test.

As far as developing their communicative abilities on radiotelephony, candidates suggest practicing in English during all their flights. One issue we have noticed is that Algerian pilots tend to use French during their national flights or during flights to destinations where French is an operational language. ICAO recommends sorting to another shared language only when phraseology does not serve the communicative purpose or during the unexpected turn of events when the said language, French in this case, serves as a last resort to solve a communicative issue. However, the use of the English language during all flights, national and international, is highly recommended by not only pilots but teachers, assessors, and supervisors as well.

Our respondents shared their concerns related to the use of plain English, mostly by native and proficient non-native speakers of English. The use of standard phraseology in routine situations is a must, and respondents added that proficient language users must "*meet us halfway*" to avoid any breakdown of communication. This specific point has been overlooked in several cases. However, Estival et al. (2016, p. 199) claimed that "pilots who are native English speakers commit, in some cases, as many communication errors as English as a second language pilots". Read and Knoch (2009) argued that the

ICAO LPRs have given "native-speaking aviation personnel no incentive to develop their communicative competence in ELF [English as a lingua franca] terms" (p. 217). This is confirmation that even after these two studies as an example, the problem persists and there is still much to be discussed about this phenomenon.

Five candidates out of ten felt confident and reassured of their success, and the other five candidates felt skeptical, mostly because of the anxiety and hesitation they showed during their performance on the speaking test. Two out of the last five candidates added that their answers during the speaking test were not convincing or accurate, and parts of them were wrong.

Assessors' and Teachers' Perspectives

Given its reliability and how much time and effort it saves, the questionnaire is a frequently selected data collection tool in social and human sciences, more precisely teaching English as a foreign language. It is crucial to realize the importance of a well-designed questionnaire and its effect on the quality of the responses the researcher collects (Dornyei, 2003). Thus, we have chosen the questions very carefully, taking into account important aspects of our study, the research questions, and the coherence of the rubrics. The questionnaire was administered to three certified assessors (EALTS) and four EFL (English as A Foreign Language) teachers and researchers at Biskra University in Algeria. We believe that assessors and specialized teachers are central to the detection and mitigation of learning issues and malpractices. The questions investigate respondents' background and experience, then tackle very specific aspects related to the test and the respondents' perspectives on the test validity, compliance, and reliability concerning test-takers performance issues. Consequently, through these inquiries, we attempted to answer the following question: what is the assessors' perception of the test's procedure and validity?

The first question is designed to collect data related to respondents' educational background and current profession. The first question is associated with the second, which discusses respondents' experience. Both questions are highly important for the study to have a clear idea of teachers' and assessors' experience and practices vis-à-vis assessment and evaluation in general, and high-stakes tests in particular. The majority of respondents are university professors with different ranks from assistant professor "B" (either not yet enrolled in a doctoral project or currently in one for less than three years),

to assistant professor "A" (three years or more working on a doctorate project). Additionally, two of the university professors already have a doctorate (associate professor B). Both the Private Academy Assessors hold a bachelor's degree in language sciences.

The second question, as stated above, is related to the first one. The purpose is to identify the experience our respondents have in teaching English as a foreign language and the specialty they graduated studying or researching currently.

Table 4.

Respondents' Specialty and Experience

Respondent	Specialty	Experience
01 (assessor)	Didactics	15 years
02 (assessor)	Didactics	3 years
03	Applied Linguistics	5 years
04	Didactics	9 years
05	Linguistics / Phonetics	6 years
06	Applied Linguistics	6 years
07	Applied Linguistics and Assessment	19 years

The data in the table shows the similarity respondents have with their main area of specialty (Applied Linguistics - Didactics). As far as experience is concerned, there is a vast difference between the least and most experienced (03 years - 19 years).

All respondents sat for standardized and high-stakes tests. There are similar tests they sat for, such as the elementary, middle, and secondary school final exams; and there are different tests in the form of general English tests such as the IELTS and TOEFL (five respondents). Four teachers claimed that they have taken such types of tests when they were filing for a teaching position either in middle or secondary school. This showed that our respondents were in a good position to share experiences and answer our questions.

The two Aviation English assessors had similar responses to what they noticed before the test. They both noticed very stressed candidates before the test. Throughout the large number of candidates, they have tested in their careers, they claimed that they have witnessed different degrees of nervousness and anxiety. However, assessors said that the candidates felt less stressed and noticeably relieved after the test.

All respondents shared similar perspectives concerning high-stakes tests causing mental discomfort that is manifested through learners' behaviors, both verbal and physical reactions. One of the respondents asserted that it is quite rare to find confident and calm test takers even if the assessor knows that they are high achievers. Another respondent pointed out that even if the age factor is different between EGP and ESP test takers, the reactions and behaviors before and during the test seem similar.

The respondents indicated that the disrupted mental state of any test takers affects their performance, and it is inevitable to feel anxious and stressed, even minimally, particularly during high-stakes tests. The reasons behind taking the test and its value, the testing physical environment, the assessors' and invigilators' behavior, the content, and the preparation for the test, were all different issues that test takers faced and that affected their performances according to what the respondents claimed.

One issue that assessors mentioned is related to the grading process. The test requires two assessors, one as an interlocutor assessor and the other as an observer assessor, whose main duty is to grade the subskills according to the ICAO scales. The assessor observer keeps the scale in front of him/her in addition to a grading sheet. The assessors faced several issues related to timing and overlap in scales. As for timing, assessors believe that extra focus is required, especially when test-takers do not speak sufficiently in the speaking test, which prevents assessors from evaluating language produced fairly. Overlap between subskills was one of the issues faced by assessors. Usually, they find it very challenging to pinpoint the communicative problem and which of the six descriptors they should relate the problem to, as most of them at a specific level seem to refer to very similar language aspects. Moere et al., (2009) discussed a similar issue with the Versant Aviation English Test regarding ICAO descriptors in level 4 which include:

- Comprehension, '(when confronted with) an unexpected turn of events, comprehension may be slower or require clarification strategies';
- Interactions, 'maintains exchanges even when dealing with an unexpected turn of events. Deals adequately with apparent misunderstanding by checking, confirming, or clarifying';
- Vocabulary, 'can often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected circumstances.

This, according to our respondents, created a particular challenge in separating subskills for assessment. Accordingly, the highly required language functions in aviation talk: comprehending, clarifying and paraphrasing appear to be related to all three descriptors, which created an operational difficulty in the isolation of the six subskills in spoken language proficiency for the non-compensatory composite scoring according to the same authors above. As a result, the validity, reliability, and fairness of the scoring and the test as a whole might be compromised.

Another issue noted by the assessors and related to timing discussed earlier is the difficulty faced in assessing each one of the six measures (language descriptors) separately. Either distributing the measures on the three speaking tasks, allot specific timing for each descriptor, or jumping from one measure to the other across tasks and throughout all the speaking test tasks, none of these techniques seemed reliable as raters might conflate fluency with pronunciation or well-structured sentences (grammar) with accurate use of vocabulary. This might lead to at least one of the subskills not being assessed appropriately (McNamara, 1996; Orr, 2002).

The test is designed for licensure, which makes it a high-stakes test and puts raters on the spot to ensure fair assessment and even hold responsibility for flight safety. Much effort is invested by assessors to avoid any overlap in the scoring of the subskills because the final scoring level, according to the ICAO, is the one subskill in which the candidate is least proficient. The different understanding and interpretation of descriptors and their requirements at each level are added to the heavy cognitive load of the assessors. These exhibited variations may compromise the validity of the scoring system and the reliability of the test.

Finally, it is worth noting that the interlocutor assessor is also responsible for the rating at the end of the test. However, it is very challenging to keep track of ratings while interacting with test-takers, and to grade the subskills of both candidates at the end of the test does not seem feasible since the assessor may overlook the specificities of candidates' performance that affect their final scoring negatively.

Specialized professors stated that assessors' duties are not only related to questioning or invigilating, so they advised creating a friendly and comfortable testing

environment and taking into account the candidates' stressful nature during these educational events. However, respondents affirmed that this task is easier said than done, impediments such as chaotic settings, and lack of equipment in addition to many test takers cannot help them pay attention to comforting and stabilizing the test takers' mental state. The two ESP assessors confirmed what is stated above except for the environment, which as they claimed, "in ESP tests like these, we did not face any of the issues related to the environment, large numbers of candidates and equipment".

The Aviation English assessors focused more on interaction and clarification with their candidates to create a friendly and comfortable testing environment. Alternatively, specialized professors said that there is a difference between ESP and EGP tests, most notably language proficiency and high-stakes tests in ESP, as they must pay more attention to test designs, content, and testing methods. Afterward, centering the focus on the mental state of the candidates before and during the test. To sum up, the focus of our respondents was testing preparation. Assessors said that even candidates who took the test before still faced technical and comprehension issues. Thus, a preparation session with a mock test simulating the real test with all its tasks and procedures can help test-takers and enhance the test's practicality, impact, and validity. They believed that this would help test-takers manage time more efficiently and provide them with more practical techniques on how to manage the breakdown of communication, especially with time limitations in aeronautical talk. The test preparation can also help candidates be accustomed to the test construct and other details, such as the listening test recordings that lack regional accents. This ultimately puts the test itself in representativeness-related issues, which jeopardized the test's validity and compliance with the ICAO and target situation linguistic requirements.

Conclusions and Summary of the Main Results

The accuracy and naturalness of the collected data play a major role in ensuring the validity and reliability of the research outcomes. It is important to note that the research outcomes the researcher obtained are not to be generalized nor altered for the sake of studying a different sample. The researcher in this paper tried to be as objective as required by limiting the observation process outcomes he opted for as a third data collection tool to be only for cross-checking obtained information from questionnaires

and interviews. As he is a specialized professional in teaching English as a foreign language and an Aviation English assessor as well, he relied only on data collected from other colleagues both assessors and professors in addition to our main focus, which is the aeronautics professionals (pilots).

The results show an immense focus on the mental side of testing, most importantly before and during the test. Candidates feel mostly nervous and stressed before the test due to lack of preparation, and unfamiliarity with the test content or testing methods, in addition to the value and significance of the test, bearing in mind that succeeding in this test is a requirement to become or remain operational as a pilot. The candidates mentioned the prior preparation and sitting for the same version of the test as a tryout before sitting for the official one. It is important to know that the test provider of the EALTS does not allow such a technique and they provide documents and a video to help candidates have the clearest idea about the test, its stages, its components, and its requirements. As stated within the background of the study, the EALTS does not require the accuracy and correctness of the specialized information from candidates. It is a test designed for testing candidates' language comprehension and production only. This is explained to all candidates before every test.

As for specialized teachers, they are all for creating a comfortable testing environment and paying attention to the test takers' mental state, given its immense impact on their performance and test results. As a result, it is crucial to rethink the stage before sitting for the test and help learners be more familiarized with the EALTS construct through a mock test or a tryout so they can apply what they have taken as information from the assessors or see in the EALTS demonstration video. This way, both the assessors and the test takers will face fewer issues. Most importantly, the technical difficulties faced by more experienced pilots with computers, and other issues we noted such as comprehension hitches and breakdown of communication in the second task of the speaking test, are caused by unfamiliarity with test tasks. These concerns can be overcome through the application of a mock test. After all, successful communication is a vital matter for the safety of any flight, and a breakdown of communication is never to be ignored or underestimated, starting from the Aviation English test itself. Thus, intensive training and formal and informal individual or collective meetings, in addition to advice

after the test, will help candidates mentally, which positively affects their test performance, and language learning; and eventually ensures flight safety.

Reconsidering the contents of the test in terms of compliance with ICAO linguistic requirements and target situation language use took their fair share of our respondents' reflections. The main issue discussed is the relatively noticeable difference between what test-takers are assessed for and what they experience during their flight operations. As an example, real-life situation misunderstanding, and regional accents are two important occurrences in everyday flight operations; yet test-takers believed that the test excluded such real-life communicative situations.

Another issue discussed by assessors was related to testing usefulness and fairness. The scoring process during the test requires much more effort than expected from a criterion-referenced scoring procedure. Assessors claimed that objectivity seemed to be compromised at times. The main problem was discussed based on ICAO's description of the six holistic descriptors. The interpretation of the descriptions might be different, and there was an overlap between the descriptors themselves. Subsequently, assessment in ESP contexts is very demanding, and it calls for rigorous testing policies and processes for all stakeholders. Monteiro (2022) asserts that "a clearer definition of the aeronautical RT construct is of utmost importance, one that is aligned with current views of language use, with the multiple factors that impact RT communication, and with stakeholders' perspectives". (p. 225)

To sum up, our study calls for robust testing validation studies, not to state that the EALTS failed validity, but to elicit and exchange data from the main stakeholders, i.e., test-takers. After all, the test is designed for them and their perspective is of high importance to maintain why not enhance the communicative abilities of pilots and ATCs around the world, which leads to a contribution to flight safety. To improve test usefulness and credibility, test providers, researchers, and test administrators must react to test-takers' and assessors' feedback. The EALTS is an interesting test that is well-constructed and provides fair opportunities to candidates from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. However, the points discussed in this study and the outcomes shared in the results section can provide informed decisions to test providers and our colleagues around the world. The test ensures reliability as far as the scoring system is

concerned through inter-rater reliability as an external consistency of scores. The interpretation of descriptors though can cause measurement errors and alter the scoring outcome, then jeopardize the scoring fairness. As for test validity, no communication-caused incidents or accidents by tested pilots have been recorded up until January 2023, which makes it clear that the testing and licensure process was fair and valid. Additionally, this shows that the knowledge, skills, and abilities tested are reliable measures of construct. However, an update of the test tasks and contents to mirror target language use is highly recommended, especially when it comes to non-routine situations and different accents. The test's impact on assessors and, more importantly, test-takers showed different perspectives. Viewpoints differed between satisfaction and high hopes for passing the test to the uncertainty of success and test fairness. Accordingly, test construct and administration must take into account test-takers' perspectives to enhance test quality.

On a different note, test practicality was somehow criticized in terms of timing and practicality of the computer-based listening test. Respondents faced issues with the listening test procedure as far as technical and operationalization issues are concerned. Besides, human, material, and time resources invested in the EALTS test show motivating procedures. Test authenticity was challenged by the absence of regional accents and real-life communicative concerns in the recordings, for instance; rather, the test draws an interesting correspondence between features of the test tasks and features of real-world language use tasks. Finally, the interactive aspect of the test is of high importance and the test under investigation showed interesting signs, as we have noticed through the test-takers' engagement. Subsequently, as motivating topical and language knowledge tasks are for candidates, the affective schemata of the test in the form of stress and sometimes severe anxiety noticed by assessors during the test is critical to creating a more comfortable testing context and an engaging test preparation phase. This idea will help test-takers interact more efficiently and comfortably with test tasks, which will reflect their real language proficiency.

We do encourage researchers to consider a deeper understanding and investigation of proficiency tests, especially high-stakes tests in ESP because of their economic value and more importantly, safety concerns in the workplace.

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A MODEL FOR TEACHING CRITICAL READING IN AN ESL CURRICULUM

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Abstract

This case study explores one Bhutanese ESL teacher's implementation of Freebody and Luke's (1990) four resources model (FRM) to teach critical reading (CR) in his grade-9 English classroom. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the teacher and thematically analysed to understand his initial perspectives on CR and teaching strategies. Based on his initial interview data, the researcher recommended him implementing the FRM to teach a poem of his choice from the grade-9 English curriculum in three lessons. The FRM is organised around four reader roles that engage and empower readers as text decoders, text participants, text analysts and text users. A thematic approach was used to analyse the audio recordings of the teacher's FRM implementation and written lesson reports. The study also analysed his post-implementation interview data to examine the implications and challenges of using the FRM in ESL classrooms. The study showed that the teacher found the FRM effective and practical, allowing him to scaffold and enhance his students' knowledge and skills to engage in various forms of meaning construction, learn and analyse language usage, critically engage with the text and promote literacy practices.

***Keywords**:* ESL, critical reading, four resources model, text decoder, text participant, text analyst, text user

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Critical reading (CR) is a complex concept and ability that involves using readers' cognitive, sociocultural and critical literacy skills to interpret and analyse critical messages that are explicit, implicit and connotative. Macknish (2011) interprets CR as a "social practice that engages the reader's critical stance" (p. 445), while DiYanni (2017) asserts that it serves as a foundation of higher-level thinking skills, which is pivotal in "analysing texts", understanding textual "logic", evaluating the "evidence" found in the text, interpreting the text "creatively", and asking probing "questions" (p. 3). The OECD (2019) suggests CR as the reader's ability to "understand, use, evaluate, reflect on and engage with texts to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential and to participate in society" (p. 28). Thus, it is helpful to understand and approach CR through the lenses of the cognitive view, the sociocultural view and critical literacy.

Literature Review

Approaches to Reading

The cognitive view considers reading as a cognitive process that depends on word recognition, phonological awareness, problem-solving, prior knowledge and experiences, as well as metacognitive skills such as monitoring reading progress, using reading strategies and thinking (Kendeou et al., 2014; Kroll et al., 2005; Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Cognitive skills are essential for readers to integrate language skills, prior knowledge and experiences into reading (Harris, 2006; Kendeou & O'Brien, 2018; Perfetti & Stafura, 2014; Rush, 2004; Underwood et al., 2007). It is also argued that cognitive processes help readers create a "coherent mental representation of the text" in their "memory" (Kendeou et al., 2014, p. 10) and provide self-directed reading skills and strategies (Blachowicz & Ogle, 2017). Some scholars have discussed the cognitive aspect of reading from bottom-up and top-down perspectives (Harris, 2006; Kintsch, 2005). The bottom-up theory suggests that meaning resides in the text and needs to be unpacked upwards from smaller to bigger units of the language (Harris, 2006). However, top-down theory is associated with using readers' prior knowledge, lived experiences (Harris, 2006), and beliefs (Ruddell et al., 2019) in the reading process.

Based on Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism, the sociocultural perspective views learning as a product of social interactions, collaboration and active inquiry (Good & Brophy, 2008; Hill, 2006, 2012). Some of its underlying principles are (1) knowledge can be socially constructed, (2) learning is vital to learners' intellectual and emotional

development, (3) real learning occurs in learners' social contexts, (4) language is instrumental in learning and social interaction, and (5) learners' zone of proximal development determines their learning progress (see Adams, 2006; Good & Brophy, 2008; Hill, 2006, 2012; Johnson, 2009; Tracey & Morrow, 2006; Tracey & Morrow, 2017). As such, teachers are encouraged to use teaching strategies that Benson (2012) refers to as "learner-centered teaching" (p. 30), including teaching for situated, inquiry-based and scaffolded learning (Good & Brophy, 2008), group-based and cooperative learning supported by higher-order thinking skills (Larson & Keiper, 2007; Orlich et al., 2010), questioning and student-directed investigation (Larson & Keiper, 2007), dialogic learning (Manalo, 2020), and engaging students in collaborative and small-group discussion (Gillis et al., 2019).

Besides the cognitive and sociocultural views, some scholars approach reading through the lens of critical literacy (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke, 2019; Vasquez, 2017). Critical literacy encompasses a range of reading strategies that involve "scientific rationality, deep thinking, or problem solving", as well as critiquing "social life, material conditions, and political ideology" (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 10). In other words, critical literacy is vital in engaging and empowering readers to "analyze, critique and transform the norms, rule systems and practices governing the social fields of everyday life" (Luke, 2012, p. 5). It is also argued that engaging readers with critical literacy affords them the "spaces, places, and opportunities to belong" and "participate differently in the world" (Vasquez, 2017, p. 2), thus empowering readers to examine themselves and others to "become aware of self and others, express emotion and needs, and create conditions and schema for maximizing potential for an optimal life" (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2021, p. 1). Hence, critical literacy encourages readers to "see and respond to instances of injustice … and participate in communities in service of social change" (Riley, 2015, p. 417).

A Hybrid Approach to Critical Reading

One model that effectively integrates the three aspects of reading discussed earlier is Freebody and Luke's (1990) four resources model (FRM). The FRM is organised around four reader roles that engage and empower readers as text decoders, text participants, text analysts and text users (Freebody & Luke, 1990). Given the complex nature of reading and the demand of the 21st century, this model can be a creative and reflective pedagogical framework for English teachers, especially in ESL classrooms, to engage their students in comprehending, interpreting, analysing, evaluating and using literary texts

prescribed in the English curriculum. It can also help readers resist and work towards changing the power dynamics and cultural, social and political hegemonic views in the text (Boronski, 2022). The following sections discuss the four reader roles in the FRM.

Text Decoders

Texts include various codes that can generally be categorised as alphabet-based and phonemic-based. Alphabet-based codes are governed by written language systems such as grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary (Harris, 2006). On the other hand, phonemic-based codes are related to phonemic awareness of how sounds in spoken language function, such as "listening for words, syllables, rhyme, alliteration and phonemes" (Hill, 2006, p. 173) and analysing their relationships with written conventions (Harris, 2006). Thus, it is expected that critical readers understand and apply various language resources related to semantics, syntax, pragmatics and paralinguistics to break textual codes (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Tompkins et al., 2019) to engage with texts using different reader roles while reading.

While the knowledge and application of both codes are helpful to learners of English, they are broad and complex for teaching. Thus, it might be helpful to approach text decoding from two levels: initial decoding and subsequent decoding. Decoding at the initial level may include analysing the "fundamental features and architecture of written texts" (Luke & Freebody, 1999, p. 7) that are "necessary but not sufficient" for holistic decoding purposes on their own (Freebody & Luke, 1990, p. 9). Initial decoding may focus on, but is not limited to, alphabet use, sound systems in words and spelling patterns (Rush, 2004), phonemic awareness and phonics (Hill, 2006), relationships between spoken sounds and written symbols (Flint et al., 2019; Harris, 2006). Extant literature shows that much research on the four resources model has considered these elements (Latham, 2014; Linda-Dianne, 2015; Rush, 2004; Simandan, 2012).

On the other hand, once readers become familiar with the basics of initial text decoding, teachers may introduce them to the subsequent level of decoding, which is mainly aimed at the text feature level (Santoro, 2004; Wilson, 2009). Focus areas for this decoding may include but are not limited to "patterns of sentence structure and text" (Freebody & Luke, 1999, p. 7), grammar, punctuation and vocabulary (Harris, 2006, p. 118), and transitional markers (Santoro, 2004, p. 10). Given that this study's focus was on teaching English for grade 9, it was assumed that the students at this level were

familiar with the initial level of text decoding. Hence, this study focused on the subsequent decoding level to engage and empower readers as text decoders of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and poetic devices in the poem.

Text Participants

As text participants, readers are expected to utilise a range of text based as well as resources drawn from their sociocultural contexts to engage in constructing various forms of meanings in both texts and multimodal materials (Luke & Freebody, 1999; Luke et al., 2011; Rush, 2004). In other words, readers are encouraged to participate, "understand and compose meaningful written, visual and spoken texts from written, visual and spoken texts from within the meaning systems of particular cultures, institutions, families, communities, nation-states and so forth" (Luke & Freebody, 1999, p. 7). Through such participation, readers are expected to work towards achieving semantic competence using the resources and knowledge to unpack layers of text-embedded and associated meanings (Rush, 2004; Serafini, 2012; Underwood et al., 2007).

Hill (2012) suggests three ways of engaging in text participation with a focus on literal, interpretive and inferential meanings. Text participation for literal meanings involves constructing meanings based on explicit textual information such as words, diagrams and other textual evidence. It is also known as reading "on the line" (Hill, 2012, p. 199). Reading for literal meanings is similar to what Rosenblatt (2019) calls efferent reading in her transactional theory of reading. Her theory talks about two types of reading stances: efferent and aesthetic. Readers should take an efferent stance when they read texts for information and procedural purposes, as opposed to an aesthetic stance, which is associated with multiple interpretations and inferences. When readers read for interpretive meanings, they may have to synthesise clues and information that is not explicitly presented, also referred to as reading "between the lines" (Hill, 2012, p. 199). Readers as text participants of inferential meanings may use their lived experiences and personal, cultural and historical backgrounds to provide critical responses to the text or produce new texts. Also known as reading "beyond" the text (Hill, 2012, p. 199), it is grounded in the social constructivist view of learning.

Text Analysts

Freebody and Luke (1990) argued that "texts are crafted objects, written by persons with particular dispositions or orientations to the information, regardless of how factual or neutral the products may attempt to be" (p. 13). In other words, texts are not neutral, and writers produce their works with "values, ideologies, and beliefs about how the world should be organised and operate" (Flint et al., 2019, p. 18). Hence, it is crucial for readers to look for writers' agendas (Rush, 2004) that attempt to present their ideology, silence others' views or defend the status quo (Luke & Freebody, 1999; Rush, 2004; Underwood et al., 2007). As text analysts, readers must explore how CR is "context-dependent, non-quantifiable, continually changing and inevitably value-laden" (Flint et al., 2019, p. 18), using a repertoire of available resources such as "cultural and ideological bases on which texts are written" (Freebody, 2007, p. 34). Engaging readers as text analysts may involve helping students and scaffolding their efforts to uncover the writers' "conscious choices or unconscious assumptions" (Tompkins et al., 2019, p. 6), such as their intentions, ideologies and values.

Text Users

As text users, readers are expected to demonstrate pragmatic competence to use texts effectively and practically in social contexts (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Rush, 2004; Underwood et al., 2007, p. iv). In doing so, text users may employ various reading and externalising strategies to engage with the text, such as setting reading goals, situating texts in cultural and social contexts and applying textual knowledge and skills to new contexts (Rush, 2004). According to Flint et al. (2019), text users must know that texts are cultural and social products with specific goals and purposes, which may guide readers to adopt "learned behaviours" (Tompkins et al., 2015, p. 4).

Another way to engage readers as text users is through what Donnelly (2007, p. iv) calls the "translation, innovation and transformation" approaches. Readers are said to be using a "translation" approach when they use it to create new texts based on the original content and genre. In an "innovation" approach to the text, readers are encouraged to produce a new text by replicating the original genre but using different content. Finally, "transformation" occurs when readers create new texts by keeping the original content but changing the genre. These three approaches can be helpful to scaffold beginning text users to tackle complex texts and prepare them to draft their own creative pieces. In addition, one may add one more approach the Donnelly model, as a "production"

approach, where readers use the original text as a model to create their own texts without using any original text feature.

Despite the FRM's practicality and effectiveness as a flexible and creative pedagogical tool to teach reading and literacy, it has never been used in a Bhutanese ESL classroom context. Hence, this study has been proposed to explore and understand its implications for teaching CR in a Bhutanese middle secondary school with the following questions.

1. What perspectives does a grade-9 Bhutanese ESL teacher have on critical reading (CR)?
2. How does using the four resources model influence a Bhutanese ESL teacher's approach to teaching CR?

Method

Context and Participant

This study used a qualitative case study (Bryman, 2012; Creswell & Poth, 2018) to explore and understand how Lhatu, a grade-9 Bhutanese ESL teacher, implemented Freebody and Luke's (1990) FRM to teach CR in his English classroom at Nima School, a middle secondary school in south-east Bhutan. Lhatu was a trained teacher with a Bachelor of Education and a Master of Arts in English. While he had more than 14 years of teaching experience, he received no training or professional development in teaching CR.

Before implementing the FRM, I conducted a five-hour online CR induction workshop to orient Lhatu towards CR. In the workshop, we discussed the basics of CR and teaching strategies based on Freebody and Luke's (1990) FRM. The FRM was aimed at helping Lhatu engage and empower his students as text decoders, text participants, text analysts and text users while reading texts. We also developed an implementation guide for him to plan and use CR lessons, instruction and activities.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data for this study were collected in three phases. First, I conducted a semi-structured interview with Lhatu to understand his initial perspectives on CR and teaching strategies. Second, Lhatu implemented the FRM to teach Maya Angelou's *The Caged Bird*, a poem of his choice from the grade-9 English curriculum. Third, after his FRM implementation, I interviewed Lhatu using a set of semi-structured interview questions

to analyse his perceptions about using the FRM to teach CR. The sources of data included audio recordings of the two interviews and Lhatu's lesson interactions, besides his written reflective reports on the three lessons. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim.

This study's data were analysed thematically (Clarke & Braun, 2017) to understand Lhatu's interpretation of teaching CR using the FRM. According to Clarke and Braun (2017), thematic analysis provides a framework to identify, analyse and interpret "patterns of meaning" embedded in "qualitative data" (p. 297). The key to this approach is using codes and identifying themes to analyse and interpret participants' experiential and behavioural meanings. Codes are meaningful portions of text in the qualitative data in words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs (Hesse-Biber, 2016; Saldana, 2016), while themes are significant ideas in qualitative data formed by related codes (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Creswell & Guetterman, 2021).

Findings

Lhatu's initial perspectives on CR and teaching strategies

Lhatu's initial perspectives comprised his definition of CR and its importance. He defined CR as a strategy to read between the lines to get the text's multiple meanings instead of reading for its literal meaning. His definition also suggests multiple ways of understanding and interpreting the text, depending on readers and contextual factors. "When we read a literary text, we don't go into a literal meaning, but we connect to different perspectives, society and personal lives" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21).

Lhatu argued that CR was necessary to maximise readers' holistic learning and knowledge development. "It allows the students to read beyond the literal meaning and analyse the multiple concepts, meanings and ideas in the text" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21). He implied that CR helped readers understand and reflect on social issues through the text and its writer. "I emphasise the impact of the text on society, personal level and the community. I want them [the students] to connect the text with them, community and larger societies" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21).

In addition, Lhatu's reportedly used various strategies to teach CR, such as teaching students to read for the text's literal meaning. "I normally make the students read and understand the text and some keywords … first" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21).

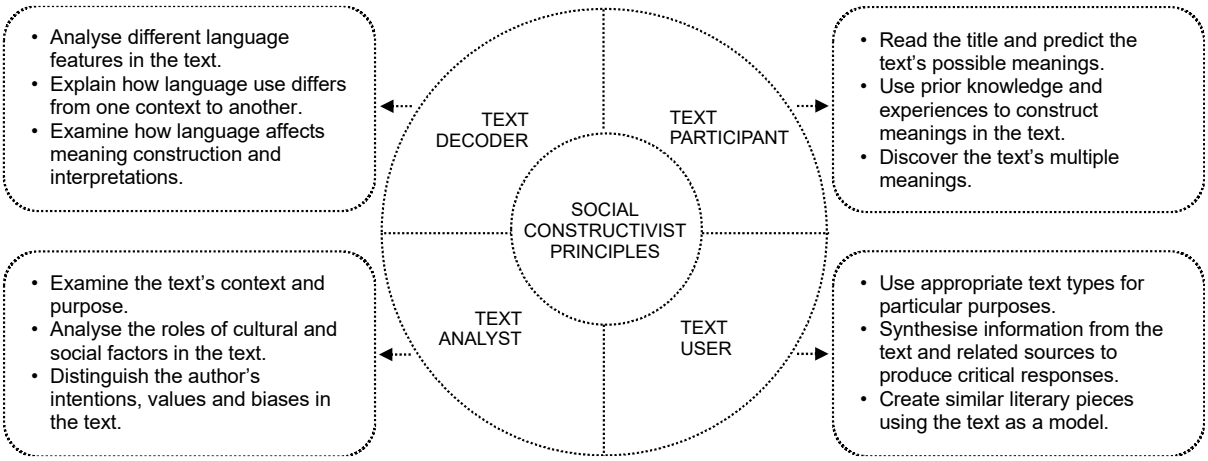
He also suggested helping them consider various social and cultural backgrounds while reading. "When [I] teach a text from different cultures, we may interpret the issue differently. For example, American perspectives differ from our Bhutanese context. We use that strategy to interpret literature" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21). Further, he mentioned helping students to analyse the text's literary features to develop critical understanding. "When I teach a poem, I [focus on] elements of poetry … for example, the alliteration and the rhyming pattern" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21). He also reportedly taught his students to connect their reading and understanding to their lives. "I emphasise … how to connect the text's impacts on their lives, communities and larger societies" (Lhatu, Interview 1, 23/4/21).

Lhatu's implementation of the FRM

This section reports Lhatu's implementation of the FRM to teach Maya Angelou's *The Caged Bird,* a poem of his choice from the grade-9 English curriculum, through four reader roles: text decoders, text participants, text analysts and text users as shown in Figure 1

Figure 1

Four Resources Model with Four Reader Roles



Note: Adapted from Freebody and Luke (1990), and Vygotsky (1978)

Readers as Text Decoders

In one of his lessons, Lhatu engaged his students as text decoders of the poem by helping them unpack the vocabulary. In particular, he instructed them to identify and analyse descriptive words with positive and negative meanings related to the two birds in the poem.

Lhatu: *Now, let's [look at], the words … we have to see positive and negative. OK? So, which one would be positive – the caged bird or the free bird?*
Class: *Free bird*
Lhatu: *Free bird. OK. Then, positive for free bird (wrote on the board). Negative for …?*
Class: *Caged bird*
Lhatu *What words do you think is positive?*
Class: *Leaps, free, floats …*

At the same time, Lhatu explained that some words could be positive or negative depending on contextual use. For example, he said that while the word "down" could be negative, it was positive in the poem as it was related to the freedom to move. With Lhatu's help, most students could decode the vocabulary, as evident from the following responses.

Lhatu: *Let's stop here for a while ... Who wants to share? … I've given some examples ... Can you share?*
Class (Boy): *(Negative words): Stopped, seldom, rage, clipped, tied, fearful, unknown, down, grave, nightmare, scream, shadow.*
Lhatu: *Very good. Does anybody want to share positive words?*
Class (Girl): *(Positive words): free, leap, freedom, float, sing, dream, open.*

In the next activity, Lhatu engaged his students in decoding Angelou's use of grammar and punctuation. With his scaffolding, most students realised that Angelou had deliberately used minimal punctuation marks, only capital letters and full stops, to indicate the catharsis of her pent-up anger and frustration after many generations of suppression and social rejection at the hands of her White counterparts. They also discussed why Angelou repeatedly used the conjunction "but" in the poem, arguing that it helped her create contrasting images of American society.

Readers as Text Participants

Lhatu engaged his students as text participants by making them read and discuss the poem in groups, limiting his interference to providing suggestions where required. As the following reports show, most students could collaboratively participate in the poem's meaning construction.

Group 1: *The poem is written by Maya Angelou. It mainly talks about comparison between two birds. Free bird and the bird in the cage. The free birds enjoy the life where they can do anything … such as enjoy the beauty of sunset. Visiting the new … places and experience new things. He has the freedom to find his own food and go as far as he likes. Unlike the caged bird do not have*

any freedom … they lived a life with fears for the harassment and, torture, even death. But he continues to sing of his desire of freedom and opportunities ….

Group 2: *… the poem describes the experiences of two birds, and one bird is able to live in natural freedom, and another bird is in cage. This bird was fearful, and because his feet were tied and he wants to be free, and he opens his throat to sing freedom song.*

Group 3: *The author talks about two birds. One who was free and one who was caged … the caged bird sings in the cage, and other bird sings in freedom. (The rest is inaudible).*

Lhatu: *OK, when I listen to your group discussions, I can understand that generally, now we can understand the poem. The poem talks about caged bird and free bird. So, this poem is about the free bird and the caged bird.*

Readers as Text Analysts

The following interactions show how Lhatu scaffolded his students as text analysts of the poem, using prompting and probing questions.

Lhatu: *So, this poem is about the free bird and the caged bird. OK, if you were the caged bird, what would you feel?*
Student 1: *Lonely.*
Lhatu: *Lonely, yes you feel lonely any other?*
Student 2: *Fear.*
Lhatu: *Why fear? I think there is no fear because you're protected by the cage.*
Student 3: *Sad.*
Lhatu: *Even if you want to sing, how will you sing?*
Class: *With fear.*
Lhatu: *With fear because you are under the control of somebody else, caged. If you were given a choice, what kind of bird would you like to be? Free bird or the caged bird?*
Class: *Free bird (in unison).*

In the next activity, Lhatu instructed the students to analyse and discuss the characteristics of the free bird and the caged bird in pairs. The following are some responses which Lhatu read to the class.

Response 1: *(Free bird): The bird leaps on the back of the wing and floats downstream till the current ends. Free bird sings with freedom. (Caged bird): bird that stalks down his narrow cage. His wings are clipped, and his feet are tied. The caged bird sings with fear. These lines … give us information that caged birds do not have [the] freedom to sing, though they sing, but they sing with fear.*

Response 2: *A caged bird that is timid and afraid to do things. The caged bird sings with a fearful trill, unable to do anything. Clipped wings. Tied feet. (Free bird): A bird that is dare and brave to take risks sings with freedom. Ability to do anything. That means free bird has lots of freedom.*

The final task for readers as text analysts was connecting the themes in the poem with the poet Angelou. Lhatu gave some background information about the African-American community in the United States of America, which helped the students draw parallels between the poem and the black community. Also, through his prompting and probing questions, most students could justify why Angelou wrote this poem. For example, they learned that the birds were metaphorical representations of injustice and freedom in American society.

Readers as Text Users

Lhatu used a hybrid approach to engage his students as text users by combining Donnelly's (2007) "translation, innovation and transformation" strategies of text using (p. iv), where he instructed them to produce a one-stanza poem using free-verse style without focusing on language, punctuation and other poetic skills. This activity excited and inspired many students, as evident from the rush to show their poems to Lhatu.

Poem 1

The trees and leaves are like an umbrella to us,
Which gives us shades.
The branches are like a group of snakes,
Which are in all directions.
Near the tree,
the fresh breeze flows towards us.

Poem 2

The yellow sunshine shines in the morning –
I don't know why.
It sets in the evening.

Meanwhile, the others appeared busy writing their own, partly motivated by the friends who had shown their poems to Lhatu.

Poem 3

I slept at night and woke up in the morning.
Slept with tension, I woke up with a smile …

Poem 4

Whenever I see him, it feels like
Someone is looking at me,
With a beautiful smile –
So bright and white!
Surrounded by many twinkling … stars!

Lhatu: *Wow*
Class (boy): *Nice! (Others talked to themselves in the background).*
Lhatu: *Yes, it is!*

Readers as Text Decoders and Text Analysts

Lhatu's implementation of the FRM also revealed its intertwined and overlapping nature among the four reader roles. For example, the activity for unpacking the poem using the poem's figures of speech involved decoding as well as analysis, as shown below:

Lhatu: *What would be the figure of speech? It's mentioned here, which thing is compared to another thing.*
Class: *Metaphor.*
Lhatu: *Metaphor. It has used metaphor. So, what this free bird is referred to somebody else. To whom is it referred?*
Class: *White people.*
Lhatu: *White people, that's American, is it? That's why this poem is a metaphorical representation, as we've discussed earlier … This poem is full of metaphors. So, we'll find out. Now, the next activity is we'll find out the metaphors that are used in this poem. Understood?*

Then the students read the poem individually, looking for other metaphors used in the poem.

Lhatu: *(After a while). OK. Now, anybody wants to share? … For example, the caged bird, it's referred to …?*
Class: *Black people.*
Lhatu: *Black people or the Africans, is it? Next? If I say what is referred to a cage, the metaphorical representation of cage is:*
Class: *Society.*

Likewise, they identified and discussed the poet's use of alliterations.

Lhatu: *What is alliteration? (Some students were heard saying "same meaning") Same meaning?*
Class: *The use of the same letter sound, sir.*
Lhatu: *Sound, consonant sound.*
Class: *Rhyming sound.*
Lhatu: *Yes, use of similar sound, consonant that is coming one after another. For example?*
Class: *Seldom see, worms waiting, shadow shouts*

Readers as Text Decoders and Text Participants

Lhatu explained that good poetry contains sensory images and descriptions besides poetic language and devices. As such, he asked the students to examine how Angelou used some words to paint sensory images, which involved text decoding and meaning construction. The following interactions show such examples.

Lhatu: *If I … look carefully here, we can see all the senses are involved. How many senses do we have?*
Class: *(Someone said) Seven senses.*
Lhatu: *Seven senses? Oh my god.*
Class: *(Many said) Five senses.*
Lhatu: *Five senses? Eight senses? Six senses? What are they? OK. Let's see one by one.*
Class: *(Many said) see, feel, hear, taste and smell.*
Lhatu: *Any other? Some of you said eight senses. Six senses? One is nonsense, no? This poem arouses all senses. Can you give some lines that arouse our senses? For example, hearing.*

With Lhatu's help, most students identified the sense-related words such as "sing", "tune", and "scream" for hearing. Also, they claimed that words such as "sunray", "hill", and "worms" were related to seeing, while "fear", "tied", and 'breeze" were related to feeling in the poem. Although Lhatu said the poem contained words related to all senses, the students could find descriptive words for only three senses.

Readers as Text Analysts and Users

Lhatu also engaged his students as text analysts and users. For example, he assigned group presentation topics that required them to analyse and relate the poem to their lives, thus interweaving the knowledge and skills of text analysts and users.

Lhatu: *How do you relate this poem to our real-life context? How would you feel if you were like Maya Angelou? What does the author try to talk about, and what do you understand from the poem?*

As shown below, most students displayed a critical understanding of the poem in their presentations.

Group 1: *The poem teaches us that we shouldn't differentiate between white and black people. The poet … wrote this poem because she wanted freedom and equality between Black African and White Americans. Maya Angelou says that everybody should have equal rights.*

Group 2: *In this poem, it talks about two birds - a free bird [and] a caged bird. The*

caged bird doesn't have any freedom to fly. It could just stay in fear, begging for its freedom, whereas the free bird can sing and fly freely and dance in the sky without fear.

Group 3: *The poem describes the opposite aspects between the birds – the caged bird sings because it is the only way it knows to express itself. And the fact that the bird has never enjoyed the freedom before …*

Group 4: *This poem talks about free birds and caged birds, related to the author's own life, how Maya Angelou has suffered like the caged bird or treated and not treated equal as other Americans.*

Lhatu's Reflections on Implementing the FRM

This section presents Lhatu's reflections on using the FRM to teach CR, focusing on the reported successful outcomes and challenges. In particular, the FRM as a pedagogical tool was vital to provide pedagogical support, engage students in the CR process and develop their critical skills.

Lhatu reported that the FRM gave him pedagogical support to make his teaching productive and exciting. "The lesson was quite interesting as the students were … aware of the strategy, and the classes became more interesting than earlier classes. Students could participate very actively" (Lhatu, Lesson report 2, 12/5/21). He added that his students were making progress and showing interest in learning. "While implementing the [model], I could see them learning and using various skills such as verbal, group discussion … and writing skills … in a systematic way" (Lhatu, Interview 2, 22/5/21). He also felt that such support boosted his confidence to teach better than before. "I'm more confident now and can teach them a little differently than I used to. The [model] will help them think and learn better" (Lhatu, Interview 2, 22/5/21).

Moreover, Lhatu stated that since the FRM required them to play various roles while reading, his students were productively engaged in the reading process. "When I implemented the [model], my students actively participated and were fully engaged. They didn't have time for leisure or to waste" (Lhatu, Interview 2, 22/5/21). He added that the FRM enabled them to take on more personal responsibilities to learning compared to previous teacher-centred learning. "This … ensures that the readers do more reading activities and tasks, thus promoting 21st-century student-centred pedagogy and

learning … Now, we don't have to teach like before using teacher-centred strategies" (Lhatu, Interview 2, 22/5/21).

In addition, Lhatu argued that the FRM could foster students' critical thinking skills. In one lesson report, he wrote how his strategies allowed them to think and discuss critical responses with their friends. "This strategy gave more opportunities for the learners to think and discuss with their friends while carrying out the activity" (Lhatu, Lesson report 1, 11/5/21). He also mentioned his students' use of creative ideas and skills to write one-stanza poems. "The most satisfying activity was students were able to write a poem of one stanza. Students were trying to express their feelings in words" (Lhatu, Lesson report 3, 12/5/21). Hence, he felt the FRM could foster students' CR and thinking skills. "I feel the framework will help students read and think more critically" (Lhatu, Interview 2, 22/5/21).

However, Lhatu encountered three challenges while using the FRM. First, most of his students were unfamiliar with his new strategies, thus requiring more time and constant scaffolding. "Students were not doing much. They couldn't do much because students were a bit stuck, and the teacher had to go and help them, provoke them. That's what I've experienced" (Lhatu, Interview 2, 22/5/21). Similarly, he reflected on that challenge in one of his lesson reports. "The lesson was delayed because the students were unfamiliar with reading strategies" (Lhatu, Lesson report 1, 11/5/21).

Second, Lhatu found that using the FRM required more planning and delivery time. "Overall, I thought such a lesson needed more preparation and time" (Lhatu, Lesson report 2, 12/5/21). Thus, he proposed to have professional development for teachers to use the FRM and student-centred strategies. "If we [continue] teaching with such a strategy, teachers must be well trained to actively carry out the lesson delivery" (Lhatu, Lesson report 2, 12/5/21).

Discussion and Conclusion

This study's findings show that using the FRM as a pedagogical tool can potentially enhance what Shulman (1986) called a teacher's pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). In particular, Lhatu's use of the FRM to teach poetry helped him scaffold his students'

grade-appropriate knowledge and skills to construct meanings, analyse language usage, engage with the poem critically and promote their literacy practices.

Although Lhatu's initial teaching strategies reportedly focused on teaching literal comprehension and text-based meanings, there was a visible shift from his earlier practices to engaging and empowering students as text participants of various meanings. For example, he displayed an increased ability and curiosity to engage his students in constructing the poem's literal, interpretive and inferential meanings. As evident from his lesson interactions, teaching CR based on the FRM afforded discursive possibilities of meaning construction, especially if approached the text from sociocultural perspectives, reflecting CR as a social and cultural practice (Luke et al., 2011). In particular, the FRM can potentially enable students to explore, construct and negotiate various meanings based on "their own particular repertoires of languages, cultures, and histories of experiences that shape their … knowledge, understandings, values, and practices" (Scarino, 2014, p. 386).

This study also showed that Lhatu used the FRM creatively to scaffold his students' efforts to analyse how Angelou used language in the poem, thus effectively integrating language teaching into a literary text. As seen previously, his integrated approach to teaching language and literature also allowed him to engage his students innovatively in learning complex language areas such as grammar, punctuation and vocabulary, which otherwise were challenging to teach and study. Moreover, such integration was helpful for him and his students to use the poem as a good example of language learning and use. Interestingly, this is consistent with a similar finding by Viana and Zyngier (2020) in their study on an integrated approach to teaching language and literature in EFL contexts. Such integration ensures learning autonomy and disrupts the ready acceptance of received wisdom from the teachers, besides enhancing students' language skills.

Lhatu's increased PCK was also clear in his efforts to engage his students critically with the poem. In his CR lessons, he ensured that his students investigated Angelou's ideologies, views and values in the poem, *The Caged Bird*. This reflected his growing understanding of critical and ethical awareness of helping students to read texts from critical perspectives, allowing them to disrupt what Boronski (2022) calls "hegemonic views of contemporary social, political and economic issues" (p. 1) in the text. This also

indicated Lhatu's confidence and sophistication in helping students use CR as a creative strategy to unpack the poem from diverse angles (e.g., Rasse, 2022), not simply accept meanings and interpretations at face value. In short, unlike his initial perspectives on CR, he displayed an increased ability to teach and empower students to view texts critically and take a critical stance on the poet's views, thus helping them investigate the power dynamics and contending assumptions in the poem (Winch et al., 2020).

As clear from this study, using the FRM helped both Lhatu and his students take a critical approach to teaching and practising CR. The FRM helped Lhatu improve pedagogical knowledge and skills, resulting in his improved PCK. Because of this, he could help his students externalise what they learned from the poem. For example, they were exposed to what Gibson et al. (2019, p. 29) call "living knowledge" of cultural and social identities and representations in the poem. This allowed them to use the poem to foster critical and emotional development, besides helping them acquire text-based and associated knowledge and skills. Moreover, the FRM helped them foster a sense of urgency to assess their personal, cultural and social values, attitudes, assumptions and ideologies (Tracey & Morrow, 2017) in light of contrasting images in the poem. Hence, the students were made to identify, position, shift or reaffirm their individual and collective values, assumptions and attitudes with Lhatu's scaffolded support and four reader roles.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VICTORIAN ENGLAND FOR THE COTTAGECORE AESTHETIC

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Abstract

This article contemplates the idyllic imagery of Elizabeth Gaskell's rural texts in relation to the key visual motifs of the Internet aesthetic "cottagecore." Meanwhile, the paper also strives to highlight the importance of both the Victorian era, particularly its literature and art, with regard to this popular Internet aesthetic. With some brief references to influential figures of the age, the cultural timeframe surrounding Gaskell's rural fiction is shown to offer significant historical relevance to the romanticisation of the English country-cottage life. The literary and pictorial texts serve as examples of this cultural process. Considering the author's mostly ornamental use of cottages in *Wives and Daughters* as well as her employment of floral characterisation, the paper also highlights the visual aesthetics of the cottage art of Helen Allingham and Myles Birket Foster as well as rural depictions made by illustrators of Gaskell's provincial works that display the visual after-life of Gaskell's rural texts.

Keywords: cottagecore, cottage art, Helen Allingham, Myles Birket Foster, Elizabeth Gaskell, Gaskell's illustrators, Internet aesthetics, nostalgia

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"Cottagecore" has become one of the internet's most established and widely-recognised modern aesthetics, seeing a boom in popularity since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Being an aesthetic that celebrates nostalgia, slow-living, home crafts and creature comforts, the timing of its rise in popularity – when people were spending unusual periods of time at home – is unlikely to be a coincidence. Of course, the cottage aesthetic is nothing new, but cottagecore is its latest iteration. Being a relatively recent phenomenon, little has been written in academia concerning this or Internet aesthetics. Nevertheless, some papers have begun to emerge, with cottagecore's links to "queer culture" being a favoured perspective. Other articles include Alicia Caticha's study of fashion and race (with a strong focus on the eighteenth century and Marie Antoinette) (2022) as well as Leah Brand's look at crafting in the digital age (2021). In addition to Brand, a number of articles, such as Angelica Frey's "Cottagecore Debuted 2,300 Years Ago" on *JSTOR Daily* (2020), or Melissa Kane's "The Simple History: #Cottagecore, Pastoral Arcadia and Marie Antoinette" in Edinburgh University's *Retrospect Journal* (2021), tend to stress the importance of the eighteenth century in cottagecore reveries, or state that cottagecore, unlike other Internet aesthetics, does not reference any particular period in time. While this paper does not challenge the idea of cottagecore's nostalgia for a "fluid past," (Brand, 2021, p. 8) one of its objectives is to make a stronger case for the influence of the Victorian period, particularly its rural literature, of which Elizabeth Gaskell's provincial works are an integral part.

Despite the word cottagecore being a broad linguistic container (with the aesthetic being open to the inclusion of almost anything loosely associated with the cottage-life), media marketed or linked to the trend ought to be relatively easy to identify. Cottages, gardens, the countryside as well as forests are among its key visual motifs. Additional motifs include cakes and pies, but also certain fabrics and patterns, such as gingham or lace. Searching for the word "cottagecore" on Google Images will lead one to a consistent set of pictures showing beautiful country cottages and wild gardens with sun-lit flowers in their fullest bloom. Among these images, one is also likely to find a painting or two by the late-Victorian British painter Helen Allingham, whose idyllic rural depictions of England are still in wide circulation. Aesthetically, Allingham's paintings seem to perfectly encapsulate the overall feel of cottagecore, which could be described as depicting that homely sense of warmth and comfort when enveloped in Nature's beauty.

In truth, there is neither a simple nor all-encompassing definition of cottagecore. It could mean different things for different people. For some, cottagecore may be a positive, daily-lifestyle choice, engaging with activities that promote the benefits of "wellness" and "mindfulness." For others, it may represent a sense of novelty, with participants occasionally engaging with its more performative aspects, such as cosplaying or preparing genteel picnics and tea parties. Numerous activities can be specified, including seasonal ones, but the aesthetic can also be enjoyed more passively through various media: most noticeably photography, film, and literature. A major part of the cottagecore aesthetic is a love for books, which includes both the contemplative act of reading them as well as appreciating their visual and tangible beauty. Illustrated novels are particularly revered for their artistic craft as well as their helpfulness in visually transporting the reader to pleasant places of the past. As Jenny Calder visualises in *The Victorian Home*: "It is from the novelists that we get the vivid hints of life." (1977, p. 101).

Regarding novels that are frequently referenced within the cottagecore community, the thematic and historic scope of titles seen on lists of recommended works is extremely broad. Yet, while the aesthetic is not limited to any particular period from history, many of its most endearing qualities, especially those regarding the safe comforts of home, can be found in Victorian literature and art, particularly in stories written either for or about children, or which may stimulate nostalgic memories of childhood. The ever-popular stories of Beatrix Potter present one such example of classic literary works from the period wherein both childhood and pastoral themes are strongly evoked, with various keywords of cottagecore, such as wholesome, warm, gentle, kind, quaint, and cozy being commonly elicited from these classic fictional works. That is not to say that cottagecore media should be exclusive of other themes. For many novels and films tagged by followers of the trend contain distinctly dark elements too. To consider that Ramona Jones (2021) in her book *Escape into Cottagecore: Embrace Cosy Countryside Comfort in Your Everyday* includes *Wuthering Heights* among her suggested cottagecore media demonstrates that there are many other factors that could determine a cottagecore text, such as romance, wild nature and the sublime, or even gothic themes and the spiritual. Needless to say, themes of what is homely, innocent, or good-natured are to be found in texts either with or without a rural setting, but when presented in such a landscape, particularly in the presence of cottages, the text is cottagecore through and through.

Another author who either could or should be included in lists of cottagecore media (though probably not as well-known among today's casual readers as Beatrix Potter or the Brontë sisters), who wrote extensively on the themes and topics of domestic life and the home, on flowers and nature, and on women and children and their experiences and thoughts, whether deemed either simple or complex, is Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865). Although mostly referenced by literary scholars of the previous century as being a writer of "social problem novels," she is perhaps better known today as being the author of *Cranford*, a collection of everyday stories nostalgically inspired by the childhood years she spent living with her maternal aunt, Hannah Lumb, in rural Cheshire. It is a novel that Kate Flint describes as presenting "a quaint picture of provincial life," (Flint, 1995, p. 31) and a similar rural and historical escapism can be felt in Gaskell's other literary works, particularly in *Cousin Phillis* and *Wives and Daughters*, which both feature towns and villages based on the same geographical region that inspired and influenced her *Cranford* texts. Despite not having the same recognition in popular culture as works of the Brontë sisters or Beatrix Potter, these three provincial works by Gaskell cover almost every aspect of the cottagecore aesthetic, ranging from its visual motifs to its more abstract values. Furthermore, Gaskell's interest in gardens and horticulture, her keen eye for picturesque landscapes as well as her contributions to ethnographic studies of the English country-life and its fading traditions affords these texts a sense of hyper-relevancy when it comes to the understanding of cottagcore's literary ontology.

Cottagecore as a cultural or artistic movement is partly reactionary. It could be a reaction to the rapid growth of technology, though this is a complex argument due to the fact that cottagecore itself was created and is enjoyed mostly via social media and by the generation that supposedly use it the most. Even more likely is to view it as a reaction to capitalism and hustle-culture, including the effects that such economic systems have on Earth's natural environment (though this would not be completely obvious from a purely visual perspective). Cottagecore's rise in popularity could also have been a reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic (though, it may be better to view it as more of an embracement of the situation). It is through these external conditions where one can find some parallels with Gaskell's works, which were also written at a time of great social and environmental change. Raymond Williams (1984) has stated that novels written around the time of Gaskell's first – *Mary Barton* – and Dickens' *Dombey and Son* (both from 1848), but also the

more rural texts of *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1847) by Charlotte and Anne Brontë, were composed "in response to a new and varied but still common experience," namely the impact of the Industrial Revolution (Williams, 1984, p. 10).

In further stressing the importance of this historical period in literature, Williams stated:

> For it is a critical fact that in and through these transforming experiences English attitudes to the country, and ideas to rural life, persisted with extraordinary power, so that even after the society was predominantly urban its literature, for a generation, was still predominantly rural; and even in the twentieth century, in an urban and industrial land, forms of the older ideas and experiences still remarkably persist. All this gives the English experience and interpretation of the country and the city a permanent though of course not exclusive importance (Williams, 2016, p. 3).

This rural nostalgia sustained through the literature of the Victorian period prevails in Gaskell's provincial texts. The industrial novels, or "Condition-of-England" novels written by the likes of Gaskell, Dickens, and Disraeli have urban settings, but they are sentimental towards the loss of the rural landscape and traditional modes of life. The industrial terrors in Gaskell's novels are the huge cotton mills of Manchester (sometimes pejoratively referred to in historical accounts as "Cottonopolis"). The threat in *Dombey and Son* is the destruction and devastation of rural communities, caused by the rapid construction of the railways – a prospect loathed by John Ruskin, the critic of the arts who formed a mutual friendship with Gaskell thanks to their many compatible views on politics, society, and "their shared disquiet at the social cost of industrial capitalism" (Longmuir, 2017, p. 2). The same threat is also present in the background of *Cranford*, but more noticeably so in *Cousin Phillis*.

Strictly regarding the English country cottage, it can be argued that the present or on-going fascination for this humble and picturesque style of home stems largely from the early Victorian period when the railways ameliorated an urbanisation of the British population, which consequently led to a nostalgic romanticisation of rural life and country dwellings. In the year of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the very same year that Gaskell published her first *Cranford* papers, and a year after publishing her Christmas story *The Moorland Cottage*, the census of England and Wales showed for the first time a nation with more urban dwellers than rural (a figure that would increase rapidly during

the Victorian period). In *Life in the English Country Cottage*, Adrian Tinniswood (1995) discusses the immediate distaste many Victorians had for the rapidly growing industrial landscape and the consequence of viewing the countryside as a slowly disappearing paradise henceforth. Also mentioned by Tinniswood are artists such as Helen Allingham and Myles Birket Foster, who, in their nostalgically-framed rural scenes, were able to display certain values associated with Nature, such as tradition, stability, continuity, and calmness, all of which were qualities that had been declining in the name of industrial progress.

Cottages have a long history and it would be hard to claim that their importance had been heightened in novels during the Victorian period. However, there are some connections that can be made to the idealisation of both the English country cottage and its gardens during this age, as evinced also through its literature. Logically, Ramona Jones' partly instructional book on the cottagecore aesthetic starts with a brief history of the cottage, correctly noting that they had once constituted only the most basic of dwelling places (Jones, 2021). As explained, there are various types of country cottage, and its definitions have either changed or been contested across the centuries. The most commonly visualised style in cottagecore is the "English thatch-roofed cottage with painted white or rusticated stone walls, chimneys, and shrubbery in the front" (Cottagecore, n. d.), a style that largely corresponds with those depicted in the paintings of Helen Allingham. This oft-depicted image with its romantic associations may appear as old as time; yet, as Tinniswood explains, this "thatch-and-roses image of cottage life is a relatively recent construct" (Tinniswood, 1995, p. 13). – a romantic vision that results from the effects of the Industrial Revolution It should also be noted that, as the term 'thatch-and-roses cottage' implies, any complete image of the idyllic cottage life should also include the visual aesthetic of gardens and flowers. Sub-genres of cottagecore that focus more specifically on its floral aspects do also exist, for example, "bloomcore," "honeycore," and "meadowcore" (all of which add to the aesthetic's overall visual schema); however, what is of particular importance in cottagecore is the added presence of people. According to *Aesthetics Wiki*, what makes cottagecore distinctly different to wild aesthetics like "naturecore" are the "signs of human involvement in the rural space (Cottagecore, n.d.)." The encyclopaedia also defends the significance of gardens (particularly those of the classic English style), explaining, with some importance, that

they are "a manifestation of this interaction between nature and human intervention" (Cottagecore, n.d.).

Although flowers are one of the most noticeable features of Gaskell's fiction, the presence of cottages is mostly peripheral. In fact, collectively, the words "cottage/s" or "cottager/s" only features thrice in Gaskell's *Cranford*, appearing the same number of times in *Cousin Phillis*. In *Wives and Daughters,* it also appears at a similarly infrequent rate, in proportion to the length of the book. This peripheral nature seems to be mostly due to its focus on gentility. In *Cranford*, particularly, it is probable that cottages are less vital for its middle-class setting because, in the nineteenth century, the term 'cottager' was mostly associated with the poorer, working class. Historically, the term had initially applied to farmers, craftsmen, or artisans, who owned the land on which their cottages stood, but by the seventeenth century it had come to include farm labourers as well (Clarke, 1994). Traditionally, the cottage was supposed to refer to a dwelling of modest proportions, thus being associated, for the most part, with those less well off. Yet, plenty of examples can be found of much larger cottages existing before and during Gaskell's life, a fact which can also be cited in the form of literary references, such as the Devon cottage of the Dashwoods in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* as well as in Gaskell's own short fiction "*The Squire's Story*" (1855), where Mr. John Dudgeon's house on Wildbury Heath is self-described in humble terms as being "a mere cottage," despite it having two floors and spreading outwards "far and wide" (Gaskell, 1996, p. 223). Aside from the exceptions that were the numerous types of genteel cottage being built for the landed gentry from the late eighteenth century onwards, including the relatively brief fashion for *cottage ornée* (the ornamental cottage), the cottage, by regular standards, has according to Pamela Gerrish Nunn "always conveyed limited size and luxuries, and as such, implies a taxonomy of class" (Nunn, 2010, p. 190). This 'taxonomy of class,' can be found when analysing Gaskell's limited use of the term 'cottage' in *Cranford*, wherein the word appears to be used only in reference to folk of a lower social stratum than that of her main characters who represent the middle-class genteel.

While the *Cranford* cottages are peripheral to its middle-class setting – in contrast to its obvious centrality in *Cousin Phillis* (if we are to regard the main setting of the Holman's home at Hope Farm as a cottage) – in *Wives and Daughters* the cottages can be described, visually, as ornamental (in an aesthetically or picturesque sense). An

immediate example of this ornamental nature can be found in the opening chapter of *Wives and Daughters* where the young protagonist Molly Gibson looks out from her bedroom window early one morning:

> Then to the window, and after some tugging she opened the casement, and let in the sweet morning air. The dew was already off the flowers in the garden below, but still rising from the long hay-grass in the meadows directly beyond. At one side lay the little town of Hollingford, into a street of which Mr. Gibson's front door opened; and delicate columns, and little puffs of smoke were already beginning to rise from many a cottage chimney where some housewife was already up, and preparing breakfast for the bread-winner of the family (Gaskell, 2002, pp. 3-4).

Markedly similar to a scene later in the novel from the same bedroom window, here Gaskell draws our attention to an idyllic view of Hollingford showing its quaint cottages and their little puffs of smoke, reminiscent of a classic feature of Allingham's paintings that presents a very homely image of quotidian action from afar. In Gaskell's text, the smoke puffs are significant to the ornamentation of cottages because they directly indicate warmth and life. The same window scene repeats in Chapter Thirty-Four when Molly runs upstairs to her bedroom after learning of Roger's marriage proposal to Cynthia. Soothed by the view outside, an older Molly once more surveys the cottages below that are teeming with life in the form of autumnal garden flowers, lazy, cud-chewing cows, home-coming husbands and school-free children, and "soft curls of blue smoke" being sent up from the evening fires of cottages (Gaskell, 2002, p. 374), which, incidentally, is more or less the same panoramic image depicted in the animated opening sequence to the BBC's serialised adaptation of *Cranford* from 2007 (Harwood & Eaton, 2007).

Another scene presented in this romanticised style is when Molly returns home partially on foot:

> To get to Croston Heath, Molly had to go down a narrow lane overshadowed by trees, with picturesque old cottages dotted here and there on the steep sandy banks; and then there came a small wood, and then there was a brook to be crossed on a plank-bridge, and up the steeper fields on the opposite side were cut steps in the turfy path; these ended, she was on Croston Heath, a wide-stretching common skirted by labourers' dwellings, past which a near road to Hollingford lay (Gaskell, 2002, p. 461).

One can assume that these labourers' dwellings were also types of cottages – probably a cruder form closer to huts, such as those described in great detail by William Howitt in his first-hand accounts from the 1820s in *The Rural Life of England* (1838). In fact, Gaskell's first stories were published in *Howitt's Journal of Literature and Popular Progress* (1847-1848), which both William Howitt and his wife Mary were its founders and editors. She was also well aware of Howitt's publication, contributing both a detailed description of Clopton Hall for the first edition, wherein she is referenced as a correspondent, including some information and corrections for the second edition in 1840 (Martin, 1985). Some of Howitt's descriptions of cottages from an outward view are somewhat comparable with Gaskell's passage about Molly's arrival at Croston Heath: "Where they [the cottages] happen to stand separate, on open heaths, and in glens of the hills, nature throws around them so much of wild freedom and picturesqueness as makes them very agreeable" (Howitt, 1840, p. 121). In Howitt's description, it is almost as though the cottage was being personified by possessing 'wild freedom' whilst also becoming more 'agreeable' to the wandering onlooker. Such an animated appearance of the cottage in its natural landscape was a highly-prized feature among landed gentry during the period of Romanticism in the late eighteenth century, with there being a particular concern for creating or maintaining "the charms of ruggedness and rusticity" (Woodforde, 1980, p. 29).

Despite Howitt and Gaskell's welcoming images of cottages from the outside, the reality was that many cottages, especially in the North of England, were harsh places in which to live, with reports of over-crowded and squalid conditions leading to general condemnation. In *The Truth about Cottages*, John Woodforde details reports from the first half of the nineteenth century of inhabitants sharing roof space with swine and poultry, of soot and smoke-filled rooms (from having the fire set in the middle of the floor), and the threat of certain types of cottages falling apart due to inclement weather and poor building conditions (pp. 36, 39). In Gaskell's *My Lady Ludlow*, originally serialised in *Household Words* in 1858, a particular scene where the Lady Ludlow has reason to inspect such a cottage is reminiscent of descriptions by Howitt as well as some parliamentary reports of the time:

> My lady went on to a cluster of rude mud houses at the higher end of the Common; cottages built, as they were occasionally at that day, of wattles and clay, and thatched with sods. As far as we could make out from dumb show, Lady Ludlow saw enough of the interiors of these places to make her hesitate before entering, or even speaking to any of the children who were playing about in the puddles. After a pause, she disappeared into one of the cottages. It seemed to us a long time before she came out; but I dare say it was not more than eight or ten minutes. She came back with her head hanging down, as if to choose her way, — but we saw it was more in thought and bewilderment than for any such purpose (Gaskell, 2013, pp. 43-44).

This highly descriptive scene from the novel's second chapter, which is also reminiscent of those written by Howitt, is also depicted briefly in the 2007 televised adaptation of *Cranford* (Harwood & Eaton, 2007), the series of which makes use of some elements and episodes from *My Lady Ludlow*. Though filling only the briefest of moments both on screen and in the novel, it is a section that presents the viewer with a welcome moment of historical realism, showing the grim environment of a family of cottagers. While clearly at odds with the escapist fantasies of modern cottage-life aesthetics, at least by way of contrast, such a scene may have the effect of enhancing the more comforting and genteel atmosphere more commonly seen in other interiors of the Knutsford village.

Though direct references to cottages in Gaskell's texts are in relatively short supply, the same can hardly be said in regards to her referencing of gardens and horticulture, with Shirley Foster stating that "Gaskell's texts abound with descriptions of plants and flowers" (Foster, 2009, p. 2). Notably, it is a topic that Gaskell had a fascination with from an early age. In "*The Floral and Horticultural in Elizabeth Gaskell's Novels*," Jeanette Eve (1993) states that Gaskell names over fifty different types of herb, wild flower, or garden flower in her novels, providing as many as fourteen descriptions of specific gardens too, also stating that Gaskell, though writing at a time when horticulture was in vogue, with dozens of flower-language dictionaries being published during her lifetime, utilised the fashionable topic to create a unique style of prose, with gardens and flowers frequently interacting with both character and plot. While *Cousin Phillis* may be the most pastoral of Gaskell's novels, *Wives and Daughters* is arguably her most floral. On the surface, the text is littered with flowers. They are everywhere both indoors and out, appearing in pots and vases and in potpourri, on dinner trays and dining tables, in

furniture patterns, in bonnets, in hair, and embroidery. As in Gaskell's other novels, flowers are also offered as gifts or for the purposes of remembrance.

The Royal Horticultural Society's (RHS) first Great Spring Show in 1862, which later became the Chelsea Flower Show, may be a testament to the appetite that there was for botany and horticulture at the time when Gaskell was writing *Wives and Daughters*. Though serialised between 1864 and 1866, the novel is set during Gaskell's late teenage years, prior to her marriage in the summer of 1832. It is around the same period when the RHS first began to hold flower shows (since 1833), which points to an increasing rate of interest in the study of flowers during Gaskell's adult life. In addition to such societies being established, various topically relevant magazines and journals also sprang up. Among them were John Claudius Loudon's *Gardener's Magazine* in 1826 and George W. Johnson's *Cottage Gardener* in 1848. As suggested by Ethne Clarke in "The English Cottage Garden," these publications appear to have had a strong influence upon the general population, helping to return English gardens to more ancient styles based on geometric formations, a style which became commonly-known as 'carpet bedding' (Clarke, 1994, p. 8). This high-Victorian garden style is frequently referred to in *Wives and Daughters*, thus accurately befitting the novel's temporal and domestic setting.

Despite this gardening and floral connection to cottagecore, the style that is more synonymous with the cottagecore movement, however, is the 'olde worlde' type of cottage garden. In simple terms, this is a more wild, less symmetrical-looking style of English garden. Clarke explains that the romantic ideal of old-fashioned gardens from later in the century was embraced by the Arts and Crafts movement, which had been "established as a reaction against the industrialisation of Victorian/Edwardian England" (Clarke, 1994, p. 8). In view of any direct comparisons made to cottagecore, Gaskell's texts were written and set too early in time to align in a synchronistic fashion with the classic-garden style of the cottagecore aesthetic, which is a style of gardening more synonymous with either Allingham's paintings or Francis Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*. All the same, the rapidly growing interest in horticulture during Gaskell's life and its subsequent application to literature lends further evidence to the argument that recent fascinations with cottages and the idyllic cottage life – as seen in cottagecore – mostly stem from a Victorian period whose literature remained rural even while its society became rapidly more urbanised. This application of horticultural interests in literature can be

demonstrated in Gaskell's fictional works, especially when it comes to her method of characterisation (rather than being a theme used merely for aesthetics or historical indexing). Select examples of this method of floral association have been given in Jeanette Eve's article, with Eve selecting, for *Wives and Daughters*, the scene of the Gibson stepsisters tying carnations together in different styles as being exemplary of Gaskell's skill in this regard.

Gaskell's artistic use of certain motifs, such as flowers and gardens, also helps to elucidate cottagecore's emotional, sentimental, and teleological nuances. More simply, central characters, like Molly, seem to articulate and embody the cottagecore ethos through Gaskell's techniques of metaphorisation. In *Wives and Daughters*, Gaskell uses her own 'language of flowers' to build, shape, and frame her characters. As with Dickens' *Great Expectations* and – more biographically – *David Copperfield*, the novel is presented in the form of a *Bildungsroman*. Yet, Lynn Voskuil, in "The Victorian Novel and Horticulture," also suggests using a more specific term *Bildungsgarten* for novels that connect the shared ethos of self-improvement between novelists and horticulturalists. Voskuil informs how "horticulture and *Bildung* often occur together in Victorian novels, especially novels that feature girls as protagonists" (Voskuil, 2013, p. 559), and such a protagonist can surely be found in Molly Gibson. Molly's floral associations are fairly explicit and her role as the subject of Voskuil's *Bildungsgarten* is evident from as early as the second chapter where a clear link is made between the young Molly and the pursuit of social cultivation. The chapter begins with Molly being suitably prepared by the Miss Brownings for her first visit to the Cumnor Towers, with some added reference and allusion to some classic fairytale female protagonists: "Her face had been soaped, scrubbed, and shone brilliantly clean; her frills, her frock, her ribbons were all snow-white" (Gaskell, 2002, p. 11). Essentially, the trip to the Towers is a walking tour around its extensive gardens, greenhouses, and hothouses, the experience of which becomes instantly mesmerising for Molly: "But she lost all consciousness of herself by-and-by when the party strolled out into the beautiful grounds, the like of which she had never even imagined" (p. 12). It is a vital chapter in the story that establishes various recurring themes of the novel. As it is throughout the text, Molly's character is given both floral and fairytale comparisons by characters (as well as the narrator), with Molly being likened to that of a wild, uncultivated flower.

Through her floral imagery, Gaskell continues to show Molly as a humble and down-to-earth character, which are typical characteristics associated with the cottage life. These traits are revealed in the same chapter in Molly's preference for less cultivated flowers:

> Molly did not care for this half so much as for the flowers in the open air; but Lady Agnes had a more scientific taste, she expatiated on the rarity of this plant, and the mode of cultivation required by that, till Molly began to feel very tired, and then very faint (Gaskell, 2002, p. 13).

Molly tends to her own flower-garden later in the novel and, unlike Cynthia, is keen to learn about the natural world from Roger, the two of whom share a similar friendship to that of Mary Lennox and Dickon in *The Secret Garden*. Assessing the story as a whole, Molly clearly represents the typical kind-hearted, good-natured character of Gaskell's mid-Victorian fiction, some similar traits of which can also be found in the characters of Paul Manning and Phillis Holman in *Cousin Phillis* or, indeed, Mary Smith and Miss Matty in *Cranford* (though, the lengthy *Bildungsroman* narration of Molly's character affords her much greater scope for characterisation). Molly's distinctly wholesome profile is further illustrated when placed in direct contrast to other major characters like Cynthia, whose more upper-middle-class cultivation under the careful tutelage of her mother and Madame Lefevre has made her more an ornamental female figure than Molly's practical type. Overall, Molly could be seen as being rather antithetical to the genteel world she is regularly thrown into, her main difference being her overall genuineness of character as opposed to the more artificial nature of others. Although this central theme of the novel is indicated in various ways throughout, with the theme of interior design also being applied in a similar way to horticulture – for example, Miss Clare's insensitive redecorating of Molly's bedroom – Gaskell is more persistent in her use of flowers and gardens as a tool for expressing this important contrast between the genuine and the fake. Thus, Gaskell's texts not only evoke cottagecore's moral and humanistic values but also tend to use the same visual motifs (as those associated with the cottagecore aesthetic) as literary devices for characterisation as well as plot.

As mentioned previously, illustrated editions of classic novels are an important reason why such literary works are so revered in cottagecore. Furthermore, Victorian novels are renowned for their captivating depictions of daily life. The images are often pleasing to the eye, thus further improving the book's aesthetic quality. They can also

accentuate certain background features as well as the general setting of a scene, the importance or the beauty of which can be lost when focusing more on the textual narrative of the story and its dialogic passages. Essentially, illustrations in classic novels can help the reader to better visualise some of the key visual motifs of a given aesthetic. However, not all illustrators will either choose to highlight such scenic elements nor are they always subject to follow the same visual schema set by the original author. An illustrator has the power to adapt a novel's themes and moods, its setting (whether spatial, geographical, historical, or other), or its overall aesthetics to suit either a personal preference or, perhaps, a specific cultural need. Indeed, such illustrated adaptations can also be used to reach a particular audience for marketing purposes in what Roxanne Gentry refers to in her article on illustrations of *North and South* as "a mass market of diverse media that makes and sells culture as a commodity" (Gentry, 2019, p. 23). Strictly in regard to illustrating Gaskell's provincial texts, it should not be of any particular difficulty, in the present day, for a publisher to market them, intentionally, with cottagecore themes.

Regarding previous editions of Gaskell's provincial works, *Cranford* has been by far the most illustrated. However, its publishing history is quite a complicated one, with numerous illustrated editions having been produced since George du Maurier made the first attempt with four wood-engravings (including title-page) for George Smith's *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1864. As described at length by Simon Cooke, du Maurier proved to be a highly favourable match as the illustrator for Gaskell, being "employed, first and foremost, to increase the appeal of the writer's work by offering the reader the added attraction of his designs." (Cooke, 2017) Gaskell's only other contemporary illustrator was Myles Birket Foster, whose line-drawings for *The Moorland Cottage* in December 1850 for Chapman and Hall may present one of the most appealing sets for today's cottagecore audience. George du Maurier worked on a number of other Gaskell texts, including both *Cousin Phillis* and *Wives and Daughters*. The only other notable illustrated editions of these two later stories are, firstly, Mary Wheelhouse's slightly children's-book styled colour prints (having also illustrated *Cranford* and *Sylvia's Lovers* during the same Edwardian period) and, secondly, Alexy Pendle's 2002 Folio Society edition of the latter text, which, as Emma Marigliano has indicated, marks a return to the line-drawing styles of George du Maurier (Marigliano, 2012). In her brief article on the many illustrated

editions of Gaskell's works, Marigliano pays credit to Pendle's distinctly romantic style, with a direct comparison being made to du Maurier's "Væ Victis!" drawing from the original serialised edition – from Chapter Eight of Wives and Daughters – 'Drifting into Danger' (Figure 1). Though hard to improve on du Maurier's original work, Pendle creates a satisfying balance between the high-society drawing-room scenes and her many out-of-doors rustic and rural portraits, the latter of which fit with both the overall mood of cottagecore and the aesthetic's main visual motifs, with the notable inclusion of modestly-sized country cottages (Figure 2).

Figure 1

Væ Victis! (1864) – by George du Maurier.

Note. [Wood engraving by Joseph Swain] by Cooke, S. 2017, Victorian Web.

Figure 2

The Storm Bursts

Note. From Wives and Daughters [Illustration], by Alexy Pendle, 2002.

Perhaps surprisingly, there is relatively little to say on the illustrated editions of *Cousin Phillis*: du Maurier's two drawings for *The Cornhill Magazine* focuses on two scenes of Holdsworth and Phillis but capture the rustic wooden interiors of the farm house in a realistically unglamorous fashion; meanwhile, Wheelhouse's 1908 edition for George Bell and Sons offers both black and white and coloured illustrations, and, as one would expect for its idyllic setting, shows a number of rural scenes, with Phillis placed at the centre of most. The title page depicting Phillis feeding the chickens using her apron to hold the feed

looks the most iconic, and a similar scene is later recalled at the end of Part One with Phillis captured in a graceful kneeling position, as was described by Gaskell in the original text (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

One of Mary Wheelhouse's illustrations for *Cousin Phillis*.

Note. One of Mary Wheelhouse's illustration for *Cousin Phillis* (Gaskell, 1908, p. 37).

For *Cranford*, it appears that there have been at least fifteen fully illustrated editions produced covering a range of artistic styles; though, to list all would be excessive. Determining which ones are the most in harmony with cottagecore is largely subjective, and to do so would largely depend on which elements one sees as being the more important. In the case of some editions, one might not see any obvious resemblance to cottagecore's visual aesthetics, which is to be expected when considering how much of its alignment with *Cranford* is due mostly to the novel's inclusion of certain ethical principles or its expressions of femininity made partly through its conveyance of innocence, humour, and sentimentalism that are less easily captured in pictorial form. Nevertheless, some editions do stand out in the light of this aesthetic. In terms of houses and interiors, Edmund Hort New's 1914 Methuen edition, described by Marigliano as a "pedestrian guide book" (Marigliano, 2012, p. 28), is an interesting find for those curious about how the original streets, buildings, and interiors looked, thus offering the reader a type of open-museum-Knutsford-tour-guide effect. Further adding to this travel-guide effect are the unusually lengthy descriptions of the illustrations spanning eight pages in total. There is also a well-illustrated 1891 edition by Joseph Knight Company that pays similar attention to locations, including *Cranford*'s rural scenery; yet, unlike E. H. New's edition, actual storied scenes are included as well.

One could say that *Cranford* is very much stuck in a certain time, and the same could also be said for many of its later illustrated editions, which bear strong hallmarks of the eras wherein they were published. However, perhaps the most timeless set of illustrations and arguably the most exquisite is Joan Hassall's 1940 Folio Society edition, the artist who Marigliano states was recognised for her "inimitable and fresh approach to the line and style" of her designs (Marigliano, 2012, p. 29). Hassall (n.d.a, n.d.b), who also illustrated other works of Gaskell, which includes *The Brontë Story: A Reconsideration of Mrs Gaskell's Life of Charlotte Brontë* by Margaret Lane (1953) and some sumptuously illustrated editions of Jane Austen's novels, in effect, created a caricature of the rural landscape, thus producing an almost dreamlike effect. This effect can be observed in two images (Hassall, 1940a; 1940b) the first being a depiction of Cranford, and the second depicting a scene from Woodley of Mr Holbrook and Mary Smith. Crucially, Hassall's charming rural scenes capture the escapist element of cottagecore, and for all the beauty and clarity of du Maurier's work, one wonders if part of the cottagecore literary dream might not be better suited to Hassall's illustrations of a slightly more dreamlike and imaginary nature.

Such depictions of the Victorian English rural landscape still thrive in today's popular culture, circulating in the form of cottagecore and other similarly-themed Internet aesthetics. In fact, cottagecore's *Wikipedia* page uses one of Helen Allingham's most iconic cottage paintings for its primary thumbnail image. In many ways, Allingham, whose art continued well into the twentieth century, can be seen as bridging an historical gap between Gaskell's novels and today's cottage aesthetics. Not only was Allingham born in the same year when Gaskell's first novel was published (*Mary Barton* 1848) but the two were also distantly related through the Herford family line - Helen Allingham's maternal grandmother, Sarah Smith Herford, was an artist who painted country landscapes. Also, her Aunt Laura was a professional artist, and was among the first group of women to be accepted into the Royal Academy. Of further connection to Gaskell is that Allingham studied with Birket Foster (Gaskell's first illustrator), both artists having belonged to the Idyllist school – a group of watercolourists influenced by the social realist paintings of Frederick Walker that specialised in picturesque landscapes. Such idealisation of the cottage-art movement continued in various forms throughout the twentieth century, with reactions to certain transformative moments in history being one of the likely causes for periodic increases in the popularity of this nostalgic art.

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INNOVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING: THE CASE OF THE SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN – BOOK REVIEW

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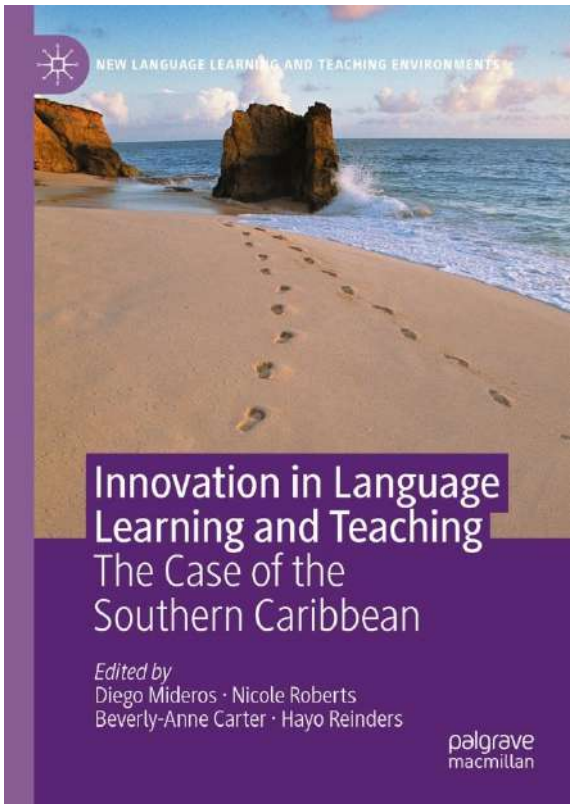
Independent scholar, United Kingdom



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Antony Hoyte-West is an interdisciplinary researcher focusing on linguistics, literature, and translation studies. A qualified translator and conference interpreter from several languages into his native English, he holds a doctorate in linguistics and postgraduate degrees in languages and social sciences from the universities of St Andrews, Oxford, Galway, and Silesia, as well as two diplomas in piano performance. He is the author of 60 publications, several of which are indexed in Scopus or Web of Science. He has presented his research at 41 international conferences in 18 countries, and is on the editorial or advisory boards of 5 peer-reviewed journals.

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Among other factors, the impact of colonialism, immigration, and emigration has ensured that the southern Caribbean is a region of diverse populations, religions, and ethnicities. Containing a broad spectrum of geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural differences, the region remains a multilingual space, albeit to varying degrees. Accordingly, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching: The Case of the Southern Caribbean* is a pioneering edited volume that brings together the pedagogical and scholarly expertise of language teachers and researchers active in the region. The book is edited by four scholars with extensive backgrounds in language teaching, learning, and research: Diego Mideros, Nicole Roberts, and Beverly-Anne Carter are all affiliated to the Centre for Language Learning at The University of West Indies, St Augustine (UWI St Augustine) in Trinidad & Tobago; Hayo Reinders is affiliated to King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) in Bangkok, Thailand.

The reviewed volume is part of a larger book series edited under the stewardship of Hayo Reinders, which to date (as detailed on page 1) has profiled innovative perspectives on language pedagogy in several countries, primarily in Asia. Accordingly, in aiming to offer "a unique perspective from an underrepresented region in the Global South" (p. 2), this book is the first in the series to focus on the Americas, and also on the specific circumstances of small nations. Centring predominantly on university-level provision, the ten informative chapters cover studies examining four languages (English as a Foreign Language, French, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish) in a total of five different polities: the independent nations of Barbados, Guyana, St Lucia, and Trinidad & Tobago, as well as the French overseas department (and region) of Martinique.

The opening chapter is by the book's four co-editors: Diego Mideros, Nicole Roberts, Beverly-Anne Carter, and Hayo Reinders. It offers a succinct geographical and sociocultural overview of the southern Caribbean (useful for those readers unfamiliar with the region) before presenting the situation relating to the teaching and learning of L2 languages in the region, as well as relevant research which has been conducted on the topic. In terms of the book's contents, all of the contributions revolve around innovation, as indicated by its title. Utilising the sociocultural concept of agency, the co-editors highlight that the creation and implementation of the novel strategies presented are "framed under particular conditions and circumstances that both enable and

constrain researchers and practitioners to successfully implement an innovative idea with the aim of improving language learning and teaching" (p. 11).

Chapter 2, by Carmen Céspedes Suárez, focuses on the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) among undergraduate students of Spanish at The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill (Barbados). Noting UWI's transnational operations across the Anglophone Caribbean, Céspedes Suárez contextualises the role of Spanish both in the institutional context as well as in the geopolitical context of the southern Caribbean's proximity to Spanish-speaking Latin America, in addition to highlighting the importance of learners acquiring the relevant sociocultural knowledge. Using ethnography of communication (see e.g., Farah, 1997), the chapter outlines the design, implementation, and findings of a project which aimed to assess CEFR B1 level students' intercultural communicative competence over the course of a whole academic year. These results were then compared alongside a series of eight ICC-related objectives pertaining to the evolution of student attitudes, knowledge, and skills in that domain.

The third chapter, by Frank Bardol, presents the findings of an innovative study conducted at the Université des Antilles in Martinique in 2018 and 2019. It outlines an action-research-based blended learning project on the teaching of English pronunciation to students majoring in other subjects (LANSAD, or *Langues pour spécialistes d'autres disciplines*). Using his own theoretical model integrating learner autonomy, digital tools, and pedagogical objectives (Bardol, 2020), the author reports on the implementation and results of the study, providing several core recommendations which – especially given the increased prevalence of blended and remote learning after the COVID-19 pandemic – will be of use to a wide range of educators.

Entitled 'Teaching Beyond the Classroom: A Project-Based Innovation in a Language Education Course', Chapter 4 details how problem-based learning was introduced into the "Teaching of Language Arts at the Primary Level" module of the undergraduate degree in primary education at the University of Guyana in Georgetown. In seeking "to transform and contextualise learning in this course by making its

assessment more meaningful and relevant to the real-life realities of teacher practitioners and the needs of students in their classrooms" (p. 63), Pamela Rose charts how the project was designed and implemented over three academic years, with the second and third iterations also integrating Course-based Undergraduate Research (CURE) (see Dolan, 2016) as a core feature. Accordingly, a detailed evaluation of the project is presented, including references to its opportunities and challenges, as well as insightful practical recommendations.

Discussions of the postcolonial context remain highly relevant in the southern Caribbean, and in light of these Ian S. Craig's chapter discusses the development of an updated statement of mission and values for the Spanish section of UWI Cave Hill. Drawing on various elements which were "personal and professional, institutional and geohistorical" (p. 86), Craig gives a detailed summary of how the statement was conceived and implemented (a full version is appended to the chapter). This analysis is supplemented with information on how these values were incorporated into the onboarding of new staff and students, as well as with regard to moves towards the creation of Caribbean-specific pedagogical materials for the teaching of Spanish. Furthermore, suggestions for further innovations to promote the organic uptake of these values in the institutional and pedagogical contexts are also provided.

Chapter 6 turns to cultural diplomacy within the academic environment, as co-editor Beverly-Anne Carter profiles the Sino-Trinidadian institutional partnership which led to the establishment of the Confucius Institute at UWI St Augustine. Drawing on her experiences as Director of UWI St Augustine's Centre for Language Learning, Carter provides a unique insider's perspective on the intricate nature of high-level academic policy and planning, outlining the inception of the project and the important and differing roles of the various stakeholders, before also underlining specific aspects relating to the teaching and learning of Mandarin Chinese at UWI St Augustine.

The continuing professional development (CPD) of French teachers is the focus of Chapter 7, where Sabrina Lipoff foregrounds the innovative Integrating French as the Language of Exchange (IFLE) programme, which was implemented by the French Embassy in St Lucia and the local Alliance Française. Lipoff situates the study within the

current pedagogical reality relating to the teaching of French as a foreign language across the wider region, noting three "worrying observations" (p. 132): uninterested students, a paucity of teacher training for French as a foreign language, and teachers' own insecurities about their level of French proficiency. Accordingly, Lipoff details the creation and implementation of a dedicated online CPD programme for teachers of French, noting participant responses and also proposing potential areas for improvement and future work.

Professional development of a different kind is highlighted in the co-authored chapter by co-editor Diego Mideros and Paola Palma, which revolves around the innovative application of learning beyond the classroom (see Benson, 2011; Reinders, 2020) in the context of the creation of a bespoke blended-learning Spanish course for the staff of a local airline. With both authors affiliated to the Centre for Language Learning at UWI St Augustine, the chapter provides a comprehensive panorama of the stages involved in developing and planning a customised corporate programme within a university context. This includes detailed information regarding the remit, the scope of the course, the online platform, tutor selection, and the delivery method. This factual information is supplemented by insightful qualitative and quantitative findings from various perspectives, including from the course academic leader, tutors, and participants.

In the penultimate chapter (Chapter 9), co-editor Beverly-Anne Carter, Avian Daly, and Mathilde Dallier present the findings of an online study conducted during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic among students of UWI St Augustine's Centre for Language Learning. With the mandatory transfer from face-to-face to online learning occurring whilst the 2019/2020 academic year was still in progress, the study centred on a particular communication-based L2 course that had previously been taught exclusively face-to-face and did not have online pedagogical resources associated with it. Accordingly, the study sought to ascertain learners' perceptions on the move to emergency remote learning through examining short reflective essays submitted on the topic. As a consequence, the qualitative insights gained provide a useful barometer of learner perception regarding this dramatic pedagogical shift in the context of an unprecedented global crisis.

Written jointly by the book's four co-editors, Chapter 10 concludes the volume as a whole. This final contribution acts as a capstone which critically analyses the innovations presented in each of the preceding chapters, comparing and contrasting them with each other in terms of the outcomes, challenges, and implications, and deftly teases out points of synergy to highlight and discuss important commonalities. Building on this detailed discussion and analysis, the work closes with a series of valuable recommendations for future research and practice.

As this review has demonstrated, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching: The Case of the Southern Caribbean* showcases the rich possibilities for novel research on the teaching and learning of L2 languages in the southern Caribbean context. Yet it is crucial to underline that this groundbreaking volume will surely also have distinct appeal far beyond the region. The innovations and experiences presented provide valuable and detailed first-hand perspectives, guidance, and analysis which can of course be applied to other geographies, languages, and learning modalities. In addition to providing an excellent point of departure for comparative studies, this book will be a crucial resource for teachers and scholars in all areas of language pedagogy and practice, including the teaching and learning of specialised languages, translator and interpreter training etc. This is particularly so given that, in common with other educational professionals worldwide, language educators are currently grappling with the shift to new modes of learning, including the concomitant requirements for digital literacy (see e.g., Tomczyk & Fedeli, 2022) as well as the ongoing influence that new AI technologies will doubtlessly exert over the coming years. Indeed, as highlighted in the book's opening chapter, the four co-editors "hope that this volume inspires local and regional L2 teachers and practitioners to engage in more L2 research that documents innovations regardless of how big or small they may seem" (pp. 17-18), noting such initiatives could certainly be beneficial for the whole region. Indeed, it is to be hoped that active "practisearchers" (Gile, 1994, p. 150), as well as those considering embarking on research in the domain, will find this volume a fount of inspiration for further innovative work on language learning and teaching across the Caribbean and elsewhere.

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