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BETWEEN PARENTHESES: THE POETICS OF IRRELEVANCE IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S EXPERIMENTAL FICTION

Gioiella BRUNI ROCCIA[a]

Abstract

The understanding and appreciation of Virginia Woolf's modernist fiction demands careful attention, not only for the obvious complexity of its experimental form but also for the apparent simplicity of certain typographical and stylistic devices. Among these is the use of parenthetical expressions, consisting of explanatory or qualifying remarks inserted into a passage and usually marked off by brackets, dashes, or commas. Generally speaking, the main functions fulfilled by parentheticals have been examined and classified by Woolf scholars. What has received less critical attention, however, is the intrinsic nature of parenthetical constructions and the subtle, multifaceted implications of their actual functioning within the overall economy of every single novel.The purpose of this paper is to address a similar question, beginning with a preliminary delimitation of the scope of the analysis. Firstly, among the different types of the so-called 'parenthetical expressions' only the explicit use of parentheses (in the form of round or square brackets) will be assumed as a distinctive feature in order to identify a specific category of stylistic and narrative devices. Secondly, and quite obviously, the novel under consideration will be, in particular, To the Lighthouse (1927), inasmuch as it provides the most striking examples of the disruptive potential contained in Woolf's parenthetical writing. A good point of departure for such an analysis, however, can be found in Jacob's Room (1922), Woolf's first experimental novel, which shows a long and compound sentence, inserted between brackets, significantly placed in the opening page of the book.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf, modernist fiction, Jacob's Room, To the Lighthouse, parenthetical constructions, round and square brackets.

[a] *LUMSA University,Rome/Italy,* gioiella.bruniroccia@fastwebnet.it

1. INTRODUCTION: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S PARENTHETICAL WRITING

Virginia Woolf's modernist fiction aims at representing human existence and everyday life in all its complexity and confusion, in its oddity, mystery and uncertainty. Therefore, it shows a deep need for a new form of narrative art which can overcome the intrinsic linearity of the written text, so as to reveal the multiple layers of experience and the contradictory tensions of consciousness. One of Virginia Woolf's greatest literary concerns might be phrased as follows: how can the 'modern' writer accomplish the task of representing, on the written page, several things that take place simultaneously? Or, in other words, is it possible to mould language in such a way as to give a plastic impression of more things occurring at the same time? Now, the use of parenthetical constructions is a way of making more than one thing happen at once, interrupting the linear succession of events in narrative time, by creating different levels of representation (Lee, 1992).

Generally speaking, the phenomenon of parentheticals has been quite neglected to date, at least in the literary domain. In order to define the scope of this article, it is necessary to clarify the basic notions and criteria. Essentially, a parenthetical statement is a qualifying or amplifying phrase or sentence, inserted into a passage in such a way as to be independent of the surrounding grammatical context. Parentheses are usually marked off by round or square brackets, dashes, or commas. This study will focus exclusively on the use of brackets, inasmuch as it represents the specific and most characteristic form of the parenthetical construction, and the one that allows the most challenging experiments with the written language. Indeed, in Virginia Woolf's acknowledged masterpiece, *To the Lighthouse*, a great deal goes on in brackets. As many critics have pointed out, one of the main functions of parenthetical expressions in Woolf's experimental fiction is the identification of the point of view (Blakemore, 2009; Lee, 1992; Sotirova, 2007). The first parenthesis that occurs in *To the Lighthouse*, for example, fulfils exactly this function, attributing to a six-year-old boy, James, a harsh judgement upon his father. It is the intrinsically digressive nature of parenthetical constructions that allows the frequent shifts of viewpoint – a distinctive feature of Woolf's fluent narrative and complex characterisation. Moreover, parenthetical remarks may function like asides in a play, supplying commentary upon the thoughts or actions in which they are embedded. Another important role of

brackets is to highlight the significance of digressive reflections, which, in *To the Lighthouse*, may also extend over more than one paragraph.

All these different functions have been considered and classified by Woolf scholars (Blakemore, 2009; Lee, 1992). What has received less critical attention, however, is the intrinsic nature of parenthetical constructions as such and the subtle, multifaceted implications of their actual functioning within the overall economy of every single novel. The purpose of this paper is to address a similar question, starting from the assumption that the fundamental property of parenthetical expressions consists in their digressive nature, that is, in their capacity to interrupt the linear flow of narrative discourse in order to arouse the impression of simultaneity. In other words, the use of brackets can create a sort of counterpoint between one level of activity and another, allowing thought and action to be shown occurring at the same time, or exploring the multiple layers of consciousness from different perspectives (Blakemore, 2009; Lee, 1992; Jensen, 2007).

If this assumption about the nature of parentheticals is correct, an in-depth exploration at the semantic level requires adequate analytical methods: methods that are not only able to promote close reading of what comes before and after the parenthesis, but also capable of interpreting each parenthetical construction in the context of the whole chapter, and (possibly) in the light of the entire book. Consequently, the scope of the present study is essentially circumscribed to Woolf's most famous novel, *To the Lighthouse* (1927), and in particular to some significant examples of parenthetical expressions taken, respectively, from each of the three sections of the novel. A good point of departure for such an analysis, however, is to be found in *Jacob's Room* (1922), Woolf's first experimental novel, in which parentheticals are quite rare and limited to a few words. And yet, surprisingly enough, the opening page of the book shows a long and compound sentence, inserted between brackets, which introduces one of the most important characters of Jacob's childhood – his elder brother, Archer. A close scrutiny of this passage is able to shed light on some relevant aspects of Virginia Woolf's narrative technique, including her flexible use of point of view, her particular treatment of time, her extraordinary art of foreshadowing – right from the opening scene – the underlying theme of the whole narrative.

2. *MODERN FICTION*, OR THE RELEVANCE OF IRRELEVANCE

Jacob's Room (1922) has often been regarded as a turning point in Virginia Woolf's artistic development. On 26 July 1922, shortly after she completed her third novel, the author wrote in her diary: "There's no doubt in my mind that I have found out how to begin (at 40) to say something in my own voice; and that interests me so that I feel I can go ahead without praise" (*Diary 2*: 186). From then on her fiction became a series of brilliant and extraordinarily varied experiments, each one searching for a fresh way of expressing the complexity of human existence and the elusive nature of what we call 'reality'. In her most famous essay, *Modern Fiction*, originally published in April 1919 as *Modern Novels*, Woolf had criticized certain of her contemporaries for producing novels with such a tightly constructed plot that they made human existence appear quite different from what we experience in our daily lives (Goldman, 2006: 103-106). The fragmented fabric of *Jacob's Room* – its relatively loose organization – is essentially due to the need to address the crucial question, posed in *Modern Fiction*, regarding the possible form of the fictional presentation of life, once freed from the constraints and inadequacies of literary conventions (Flint, 1992). In her critical essay, Woolf describes the task of the modern novelist as follows:

'Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, *the accent falls differently from old; the moment of importance came not here but there*; so that, if a writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style. (*Modern Fiction*, 160, my emphasis)'.

In other words, the writer should try to capture and convey the 'moments of importance', however trivial, fleeting and irrelevant they may appear. In Woolf's view, it is a mistake to search for life in the 'objective reality'. Rather than focusing on external events, modern novels should be concerned with the life of the mind, considered in all its complex thought processes and emotions.

Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness. Let us not take it for granted that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than in *what is commonly thought small.* (*Modern Fiction*, 161, my emphasis).

Indeed, "what is commonly thought small" may reveal its hidden meaning if it is associated with the so-called moments of importance, or 'moments of being', which Virginia Woolf describes in her, essay *A Sketch of the Past*. These moments coincide with sudden instances of clarity, through which the individual is able to gain a greater awareness and to reach a deeper understanding about his own situation and the world around him (Jensen, 2007). Such moments of revelation and insight may be provoked by immediate ideas, ephemeral impressions, visual and sensory perceptions – all things that appear insignificant from an objective point of view. The attentive reader, however, knows the importance of paying careful attention to what seems irrelevant and disconnected in such experimental fiction. To put it briefly, we can affirm that Woolf's critical approach configures itself as a true *poetics of irrelevance*, to the extent that fleeting hints and minimal details may assume a crucial role in creating the overall meaning of the novel.

3. *JACOB'S ROOM:* A PARENTHETICAL INTIMATION OF DEATH

Jacob's Room proposes itself as an innovative form of *Bildungsroman*, apparently centred on the life of Jacob Flanders, who is destined to die before his time in the Great War (Little, 1981). The highly impressionistic, self-reflexive narrative draws the protagonist essentially as an absence in the lives of others. As the title tellingly suggests, the novel is focused on the empty room – the intimate and social space occupied by Jacob, and the emotional vacuum left among those who loved him (Bishop, 2004; Flint, 1992). The theme of absence seems to pervade the novel from the very beginning. The story opens with a beach scene from Jacob's childhood during a summer holiday in Cornwall:

'So of course,' wrote Betty Flanders, pressing her heels rather deeper in the sand, 'there was nothing for it but to leave.' (*Jacob's Room*, 3).

The opening paragraph depicts the figure of Betty Flanders, Jacob's widowed mother, sitting on a beach and writing a tear-stained letter, while her two sons are playing nearby. Beginning *in medias res*, the dramatic incipit focuses on the conclusive statement of the letter: "there was *nothing for it but to leave*". This concise sentence alludes to a difficult and painful situation connected with the death of Mrs. Flanders's husband, as the reader will be able to deduce from the subsequent reconstruction of past events. But here, at the beginning of the story, the unexpected occurrence of the verb *to leave*, used in an absolute sense and placed in a negative sentence, seems to prefigure the protagonist's fate and the dire consequences of the war. It is Jacob who is destined *to leave* behind the empty room towards which the desires and memories of the other characters will be fruitlessly directed, as shown in the last scene of the novel. It is Jacob Flanders who embodies the trauma of a whole generation, as his surname eloquently suggests (Hattaway, 1993). What follows is a descriptive paragraph, where the bay and the lighthouse are viewed through the eyes of Betty Flanders, brimmed with tears:

Slowly welling from the point of her gold nib, pale blue ink dissolved the full stop; for there her pen stuck; her eyes fixed, and tears slowly filled them. The entire bay quivered; the lighthouse wobbled […]. She winked quickly. Accidents were awful things. She winked again. The mast was straight; the waves were regular; the lighthouse was upright; but the blot had spread.

'…*nothing for it but to leave*,' she read. (*Jacob's Room*, 3, my emphasis)

It is worth noting that the negative clause with the infinitive form *to leave* is foregrounded, at the end of the paragraph, through repetition: "…nothing for it but to leave". By repeating these words, mirrored through the eyes of Betty Flanders, the author intends to convey a vague sense of loss and a feeling of emotional distance. It is not without reason that, immediately after these words, Jacob is mentioned for the first time in the novel:

'Well, if Jacob doesn't want to play' (the shadow of Archer, her eldest son, fell across the notepaper and looked blue on the sand, and she felt chilly – it was the third of September already), 'if Jacob doesn't want to play' – what a horrid blot! It must be getting late. (*Jacob's Room*, 3, my emphasis)

It is interesting to note that the reference to Jacob, in the quoted passage, implicitly signals to the reader that the protagonist is out of the sight of both his mother and brother. Right from the beginning, from the opening scene on a beach along the Cornish coast (where Jacob will be referred to as a "tiresome little boy"), he is essentially characterized by his absence (Bishop, 1992; Oinam, 2011). This absence will become immediately evident in the next passage, where the older brother begins his search for Jacob, calling him with insistence and making his name resound among the rocks with loud cries. And yet the pervasive sense of anxiety and fear that accompanies this search is already foreshadowed, as the attentive reader will perceive, by the parenthetical quoted above. Let us then focus our attention on this long, compound sentence in round brackets, which occupies almost entirely the third paragraph of the novel:

'Well, if Jacob doesn't want to play' (the shadow of Archer, her eldest son, fell across the notepaper and looked blue on the sand, and she felt chilly – it was the third of September already), 'if Jacob doesn't want to play' – (*Jacob's Room*, 3)

The events in the first part of the novel are narrated from the point of view of Betty Flanders. She is the one who opens the narrative: sitting on the beach in front of the bay, she is writing a letter, while her sons Archer and Jacob are playing round about. Suddenly the shadow of Archer, her eldest son, falls on the sheet of paper on which she is writing: clearly the boy has come up from behind. His mother perceives his shadow together with the words with which he complains about his little brother: "*if* Jacob doesn't want to play". This doubting sentence, which for the first time names the protagonist of the novel, also reveals his independent, strong-willed nature. In actual fact Jacob has gone away, completely disappearing from sight: he is absent from the scene, while the reader learns his name through the voice of his brother (Van Rooyen, 2012). What, then, is the meaning of the parenthetical that follows and introduces, precisely between brackets, a character who plays a primary role in Jacob's childhood, namely his older brother?

In truth, the first mention of Archer in the story is a reference to his shadow, which makes the sand appear blue before his mother's eyes. Between parentheses, therefore, the modernist writer tends to place what is irrelevant from the point of view of

traditional literary narratives: an obscure shape on the sand; a sudden feeling of coldness; an immediate awareness of the present moment ("the third of September already"). In contrast with the conventional manner, which aimed at an explicit and full representation of reality and human behaviour, Woolf's modernist writing tends to highlight the subjective consciousness, shunning any pretence at objectivity and completeness (Raitt, 2010; Sotirova, 2007). The author herself addresses the critical question of how to handle character description and development. In two different chapters of *Jacob's Room*, towards the beginning and the end of the novel, the same idea is repeated in exactly the same words: "It is no use trying to sum people up. One must follow hints, not exactly what is said, nor yet entirely what is done" (*Jacob's Room*, 37, 214). This is the narrative technique that Virginia Woolf inaugurates in her first experimental novel and that will be more fully developed in her successive works and above all in her masterpiece. She whispers hints; she never shouts proclamations (Raitt, 2010). She puts relevant intuitions within parentheses.

In the light of these considerations we can better appreciate the significance of the parenthesis that appears on the first page of *Jacob's Room*. As already shown above, this parenthesis contains three distinct and apparently disconnected elements, which give an idea of Betty Flanders's subjective consciousness: the shadow of her eldest son; a sudden sensation of cold; the perception of time which has passed (Jensen, 2007: 114). And yet, clearly these three elements are all presented in implicit connection with the figure of Jacob, whose name has just been uttered in the direct speech to which the parenthetical is a commentary.

Indeed, Jacob will appear through the novel as a shadow, as an elusive, indefinable presence (Oinam, 2011). His life's evanescent quality is symbolically enclosed in a simple name, Jacob, evoked in the absence of the character at the beginning of the novel; and again a pure name will be called out at the end, by the voice of a friend, in the excruciating void left by his death. Jacob's life is composed and broken up continually, as impalpable and changeable as a shadow, filtered through the latent impressions, the voices and memories of those who have known him. Jacob's death will cast a dark shadow over the hearts of those who have loved him (Orestano, 1999).

The second element mentioned within brackets at the beginning of the novel is a cold shiver, which suddenly pervades the body of Betty Flanders. The mother shudders for an obscure sense of fear, which is made explicit in the order she gives to her eldest son, when she notices the disappearance of Jacob:

'Where is that tiresome little boy?' she said. 'I don't see him. Run and find him. Tell him to come at once.' (*Jacob's Room*, 3)

Archer then runs to look for his brother, making Jacob's name echo among the rocks, with an articulate cry full of anguish, repeated at regular intervals:

'Ja – cob! Ja – cob! Archer shouted. (*Jacob's Room*, 4)

And for the last time, again:

'Ja – cob! Ja – cob! shouted Archer, lagging on after a second.

The voice had an extraordinary sadness. Pure from all body, pure from all passion, going out into the world, solitary, unanswered, breaking against rocks – so it sounded. (*Jacob's Room*, 5).

A pure name which echoes among the rocks, called by his brother, "solitary, unanswered"; similarly, in the concluding scene of the novel, the name of Jacob will echo in his empty room, shouted by his friend and destined to remain forever "solitary, unanswered". As the reader will perceive, this first temporary absence of the protagonist, somehow distressing for his mother, foreshadows all the subsequent absences, departures, separations, until the final void symbolically represented by the empty room (Jensen, 2007: 115).

Finally, the last element included in the parenthetical, and associated with the cold shiver, is a time expression which might denote, at first glance, a merely declarative kind of temporal awareness: "it was the third of September already". And yet, the presence of the adverb "already" suffices to confer a subjective connotation to this sentence, which sounds like a secret regret for the summer that is ending – like a reminder of the transient nature of life. In the light of the above, the three elements enclosed in brackets appear strictly interconnected. Almost impalpable, and yet with a deep and significant effect, a parenthetical intimation of death foreshadows, right from the opening page of the novel, the underlying theme of the whole narrative.

4. PARENTHETICAL REMARKS IN *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE:* THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. RAMSAY

Virginia Woolf's masterpiece, *To the Lighthouse*, is conceived as a triadic structure: the first part, 'The Window' is followed by a much shorter section, 'Time Passes', which functions as a link between the first and the third part of the novel, 'The Lighthouse'. In the first part, which takes place in the course of a single day, we are introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and their numerous children and guests, as they take their summer holiday on the Hebridean island of Skye.

In chapter 7 of the first part the tension between husband and wife reaches a particular intensity, enhanced by the fact that the relationship is presented from the point of view of James, who is the youngest among the Ramsays' children (Lilienfeld, 1981). As always in modernist fiction, it is the reader who is called upon to reconstruct the scene through suggestions and details which are given in the course of the narrative. Besides, among these details, some of the most significant indications are contained in parentheses (Blakemore, 2009). In particular, the opening paragraph of chapter 7 takes the reader back to the beginning of the novel, where a first essential parenthetical occurs – "(James thought)" – in order to attribute to the six-year-old boy a harsh judgment upon his father (*To the Lighthouse*, 8). The scene depicted in chapter 7, too, recalls the physical postures and attitudes of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay as they appear in the initial pages of the narrative. Mrs. Ramsay is sitting by the window with her son in her arms, reading Grimm's fairy tales to him. The chapter begins by showing James's feelings towards his father, who has come up and stopped in front of them, disturbing the perfect harmony between mother and child:

But his son hated him. He hated him for coming up to them, for stopping and looking down on them; he hated him for interrupting them; he hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; for the magnificence of his head; for his exactingness and egotism (for *there he stood*, commanding them to attend to him); but most of all he hated the twang and twitter of his father's emotion which, vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his relations with his mother. By looking fixedly at the page, he hoped to make him move on; by pointing his finger at a word, he hoped to recall his mother's attention, which, he knew angrily, wavered

instantly his father stopped. But no. Nothing would make Mr. Ramsay move on. *There he stood*, demanding sympathy (*To the Lighthouse*, 51-52, my emphasis).

As happens often in the novel, the parenthetical here has the function of describing the physical position of Mr. Ramsay and the firm and irremovable attitude with which he remains in front of his wife and his son, demanding their attention. Interestingly enough, the parenthesis contains the only expression that describes 'objectively' the father's position: "there he stood". On the other hand, what is important to reveal for the modernist writer, that is the inner attitude and the emotional life of the characters, pervades the whole passage. It is also worth noting that the feelings of little James towards his father are expressed through the almost obsessive repetition of the verb *to hate*, occurring with incessant insistence five times in the first paragraph. All the material acts carried out by Mr. Ramsay ("coming up", "stopping", "looking down", "interrupting them"), his gestures, his characteristic features are revealed uniquely through the perception of James, as if they were fraught with the strong feelings of aversion that the little boy shows towards his father.

In this context, the parenthetical content appears detached, like an off-stage voice. In truth, it is always the narrative voice that holds up the speech of the whole chapter; but here it assumes a semblance of objectivity, in such a way as to enable a deeper truth to emerge, transcending the particularistic points of view of the single characters.

At this point, it is important to notice that the parenthetical is not limited to a mere external indication ("there he stood"), but also includes a moral attitude, expressing with incisive effectiveness Mr. Ramsay's nature, which is both fragile and imperious, pleading and commanding ("commanding them to attend to him"). Moreover, the parenthetical content is repeated, with a slight but significant variation, right at the end of the paragraph: "There he stood, demanding sympathy". Undoubtedly, this is the physical and moral image of Mr. Ramsay that will remain impressed on the reader's mind.

In contrast with the presentation of the male figure, there follows a description of the female character: she, too, is revealed through a parenthetical note which takes us back to an initial image of the narrative:

Mrs. Ramsay, who had been sitting loosely, folding her son in her arm, braced herself, and, half turning, seemed to raise herself with an effort, and at once to pour erect into the air a rain of energy, a column of spray, looking at the same time animated and alive as if all her energies were being fused into force, burning and illuminating (quietly though she sat, taking up her stocking again), and into this delicious fecundity, this fountain and spray of life, the fatal sterility of the male plunged itself, like a beak of brass, barren and bare. He wanted sympathy. (*To the Lighthouse*, 52)

At first sight, the parenthetical seems merely to describe the physical attitude of Mrs. Ramsay, with the addition of a relevant gesture which refers back to the opening scene of the novel: the woman is knitting a brown sock for the son of the lighthouse keeper (Lee, 1992). In the first section of the book, 'The Window', the act of knitting assumes a symbolic significance, alluding to Mrs. Ramsay's capacity to weave connections between people, to create relationships, to promote cohesion and harmony.

The passage quoted, which should be read in its entirety, highlights the protagonist's effort to turn her attention towards her husband; besides, this same effort is transformed into an illuminating and fertile burst of energy which emanates from her whole being. In this context, the parenthesis introduces an adverb – "quietly" – which is able to attribute a definitive connotation to the physical and moral portrait of the female character. In the first chapters of the novel, as the reader knows, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay continually face each other through the dialectics of *Yes* and *No* (Lilienfeld, 1981). The mother's full agreement with her son's desire to go to the lighthouse is conveyed by her attitude of heartily acceptance and support. On the contrary the objective, rational reasons of Mr. Ramsay, motivated by the weather forecast for the next day, sound like an unappealable refusal. However, beyond these contrasting attitudes, which find a strong echo in little James's soul, it is the different personality of husband and wife that is gradually outlined throughout the first part of the narrative. One might say that this representation reaches its acme precisely in the seventh chapter, where the confrontation between husband and wife is direct, no longer mediated by the child's request.

Indeed, in the passage quoted above, the relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay appears as one of opposition and complementation. The narrative voice presents the

husband's evident dependency as an indication of "the fatal sterility of the male", contrasted adversely with the "delicious fecundity" of the female, described as a "fountain and spray of life". At this point the function of the two parentheticals becomes clear: strategically placed – as they are – in the middle of the first and second paragraph of the seventh chapter, they are intended to focus on the visual and symbolic representation of the two characters. While opposing each other on the semantic level, these parenthetical expressions succeed in capturing and fixing the essential features of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, providing two icons that will remain etched in the reader's mind.

5. SQUARE BRACKETS, OR THE TERRIBLE IMPERSONALITY OF 'TIME PASSES'

The middle section of Woolf's masterpiece constitutes a highly experimental piece of writing, which covers an interval of ten years, focusing on the objective world of the house and its surroundings, in decline and under repair, as a metaphor for the losses and changes during the period of the Great War (Goldman, 2006: 59). The real subject of this section, as the title suggests, is time, whose action is revealed above all through the inexorable forces of nature. The first part of the novel, 'The Window', ended with the affirmation of the most profound human values, showing the mutual love between the Ramsays, despite all the potential for disagreement, misunderstanding, and resentment. In this second part, much shorter, human existence seems to lose all its value and relevance, while the narrative voice describes the passing of time and the supremacy of a world which is not human.

Thus, characters we have come to know in the first part of the novel are consigned to terse, matter-of-fact parenthetical statements, contained in square brackets. The detached, impersonal tone of these assertions is aimed at shifting the reader's attention from the experiences of individual lives to the material processes concerning the life of the world (Stevenson, 1992: 175). At the end of chapter 3, the reader may be shocked by the traumatic representation of Mrs. Ramsay's death:

[Mr. Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs. Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty.] (*To the Lighthouse*, 175)

The use of square brackets gives the shape of a mathematical, irrefutable certainty to the contents transmitted, in such a way as to confer upon them a character of lucid objectivity. The terrible news of Mrs. Ramsay's death refers to "the night before" – a night which mingles with that "immense darkness" pervading the middle section of the narrative from the beginning to the end (*To the Lighthouse*, 171).

The sixth chapter again surprises the reader with the impact provoked by the square brackets. These, differently from round brackets, which were inserted naturally in the fabric of the narrative discourse, appear isolated from the rest of the linguistic context, arousing a strong, visual impression of heterogeneity and detachment. On the syntactic level, in effect, it is evident that the square brackets circumscribe a very short paragraph, so that the parenthetical statement looks like a sort of subtext – almost an unnecessary insertion, which provokes a sudden interruption in the stylish, overflowing, highly lyrical prose of 'Time Passes' (Goldman, 2006: 62). The first parenthetical which appears in the sixth chapter contains concise information about the marriage of Prue, the Ramsays' eldest daughter, for whom the mother had cherished visions of future happiness, and in whom she saw herself on account of her beauty:

[Prue Ramsay, leaning on her father's arm, was given in marriage that May. What, people said, could have been more fitting? And, they added, how beautiful she looked!] (*To the Lighthouse*, 179)

The reader cannot help being struck by the cold, detached tone of this communication, which inevitably calls to mind the references to Prue in the first part of the novel and, above all, Mrs. Ramsay's expectations and dreams regarding her daughter's marriage. One should also note that the impersonal tone is referred to obvious and superficial judgements, which are attributed to an external world ("people said / they added"), insensitive and extraneous to the inner lives of the characters. And here, after the flow of a long paragraph describing a sequence of natural processes, the impersonal impact of the square brackets intervenes again, interrupting the lyrical prose of this narrative, just as the continuity of life may be suddenly interrupted:

[Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said. They said nobody deserved happiness more.] (*To the Lighthouse*, 180).

The reference to the natural desire for happiness, so alive and personalized in the first part of the novel, returns here as a useless, stupid comment made by "people". Yet again, another announcement of death follows, written between square brackets in a brief and lapidary style, characterized by the chill impersonality of a war bulletin:

[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous.] (*To the Lighthouse*, 181).

The short, stabbing account accentuates the brutality of the event depicted. Andrew, the Ramsays' eldest son, is one of the many young men who tragically lost their lives in an explosion: the reference to a whole generation slaughtered in the First World War is evident. The cold, impersonal tone that distinguishes all these parenthetical expressions, also suggested by the indication of the name and surname of the character, reaches its climax here. Differently from what happened in the parentheticals quoted above, here the very first occurrence, inserted between square brackets, is a nuclear sentence whose subject may disclose different potential meanings: "A *shell* exploded". The disruptive power of this statement becomes immediately explicit in the light of what follows. However, the latent polysemy of the word "shell" cannot but evoke in the reader's mind, precisely in relation to Andrew Ramsay, a completely different context: a summer home in the Hebrides, which was the setting for the first part of the novel, where the Ramsays' children loved to run up and down the beach collecting crabs and shells.

6. TOWARDS AN ENDING: THE (PASSIONATE) IMPERSONALITY OF THE ARTIST

It has been said that "*To the Lighthouse* is about something ending, and it contains a number of endings" (Lee, 1992: xxxix). Among these, two projects are brought to a conclusion simultaneously in the final part of the novel: the trip to the lighthouse, which was so longed-for by James, the Ramsays' youngest child; and the picture – a

portrait of Mrs. Ramsay – that Lily Briscoe had begun ten years earlier. Lily is the protagonist of the concluding part of the narrative, inasmuch as she embodies the figure of the artist, whose main task consists in shaping into a coherent form the chaotic multiplicity of life (Humm, 2010). It is precisely through the eyes of Lily Briscoe that the reader perceives the accomplishment of the two actions planned from the beginning. It is worth noting that both actions would have required the presence of Mrs. Ramsay; on the contrary, they are fulfilled in the absence of the person who had supported and inspired them.

Significantly, the third section of the novel is entitled 'The Lighthouse', indicating that the longed-for destination is eventually reached. However, the lighthouse also represents a sort of objective correlative of Mrs. Ramsay, because of the light it emanates. Consequently, the title also suggests the idea that the artist has finally succeeded in grasping the inner beauty of such a cherished woman, though she is no longer a visible presence (Fusini, 1992). This last achievement, the most arduous, literally puts an end to Virginia Woolf's masterpiece: Lily draws a final line on her painting and realizes that it is truly finished, feeling a weary sense of relief:

It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, *I have had my vision*. (*To the Lighthouse*, 281, my emphasis).

The attainment of this interior vision is the result of a long and painful process which passes through a deeply felt sense of loss. Thus, in the fifth chapter, looking at the picture, Lily suddenly realizes that her eyes are brimming with tears:

[…] when, looking at the picture, she was surprised to find that she could not see it. Her eyes were full of a hot liquid (she did not think of tears at first) which, without disturbing the firmness of her lips, made the air thick, rolled down her cheeks. She had perfect control of herself – Oh yes! – in every other way. Was she crying then for Mrs. Ramsay, without being aware of any unhappiness? (*To the Lighthouse*, 242).

The passage shows with penetrating acuteness the contrast between the sensitive nature of Lily Briscoe, who perceives the absence of Mrs. Ramsay as an unfillable void, and the tension towards the impersonality of the artist, which she somehow embodies and expresses with full awareness ("She had perfect control of herself – Oh yes!"). In this

context the parenthetical sentence appears extremely significant, confirming from the outside, through an objective narrative voice, how the deep emotion arrives unexpectedly, to the point of not even being recognized. A little further on, at the end of the same chapter, Lily is depicted in the act of giving voice to her suffering, almost as if she wanted to call back the presence of Mrs. Ramsay by invoking her name:

'Mrs. Ramsay!' she said aloud, 'Mrs. Ramsay!' The tears ran down her face. (*To the Lighthouse*, 243)

It is precisely by passing through this suffering of the soul that Lily acquires the capacity for spiritual cognition and perception, which allows her to recuperate the truest image of Mrs. Ramsay. As Nadia Fusini (1992: 20) emphasizes in her *Introduction* to the novel, it is not the presence of Mrs. Ramsay that permits the completion of the portrait, but her absence. Because it is not the organ of sight that achieves the profound perception of persons and things; only memory, purified by suffering, is capable of attaining interior vision. This crucial passage, this inner transformation is masterfully described in the seventh chapter:

And now slowly the pain of the want, and the bitter anger (to be called back, just as she thought she would never feel sorrow for Mrs. Ramsay again. Had she missed her among the coffee cups at breakfast? not in the least) lessened; and of their anguish left, as antidote, a relief that was balm in itself, and also, but more mysteriously, a sense of someone there, of Mrs. Ramsay relieved for a moment of the weight that the world had put on her, staying lightly by her side […]. (*To the Lighthouse*, 244).

Here, too, the parenthetical has an important role, inasmuch as it contains an interrogative reflection which demonstrates how thought and feeling do not proceed at the same pace; and how one can be surprised at what she feels, finding herself emotionally at a point that she thought she had overcome. The aspiration of the artist towards the detachment of impersonality, theorized by T. S. Eliot, is thematized in Virginia Woolf's masterpiece through a subtle and penetrating psychological analysis. The process outlined in the concluding section of the novel is characterized, at least in a first phase, by its contradictory impulses and wavering progression, as shown in the passage quoted above. Moreover, a decisive moment in this evolution is marked by the need – often perceived almost unconsciously – to stand at a distance, to stand apart.

Thus, in the seventh chapter, the narrative voice focuses on Lily's attitude with these words: "Now again, moved as she was by some instinctive *need of distance* and blue, she looked at the bay beneath her". (*To the Lighthouse*, 245, my emphasis). And further on, towards the end of the same chapter: "For sometimes quite close to the shore, the Lighthouse looked this morning in the haze *an enormous distance away*." (*To the Lighthouse*, 246, my emphasis). In this way, gradually, with rapid strokes, the descriptive/interpretative process moves towards the desired result:

[The sea without a stain on it, thought Lily Briscoe, still standing and looking out over the bay. The sea is stretched like silk across the bay. *Distance had an extraordinary power*; they had been swallowed up in it, she felt, they were gone for ever, they had become part of the nature of things. It was so calm; it was so quiet. The steamer itself had vanished, but the great scroll of smoke still hung in the air and drooped like a flag mournfully in valediction.] (*To the Lighthouse*, 253-254, my emphasis)

Once again the reader is confronted, at this point of the novel, with the interpretative challenge represented by the square brackets. What we have here, however, is a totally exceptional case, since the parenthetical construction perfectly coincides with a whole chapter – the ninth in the final section of the book. This brief chapter, placed within parentheses, is proposed therefore to the reader as a true digression, interrupting the narrative continuity between the previous chapter and the one following. These present us alternately with the thoughts and feelings of Cam and James while they are on the boat, together with their father, approaching the lighthouse.

Placed between the eighth and tenth chapters, therefore, this reflection of Lily Briscoe stands out as she sees the group of people on the boat in the distance: and it seems to her that they have become "part of the nature of things". On the one hand, then, the use of parentheses could induce the reader to put aside Lily's reflection, almost as if it were an undue interruption, and totally superfluous to what is being narrated. On the other hand, one cannot help noting the visual impact caused by the square brackets, as if they were intended to frame a pictorial image, symbolically expressed by one sentence: "Distance had an extraordinary power".

Clearly this is a key sentence, whose meaning sheds light, for example, on the interpretation of the preceding chapter: where James had observed how the lighthouse,

seen near at hand, no longer held the fascination that had enthralled him as a child, when its remoteness made it an object of desire. More radically, considering the general structure of the novel, one could affirm that this parenthetical chapter is a prelude to the ending: and here the visual symbolism of the square brackets really does play a part, giving definite form to the vision of Lily Briscoe and framing it as an objective 'work of art' (Stevenson, 1992: 161; Humm, 2010).

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BJES

ON SOME PASSIONS OF THE CHARACTERS IN SHAKESPEARE'S "ROMEO AND JULIET" (A SEMIOTIC PROSPECTIVE)

Bujar HOXHA [b]

Abstract

The aim of the present paper shall be to analyze determined semantic taxonomies of the main characters in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet". The focus shall be on rendering characters' actions passionate, due to a semiotics of action, as described in Greimas and Fontanille (1993). To my opinion, universal themes such as love, hatred, death, etc. can be subject to a passionate configuration of different characters perspective in action. This shall also be due to the recent definition of semiotics as a cognitive science on meaning interpretation. In conclusion, characters' passions resulting as final semantic entities shall give this study an empirical account for at least two reasons: first to argument semiotics' importance of artistic expressivity and second, to argument semiotics' epistemological significance besides its ontological one. "The signs' way" as Deely (2009) states, gives us the possibility of treating each character's perspective separately, thus rendering the signification process for each sign taken as an example separately.

Keywords: *passions, semiotics, modalities, epistemological, action*

[b] *South-East European University; Tetovo and Skopje; Macedonia*

1. INTRODUCTION: THE SEMIOTIC RELEVANCE OF THEPHENOMENON

Treating whichever sort of artistic creation out of the semiotic viewpoint means not only establishing relations among its constituent components but deducting meaningful units out of such relations, as well. As obvious otherwise, relational attitudes within semiotics, as well as their relevant interpretation possibilities, are as significant as establishing the mentioned relations themselves [see: (Deely, 2009)]. I emphasize this fact because of the "action" component which is an integral part of the "actors in scene" in the case of analyzing a theatrical work of art - a term which also complies with Greimas's terminology [see: (Greimas, 1973)]. My intention here is to expose as much as possible ways of "resolving determined conflictual situations" so as to reach the point of complex signification processes. In conclusion, therefore, one should not treat only one of the semiotic processes whose aim is to signify, but more of them. It thus makes the problem as complex as the signification process, in general, is: either taken from its ontological viewpoint [such as at least explained in (Eco, 1979)], or from its epistemological viewpoint [such as at least explained in (Greimas, 1973)].

If one has to consider both mentioned methodological approaches, then one should be certain that "relations" among characters should enhance deducing a multitude of meaning possibilities. In conclusion, therefore, the mentioned thesis shall be our main concern in the present text. What I intend by this is: focusing on the form rather than on the content, of a given art creation. In the instance of a Shakespearean tragedy, it exposes a semiotic representational method which represents at least some of the following relations: contradictoriness, conjunction, disjunction, etc., [as it is, after all, shown in (Greimas, 1973)]. My methodological approach should be seen as originating from the Russian formalists' contribution, in the sense of exposing artistic realities to a semiotic analysis, [the historical and developmental points of view of such approaches, can be seen in (Beker, 1986)]. If all mentioned components are taken into account, it should be logical to state then, that methodologically speaking, we start our analysis out of the phenomena opposed at each other, in the sense that it has been shown within the structural approach to semiotics, so as to continue such developed inter-relations into their epistemological comprehension, aimed at a passion taxonomy of meaningful units. It should be remarked, however, that the last assertion needs a further elaboration in the frames of its methodological representation, in an attempt to justify the

theoretical background of the mentioned semiotic method [such as explained in (Greimas & Fontanille, 1993)].

1.1. "Love" and "hatred" as possible passion taxonomies

If semiotics should among other related issues pertain to the "world of possibilities", in the sense as explicated by Eco [see: (Eco, 1984); (Eco, 1994a)], then it is logical to assert that "love" and "hatred" as universal themes in Shakespeare (i.e. not only in *"Romeo and Juliet"*) [see (Shakespeare, 2002)], should be regarded as one of such possibilities. Based on the most of the plot aspects of the tragedy, a semiotician should single out such possible taxonomic results, thus enacting a "semiotics of action", such as explicated in Greimas and Fontanille (1993). Be they semiotic topoi, or passional configurations obtained as parts of the semiotic possibilities, one should be aware of the 'speculative" nature of such an analysis. This is due to the following:

> *It is therefore not surprising that the best-explored, and perhaps the most efficient level of the generative trajectory is, in fact, situated in the middle area between its discursive and epistemological components. We are referring above all to the modelling of narrativity and to its actantial organizations. The concept of the actant, freed from its psychological frame and defined only by its doing, is the sine qua non condition for developing a semiotics of action. (Greimas and Fontanille, 1993:VII-VIII)*

The above citation claims the following to be true: even though relational attitudes might be an outcome of determined narrative units (where such units, as should be obvious, represent an outcome of determined plot aspects of an analyzed artistic discourse), a taxonomy must be deduced; which should finally obtain its semantic importance. It thus definitely makes semiotics a cognitive science within its interpretative competencies. Only in such given circumstances can "love" and "hatred" be distinguished as contradictory units in the semiotic sense of the word, among other related entities under analysis. As should be understandable, all such empirically obtained results should be subordinated to a subjectivizing component, which is able to make such gained semantic units moveable, from one state to another. This last remark is finally possible through introducing the "subject" in the frames of the semiotic studies [such as explicated in (Greimas, 1973)]. The "subject" concept otherwise, can render itself "active", and be named a "knowable subject" [such as shown in (Greimas & Fontanille, 1993)].

Prior to concretizing abstractions, at least if they are perceived within their semiotic way of comprehension, let us see some practical matters of the given object of analysis.

As obvious, in *"Romeo and Juliet"* a wanted love cannot come true: due to conflictual situations between families in question. It is for this reason that "hatred" following "despair" should be taken as one of the taxonomic solutions. The situation in question is not easy to resolve: as otherwise known, besides the conflict, there is a "secret" not known to both lovers respectively: the poisoning component (wanted by both protagonists, either true or false – but we will mention this later on in this paper); as such was their decision to resolve determined misunderstandings. I emphasize the last term because of the communication problem between two parties, which as a matter of fact, in Shakespearean terms, renders the conflict possible. Or by semiotic terms: the "absent structure" [see (Eco, 1968)], has to be resolved. I shall intend by this notion the "enigma", the seemingly "unknown" in such sort of work of art on one hand, and on the other, in reality, the full awareness of the audience about the created situation. It thus creates two axes in the Greimasian sense of the word: one which pertains to seeming and the other one to reality. This is after all one of the main goals of an artistic creation: to enhance a certain feed-back reaction; or by other words: being able to reach reality, through determined fiction components [a term widely used in Eco, as well; see: (Eco, 1994c)].

One may ask then: who is it that offers the mentioned 'feed-back' information from the communicational point of view? It is only the audience that should be aware of the phenomenon of poisoning (either in terms of Romeo or Juliet): therefore it temporarily excludes the main protagonists of the scene, respectively. To my opinion, it renders at least two components visible: first, the enhancing of the audience as an active part of "participating" in the story narrated, and second, it points out, the "indetermination" component in a work of art [see: (Eco, 1989)]. It should be remarked however that, although Eco (1989) asserts that the case of an "openness" of a work of art is more visible and noticeable in terms of modern artistic creativity, one should note that it occurs in previously created works: at our instance in conclusion, also because of its semiotic comprehension.

2. ON THE MOVABILITY OF STATES FROM ONE TO ANOTHER: WHICH IS THE STATE OF AFFAIRS?

Not only that determined key actions of the plot aspect of the tragedy are narrated in a superb way by the author, but they are also encoded. Such sort of encoding entails a metaphoric usage, which renders the decoding process complex. It should be understood on the other hand that, the story develops gradually, to the peak of its importance, emphasized by the author himself. My aim here is to discuss only matters which are significant for the main characters, so as to obtain a semiotic process.

First, even in the exposition stage of the play, one can notice the aim of the main protagonists. Disregarding all other events happening in the tragedy, (such as, for instance, the dispute among Romeo's friends, as well as the events of the both families respectively), one can easily notice that love between two lovers is the key point to keep the audience interested in the story being narrated. Second, the dispute among families makes itself evident almost since the beginning of the play. It is to note however that it foresees the impossibility of a wanted love to come true. It is to conclude therefore that, it points out at least two important plot components: one, that love between Romeo and Juliet has to come true, and second, that their respective parents do not want such a love to happen. It thus again pertains to both Greimasian axes: the first one in appearance, that Romeo and Juliet want their love to come true, disregarding their parents' *wishing-to-do* (a matter that regards Greimasian "modalities"), and second, in reality, that their parents wish to marry their children with individuals equal to their respective economic statuses. Besides the mentioned distinctions above, two other related issues are evident here: the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes of possible taxonomic deductions, which would supposedly presume determined obtainable and/or obtained passions. In conclusion, two relations can be noticed here: one which represents conjunction, and the next disjunction. If one analyzes the mentioned terms in such a context, then semiotically speaking, relations among characters themselves are a truth. However, one asks: how much of such love and hatred actually comes true, throughout the tragedy? No question, the last remark should regard the changeability and substitutional optionality among various attitudes within respective characters within the tragedy we are discussing. The instance of "substituting" determined actants among each other, (and/or determined semantic units

procedurally obtained), should definitely belong to a semiotic way of comprehending the discussed tragedy.

The above-mentioned question is nonetheless clarified further in the play. Besides the exposition of the story aspects, which we shall call "a story told", as opposed to " a story lived', thus rendering the "story narrated', [either seen within its psychological sense of the word, such as explained in (Griffin, 2003), or in its semiotic sense of the word, such as explained in (Eco, 1994b)], in the sense that can be seen in Act I, one finds further explication in the next parts of the play (and/or, in the next scenes or acts of the play), at least if one follows Russian formalists theories. What I intend by this is the "agent' s' role, (in compliance with Greimas's theory) [see: (Greimas, 1973); (Greimas & Fontanille, 1993)], or specifically speaking: either the nurse or the priest. In conclusion, if Romeo and Juliet mainly represent "objects" of a given story in the semiotic sense of the word, then the subjectivizing component shall consist of the ones who make matters speculative and dubious from the scientific point of view: the Nurse and Friar Laurence. What is the reason for this assertion? The action component itself: understandably, from the semiotic point of view. It is for this reason that the movability of states refers to semiotically perceived transformational processes, or by other words: it represents, moving from the state of affairs to the state of feelings. Finally then, the state of affairs is the one that is represented in the exposition of the story. In specific terms then: Romeo "has fallen in love" with a person who was the one "assigned" to him on the one hand, (represented by Rosaline), and on the other one, Juliet has also "fallen in love" with a person that was "assigned" to her (represented by Paris). Except for the main known characters of the play (which, understandably are, Romeo and Juliet), I shall name the Nurse and Friar Laurence "agents" in the Greimasian sense of the word. I intend by such notion, the action component in the dramaturgical sense of the word (or, the "modus vivendi" of the play): as according to Grimas and Fontanille (1993), a semiotics of action is based on the "doing" component. My aim, in conclusion, is to make the "intrigue" concept of the play exposable to a semiotic analysis.

2.1. Seeking for the state of feelings

The "state of feelings" should be final; therefore it should result into semantic entities. It renders at least the transformational component visible. The meaning component or the meaning itself, "is defined by the transformation of meaning itself"[the paraphrase is mine, see: (Greimas, 1973); (Greimas & Fontanille, 1993)]. As should be understandable, the meaning is being created gradually, procedurally, out of the meaning concept itself. Or by other words: a transformation of meaning, from one state to another, is what actually occurs. Finally, the "transformation" component is of a crucial importance in regard to this sort of a semiotic analysis. Let us see now, how this looks like in practical terms.

Owing to the fact that love cannot come true owing to certain circumstantial conditions, like we said, two more characters have an implicit role (and./ or act as "helpers" in the Greimasian sense of the word), as I would be encouraged to add, in the development of the story narrated itself. Such a role is seemingly unimportant – at least as far as the main line of narration goes - (specifically in terms of both concepts of "love " and "hatred" discussed), but realistically speaking, it is essential: as it entails in itself the intrigue making phenomenon, which is very characteristic in terms of a Shakespearean sort of writing. Thus, the wish of the lovers tends to come true. This is a part of the transformation process in semiotic terms. This is not semiotically disputable. What is it that is disputable then?

First, the Priests' choice as well as the request and consent of both lovers to use the poison offered by the Priest is a wrong choice. This entails the tragic consequences of the play. Second, the Nurse succeeds at secretly compounding both lovers, although being fully aware of other contextual conditions. Or by other words: this fact renders the "enigma" visible and/or understandable to the audience. Consequently, only in such given semiotic preconditions, can the state of feelings be deductible. In conclusion, therefore, one should see this process, after Act II, i.e., after determined conflicts in the play are already exposed and/or exposable to the audience and to the reader. Or specifically speaking: such a situation can be witnessed after the marriage between Romeo and Juliet is secretly performed by Friar Laurence. As it may be semiotically justifiable, this is the instance of the substitution component, or better expressed: the transformation process itself. Instead of applying this process with Paris (as desired and

planned by the Capulets), there is another line of narration which pertains to disclosing the "enigma" to the audience. It is, as generally known, an attempt to at least dramaturgically unite the two main protagonists of the play. In such contents' preconditions therefore, the semiotic preconditions are obtained: either in the sense of the general Greimassian dichotomy between reality and appearance (previously mentioned in this text), or in other consequential meanings, which are seen as causes of the tragic events of the play.

It is for such and similar reasons that one discovers determined *meanings* throughout the process of reading the tragedy, in the semiotic sense of the word. In conclusion, therefore, as we mentioned, the consequences of the terms of "love" and "hatred" (which, like we said remain contradictory and oppositional) are to be seen gradually as the contents of the play develops in a shape of semantic entities to be transformed into passion taxonomies, because of the "becoming" component: either in the Greimasian sense of the word, or in the philosophical sense of the word. One of such situations, for instance, is witnessed by Juliet. Does she feel love for Romeo or for her cousin Tybalt, who was just killed by Romeo? Was it an animosity created in her soul, so as to be transformed into a passion, or her hesitations are based on her love towards Romeo, only? I shall quote her "confession" at this instance:

> *Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?*
> *Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,*
> *When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?*
> *But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?*
> *That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:*
> *Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;*
> *Your tributary drops belong to woe,*
> *Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.*
> *My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;*
> *And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband:*
> *All this is comfort; wherefore weep I then?*
> *Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,*
> *That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;*
> *But, O, it presses to my memory,*
> *Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:*
> *Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banished;'*
> *That 'banished,' that one word 'banished,'*
> *Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death*

Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,
Why followed not, when she said 'Tybalt's dead,'
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
Which modern lamentations might have moved?
But with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
'Romeo is banished,' to speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. 'Romeo is banished!'
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.
Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?(Shakespeare 2002:1278)

As can be seen, both feelings seem mixed in Juliet's words at this instance: did she have to hate her husband who killed her cousin, or did she have to continue loving him? It is to note, however, that Juliet is not aware of other facts contemporarily happening in the tragedy, in the same way as Romeo is not aware, of some other events, as well. Juliet is not aware of the cause of Romeo's killing Tybalt on the one hand, and on the other, Romeo is not aware of the reason of his being banished. He finds out this fact later, from Friar Laurence. These mentioned facts regarding the plot aspects of the story narrated in the play render the "action" component visible and faster in the play: or, in the semiotic sense of the word: the transformation process has already started to occur. In what a way, though?

Feeling love towards Tybalt (her cousin) and Romeo at the same time, Juliet starts to change her state of affairs into a state of feelings, or by other words: she hesitates at her own "transformation" of states. Deciding finally to continue loving Romeo, as can be intended also from her previous soliloquies, she is ready to stop thinking either as a Capulet or as a Montague. This definitely makes her states of feelings deductible: therefore, ready for "the meanings" that can be obtained, due to a relational semiotic process. In conclusion, therefore, she feels love instead of a presumed hatred, despair and anxiety instead of unwillingness to cope with her presumed 'enemy".

Romeo, on the other hand, being "banished", cannot find out many events closely related to his beloved Juliet. Therefore he also passes through a process of transformation. Or by other words: his "state of feelings" is full of despair and hatred out of the created situation on one hand, but feeling love for his Juliet on the other.

Romeo in conclusion, also, stops thinking as a Montague or as a Capulet. A state of feelings as we mentioned is possible and deductible on his part too. This is naturally, a common feature of both main protagonists of the play.

"The knowable" subjects, like we previously stated, the Nurse (in most of the cases "helping" Juliet) and Friar Laurence (in most of the cases "helping" Romeo), become "bridges' of both lovers' own mutual understanding(s) and/or misunderstanding(s). These actions as a matter of fact (rapidly happening in the tragedy), are the cause of the tragic events occurring towards the end of the tragedy. It is for these reasons that for instance, Friar Laurence finds a way to "offer" a solution either to Juliet (by overhanding the "false" poison to her), or to Romeo by planning their secret marriage. His "active subject" at this instance is the Nurse herself. Her activities initially seem sincere, as long as she does not attempt at "tricking" the Capulets (either consciously or unconsciously), a fact which consequentially and tragically enough, also includes Juliet herself. In conclusion, therefore, it is to state that the Nurse and Friar Laurence are in a relation of conjunction, if one follows Greimassian models.

Although all such mentioned events happen one after another as it is characteristic in a theatrical work of art, the message of Friar John to Romeo does not reach the goal. It is one of the reasons for the tragic events of the play.

3. CONCLUSION

In both cases (in terms of either Romeo and Juliet), like I have attempted to show, similar passions are obtained as a consequence of determined transformational processes, throughout determined stages of narrating within the tragedy under analysis. I shall intend by a transformational process either the substituting of determined states of the actants in the Greimassian sense of the word (represented by the syntagmatic axis), or the consequential flow of the narrative units gained (represented by the paradigmatic axis). Or by other words: if initially a seemingly calm situation can be intended within initial parts of the play, towards the next parts of it, other lines of content occur, which argument the "intrigue making" phenomenon, thus rendering a tragic solution of the work of art.

"Love" and "hatred" felt by both protagonists, owing to "the agents'" action in the play, are both interwoven, changeable, therefore resulting in a process of semiosis. What does this mean? By the process of semiosis of this sort, I intend uniting

determined actors' actions in a single semiotic function. This can be intended for instance, by the will, wish, and traditions of the Capulets and Montagues respectively. Notwithstanding this fact, once the author's message is discovered, as one may presume, that the animosities have to be forgotten if true love and passion are into question, a transformational process is disclosed within the actors in scene, in an attempt to show how important is this sort of an attempt to compound and/or unite a desired semiotic function. In conclusion, therefore, the failure of a wanted love to come true or be fully expressive is due to other contextual contexts, which as it may be concluded, play a dominant part in the discussed work of art.

My intention here, as I hope that I have been able to show, was to demonstrate the existence of an epistemological component within this sort of a semiotic analysis: so that an inexactitude and/or unequivocalness of the transmitted messages could be demonstrated within artistic creativities, among other semiotically related issues. To my opinion, this last point contributes to the universality of the discussed notions of "*love*" and *hatred*" in the given object of analysis as well as to the omnipresence of the semiotic method in general.

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THE POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION OF ALBANIAN WRITERS IN DEFINING ALBANIAN IDENTITY: THE DEBATE BETWEEN ISMAIL KADARE AND REXHEP QOSJA

Përparim XHAFERI[c]

Abstract

This paper will explore some elements of the contested notion of Albanian identity through a short analysis of the thesis put forward by the Albanian prominent writer, Ismail Kadare. Kadare claims that Albania belongs to the European family, and the Ottoman 'barbarians' unjustly 'removed' Albania from Europe for five centuries. His main opposing voice, Kosovar academic, Rexhep Qosja, rejects Kadare's Albanian identity interpretation. In contrast to Kadare, Qosja argues that the Albanian identity has more similarities with Oriental-Eastern culture, and therefore, does not reflect Europe. Religious controversy is present on both sides. The paper will explore how expansive contribution of both Albanian writers, while appreciated, has also been instrumental in defining the Albanian identity. The Kadare-Qosja argument is the overarching question with regards to Albanian identity, which is still polarising Albanians. After a short analysis of the Kadare-Qosja debate, this paper will emphasise some opinions of the Albanian analysts, media, writers and politicians. The paper will then conclude with some remarks, as Kadare, Qosja, and others need to constructively debate the Albanian identity question and avoid drawing on personal differences between the two; which for obvious reasons do exist.

Keywords: Albanian identity, European family, culture, religion, Kadare-Qosja debate

[c] *The University of Sydney; Sydney/Australia; pxha2324@uni.sydney.edu.au*

1. INTRODUCTION

The political contribution of Albanian writers in defining Albanian identity: The debate between Ismail Kadare and Rexhep Qosja.

One of the best Albanian contemporary writers, Ismail Kadare, along with his extensive writings, has emphasised Albanian identity as his main theme. Kadare is convinced that Albania belongs to Europe, and therefore, there is compatibility between Albanian and European identity. The Albanian-European identity includes religion, which according to Kadare follows that of 'Christian Europe'. On the other hand, Professor Rexhep Qosja argues that the Albanian Muslim majority cannot be ignored, and along with that, Albanian identity has more similarities with Eastern civilization.

Since 2006, both Kadare and Qosja have been actively engaged in debates regarding Albanian identity – a paramount that cannot be treated as a secondary question. The dynamics of exchange essays between Kadare and Qosja since 2006 deserve to be captured in a context of exploring the nucleus of their debate: The Albanian identity definition. Although both authors are the best Albanian contemporary writers, only a few of their essays are translated into English, which shows lack of research in this area. The latest essays of Kadare and Qosja analysed in this paper are not translated into English yet; therefore the author is responsible for any error of translation or possible mistakes.

The decision of some Albanian politicians to side with 'Albanian-European-identity' and support Kadare's Albanian identity thesis can be instrumental, while guiding Albania toward the Euro-Atlantic orientation. The Albanian-speaking analysts, media, writers and politicians are also involved in this debate between the two Albanian 'giant' writers. Their opinions vary in siding with one, the other; and whether to agree with them or against both of them. While disagreements show the complexities of defining Albanian identity, the focus of this debate needs to shift on discussions about Albania's past, present and future, rather than drawing on writers' personal differences.

2. KADARE: A MODERN HOMER AND THE ALBANIAN AESCHYLUS

So much of what we know and understand about Albanian identity is due to the master narratives of Ismail Kadare. This is particularly true at the level of emotional, physical and psychological trauma of the Albanian nation, which often gets lost in larger narratives of the Ottoman period. Kadare successfully transcribed Albanian folklore to a modern written style. As John Carey describes, Kadare, who creates the entire map of the Albanian culture, its history, passion, folklore, politics and disasters, "is a universal writer in a tradition of storytelling that goes back to Homer" (Kadare, 2011, p. back cover). Peter Morgan found that Kadare, who is "conscious of his obligations" to connect the "break between Illyro-Albanian culture" and modern Albania, "'is' Aeschylus" (Morgan, 2009, p. 292). For Kadare, Aeschylus is the character "who forged the transitional path from the oral legacy of the Homeric Greek to the written forms of modern literature" (Morgan, 2009, p. 285). Therefore, Kadare, the 'Albanian-Aeschylus', is convinced of his duty to his motherland to convey its ancient folklore and epic songs (as Aeschylus did with Greek literature), to contribute to defining Albanian identity.

Kadare has been persistent in uncovering the ancestral roots of Albanian identity. During the 1970s and 1980s, when he produced his seminal essays *Aeschylus, the great loser* and *The Palace of Dreams,* Kadare asked questions about his origins and "the authentic core to the Albanian existence", as he did in *The Shadow* going back in the period of "Christian Albania in the Middle Ages", before the Ottoman conquest (Morgan, 2009, p. 298). For Kadare, the Ottoman occupation and communist regime in Albania negatively affected Albanian identity, disrupting the integrity of Albania's European culture.

3. KADARE'S ANCIENT ALBANIAN IDENTITY

Based on archeological facts and historical studies, Kadare envisages the Greco-Illyrian civilization as the oldest in the Balkan Peninsula. In his essay, *Aeschylus,* Kadare advances his "imaginative evocation" of similarities in "the original Greek and Illyrian civilization of Homeric antiquity" (Morgan, 2009, p. 299). Kadare believes that Illyrian-Albanian culture resided in the Balkans before the Slav migration, as "Albanian Christianity was older than that of Serbia" (Kadare, 2006, p. 44).

According to Kadare, upon the arrival of the Ottomans, at the end of the fourteenth century, "a new faith was introduced to our [Albanian] ancestors, Muslim faith and its mosques" (Kadare, 2006, p. 25). For Kadare, as a result of "the clash of two civilisations", Oriental-Ottoman Empire and Occidental-Europe, the Balkan Peninsula (considered "the cradle of [Europe's] civilization"), was removed from the body of the old "mother" (Kadare, 2006, p. 59). However, if little Albania was physically removed from the 'body' of the 'mother' Europe, what happened at a cultural and spiritual level? Kadare is convinced that Albanian identity was not affected by the Ottoman conquerors, as "nations cannot be changed by occupations or conversions" (Kadare, 2006, p. 51). While in the earlier *Aeschylus* essay, Kadare discussed "Albania's European credentials", in his later 2006 essay, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, he aimed to create the "intellectual and spiritual environment" that can be seen as his contribution to "a new and more profound reattachment of Albania to its European heritage" (Morgan, 2009, p. 299). In fact, throughout his writings, Kadare maintains this thesis, that Albania is part of Europe. In *The European identity* essay, he supports his claim with reference to geography, "which is hard to argue with" (Kadare, 2006, pp. 20-21). Kadare's line of separation between Occident and Orient "verifies Albanian Europeanism" (Kadare, 2006, p. 21); race, as he thinks the "Albanian population, as the entire European continent, is white", and its ancestors are "at best Illyrians, or at worst Thrace-Illyrians"(Kadare, 2006, p. 21); the Albanian national hero Skenderbeg, whose name was mythicized not only by Albanians but also by Europeans (Kadare, 2006, p. 22), at a point that his dead body disappearance was compared, as an analogy, to be "the same as Jesus" (Kadare, 2011, p. 54); the similarities of the Albanian kanun and *këngët e kreshnikëve* [epic songs], with European epics, which start from Diogenes, "one of the creators of European culture", until 'the "Saxo Grammaticus", which in 1200, dedicated around forty pages on the history of the "blood feud of the prince Hamlet" (Kadare, 2006, pp. 22-23); Kadare has a high regard for the Albanian language, which according to him, at early stages was written in Latin languages and had been a driving force to unite Albanians as its power has been "above the state" (Kadare, 2011, p. 69). In short, Albania never changed her national identity and thus, is still part of Europe.

In one of his last books, *Bisedë për brilanted në pasditen e dhjetorit* [*Conversation for brilliants on a December afternoon*], Europe is described as "a strange star, very dense, a sort of colossal diamond…a brilliant" (Kadare, 2013a, pp. 111-112), which is more important than anything else; "hanging perhaps in the sky" but being "cold and useless such as death" (Kadare, 2013a, p. 112). While Kadare deliberately baptized Europe as a "diamond", on the other hand, Europe has also been "cold" and helpless to protect the Balkans – its 'cradle of civilization'. However, for Kadare, this enormous diamond is illuminating Albania's way to join Europe. The 'mother' Europe has been "absent" and "late for many years" (Kadare, 2013a, p. 111), however, for Kadare, the "lost and re-found of the mother continent, does not make you [Albanians] less European than others. In contrary, it makes you more" (Kadare, 2006, p. 59). Thus, the Albanian nation with a 'European-Latin' language and cultural similarities with those of Europe needs to rejoin the European Union. Kadare is obsessive in his quest to rejoin Albania with Europe. He is also very anxious to distance Albania from its Ottoman past.

4. KADARE'S RHETORICAL TECHNIQUES IN CREATING 'OTHERS'

At times, when the Albanian nation building process is on its way, Kadare "remains fuelled by the same fears" that this process can also "capitulate again to internal as well as external forces of destabilization" (Morgan, 2015, p. 14). In one of his last essays, *Secret relation*, Kadare's creative characters communicate through an emotive language that is directed to different audiences. His invented character 'Tuz efendiu' (a high Ottoman figure that perhaps was made to represent the Sultan Mehmeti II) is coming to visit Albanian *pashaliks* after the death of Skenderbeu. Tuz considers the European continent as "threatening, without soul" (Kadare, 2013b, p. 125). While Albanian people are speculating about the purpose of his visit, some of them thinking that Albania is important in the Balkans, others are claiming that Tuz efendiu is "preparing the big attack against Europe". Tuz himself cannot stop thinking about Gjergj Kastrioti's empty tomb that became a myth (Kadare, 2013b, p. 118). Skenderbeu's disappearance deeply troubles him. One of the local Albanians speaking to Tuz efendi states:

Our Osman state will soon swallow Europe. I once saw a python swallowing a gazelle. It was terrible, but beautiful. This is what is going to happen; the swallowing [of Europe] will start just here; the Balkans (Kadare, 2013b, p. 134)

This imagery is used in order to reach out to different audiences. While it reminds the Albanian resistance to halt the destructive effects of the Islamic-Turks that arguably might have been spread to Europe, it also compares the Turks with a snake that swallows a beautiful gazelle. In short, one can argue that Kadare's emotive language is addressed externally to the West, Orient and Albania's neighbors, but also to Albanians themselves – "the four others of the Albanian nation" (Jing, 2013, p. 48) that Jing Ke has found in analyzing Kadare's work. However, Ke's analysis in finding Kadare's shift to consider the west from "the hostile other" to become "the dear Mother of the Albanian nation" (Jing, 2013, p. 226) is very simplistic. Kadare at the age of 22, in 1958, "was sent to the Soviet Union for his professional education" to write in a socialist-Soviet style (Morgan, 2009, p. 38), however, at Gorki Institute he was also exposed to western literature, which at the time was penetrating Russian regime. Kadare "begun to draw his own conclusions" (Morgan, 2009, p. 38), and thus, his criticisms toward the west need to be read carefully, in context of time and circumstances in which were written. Nevertheless, Kadare's –'others' of Albanians – are unchanged: the Oriental-Turk, Serbian nationalistic ideology and those Albanians that since the fourteenth century have been working against Albania's interests, remain enemies.

5. THE POST-OTTOMAN ERA: RELIGION'S ROLE IN NATION BUILDING

Kadare thinks that the *rilindja* period was very decisive in paving the foundation of today's Albanian nation and its identity. During the *rilindja* period from the scrimmage of three Albanian faiths Catholic, Muslim and Orthodox, "the miracle happened: three faiths" lent respect and loyalty to *"Albanianism"* (Kadare, 2011, p. 68).

The harsh medieval formula, "Where is sword, lays religion", was replaced with the soft approach: "The Albanian faith is Albanianism" (Kadare, 2006, p. 33)

For Kadare, *Albanianism* has always been above religion. One example used by Kadare is the self-proclaimed Muslim-Albanian-King, Ahmet Zogu who attempted to create a new "European Muslim" (Kadare, 2006, p. 36) hence; he was in a hurry to approve the legislation, which regulated "the relation of [Albania's] three religions and the state", as he understood Albania's survival while separated from Europe was impossible (Kadare, 2006, p. 35). The new "European Muslim" now had to comply with Zogu's policies such as the prohibition from using the white Turkish fez for men, the hijab for

women, and the direction to pray while standing, rather than sitting on their knees – as this would clash with the old Albanian kanun, which protected Albania's male pride. As he mentioned, one cannot force an Albanian man to sit on his knees (Kadare, 2006, p. 35).

6. KADARE-QOSJA DEBATE

Kadare's Albanian identity thesis is strongly opposed by Professor Rexhep Qosja – a long-standing intellectual figure in Kosovo who pays a role in Albanian literature, a historian and a critic who is also very active in politics and social science. The debate between the two was sparked in 2006, with the publication of Kadare's essay, *Identiteti Europian i Shqiptarëve* [The European Identity of the Albanians], and became incandescent when Qosja responded in the same year with his essays *Idetë raciste të Ismail Kadaresë* [The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare], *Ideologjia e Shpërbërjes* [Disbanding Ideology] and *Realiteti Shpërfillur* [Neglected Reality] (Toena, 2006). A summary of Qosja's disagreement with Kadare is published (Qosja, 19 April, 2006) on his own website created by *AlbaNur,* and will be analysed throughout this paper.Qosja thinks that Kadare's theses that were put forward in his essay, *The European Identity*, reveal "the cultural disagreement between Europe and Muslim-East, while…it shows superiority of the European identity towards…Muslim identity!" (Qosja, 19 April, 2006). Qosja argues that it is a racist assumption to ignore the Albanian Muslim community that is a majority in Albania and Kosovo, and to therefore equalise Albanian identity with that of 'Christian Europe'. While for Kadare, this identity has remained unchanged and clearly belongs to the European-Christian civilization, Qosja thinks that Albanian identity is a mixture of two civilizations: "Christian and Islamic". However, for Qosja, "Islamic civilization" in Albania is more widespread than the "Christian civilization" (Qosja, 19 April, 2006). Qosja centres his claim on Albania's culinary culture; folk dress; songs and dances; death and birth ceremonies and their rules; gender culture; morals and laws; pop art that have Turkish and Arab similarities; religious, illuminist, pedagogic and moral literature written in Arabic; architecture of the Albanian cities; bridges, mosques, *tekkes* and *tyrbes* built during the Ottoman occupation, which, according to him, are all part of the "Islamic civilization" (Qosja, 19 April, 2006).

The Albanian religious dichotomy creates strong divisions between the two Albanian writers with regard to the Ottomans and their Islamic religion. While for Kadare the Ottomans represented Islam, backwardness, intolerance and barbarism, Qosja disagrees, reminding us that the Ottoman Empire was also "religiously tolerant" (Gawrych, Novembre 1983; Qosja, 19 April, 2006). In addition, Qosja thinks that, at the time, the Ottomans were no more "barbarian" than other European Empires, as was shown during the period of Christian crusades. Hence, while for Qosja, Islam is part of the Albanian identity, Kadare posits Islam as 'other' for the Albanian identity. Kadare thinks that during their protests in 1981 and 1989-1990, Kosovar students fought for freedom, not for Islam (Kadare, 2006, pp. 43-44), whereas Qosja believes the students fought not for Christianity either, but for a simple request: to see Kosovo as a republic, which must be united to "what was then called, the mother state – Albania" (Qosja, 19 April, 2006). Kadare's position with regards to Islam not only seems to be an emotional statement, but also instrumental during the Albanian national building process of the post-Cold War period.

Qosja went as far as revealing his position against "mythicising Mother Teresa" in Albania, who for him, is a religious figure and, therefore, the "name, portrait and her statue must be present at religious, humanitarian or health institutions, but not at Tirana airport, political, state institutions and city plazas" (Qosja, 19 April, 2006). Qosja thinks that the Albanian politicians (including Kadare who is not a politician) use a religious figure "in a multi-religious country" to achieve their political ends. Hence, it is not hard for one to grasp Kadare's 'sympathy for Christian Europe', as it is the same for Qosja with regard to 'Albania's Muslim heritage'.

The reality is that while Qosja tries to paint a realistic picture of Albania's current religion, Kadare is going back in history to discover the 'unchanged' Albanian-Christian religion. Qosja thinks that Albanians have different religious identities such as "Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim, Protestant, Atheist", however, all unite in what he calls "the Albanian national identity" (Qosja, 2006, p. 28). Kadare instead, ignoring other religious composition of Albania, thinks that the "cards are clear" for Christian-Albania to join Europe. This is not the case for Qosja's Albania with mixed religious identities, or 'more' Muslim identity, which, following Qosja's logic, is not yet ready to join the Christian Europe (Frashëri).

Kadare argues with Qosja that identity is not something fleeting that can alter quickly, whereas for Qosja, national identity can be transformed and changed, absorbing new elements, as it did in Albania's case. Qosja's position with regards to Albanian identity is strongly contradicted by Kadare who, in his essay, *The European Identity*, thinks that Albanian identity cannot be "half", which in Albanian language means "*torollak* [fool]" (Kadare, 2006, p. 55), but must be entirely Occidental – the same as European identity. Kadare refers to the Kosovar identity as an example that, according to him, did not change under the Serbian rule.

Qosja on the other hand, considers Kadare's thesis racist (Qosja, 3 May 2006, p. 34); arguing with some of those factors that Kadare brings forward to prove the Albanian-European identity, such as geography, the Albanian 'race', the role of bilingual Albanian-Latin literature and his emphasis with regard to religious dichotomy of Albania. Hence, Qosja considers Kadare as 'Orientalist' and '*Muslimanist*' in Edward Saied's style.

Qosja culminates his debate in opposing Kadare, who considers the Albanian population to genetically have 'white color of the skin': the same as Europeans. Thus, he calls Kadare's thesis dangerous, as they want to keep Albanians far from Asians and Africans at times when Europe is a unification of nations, cultures and languages, and is not created based on the race or skin color. Europe has shifted from that concept for some time now, and European countries have, in their composition, people with different colours who share the same rights with white Europeans (Frashëri).

While Kadare blames the Ottomans as primarily responsible for wreaking destruction of Albania, both Kadare and Qosja criticise great powers for their lack of interest in protecting Albania and their reluctance to recognise Albania as a nation-state after the independence proclamation on 28 November 1912. Both Kadare and Qosja also criticise Europe for its negligence regarding the Albanian case, all those Albanians who work against the national interest, and they both have high regard for Albanian *rilindja* writers. Thus, Kadare and Qosja contemplate the same 'others' for the Albanian identity, with one exception: the Ottoman-Turks and their religion.

7. TWO DISTINCTIVE WRITING STYLES – DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS

It is important to remember that Qosja and Kadare – one *geg* and the other *tosk* – are writing in very different styles, attacking each other in a way that Frashëri calls the Albanian "sanguine temper" (Frashëri) – another characteristic element of the Albanian identity. While Kadare is a great writer and novelist, Qosja tries to academically probe the Albanian identity question, however, despite the fact that they are both Albanian giants in the field of literature, they both possess extensive knowledge, but argue in the wrong field (Frashëri). They also grew up in very different environments, which shaped their ideas. Kosovo was annexed into Yugoslavia and its economy under Tito enjoyed relative progress compared to that of the remote-centralised Albania. Therefore, Kadare and Qosja's paths were divided from the beginning.

For Qosja, as a Kosovar, the Serbian-Orthodox enemy was extremely visible, and existed outside the Albanian community. Along with the Albanian language, the Kosovar-Muslim religion acted as an important bond to oppose the Serbian orthodox religion, which was used by Serbian nationalism against Kosovar-Albanians. For Kadare, instead, 'the Albanian enemies' — the Islamic-Ottomans, Russian and Chinese imperialists, were easy preys, however, this was not the case with the Albanian-atheist-communist regime during the cold war period. In short, for Kadare religion played only a limited role in safeguarding Albanian identity. Although things have changed in the last two decades, Kadare is openly trying to revitalise the importance of Albanian identity and its ancestral Christian religion.

8. ALBANIAN POLITICIANS SIDING WITH KADARE

Since the end of the Cold War, in Albania, a bi-partisan political support for Kadare's thesis of a European-Albania is noticed (F. Nano, 12 September, 2002). The post-Cold War discourse of the Albanian elite is a chorus echoing the West and its values, and Kadare is considered the spiritual leader. Some Albanian politicians are convinced that it is only by returning Albania to the 'European family' that issues like security and economic needs will be resolved. Supporting Kadare's theses, they consider Albanian culture as part of Western Europe. At the peak of the debate, when Qosja criticised

Kadare in his essay, *The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare*, the former head of the Albanian Parliament, Jozefina Topalli, was quick to state that "Albanians have a European identity" ("Topalli mbështet Kadarenë: Kemi Identitet Evropian [Topalli support Kadare: We have European Identity]," 31 May, 2006). Former Albanian President Bamir Topi did the same, stating: "Albania must return to Europe… to which it belongs both historically and geographically and from its spiritual vocation" (Topi, 7 February, 2008). Topi's predecessor, Alfred Moisiu went even further in one of his speeches, stating that "every Muslim Albanian carries 15 centuries of Christianity in his/her soul" (Moisiu, 10 November, 2005). In his statement, Moisiu ignored three decades of a dysfunctional Albanian state between 1912 and 1944, half a century of communist-atheism, and two and a half decades of a wild transition-anarchy and corruption culture – a new 'religion', which is neither Christian nor Islamic, but seems to be part of the Albanian fabric. Therefore, these statements demonstrate a political decision toward the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' as the only way that the Albanian state-building process 'must go'.

9.   DIFFERENTIATING ALBANIAN SCHOLARLY OPINIONS – PRO OR AGAINST KADARE

Challenges regarding Kadare-Qosja debate are reflected on divisive positions and interpretations of Albanian scholars. The Albanian historian Kristo Frashëri suggests that both Kadare and Qosja are focusing too much on religious identity issues and they are missing the real debate about Albanian identity (Frashëri). For Frashëri, Kadare's thesis needs correction, whereas all Qosja's analyses are wrong, as Albanian identity should be understood out of religious bias; other elements such as Albanian language and culture can better explain it. In fact, while both Qosja and Kadare try to better explicate the Albanian and European identity, they also seem to be confined within religious and their own personal disagreements.

Frashëri thinks that both Kadare and Qosja are confusing "identity" with "civilization" (Frashëri). For him identity is a "nation's property" and cannot be changed, whereas civilization is very dynamic and continually absorbs new elements (Frashëri). It can be argued that Frashëri's 'unchanged identity' sides with Kadare's theses, and on the other hand, opposes Qosja who equalises the "religious civilisation", which for Frashëri does

not exist, with that of 'western and eastern civilisation'. Although for him, Islam and Christianity are guided by their 'static' policies, little changes are made to reflect continuous developments. However, Frashëri notes that "religion has no power over civilization" (Frashëri), but rather follows civilisation developments. Hence, Islam and Christianity cannot be identified with "eastern" and "western" civilisations respectively, as "religion is different from civilisation" (Frashëri).

According to Besnik Pula, Kadare's description of "Islamic 'Turks' as the antinomy of 'Western' Christian Albanians" was transformed "a standard theme in the Orientalist historical narratives of Ottoman expansion in Europe" (Pula, 2006, pp. 76-77). In his book, *Escaping from the East,* Enis Sulstarova offers a detailed analysis of Kadare's shifts who describes the Turks as "barbarians of a lower race set to conquer and destroy all of Christian Europe" (Pula, 2006, pp. 74-77). As the review of Sulstarova's book astutely notes:

What is more interesting, Sulstarova finds the themes of Kadare's works to reflect major policy shifts in Albania, and with it, the subject representing the Orient in Kadare's works shifting as well. ... In one of his novels, the Chinese communist leadership seems set on using Albania as a pawn which the large Asian country was to use in a cunningly secret plan to dominate all of Europe. … Soviets and the Chinese representing what once were the Ottomans (Pula, 2006, pp. 76-77)

In reality, while for Kadare, Albania's 'others' might have altered; it is hard to argue his contemplation of the 'Albanian-European identity' has ever shifted. His late writing demonstrates that his interpretation is narrowed to the point that Albanians has no other choices but to join their motherland – Europe.

The Kadare-Qosja debate has divided most Albanian scholars who often side with one or the other. Professor Zekerija Ibrahimi from Skopje University supports Qosja for his realistic assessment of the Albanian composition, and also sides with him in criticising Kadare for idealism. Ibrahimi expressed his concern over the cultural and spiritual re-orientation of Albanians, who live in territories of ex-Yugoslavia for shifting their loyalties from Tirana towards Pristina (Ibrahimi, 20 April, 2006). Dukagjin Gorani argues that "Kosovo-Albanian society is focused on religious rights and [new] identities" (Gorani, December 2011, p. 289); an issue also discussed by Qosja. However, this matter requires more research, and it is not the focus of this paper. Others, like Xhavit Shala, defend Kadare and his emphasis on the west-European

Christian origins of Albania (Shala, 9 May, 2006). In *Qose-Kadare and the dynamic identity*, Shala fails, however, in the same way that Kadare does, to recognise the dynamism of the Albanian identity and the fact that, historically, it has transformed to reflect elements of both East and West.

One of Kadare's historical rivals, the Albanian writer Dritëro Agolli, supports Qosja's arguments about Albanian identity. Agolli highlights the dynamism of the concept of identity, stressing that the Albanian identity, language, cultural and social habits have changed greatly and many more changes can be expected in the future (Agolli, 16 May, 2006). In his comments, however, Agolli neglects Albanian religious identity, focusing more on the dynamics of continuous social, cultural and political change.

Another Albanian writer and critic, Mustafa Nano, does not side with either Qosja or Kadare in his analyses. While for Nano, Kadare exaggerates in thinking that the Balkan nations added to the Ottoman culture "desire to become more European", Qosja perceives Albanian identity to be a mix of "oriental" and "occidental" components (M. Nano, 22 May, 2006). Furthermore, with 'anti-Kadare passion', Qosja equalises barbarian events of western-Europeans with those of eastern-Ottomans. According to Nano, Albania's "eastern civilization" is not "autochthon and authentic" and, thus, Albania has no other choice but to follow its own culture, which, is similar to that of Europe since its birth (M. Nano, 22 May, 2006).

Aurel Plasari, another Albanian scholar, is instead criticising both Kadare and Qosja — Kadare for "nonsense" in claiming that the Albanian Christian church is older than the orthodox one, and Qose who is "mixing-up Istanbul with Jerusalem" (Plasari, 2012). Plasari is referring to Qosja's claim with regards to freedom of religion; that Christians can go for their religious rituals even to Turkey if they wish too (Plasari, 2012). Plasari thinks that the debate between Kadare and Qosja is beneficial for the Albanian nation, but also tells us there is much to be resolved concerning the question of Albanian national and religious identity.

Visar Zhiti – an Albanian artist who was arrested during the Albanian Cultural Revolution in 1979 and released in 1987 – highlights the importance of plurality as part of the national identity and states that both Kadare and Qose represent Albanian identity (Zhiti). Indeed, this is an important issue for Albania and must be further researched by scholars rather than conducting subjective analysis about Kadare and Qosja. Zhiti also points out that a big personality such as Mother Teresa should be left

out of the debate, as she does not have the recognition she deserves in Albania. Unfortunately, Albanians are yet to understand the significance of Mother Teresa and what she represented for Albania and the entire world regardless of her religion. Nevertheless, the Albanian 'clash of civilisations' debate between Kadare and Qosja is a clear indication of how contested the Albanian national identity is.

As Zhiti mentioned, Kadare represents "Albanian aspirations and its national spirit" (Zhiti). The same thing can be said about Qosja's realistic picture to take into consideration the religion and other cultural elements that cannot be ignored. Nevertheless both Kadare and Qosja have been servants of the Albanian cause in the wider world.

10. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ismail Kadare is one of the most prominent Albanian writers who contribute to defining the Albanian identity. He feels obliged to bridge the old Albanian millennia with the post-cold war period. Kadare is firm and not willing to compromise on his belief that Albania is part of Christian Europe; removed unjustly by Islamic Ottomans, temporary abandoned by the 'mother-Europe', who is now, one of those progressive forces that must help Albania rejoin its European family. Kadare offers fresh eyes to study the Albanian identity. Although his lens has its own strident focus, nevertheless, probing the Albanian identity from his perspective brings us closer to genuinely recognizing and acknowledging the complexity of defining it.

What Kadare underestimated in his thesis, is the fact that religion is not something than can be assumed and removed like an article of clothing and, once it has changed, it is difficult to shift again—especially after 500 years of the Ottoman domination in Albania and Kosovo. Nonetheless, only time will tell us whether the Albanian Muslim religion will again be're-converted' to that of Christianity, remain to be a Muslim majority, or will never play an important role – as never did in the past.

The paper then analysed the ongoing Kadare-Qosja debate, which represents difficulties that the Albanian national identity is facing during its building stage. It was found that the theme of religion is always present on their analysis. However, despite making much of a religious dispute with Qosja, Kadare's theory is not religiously oriented. His main concern is to protect the Albanian people who suffered enough

throughout history, from the repeated border incursions of the sixth century to the iron rule of the Communist Party in the last century.

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PHILOSOPHICAL PROFILES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION
A COMPARISON BETWEEN ALBANIA AND ITALY

Eridiola BUZI[d]
Francesco TADDEI[e]
Mario BELLUCCI[f]
Emanuele ISIDORI[g]

Abstract

Critical thinking and reflexivity are two important concepts through which Physical Education (PE) teachers can develop their abilities. Nowadays, there are a few possibilities for them to do so. The Philosophy of sport as an educational and sport science can be an important field whenever PE teachers want to develop the conceptual framework for sport pedagogy. The purpose of this study is to identify and compare the philosophical paradigms of PE teachers from two countries. The purpose of our study is to help PE teachers understand their world and seek the truth about facts and actions by asking themselves why and for what purpose they teach their subject. By starting from this point of view, we selected two groups of PE teachers, one from Tirana, Albania and one from Rome, Italy. We identified their educational orientations by a validated questionnaire aimed to detect their profiles on the basis of the five paradigms. The results of our study have shown that between the two groups of teachers there exist remarkable differences relating to so-called Socio-critical, Idealist and Positivist profile. The Albanian PE teachers are more Socio-critical (the highest score); instead, Italian teachers are more Pragmatistic, and the difference between the two groups can be related to many reasons, such as country development of, culture, lifestyle, etc. Albanian PE teachers are more devoted to the task and are educated through a curriculum focused on a more technical approach to the subject they teach.

[d] *University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy, Laboratory of General Pedagogy, eridiolabuzi@yahoo.com*
[e] *University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy, Laboratory of General Pedagogy, francesco.taddei@uniroma4.it*
[f] *University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy, Laboratory of General Pedagogy, labopedagogia@gmail.com*
[g] *University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy, Laboratory of General Pedagogy, emanuele.isidori@uniroma4.it*

In our opinion, this does not allow them to develop a deeply critical view and perspective on their practice. Italian teachers are, instead, more focused on the theory of learning through practice and motivation.

Key words: *physical education, teachers, philosophy, profile, paradigms.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In Albania, Italy and in most European countries PE teachers do not follow courses in educational philosophy. They focus more on practical aspects and do not concentrate on the theory of the teaching process. The previous curricula followed by them as students usually don't include any mandatory courses in the philosophy of education. It happens not only to PE teachers but also to teachers of other subjects.

Philosophy of education plays a fundamental role in helping teachers develop as critical practitioners and educators who transmit values to their pupils. This is particularly true for PE teachers, who are used to teach a discipline in which, due to several factors and the utilization of technical teaching and learning models, there exist very few real opportunities to develop and to implement critical thinking and reflexivity.

As mentioned above, PE teachers do not follow courses about educational philosophy. Their education tends to focus more on practical skills than on theoretical reflection and philosophical attitude towards the comprehension of their actions within the framework of the complex subject they teach.

Different authors wrote about the dichotomy between theory and practice (Thomas, 2007). They affirmed that this concept and false belief give rise also to the well-known dichotomy between scholars and practitioners. Education helps people develop a "philosophical" attitude towards the world and its problems (Schön, 1983). We know that the main aim of the philosophy of education is to teach educational practitioners to reflect upon why they act and do things and upon their behaviours (Reboul, 1971). But teachers are mainly interested in learning what they do because, for many of them, the practice of teaching is reduced to actions devoid of a rationale or justification. Philosophy can act as a means capable of highlighting and helping teachers deeply understand the main issues of the complex educational and political relationship of the school with the social order.

Therefore, sometimes happens that PE teachers in Albania and Italy are not aware of their real role as educators. They should not be only practical and technical instructors for their students but also play the role of intellectuals for them. PE teachers have to understand the important role that they play in the student's education. In doing so, they will better understand themselves and their world.

Pelton (1970) identified five philosophical attitudes that can help PE teachers to develop their profiles. These attitudes can be summed up as follows:

1) to examine and explore the meaning of the world, the individual, and the interaction between the two;

2) to arrive at and develop a personal philosophy which gives meanings and direction to her/his efforts as teacher and human being;

3) to keep in perspective the teacher's role, direct her/his choices, and maintain her/his personal integrity both as human being and practitioner;

4) to structure the totality of her/his personal beliefs and, thus, avoid contradictory actions and unrecognized compromises;

5) to analyze the consistency of her/his beliefs and determine if her/his practices conform to her/his beliefs.

For PE teachers, getting involved in philosophical questions and attitudes can be very beneficial. It can help them clarify their ideas about what they do or intend to do, it can help them to understand the way to work and act in the field, classroom or gym. Moreover, this involvement can help them to develop a specific reflection way capable of making them more confident in decisions they make.

Philosophy can help PE teachers to clarify their own notions of existence, their knowledge about the subject and about the values implied in its teaching process.

A very important area for sport pedagogy, where a PE teacher can develop their conceptual framework and critical thinking can be the philosophy of sport education. (Grupe, Krüger, 1997).

Applied to the cultural context of PE, philosophy of sport education can be considered as a device that gives to the PE teacher the right area to examine and explore their own philosophy of sport and teaching process (Isidori, 2015).

Nowadays, there is a specific philosophy that can help PE teachers to reflect and enhance their skills. This philosophy, which places itself between the two systems of

so-called "sport sciences" and "educational sciences", is the "philosophy of sport education" (Isidori 2012; Kretchmar, 1994).

This philosophical science stresses the importance of helping PE teachers to develop as reflective practitioners becoming aware of their role as intellectual and educators. PE teachers need to keep in mind all the values, beliefs and prejudices that influence them, both as a subject and as a social practice.

This critical exercise is very important for teaching physical education, discipline which is, traditionally, focused on acquiring technical skills.

Often, it can happen that physical education teachers have no clear idea about the philosophical context of their teaching in terms of teaching techniques, values connected to PE and sport, and sense and meaning they give to human life through sport and physical activity. This lack of awareness about the paradigms that guide their teaching practice does not allow PE teachers to develop critical and reflective thinking attitudes towards the subject they teach in the school. Actually, In the school sport and PE are often conceived as just mere technical activities and a practice aimed to competition and performance.

2. PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' PROFILES

To identify the philosophical profiles of PE, the Italian research team involved in this research has built and validated a questionnaire to detect the philosophical paradigms and pedagogical orientations of a group of Albanian and Italian PE Teachers. The questionnaire aimed to identify the theories of education upon which Albanian and Italian physical education teachers tend to base their teaching (Isidori, Abele, Taddei, Buzi, 2016).

The educational paradigm represents both a pre-understanding of the world and the root of human action. They reflect specific trends and they need specific pedagogical models to be implemented by teachers (Isidori, 2015).

After defining the concept of paradigm in this way, a research analysis conducted on both sport philosophy and pedagogy scholarly literature (Safania, Ghorbanalizadeh, Tayebi, 2010; Wiles, Bondi, 2010; McFee, 2007; Davis, 1963) has allowed us to identify five basic PE teaching paradigms related to five main philosophical movements, mainly:

1) Pragmatist paradigm;

2) Idealist paradigm;

3) Positivist paradigm;

4) Existentialist paradigm;

5) Socio-critical paradigm.

Each paradigm is inspired by a specific philosophy of education that has its basis on the thinking of many influential Western philosophers associated with each movement (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997; Morgan, 2006; Thomas, 2007). After that, we have identified five educational philosophical profiles linked and corresponding to the above-mentioned five specific philosophical paradigms. These profiles can be summed up as follows.

1) Pragmatist profile. This philosophical profile refers to the theories of the American philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952). The starting point of this profile is Dewey's concept of experience which is understood as the relationship between the human being and her/his environment.

In the pragmatist profile, teachers learn more from practice and experience than from theory; they are always with other people and like group activities. Learning for them is a process where interest and motivation are needed to complete tasks.

Every experience can be an educational and an enriching experience if the person lives in an environment where people accept pluralism of opinions and recognize the right of individuals to express their creativity in the name of freedom and democracy. In Pragmatist profile, PE teachers are distinguished by the way they work, the type of sport and physical activity they teach. Pragmatist teachers tend to focus their teaching on group activities, team working, and activities aimed to improve cooperation and conflict resolution among students.

Teachers who belong to this profile keep away from their teaching routine, they are more predisposed to the games than to daily formal exercises and tend to communicate and share experiences in a non-directive communication environment. For instance, a pragmatist PE teacher when she/he has to help her/his pupil warm up themselves prefers better a game than formal static or dynamic exercises. The exchange of ideas, collaboration, and active participation is seen as a fundamental means to promote active learning styles in her/his students.

2) Idealist profile. The most important point of this profile is that the nature of reality and what really matters in our life is something spiritual and ethical, mainly: being human and having a clear conscience; doing things in the right way; keeping present every ethical value. Human beings must always conform their life to the principles of moral duty and ethics. A Physical Education teacher who embraces educational philosophical attitudes, teach her/his pupils to respect the rules of the game showing always the practical example and aiding them to adhere the rules.

To be clear, this profile implies a vision of the teaching-training process centered on discussion, analysis and decision-making dealing with, for example, fair play, ethical choices and moral behaviours that sport, especially in its competitive form, always imply. In this profile, values are considered more important than athletic and physical performance, and personality is considered central in the process of individual learning. Ideal teachers tend to seek for what is better and what is right for their pupils. The way that they decide to teach in the classroom, pitch or gym does not focus on specific technique aspects of physical exercise or sport games, but on ideal concepts and values of education and learning. Idealist profile puts an emphasis on moral and spiritual values of experiences related to sport. Tournaments, competitions or sport activities are not important in themselves but as means to achieve spiritual or moral ends. For an idealist PE teacher, students involvement in a tournament is important to build their character and in spiritual mood and attitudes.

3) Positivist profile. Positivism puts great emphasis and beliefs on the objectivity of science, on rationality, and on an interpretation of woman/man seen as a "rational animal" capable of developing, through science and its methodology, as a better human being.

 Positivism concentrates only in "factual" knowledge that get gained through observation (the senses), including measurement, and that is why it is trustworthy. Positivism, most of the time, uses existing theory to develop hypotheses that need to be tested during the research process.

Physical Education teachers who follow this profile tend to scientifically select activities that enhance physical strength and technical sport skills. They keep science as a point of view for the development of everyday life.

Moreover, teachers who belong to this profile, during teaching sessions tend to use fitness tests and measurements to verify the level of technical skills achieved by their pupils and the effectiveness of their teaching, rejecting any subjective and personal approach to physical education and sport. They keep rigorously the evaluation of fitness tests seen as a determinant in measuring skills and results. Within this profile, the teaching-learning process of physical education is mostly implemented through methods that go from parts to the whole (through an inductive methodology) and are based on a systematic, sequential, and organized a presentation of subject contents

4) Existentialist profile. This profile is based on the concept of existence as conceived by Existentialism, which looks at the world and human life as something precarious but at the same time also contingent and dynamic. The nature of reality for Existentialists is subjective and lies within the individual. In simpler terms, existentialism is a philosophy that concentrates in findings the most important meaning of life through free will, personal responsibility and choice

Existencialism The existentialist PE teacher is not focused on measurement of skills or measurable objectives. During the teaching-learning session, he/she lets students autonomously achieve their learning objectives. Existentialist teachers give them the space to feel free to learn the subject. The teacher who follows this profile does not like a close and direct supervision/control on her/his students through discipline. Actually, she/he tends to evaluate the student as a whole, taking into account both skills achieved and values transmitted through sport activities and physical exercises, as well as their effects on students personality.

5) Socio-critical profile. This profile is inspired by the critical theories of the Frankfurt School (Fernández-Balboa, 1997). A socio-critical PE teacher trusts in sport and physical education seen as a mean capable of developing critical and transformative abilities and skills in people. That is to say, skills that allow the person to become aware of social problems, and to explain the components of social identities in physical education and sport and see how these are related to historical and social forces and how they can help the change in our society. The teacher that belongs to this profile is indifferent to measurable targets, although, as a facilitator of learning contents, can arrange in a structured way effective training sessions so that students can get the objectives that intend to pursue.

Moreover, this profile requires by the teacher a permanent use of dialogue and democratic communication with her students, and a view of the relationship between teachers and students as a complementary relationship between equals, and never asymmetrical. Within this context, the teacher plays the role of facilitator whose main aim is to promote free creativity, body movement, the pleasure of playing sport, staying with others and sharing with them the gratification and joy.

3. METHOD

For this study, we used a questionnaire translated and validated in Albanian and Italian language. The questionnaire identified the five paradigms PE teachers philosophy. The questionnaire was based on a Likert scale, centred on a scoring system which ranged from 1 to 5 detecting the level of agreement or disagreement with regard to specific statements. The questionnaire was inspired by a previous research tool, statistically validated, and aimed at detecting the philosophical profiles of youth football coaches (Isidori, 2013; Isidori, Migliorati, Taddei, Abele, Sandor, 2011), by other and theoretical research (Jones, 2006).

To carry out the study, we used a sample of 50 PE teachers from both countries. Albanian and Italian PE teachers aged: Albanian teachers' mean age=31.2 yr, SD=9.56; Italian ones' mean age=54.1 yr, SD=4.56. The Italian teachers were significantly older than the Albanian ones (F(1,96)=226.69, p<.00001). This is due to the fact that teachers' recruitment system in Italy has stopped for many years. The opposite happened in Albanian system due to the necessity to recruit new teachers in order to cover the PE class hours in the school, which increased from 2 to 3 times a week and many young PE teachers were inducted and involved in the system.

The Italian group consisted of 29 females (mean age=54.5 yr, SD=3.4) and 21 males (mean age=54.1 yr, SD=5.9). The sample of Italian PE teachers was randomly selected, from schools in Rome. The Italian PE teachers had majored in sport sciences. The majority of them (82%) had a long teaching experience (>20 years) and had practiced sports at a competitive level (88%), mainly, team sports (39%) and individual sports (32%). Moreover, 44% of the teachers were sport coaches.

The Albanian PE teachers group consisted of 24 females (mean age=31.4 yr, SD=9.1) and 26 males (mean age=31 yr, SD=10.1). The sample of Albanian PE teachers was also randomly selected from schools in Tirana.

4. RESULTS

Based on the scores obtained in each paradigm, we have found prevailing profiles in each group of PE teachers. In order to evaluate the differences between Albanian and Italian PE teachers, the profile scores were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA), using the country Group (Albania, Italy) and the Gender (Male, Female) as independent factors. All analyses were performed using Age as a covariate. The alpha level was fixed at 0.05. The data showed for Albanian teachers the following scores: Pragmatist paradigm (6.49), Idealist paradigm (6.90), Positivist paradigm (6.2), Existentialist paradigm (5.38), Socio-critical paradigm (7.14).

With regards to the Italian group, the data from the questionnaire showed the following scores: Pragmatist paradigm (6.64), Idealist paradigm (6.26), Positivist paradigm (5.46), Existentialist paradigm (5.28), Socio-critical paradigm (6.51).

The ANOVAs conducted on the profile scores have shown a significant effect of the Group factor on Socio-critical ($F_{(1,95)}=10.36$, $p<.05$), Idealist ($F_{(1,95)}=14.23$, $p<.01$) and Positivist profile ($F_{(1,95)}=17.06$, $p<.005$). The Albanian PE teachers group has shown higher scores than the Italian with regards to the Socio-critical (7.14 vs 6.51), Idealist (6.9 vs 6.26) and Positivist profile (6.20 vs 5.46) [fig.1]. Other ANOVAs have not shown significant results.
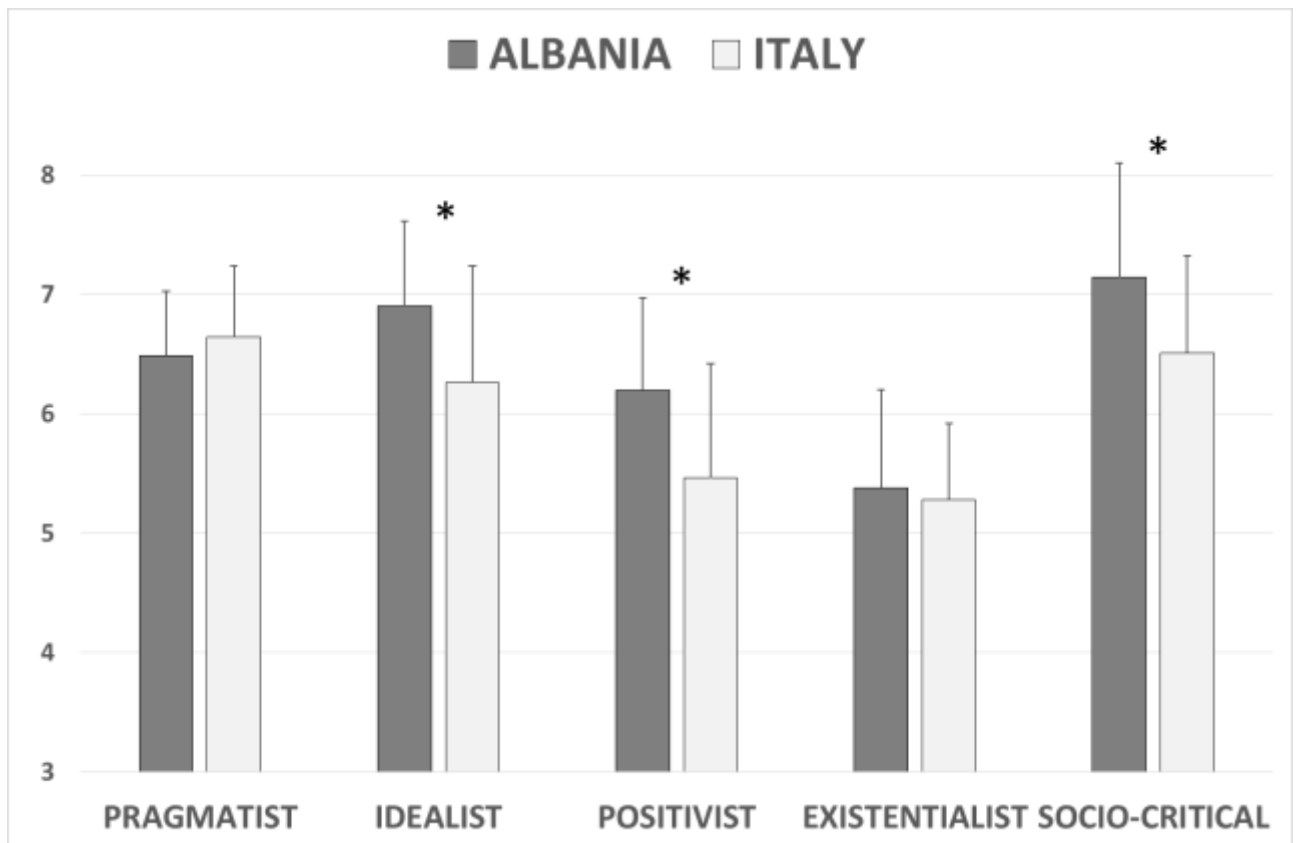
Fig. 1. *Comparative analysis between Albanian and Italian PE teachers' profiles. The asterisk (*) highlights significative differences.*

Focus Group

In this study, we also involved a focus group from both countries. The two focus groups were based on an interactive conversation (dialogue) and composed of 6 participants. We involved: 2 female and 2 male PE teachers; 1 practice and 1 research supervisor. We showed to the participants their personal philosophical profiles as revealed by the questionnaire, and asked them to answer the following three questions:

1. What explanation do you give, generally speaking, with regard to the result of this study?
2. Why are you classified in this profiles?
3. Do you recognize yourself in this profile or not?

The interactive conversations among the participants to the two groups in Albania and Italy lasted for 1 hour and a half. The two focus groups analyzed all profiles of the PE

teachers; the results were contrasted and interpreted in light of participants'experiences as educators.

In this regard, interpreting what emerged from the focus groups, we can affirm that both the culture and country development has played a very important role in influencing teachers profiles. Italian PE teachers are more focused on their profession seen as a set of structured activities influenced by tradition and its values. Italian PE teachers are able to define their role as teachers and educators, and for them the best technique capable of developing the teaching-learning process is practice. The opposite can be said about Albanian PE teachers who are and feel freer to explore and be creative regarding the teaching techniques that they use.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From this research, we detailed the philosophical profiles of Albanian & Italian PE teachers into five philosophical paradigms. Our study has shown that there exist different educational philosophical profiles between Albanian and Italian PE teachers. Albanian PE teachers show a higher score relating to so-called Socio-critical, Idealist and Positivist profile. Albanian PE teachers are more Social-critical, Idealist and more Positivist than Italian ones. The higher score for Italian teachers is in Pragmatist profile. To better understand these differences, we ran a focus group that helped us interpret the results of the questionnaire. Therefore we can affirm that Albanian teachers are more enthusiastic about the subject they teach than Italian ones. The Albanian culture and country development can be an explanation to why Albanian teachers are more involved in their subject matter: they are younger and are still defining their role in the education system. The curriculum in Albania is focused more on sport activities, sport training, fitness, and body shape. Italian teachers tend to focus more on experience and practice and on a traditional conception of physical education based on gymnastics and sport games. In conclusion, through this study, we have tried to stress how so-called philosophy of sport education can be an important scholar field where PE teachers can develop their critical thinking and apply it to the subject they teach.

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BJES

IMPROVING QUALITY TEACHING IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Nazmi XHOMARA[h]
Tomi TRESKA[i]

Abstract

Quality teaching in teacher education programs is crucial to improve student's achievements in all levels. In this basic paper there have been presented the main issues on teacher education programs around the Europe but not only, including Albania. Results and conclusions of the paper showed evidence that teachers need to help students acquire not only the skills that are easiest to teach and easiest to test but more importantly, ways of thinking: (1) ways of working, (2) tools for working and (3) life skills. In Albania there is a new law for teaching professionalism in pre-university education system, as well as a Code of Conduct, and a license system for teachers' certification after their studies at universities. Some core competences that all teachers need include: (1) sound knowledge frameworks; (2) a deep knowledge of how to teach specific subjects; (3) classroom teaching/management skills and strategies; (4) interpersonal, reflective and research skill; (5) critical attitudes towards their own professional actions; (6) positive attitudes to continuous professional development, collaboration, diversity and inclusion; (7) the capability of adapting plans and practices to students' needs. Research suggests a number of factors for effective initial teacher education: (a) an extensive, structured teaching practice; (b) sustained, structured mentoring; (c) an individualized focus on student teachers as reflective learners; (d) opportunities for student teachers' reflective practice; (e) an integrated initial teacher education curriculum; (f) effective partnerships between initial teacher education providers/universities and schools.
A good balance between theory and practice of teacher education curricula enables teaching to be viewed as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity, closely linked to students' learning and progress. The amount and sequence of teaching practice are key, to help develop teachers' practical wisdom as related to professional values. Since 2011 graduated teachers from universities in Albania do a year professional practice, where a mentor has a significant role during professional practice. The benefits of a continuum approach that aligns initial teacher education with induction and continuing professional development are confirmed by evidence, which recommends: (1) mentoring of student teachers; (2) dialogue and collaboration of school and university communities; (3) innovation and creativity in teaching and learning.
Keywords: *Teaching, quality of teaching, teaching curricula, teacher programs*

[h] *European University of Tirana; Education Sciences Department; Faculty of Social Sciences and Education;* nazmi.xhomara@uet.edu.al
[i] *European University of Tirana; Education Sciences Department; Faculty of Social Sciences and Education;* tomi.treska@uet.edu.al

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Status of teaching profession/Teacher professionalism

What is teacher professionalism? What do we mean with this term? Teacher professionalism is one of the main components of teaching practice. There are a host of terms and definitions utilized in various sectors to convey the status of an occupation or a profession, ranging from a focus on occupational esteem, identity, attitudinal attributes, or prestige among others. This variation can lead to confusion in articulating the precise aspect of teacher professionalism being addressed, implemented, and measured.

Darling-Hammond (1990) stated that professionalism depends not on compensation or status but on the affirmation of three principles in the conduct and governance of an occupation: (1) Knowledge is the basis for permission to practice and for decisions that are made with respect to the unique needs of clients. (2) The practitioner pledges his first concern to the welfare of the clients. (3) The profession assumes collective responsibility for the definition, transmittal and enforcement of professional standards of practice and ethics.

The roles of teachers and schools are changing, and so are expectations about them: teachers are asked to teach in increasingly multicultural classrooms, integrate students with special needs, use Information and Communication Technology for teaching effectively, engage in evaluation and accountability processes, and involve parents in schools (OECD, 2009). Furthermore, a recent World Summit on Teaching noted that teachers need to help students acquire not only *the skills that are easiest to teach and easiest to test* but more importantly, (1) ways of thinking: (a) creativity, (b) critical thinking, (c) problem-solving, (d) decision-making and learning; (2) ways of working: (a) communication and (b) collaboration; (3) tools for working, including (a) information and communications technologies; and (4) skills around (a) citizenship, (b) life and (c) career and personal and social responsibility for success in modern democracies" (OECD, 2011).

Teachers at all levels of the education system according to UNESCO (2002) should be respected and adequately remunerated; have access to training and ongoing professional development and support, including through open and distance learning;

and be able to participate, locally and nationally, in decisions affecting their professional lives and teaching environments. Teachers must also accept their professional responsibilities and be accountable to both learners and communities.

The 12 strategies designed to support the six Education For All goals did not strictly define what a teacher professionalism state must, should, or ought to do. Instead, they focused mainly on the ways in which actors within countries can be supported by co-operation with regional and international agencies and institutions (UNESCO, 2002, p. 10). In particular, UNESCO (2002) articulated several ways to support countries in the implementation of Strategy No. 9 (The evolution of the teaching profession 2000-2015) of *Education For All*, including calling attention to the following aspects of teacher professionalism: (1) working conditions; (2) job descriptions; (3) appointment mechanism; (4) harmonizing national standards of the training, remuneration and certification of teachers; (5) implementing a carefully planned teacher deployment policy and practice; (6) improving the teacher recruitment process; (7) establishing sub regional minimum standards for entry in the teaching profession; (8) developing a code of professional and ethical conduct for teachers; (9) increasing the emphasis and resources for in-service teacher training (UNESCO, 2002).

What's the situation of abovementioned aspects of teacher professionalism in Albania? There is a new law since 2012 and new by laws for teaching professionalism in pre-university education system. In the new law according to MAS (2012) for pre-university education system is described appointment mechanism for teachers in school level. There is also approved a Code of Conduct for teachers in pre-university education system. There is a license system for teachers' certification after their studies at universities that allow them to enter in the education institutions. There are efforts to address in- service teacher training by both public and non public agencies.

The positive aspect of this international strategy according to UNESCO (2002) is that it has provided states with a comprehensive foundation to develop policies to support teachers, while allowing enough flexibility to articulate their own solutions based on context-specific needs. At the same time, this flexibility is somewhat problematic because of an absence of agreed-upon definitions, a lack of a systematic measurement framework, insufficient financial resources to implemented policies, as well as

challenges related to accountability, advocacy, and alignment with *Education For All* goals.

1.2 Quality of teaching

Quality of teaching or teacher quality is one of the main components that influence academic achievements of students but not only. The need for more effective and equitable education systems, globally, has been underscored by wide variations in students' outcomes, both between and within nations, regions and schools. The 2013 PISA report confirms that students' socio-economic status has a strong impact on academic performance (OECD, 2013). Within education institutions, teachers are widely recognized in the research as the most powerful determinants of pupil achievement (Hattie, 2003). However, they face unprecedented challenges in their role (European Commission, 2012).

Future world citizens need not only subject knowledge, but also a wide range of skills and attitudes, communication and collaboration skills, the ability to solve problems and make decisions, creativity, critical thinking and positive attitudes towards learning. These are competences which teachers and teacher educators themselves need to master, as models for their students (OECD, 2011).

Teachers do matter but so do the ways in which schools are organized and run (Conway et al., 2009). The teacher's task is made increasingly complex by the shifting role of school institutions, which compete with an increasing number of knowledge providers offering multiple, diverse opportunities for informal and non-formal learning. In order to bring about improvements in teaching as parts of a strategic agenda for change, teachers also need to be able to make value judgments about choices and trade-offs in specific situations, about specific students (Biesta, 2012).

Such demands can be tackled only by teachers working together, in cooperation and dialogue, as researchers who reflect on their own and others' practices. Evidence links improvement in pupil learning with collaborative teaching that embeds professional dialogue and enquiry in everyday practice by peer coaching and experimentation on specific strategies, content and outcomes (Cordingley and Bell, 2012). For these to thrive, a supportive school context is fundamental: collective participation, good communication, regular observation and feedback starting from school practice in

Initial Teacher Education and going on with continuous professional development (OECD, 2009; Day, 2011).

Across different cultures and school systems, there seems to be agreement on some core competence requirements that all teachers need (European Commission, 2013): (1) sound knowledge frameworks (e.g. about school curricula, education theories, assessment), supported by effective knowledge management strategies; (2) a deep knowledge of how to teach specific subjects, connected with digital competences and students' learning; (3) classroom teaching/management skills and strategies; (4) interpersonal, reflective and research skills, for cooperative work in schools as professional communities of practice; (5) critical attitudes towards their own professional actions, based on sources of different kinds students' outcomes, theory and professional dialogue to engage in innovation; (6) positive attitudes to continuous professional development, collaboration, diversity and inclusion; (7) the capability of adapting plans and practices to contexts and students' needs.

Thus, the intellectual, cognitive and emotional demands of teacher preparation can often appear formidable to student teachers. These demands cannot be met simply by 'learning the tricks of the trade' in a working context. Teacher education cannot be boiled down to a short, intensive immersion in a school setting where future teachers, like apprentices, are placed to observe, imitate and acquire the 'craft of teaching' of expert practitioners (European Commission, 2013).

1.3 Higher education challenges

The Europe 2020 strategy highlights higher education (1) as a key policy area where reforms can directly contribute to jobs and economic growth. In this context, one of the 2020 twin targets on education refers to the commitment made by Member States that at least 40 % of young people (aged 30-34) should have completed tertiary or equivalent education by 2020 (2). The European Commission has defined an agenda for the modernization of Europe's higher education systems which outlines the main areas for reform (European Commission, 2011b).

Against this backdrop, among the important challenges are: (1) widening access to tertiary education by facilitating entry, (2) improving the retention of students from

disadvantaged groups, (3) increasing efficiency by improving completion rates, (4) reducing the time taken to complete degree courses.

In 2012, tertiary attainment levels continued to improve and, across the EU, 35.7 % of individuals aged 30 to 34 achieved this level of qualification. The highest proportions of those aged 30 to 34 having achieved tertiary-level education were found in Ireland (51.1 %), Cyprus (49.9 %), Luxembourg (49.6 %) and Lithuania (48.7 %), and the lowest in Italy (21.7 %), Romania (21.8 %) and Malta (22.4 %). Several Member States have already met or exceeded their 2020 national targets in this area.

In Albania enrollment rate of students from 1994- 95 academic year of 28331 students enrolled at public universities only has increased in 2013- 2014 academic year of 173819 students enrolled at public and private universities (INSTAT, 2014).

1.4 Methodology

Methodology of the paper is mainly based on official documentation examination such as: (1) UNESCO: Education for All 2000-2015: achievements and challenges. Implementing EFA Strategy No. 9: The Evolution of the Status of the Teaching Profession (2000-2015), (2) OECD: Fostering Quality Teaching in Higher Education: Policies and Practices. An IMHE Guide for Higher Education Institutions, (3) European Commission: Education and Training in Europe 2020. Eurydice Report, (4) European Commission: Initial teacher education in Europe: an overview of policy issues, (5) MAS: Ligji Nr. 69/2012 Për Sistemin Arsimor Parauniversitar në Republikën e Shqipërisë (Ministry of Education and Sports: Law No. 69/2012 For Pre- University Education in the Republic of Albania), (6) MAS: Ligj Nr. 80/2015 Për Arsimin e lartë dhe kërkimin Shkencor në Institucionet e Arsimit të Lartë në Republikën e Shqipërisë (Ministry of Education and Sports: Law No. 80/2015 For University Education and Scientific Research in the Republic of Albania), (7) MASH: Rregullore për organizimin dhe zhvillimin e praktikave profesionale për profesionin e rregulluar të mësuesit (Ministry of Education and Science: Bye- law For professional practices' organization and development on teaching profession), (8) Instituti i Statistikave (Instat): Studentë të regjistruar për çdo Universitet dhe sipas gjinisë (Institute of Statistics (Instat) Enrolled students by gender).

In the paper there are also used second data taken from above official documents. The method use to analyze the data selected and taken from official documents has been typology.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1 Initial teacher education

What's the initial teacher education and what's the importance of it? Initial teacher education is the first crucial stage in a teacher's professional journey. It lays the foundations of a professional mindset and provides the new teacher with a basic toolbox to make meaningful learning happen in the classroom. As a taster of future daily practice, it offers the opportunity to experiment in the reality of the school within a safe and supported environment where teachers can discuss, reflect, and share ideas or experiences with peers and experts.

Initial teacher education is an intensive experience that requires student teachers to be both learners and teachers simultaneously being supported in learning how to teach, and supporting pupils in how to learn. It is intellectually demanding as it requires analyzing, questioning and reviewing ideas in the context of practice. All pupils have an entitlement to be taught by skilled professionals who can actually make a difference to their learning. The selection, preparation and guidance of teachers throughout initial teacher education and the following stages of their careers are therefore crucial.

2.1.1 The complexities of initial teacher education

Initial teacher education has been the subject of sustained reform and debate over the last decade. It is often defined as complicated, as it poses a number of challenges for policymakers and providers within each country: (1) the fragmentation of responsibilities for initial teacher education, induction and continuing professional development hinders the development of a long-term system strategy and implementation policy; (2) related employment and job market issues – teacher supply and demand, broader economic issues, employment conditions, standards and access to the profession can affect initial teacher education priorities; (3) the selection of teacher candidates is influenced by other policy strands (higher education; teacher status and recruitment); (4) there can be specific national requirements for initial teacher education, but also varying degrees of autonomy granted to initial teacher education

providers across countries; (5) diversity of regulations and priorities about education, governance, teaching and teacher development within and between countries are reflected in the content and delivery of initial teacher education; (6) this wide heterogeneity in initial teacher education programs within a Member State can hamper professional quality and mobility; (7) there are organizational issues of coordination, communication and consistency in initial teacher education, across different contexts and teacher educators, schools and universities, presence and virtual environments; (8) there is the challenge of integrating subject knowledge, teaching practice and interdisciplinary aspects in initial teacher education curricula; (9) quality assurance is key to ensure that an initial teacher education program is delivered according to stated objectives, actually meets teacher learning needs and yields expected results; (10) clear-cut structures and roles for monitoring initial teacher education programs are needed, within a shared quality framework (Menter et al., 2010; Zgaga, 2013).

Initial teacher education has been increasingly influenced by international developments such as the Education & Training 2020 strategies and the European Higher Education Area development (Biesta, 2012). Trends of comparability and compatibility have meant pressure towards convergent teacher education practices, strengthening international academic cooperation with European Higher Education Area consistent guidelines for teacher education programs and competence-based outcomes.

However, there have been challenges for teacher education arising from the implementation of the European Higher Education Area, with diverse national interpretations. This is due to the frequent mismatch between national teacher qualifications and general higher education requirements. There can also be quality assurance issues in teacher education, characterized by the competing pressures of international influences, university autonomy and state control. Student mobility in European teacher education is another major issue: it lags far behind other study areas, due to national obstacles of time frames and regulations (Zgaga, 2013).

2.1.2 Effective initial teacher education

Throughout the literature *effective initial teacher education* means *related to intended results*, what works in specific situations and contexts. Although research finds little hard evidence of causal links between teacher quality, teacher education and pupil

outcomes, there is widespread professional agreement that they are related. The difficulty of connecting teacher preparation and pupil outcomes is due to the complex nature of factors in schooling and experimental studies (Menter et al., 2010).

Teachers need highly refined knowledge and skills for assessing pupil learning and a wide repertoire of practice along with the knowledge to know when to use different strategies for different purposes (Darling-Hammond, 2006). They must be prepared to recognize and address problems in a complex classroom, juggling the learning needs of all, continuing to learn themselves as adaptive experts.

If they need to become *practically wise*, making sound choices that fit education aims and specific needs, they can only learn in a wide range of practical situations, and by studying *mastery examples* (Biesta, 2012). Teachers must learn *for* practice but also *from* practice and initial teacher education must not only provide knowledge, but also help teachers to access it and reflect on their practice.

Initial teacher education needs to provide student teachers with the opportunity to engage in reflective discussions with experienced teachers and teacher educators. It requires student teachers analyzing and discussing ideas about teaching with experienced teachers and teacher educators, to make explicit what is often tacit for experts, and link it to their own learning to teach. Initial teacher education must also be powerful enough to break student teachers' conditioning, helping them understand that teaching is different from what they remember from being students (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Such complexities suggest three key priorities in preparing for the profession: (1) enabling teachers to acquire basic classroom teaching competence to do satisfactory work from the start of the career; (2) preparing them for situations where they will need to keep on learning on their own, on the basis of classroom experience; (3) preparing them to respond critically to demands for innovation and improvement (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

Research suggests a number of factors for effective initial teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006): (a) an extensive, structured teaching practice, with different learning opportunities, including informal work-based learning and incremental levels of difficulty, to fit student teachers' development; (b) sustained, structured mentoring, with set time and opportunities for modeling, practice, assessment, support and feedback, by school professionals who are trained for the task;

(c) an individualized focus on student teachers as reflective learners whose beliefs, experiences and concerns should be taken into account and discussed in initial teacher education, in order to allow for successful learning; (d) opportunities for student teachers' reflective practice, critically examining their own ideas about teaching against a variety of sources, by observation of teaching, practice in class, debate with expert teachers and peers, research, dialogue with teacher educators and mentors; (e) an integrated initial teacher education curriculum that can support student teachers' critical thinking, teaching and learning with relevant knowledge, understanding and research; (f) effective partnerships between initial teacher education providers/universities and schools, with joint responsibilities and structured roles for planning, management, monitoring and assessment.

These perspectives tie in with key aspects of effective initial teacher education programs shown by case studies (Zeichner and Conklin, 2008): (1) a common vision of good teaching and defined standards of professional practice; (2) clarity and consistency of aims, outcomes and curriculum content; (3) effective organization and coordination of activities and assessment, (4) consistent selection procedures of candidates along initial teacher education and across different roles or contexts; (5) preparation and collaboration of quality teacher educators, in school and university; (6) experimentation, reflection on innovation and practice-based research in instructional practices; (7) extended teaching practice in a school's professional community that shares the vision and values of the initial teacher education program.

2.1.3   Selection and support of candidates and teacher educators

What are the criteria for selecting teacher candidates into initial teacher education? What's the importance of this crucial stage? The criteria for selecting teacher candidates into initial teacher education should be clearly linked with key programe aims, processes and roles; the degree of selectivity applied at different stages also matters. In entry assessment procedures, academic excellence in subject knowledge should count as it is has been proven to be beneficial to student learning (Goe, 2008). The assessment of student teachers at the end of for selecting teacher candidates into initial teacher education should span knowledge about pedagogical practices, contents and environments, as well as professional skills and attitudes to help all students learn against reference frameworks of competences (Howe, 2006).

The selection of qualified teacher educators should be based on their profiles as professional practice models in the academic and teaching field, including the capacity for self-assessment related to their students' learning and teaching. It should be followed up by systematic monitoring of their performance and professional development support (NCATE, 2008; European Commission, 2013b).

The knowledge, skills and commitment of teachers, as well as the quality of school leadership, are the most important factors in achieving high quality educational outcomes. For this reason, it is essential to ensure that those recruited to teaching and school leadership posts are of the highest caliber and well-suited to the tasks they have to fulfill great care and attention should be devoted to defining the required profile of prospective teachers and school leaders, to selecting them and preparing them to fulfill their tasks. (European Union, 2009)

Selection of teacher candidates in Albania currently are doing with participation of universities that set up a criteria list for applicants came out from secondary education system and apply to enroll in a university branch include education faculties (MAS, 2015).

2.1.4   Teacher education curricula

How is quality on teacher education curricula? What's its role on formation of future teachers? Teacher education curricula need to reflect the changing needs of the school system. The modern professional role involves teaching an increasingly diverse range of learners, values education, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, using assessment data effectively, engaging in action research and self-review, collaborating in school teams (including inter-agency working) and integrating technology effectively (Menter et al., 2010).

Three integrated core curriculum areas can generally be found in effective for selecting teacher candidates into initial teacher education curricula: (1) subject area methodologies; (2) pedagogical aspects linking knowledge of pupils' ways of learning, school curricula and strategies to deal with diversity in the classroom; (3) teaching practice and supervision (Snoek and Žogla, 2009).

The integration of the three core areas is strategic for student teachers' learning, with a pivotal role for reflective practice and dialogue, addressing prior beliefs and experiences about schooling (Conway et al., 2009). The weight, balance and placement

of the curricular areas also matter; they mirror views on education aims and the roles of teaching professionals (Snoek and Žogla, 2009). A good balance between theory and practice enables teaching to be viewed as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity, closely linked to students' learning and progress (Garbe et al., 2009).

The diversity issue ought to be infused into several programe elements; likewise, research should permeate different curricular areas, research methodologies, and practice-based research in schools, supervised research project assignments (Niemi, 2008). Initial teacher education is also crucial to provide teachers with knowledge of innovative approaches to Information and Communication Technology, encourage them to experiment with digital technologies and reflect on their impact in teaching specific subjects. The impact of Information and Communication Technology on effective learning seems to depend on the approach (Ala-Mutka, Punie and Redecker, 2008); supporting teachers' use of Information and Communication Technology for learning as *an aware choice* rather than an external imperative can boost their role as catalysts of innovation (Learnovation Consortium, 2009).

Consistency of pedagogies in curriculum delivery, the way student teachers are taught should reflect what is advocated for pupils: they should learn innovative teaching practices firsthand to compare and consider their value, and be assisted in implementing those practices themselves. (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

2.1.5 School practice and partnerships

Student teachers should be actively involved in planning the practice activities and defining learning outcomes (European Commission, 2009). The amount and sequence of specific coursework, supervision and reflection activities in relation to teaching practice are key, to help develop teachers' *practical wisdom* as related to professional values. Applying knowledge to practice experience can thus provide opportunities for reconstructing prior beliefs that are inconsistent with effective teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Throughout the literature, mentor means school-based teacher educator and mentoring means the support of student teachers by expert teacher educators in schools.

The choice of teaching practice sites and mentors is crucial for effectiveness; it should align what is advocated in university courses about teaching and learning, and what is practiced in school contexts (Hammerness, 2006). Another relevant factor is the way

each practice experience builds on the previous ones in adding more responsibility and complexity, while fitting individual needs and development stages of the student teacher (Brouwer and Korthagen, 2005).

Evidence suggests that teacher learning is enhanced in school practice contexts as professional communities where teachers get along and have regular professional dialogue with one another, with strong leadership and adequate teaching resources. Teacher educators' joint planning and responsibility for practice, with mixed school-university steering teams, have proved to be effective, together with joint assessment of student teachers, in long-standing school-university partnerships (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

Since 2011 graduated teachers from public and private universities in Albania do a year professional practice before they have taken an exam to get a license for teaching in primary university education system. A mentor teacher has a significant role during professional practice through development of their skills and competencies to be professional teachers in their curricula field (MASH, 2011).

2.2 Importance of quality teaching in teacher education programs

Is there a positive correlation among quality teaching in initial teacher education programs and effectiveness of teachers? If so how's the quality teaching at universities? Quality teaching is the use of pedagogical techniques to produce learning outcomes for students. It involves several dimensions, including the effective design of curriculum and course content, a variety of learning contexts, including guided independent study, project-based learning, collaborative learning, experimentation, etc., soliciting and using feedback, and effective assessment of learning outcomes. It also involves well-adapted learning environments and student support services (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

Experience showed that fostering quality teaching is a multi-level endeavor. Support for quality teaching takes place at three inter-dependent levels: (1) at the institution-wide level: including projects such as policy design, and support to organization and internal quality assurance systems. (2) Programe level: comprising actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of the programes within a department or a school. (3) Individual level: including initiatives that help teachers achieve their

mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner oriented focus.

Support for quality teaching can be manifested through a wide range of activities that can include: (a) A centre for teaching and learning development, (b) Professional development activities, (c) Teaching excellence awards and competitions for remarkable improvements, (d) Teaching innovation funds, (e) Teaching recruitment criteria, (f) Support to innovative pedagogy, (g) Communities of teaching and learning practices, (h) Learning environments, (i) Organization and management of teaching and learning, (j) Support to foster student achievement, (k) Students' evaluation, (l) Self-evaluation of experimentations, peer-reviewing, benchmarking of practices, (m) Community service and work- based programes, development-based programes, (n) Competence-based assessments (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

Institutions engage in fostering quality teaching essentially for the following reasons: (1) to respond to the growing demand for meaningful and relevant teaching. Students as well as employers want to ensure that their education will lead to gainful employment and will equip them with the skills needed to evolve professionally over a lifetime. (2) To demonstrate that they are reliable providers of good quality higher education, while operating in a complex setting, with multiple stakeholders, each with their own expectations (ministries, funding agencies, local authorities, employers). (3) To balance performance on teaching and learning achievements along with research performance, since even for elite, world-class universities, research performance is no longer sufficient to maintain the reputation of the institution. (4) To more effectively compete for students against the backdrop of higher tuition fees and greater student mobility. (5) To increase the efficiency of the teaching and learning process as funding constraints become more stringent. Teaching quality throughout the world is also influenced by contextual shifts within the higher education environment (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

Current factors influencing the quality of teaching include: (a) the internationalization of higher education, (b) the increasingly broadening scope of education and greater diversity of student profiles, (c) the rapid changes in technology, which can quickly make programe content and pedagogies obsolete, (d) the demand for greater civic engagement of graduates and regional development of higher education, (e) the increased pressures of global competition, economic efficiency the need to produce a

skilled workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st century (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

2.2.1 New paradigms for Quality Teaching

The fundamental changes in employment over the past 50 years imply a rise in the demand for nonroutine cognitive and interpersonal skills and a decline in the demand for routine cognitive and craft skills, physical labor and repetitive physical tasks (OECD, 2012). Graduates are entering a world of employment that is characterized by greater uncertainty, speed, risk, complexity and interdisciplinary working (OECD, 2012).

University education, and the mode of learning whilst at university, will need to prepare students for entry to such an environment and equip them with appropriate skills, knowledge, values and attributes to thrive in it. Tighter connections with working life through different academic projects provide authentic opportunities to learn both generic and professional competencies as well as to build networks and pathways for employment after graduation.

Learning rooted in working life could help institutions to interpret and respond pedagogically to the challenges of this environment, using other forms of teaching and learning patterns, like project-based learning (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

Higher education can no longer be owned by a community of disciplinary connoisseurs who transmit knowledge to students. Both the complexity and uncertainty of society and the economy will require institutions to continuously adapt while upholding quality standards. In practice, institutions will have to learn how to best serve the student community. Students have become the focal point of the learning approach in many areas of the world.

At the same time, students appear to have become more sensitive to equality of treatment and demand to be provided with equal teaching and learning opportunities, to be assessed fairly and get the education they deserve for job and social inclusion. The expansion of higher education providers along with the diversification of student types put the issue of equity at the very centre of quality issues (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

With this view of learning, the role of higher education teachers is therefore changing. In addition to being, first and foremost, a subject expert acquainted with ways to

transmit knowledge, higher education teachers are now required to have effective pedagogical skills for delivering student learning outcomes. They also need to cooperate with students, colleagues from other departments, and with external stakeholders as members of a dynamic learning community.

The new teaching and learning paradigm in higher education actually imply: (1) New relationships regarding access to teachers, and a wider range of communication and collaborative working through learning platforms; (2) Re-designing of curricula, (3) Bridging teaching and research more intensively; (4) Re-thinking of student workload and teaching load; (5) Continuous upgrading in pedagogy, use of technologies, assessment models aligned with student-centered learning; (6) Creating of innovative learning platforms; (7) Providing guidance and tutoring to students with new means and methods; (8) Assessing impacts and documenting effectiveness of the teaching delivered (Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

2.2.2   Key elements to consider in fostering quality teaching

There is evidence that participation and engagement in professional development activities are related to the quality of student learning. Provision of opportunities for professional learning and development, and obtaining relevant teaching qualifications, and establishing requirements that professional development and qualifications are undertaken are indicators of an institutional climate that recognizes the importance of the preparation of staff for teaching (Chalmers, 2007).

There can be tensions between institution leaders seeking to change the culture of the institution through centralized steering and the collegial culture that reflects the discipline-specific features of academia. If connections have not already been build between the two approaches, then these tensions will slow the progress that can be made on fostering quality teaching. Indeed, when strategies are implemented from the centre in a top-down approach, with little or no engagement from departments, faculty within departments tend to ignore them (Gibb, 2010).

According to OECD (2012) key elements to consider in fostering quality teaching are as below: (1) the ultimate goal of quality teaching policies is to improve the quality of the learning experiences of students and through this the outcomes of learning. (2) Teaching and learning are inherently intertwined and this necessitates a holistic approach to any development initiative. (3) Sustained quality teaching policies require

long-term, non-linear efforts and thus call for a permanent institutional commitment from the top-leadership of the institution. (4) Definitions and conceptions of quality teaching are varied across contexts and evolve over time. They require adaptability and an empirical basis to remain useful for development. (5) Quality teaching initiatives respond to specific objectives of an institution and could therefore be irrelevant when implemented in another institution, or in another department or school within the same institution. (6) Quality teaching policies should be designed consistently at institutional, programe and individual levels. (7) Encouraging a quality teaching culture will consist in inter-linking the various types and levels of support so that collaboration and its likely impacts on the teaching and learning are enhanced among leaders, teachers, students, staff and other stakeholders. (8) Strengthening horizontal linkages and creating synergies is a particularly effective way of supporting the development of quality teaching. (9) Learning experiences can be gained in many different forms of learning environments, not to be limited to auditoriums and class-rooms. (10) The temporal dimension counts in quality teaching: what can be done at a certain point of time cannot be done later and *vice-versa*. (11) The environment, students' profiles and demands, job markets requirements, reputation and history of the institution are the prominent factors amongst others that influence a strategy of teaching improvement. (12) There are no predetermined thresholds to be attained in quality teaching. The lack of quantitative indicators should not be a barrier to assess the impacts. (13) Orchestrating the implementation, setting the right pace of change, leaving room for experiments enable a steady improvement in the quality of teaching. (14) Few quantitative standards can be prescribed and measured. Comparative analysis within and across institutions is however likely to provide new benchmarks, as long as the method used is reliable and transparent. (15) Quality teaching is a part of a global quality approach and of the institutional strategy and should not be isolated from the institutional quality culture. (16) Incentives are more impactful than regulations and coercive stands. Ministerial authorities, funding bodies and quality assurance agencies should contribute to foster a climate for change. (17) The size of an institution is irrelevant with respect to quality teaching. Small specialized polytechnics or large multi-disciplinary universities can equally improve quality teaching provided: (a) A teaching and learning framework is set and understood by the community, (b) Resources, time and provisions are provided consistently, (c) Leadership is a driver for

change and is clearly identified at all levels, (d) Synergy of policies is sought as it serves teaching and learning improvement. (18) Although money matters, the quality of teaching can start improving without a significant investment. (19) Sustaining quality improvement will require prioritization, consistent with the educational model and goals set by the institution. (20) Quality teaching happens first in the classroom. (21) Higher education institutions ought to cast themselves as learning organizations in order to embrace quality teaching.

2.2.3 In- service teacher education

In order to ensure teachers can and will keep working with the expertise and commitment required, a continuum approach to teacher education is required aligning school and teacher education curricula is not enough.

A continuum perspective should take into account all key roles and responsibilities: the education ministry, initial teacher education providers, school leaders, teaching professionals and other education stakeholder groups.

The following cornerstones of teacher policy are suggested by research and peer learning: (1) A clear reference framework for the competences of teachers, to provide common ground between different teaching/learning settings, stages, activities and actors (European Commission 2013a); (2) multiple selection mechanisms, placed at different points of teachers' professional continuum, with flexibility in 'selection filters' to fit specific needs and contexts; (3) consistency in teacher assessment and feedback, with key structures and procedures that define what, how, why and when to assess and who should do it, in different settings and career stages (European Commission, 2013b); (4) careful selection, preparation, professional development and support of teacher educators, so that they can offer optimal conditions for developing teachers' potential, in school and university settings; (5) a common policy framework for effective school leadership, to ensure quality school leaders who can monitor and support teachers' motivation and practice, for improvement in teaching and learning. (6) These policy cornerstones should be embedded in an overall strategy linking initial teacher education, selection, recruitment, induction and professional development, with clear roles and responsibilities for support and quality assurance.

The benefits of a continuum approach that aligns initial teacher education with induction and continuing professional development are confirmed by evidence, which

recommends: (1) induction, mentoring extended to initial teacher education, with long-term guidance of student teachers by experienced mentors, who themselves undergo relevant training in the initial teacher education institution (Schneider, 2008); (2) dialogue and collaboration of school and university communities in initial teacher education as a form of effective professional development since collegial discussion, observation, inquiry and reflection on practice are found to boost school improvement (Day et al., 2006); (3) innovation and creativity in teaching and learning by consistent approaches along the teacher education continuum with a key role for informal, self-directed learning (Learnovation, 2009).

No course of initial teacher education, however excellent, can equip teachers with all the competences they will require during their careers. Demands on the teaching profession are evolving rapidly, imposing the need for new approaches.

To be fully effective in teaching, and capable of adjusting to the evolving needs of learners in a world of rapid social, cultural, economic and technological change, teachers themselves need to reflect on their own learning requirements in the context of their particular school environment, and to take greater responsibility for their own lifelong learning as a means of updating and developing their own knowledge and skills. (European Union, 2009)

Teachers' continuous professional development is highly relevant both for improving educational performance and effectiveness and for enhancing teachers' commitment, identity and job satisfaction. Although they are interconnected with the features and constraints of specific school contexts and national education systems (OECD, 2009), teachers' competences have powerful effects on student achievement: up to three quarters of school effects on student outcomes can be explained by teacher effects (Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005).

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Quality teaching in teacher education programs is crucial to improve student's achievements in all levels.
- The changing roles of teachers and schools are asking teachers to teach in increasingly multicultural classrooms, integrate students with special needs, use

Information and Communication Technology for teaching effectively, engage in evaluation and accountability processes, and involve parents in schools.

- Teachers need to help students acquire not only *the skills that are easiest to teach and easiest to test* but more importantly, (1) ways of thinking, (2) ways of working, (3) tools for working, and (4) skills for life.

- Teachers should be respected and adequately remunerated; have access to training and on- going professional development and support, including through open and distance learning; and be able to participate, locally and nationally, in decisions affecting their professional lives and teaching environments.

- Countries need to call attention to the following aspects of teacher professionalism: (1) working conditions; (2) job descriptions; (3) appointment mechanism; (4) harmonizing national standards of the training, remuneration and certification of teachers; (5) implementing a carefully planned teacher deployment policy and practice; (6) improving the teacher recruitment process; (7) establishing sub regional minimum standards for entry in the teaching profession; (8) developing a code of professional and ethical conduct for teachers; (9) increasing the emphasis and resources for in-service teacher training.

- Within education institutions, teachers are widely recognized in the research as the most powerful determinants of pupil achievement.

- The teacher's task is made increasingly complex by the shifting role of school institutions, which compete with an increasing number of knowledge providers offering multiple, diverse opportunities for informal and non-formal learning.

- Some core competences that all teachers need include: (1) sound knowledge frameworks; (2) a deep knowledge of how to teach specific subjects, connected with digital competences and students' learning; (3) classroom teaching/management skills and strategies; (4) interpersonal, reflective and research skills, for cooperative work in schools as professional communities of practice; (5) critical attitudes towards their own professional actions, based on sources of different kinds; (6) positive attitudes to continuous professional development, collaboration, diversity and inclusion; (7) the capability of adapting plans and practices to contexts and students' needs.

- Initial teacher education poses a number of challenges: (1) the fragmentation of responsibilities for initial teacher education, induction and continuing professional

development hinders the development of a long-term system strategy and implementation policy; (2) related employment and job market issues can affect initial teacher education priorities; (3) the selection of teacher candidates is influenced by other policy strands; (4) there can be specific national requirements for initial teacher education; (5) diversity of regulations and priorities about education, governance, teaching and teacher development; (6) wide heterogeneity in initial teacher education programes can hamper professional quality and mobility; (7) organizational issues of coordination, communication and consistency in initial teacher education, across different contexts and teacher educators; (8) challenge of integrating subject knowledge, teaching practice and interdisciplinary aspects in initial teacher education curricula; (9) quality assurance is key to ensure that an initial teacher education programe is delivered according to stated objectives; (10) clear-cut structures and roles for monitoring initial teacher education programes are needed, within a shared quality framework.

• Teachers need to be prepared to recognize and address problems in a complex classroom, juggling the learning needs of all, continuing to learn themselves as adaptive experts.

• Initial teacher education needs to provide student teachers with the opportunity to engage in reflective discussions with experienced teachers and teacher educators.

• A number of factors for effective initial teacher education include: (a) an extensive, structured teaching practice; (b) sustained, structured mentoring by school professionals; (c) an individualized focus on student teachers as reflective learners; (d) opportunities for student teachers' reflective practice by observation of teaching; (e) an integrated initial teacher education curriculum; (f) effective partnerships between initial teacher education universities and schools.

• The selection of qualified teacher educators need to be based on their profiles as professional practice models in the academic and teaching field, including the capacity for self-assessment related to their students' learning and teaching.

• The knowledge, skills and commitment of teachers, as well as the quality of school leadership, are the most important factors in achieving high quality educational outcomes.

• Selection of candidates in Albania currently are doing with participation of universities that set up a criteria list for applicants came out from secondary education system and apply to enroll in a university branch include education faculties.

• Subject area methodologies, pedagogical aspects, teaching practice and supervision can generally be found in effective for selecting teacher candidates into initial teacher education curricula.

• Teacher learning is enhanced in school practice contexts as professional communities where teachers get along and have regular professional dialogue with one another, with strong leadership and adequate teaching resources.

• Since 2011 graduated teachers from public and private universities in Albania do a year professional practice before they have taken an exam to get a license for teaching, as well as have a mentor teacher that plays a significant role during professional practice through development of their skills and competencies to be professional teachers.

• Support for quality teaching can include initiatives such as: (a) a centre for teaching and learning development, (b) professional development activities, (c) teaching excellence awards and competitions for remarkable improvements, (d) teaching innovation funds, (e) teaching recruitment criteria, (f) support to innovative pedagogy, (g) communities of teaching and learning practices, (h) learning environments, (i) organization and management of teaching and learning, (j) support to foster student achievement, (k) students' evaluation, (l) self-evaluation of experimentations, peer-reviewing, benchmarking of practices, (m) community service and work-based programes, development-based programes, (n) competence-based assessments.

• Current factors influencing the quality of teaching include: (a) the internationalization of higher education, (b) the increasingly broadening scope of education and greater diversity of student profiles, (c) the rapid changes in technology, (d) the demand for greater civic engagement of graduates and regional development of higher education, (e) the increased pressures of global competition.

• The cornerstones of teacher policy include: (1) a clear reference framework for the competences of teachers; (2) multiple selection mechanisms; (3) consistency in teacher assessment and feedback; (4) careful selection, preparation, professional development and support of teacher educators; (5) a common policy framework for effective school

leadership; (6) these policy cornerstones should be embedded in an overall strategy linking initial teacher education, selection, recruitment, induction and professional development, with clear roles and responsibilities.

• A continuum approach that aligns initial teacher education with induction and continuing professional development include: (1) induction, mentoring extended to initial teacher education; (2) dialogue and collaboration of school and university communities in initial teacher education; (3) innovation and creativity in teaching and learning by consistent approaches along the teacher education continuum.

• In Albania there is a new law for teaching professionalism in pre-university education system, as well as a Code of Conduct, and a license system for teachers' certification after their studies at universities.

• A good balance between theory and practice of teacher education curricula enables teaching to be viewed as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity, closely linked to students' learning and progress.

• The amount and sequence of teaching practice are key, to help develop teachers' practical wisdom as related to professional values.

• The benefits of a continuum approach that aligns initial teacher education with induction and continuing professional development are confirmed by evidence, which recommends: (1) induction or mentoring of student teachers by experienced mentors; (2) dialogue and collaboration of school and university communities; (3) innovation and creativity in teaching and learning by consistent approaches along the teacher education.

2.3   Recommendations

• Universities should improve the quality of teaching in teacher education programs in order to improve student's achievements in all levels.

• Teachers should teach in increasingly multicultural classrooms context in order to integrate students with special needs, to use information and communication technology, as well as to include parents in schools.

• Teachers should help students to acquire not only *the basic skills* but also to include (1) ways of thinking; (2) ways of working; (3) tools for working; and (4) skills around (a) citizenship, (b) life, (c) career and personal and social responsibility.

- Universities and other education institutions should support teachers to have access to training and on- going professional development, including through open and distance learning; and be able to participate, locally and nationally, in decisions affecting their professional lives and teaching environments.

- Education institutions should support teachers on: (1) working conditions; (2) job descriptions; (3) appointment mechanism; (4) harmonizing national standards of the training, remuneration and certification of teachers; (5) implementing a carefully planned teacher deployment policy and practice; (6) improving the teacher recruitment process; (7) establishing sub regional minimum standards for entry in the teaching profession; (8) developing a code of professional and ethical conduct for teachers; (9) increasing the emphasis and resources for in-service teacher training.

- Universities and other education institutions should support teachers to obtain core competences: (1) sound knowledge frameworks; (2) a deep knowledge of how to teach specific subjects, connected with digital competences and students' learning; (3) classroom teaching/management skills and strategies; (4) interpersonal, reflective and research skills; (5) critical attitudes towards their own professional actions; (6) positive attitudes to continuous professional development, collaboration, diversity and inclusion; (7) the capability of adapting plans and practices to contexts and students' needs.

- Universities and other education institutions should reply the challenges: (1) induction and continuing professional development; (3) the selection of teacher candidates; (4) specific national requirements for initial teacher education; (5) diversity of regulations and priorities about education; (6) wide heterogeneity in initial teacher education programes; (7) organizational issues of coordination in initial teacher education; (8) integrating subject knowledge, teaching practice and interdisciplinary aspects in initial teacher education curricula; (9) quality assurance; (10) clear-cut structures and roles for monitoring initial teacher education programes.

- Teachers should be prepared to recognize and address problems in a complex classroom, juggling the learning needs of all, continuing to learn themselves as adaptive experts.

- Initial teacher education should provide student teachers with the opportunity to engage in reflective discussions with experienced teachers and teacher educators.

- Universities and other education institutions should support student teachers: (a) to have an extensive, structured teaching practice; (b) to have a structured mentoring by school professionals; (c) to focus on student teachers as reflective learners; (d) to create opportunities for student teachers' reflective practice; (e) to use an integrated initial teacher education curriculum that support student teachers' critical thinking; (f) to establish effective partnerships between initial teacher education universities and schools.

- The selection of qualified teacher educators should to be based on their profiles as professional practice models in the academic and teaching field, including the capacity for self-assessment related to their students' learning and teaching.

- Universities should select student teachers based on: (1) subject area aspects/methodologies; (2) transversal/pedagogical aspects; (3) teaching practice and supervision.

- Universities should offer student teachers to learn innovative teaching practices firsthand to compare and consider their value, and to be assisted in implementing those practices themselves.

- Universities should support initiatives for quality teaching such as: (a) a centre for teaching and learning development, (b) professional development activities, (c) teaching excellence awards and competitions for remarkable improvements, (d) teaching innovation funds, (e) teaching recruitment criteria, (f) support to innovative pedagogy, (g) communities of teaching and learning practices, (h) learning environments, (i) organization and management of teaching and learning, (j) support to foster student achievement, (k) students' evaluation, (l) self-evaluation of experimentations, peer-reviewing, benchmarking of practices, (m) community service and work-based programes, development-based programes, (n) competence-based assessments.

- Universities and other education institutions should establish: (1) a clear reference framework for the competences of teachers; (2) multiple selection mechanisms; (3) consistency in teacher assessment and feedback; (4) careful selection, preparation, professional development and support of teacher educators; (5) a common policy framework for effective school leadership; (6) an overall strategy linking initial teacher

education, selection, recruitment, induction and professional development, with clear roles and responsibilities for support and quality assurance.

- Universities and other education institutions should establish a continuum approach that aligns initial teacher education with induction and continuing professional development.

- Universities should establish a good balance between theory and practice of teacher education curricula enables teaching to be viewed as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity, closely linked to students' learning and progress.

- Education institutions should support teachers to apply knowledge to practice experience in order to provide opportunities for reconstructing prior beliefs that are inconsistent with effective teaching.

- Education institutions should establish a continuum approach that aligns initial teacher education with induction and continuing professional development.

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PRAGMATIC ACTS IN PRE-ELECTION DEBATES: 2012 GUBERNATORIAL CONTEST IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

Esther OLAYINKA BAMIGBOLA[j]
John TEMITOPE OLUMODI [k]

Abstract

Language is an indispensable tool in the human society for it engenders communication, understanding and interaction. In a democratic setting, it propels people to vote, debate or revolt; it is a major determinant of the fate of political office seekers during elections especially in the first world countries. Thus, politicians must strive to use language appropriately to package their programmes in order to garner more votes during elections.

This study aims at examining the effects the utterances of political candidates could have on their audience. The 2012 governorship pre-election debate in Ondo State of Nigeria was used as a case study. The contest was organised by the Nigerian Election Debate Group – a conglomeration of stakeholders in the election. Six political parties participated in the debate but the responses of candidates of the three most prominent parties were considered in this study. The utterances of the participants were transcribed from the video recording of the debate which was sourced from YouTube on the internet and the summary of the utterances is presented in tabular form.

The analysis is based on the speech acts theories of J. L. Austin and John Searle. The utterances were classified into direct and indirect illocutionary acts identified by John Searle. The major findings of the study indicate that political aspirants in their speeches make use of more commissives than other illocutionary acts, and use requesting rather than ordering, an illocutionary act associated with the military. An incumbent leader aspiring to be re-elected makes use of directive illocutionary acts in order to intimate the masses with his past accomplishments, and thereby imploring

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[j] *Department of English Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria*
bamigbolayinka@yahoo.com
[k] *Department of English Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria*

them to re-vote him into power so that his "good works" may continue. The implications of these findings are that effective language use is strategic to winning elections as it is required to explain political plans and programs; political campaign must be issue-based with convincing evidences that the nitty-gritty of governance is well understood; an incumbent seeking re-election must ensure that he performs creditably in order to make an easy triumph in future contests. In conclusion, the ability of an aspiring political leader to make use of appropriate illocutionary acts can earn him the support of the electorates.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is very essential in the implementation of successful democratic or conservative rule in any human society. Taiwo, (2009) observed that language is the conveyor belt of power, it moves people to vote, debate or revolt, and it is therefore a central explanation of political stability or polarization. In the political world, language is a strong and important instrument which goes a long way in determining the fate of aspirants during elections. The primary aim of every political player is to be at the corridor of power, the ability to achieve this depends on how well he is able to convince the electorates and win them to his camp through his words, Nkem (2003).

During elections, speeches are delivered on several occasions, at different fora, as each political party struggles to be the peoples' choice. Pre-election speeches are delivered during warm-up to elections; these are avenues where politicians, most especially candidates to different political offices, make their intentions of going to represent the people and their programmes known to the people. They use language in structuring the speeches that will enable them to explain their agenda in order to gain the support of the people. Such speeches are delivered during political rallies, campaigns and debates.

Speeches are also delivered immediately a candidate emerges the winner. This is where he reaffirms his commitment and appreciates the people for voting him. This is called "victory speech." Also, on the day of swearing-in of a victorious candidate, most especially the governor of a state or the president in a country, an inaugural speech is delivered to the citizens, which serves as the first official address of a newly inaugurated leader.

Political debates are formal discussions where candidates of different political parties present their views or blueprints on how some public issues will be addressed if they

are eventually voted in by the electorates. This type of debate is a well coordinated one which is usually organized by non-governmental and non-partisan bodies. Specifically, political debates are organized by social groups, media houses etc. In the first world countries, political debates go a long way in determining the winner of a political race. Such was the USA in 2012 that ensued between President Barrack Obama from the Democratic Party and Mr. Mitt Romney from the Republican Party. Debates, unlike political speeches that are read out to the people, are the expressions of the people which come with ceaseless spontaneity, depending on how prepared the debaters are. Here, the debaters are susceptible to malapropism and 'malogorrhea.' The debate is where all contestants are judged by every utterance made by them, either in the present or in the future, Beard (2000).

The case study considered for this study is the 2012 pre-election debate in Ondo State, Nigeria. Six political parties participated in the debate but the responses of only three candidates were analysed because those three were the most popular. The debate was organised by the Nigerian Election Debate Group in collaboration with the Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria and the National Orientation Agency, with the support of the Independent National Electoral Commission.

Analysis in this study is based on the speech acts theories of J. L. Austin and John Searle. Precisely, the study examines the direct and indirect illocutionary acts performed in the utterances. It also explores how capable the participants are to actually say or do things with words. In doing this, the actual utterances of the political candidates as well as the powers used in titivating their words so as to achieve good results are examined. The reaction of the masses to the utterances is also examined.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society, (Mey, 2001). He further points out that a pragmatic perspective will focus on the societal factors that make a certain language use more or less acceptable. David Crystal defines it as the discipline that studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others.

Pragmatics examines the devices used by language users (ex-deictic expressions, or anaphoral) in order to express the desired meaning and how it is perceived.

Different theories of pragmatics have been developed to explain how context and utterance relate with language. Some of these theories include Austin's speech act theory (Austin, 1962), the co-operative principle of Grice (Grice, 1975), Searle's indirect speech act (Searle, 1975), Bach and Harnish's intention and inference (Bach and Harnish, 1979), the balanced and unified theory postulated by Adegbija (Adegbija, 1982), Allan's classification of Speech Acts (Allan, 1986), Lawal's aspect of a pragmatic theory (Lawal, 1995) and Leech's cross-cultural pragmatics (Leech, 1983). The speech act theory which forms the basis for this study is discussed briefly below.

2.2. The Speech Act Theory

The Speech Act theory was propounded by Austin (1962). The theory points out that engaging in speech act means performing the complementary acts of locution, illocution and perlocution (Austin 1962). A speech act is an utterance that has performative function in language and communication. Speech acts are commonly taken to include such acts as promising, ordering, greeting, warning, inviting and congratulating. The analysis of speech acts is on three levels which include locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. A locutionary act refers to the actual utterance and its ostensible meaning, comprising phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts corresponding to the verbal, syntactic and semantic aspects of any meaningful utterance. Illocutionary act is central to the concept of a speech act. Although there are numerous opinions regarding how to define 'illocutonary acts,' there are some kinds of acts which are widely accepted as illocutionary, as for example, promising, ordering someone, and bequeathing. Searle (1975) sets up the following classification of illocutionary speech acts.

1. Assertives - Speech acts that commit speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition

2. Directives - Speech acts that are to cause the hearer to take a particular action, e.g. requests, commands, and advice.

3. Commissives - Speech acts that commit a speaker to some future action, e.g. promises and oaths.

4. Expressives - Speech acts that express on the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition, e.g. congratulations, excuses and thanks.

5. Declaratives - Speech acts that change the reality in accord with the proposition of the declaration, e.g. baptisms, pronouncing someone guilty or pronouncing someone husband and wife.

A perlocutionary act is a speech act, as viewed at the level of its psychological consequences, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something.

Searle (1969) introduced the notion of 'indirect speech act' which in his account is meant to be more particularly, an indirect "illocutionary" act. Applying a conception of such illocutionary acts according to which they are (roughly) acts of saying something with the intention of communicating with an audience. In describing he explains: "Indirect speech acts, the speaker actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and non-linguistic, together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer." An account of such act, it follows, will require such things as an analysis of mutually shared background information about the conversation, as well as of rationality and linguistic conventions. In connection with indirect speech acts, Searle (1969:178) introduces the notion of 'primary' and 'secondary' illocutionary acts. The primary illocutionary act is the indirect one, which is not literally performed. The secondary illocutionary act is the direct one, performed in the literal utterance of the sentence.

Searle further explains how it is possible that a speaker can say something and mean it but additionally mean something else. This would be impossible or at least it would be an improbable case, if in such a case the hearer had no chance of figuring out what the speaker means (over and above what he says and means). Searle's relation is that the hearer can figure out what the indirect speech act is meant to be, and he gives several hints as to how this may happen. While direct speech purports to give a verbatim rendition of words that were spoken, indirect speech is more variable in claiming to represent faithful report of the content or content form of the words that were spoken. Both direct and indirect speeches are stylistic devices for conveying messages. The former is used as if the words being used were those of another, which has therefore

pivoted to a deictic centre different from the speech situations of the report. Indirect speech, in contrast, has its deictic centre in the report situation and is variable with respect to the extent that faithfulness to the linguistic form of what was said is being claimed. In line with this view, Bamigbola (2008) observed in the analysis of a funeral oration that every statement performs two illocutionary acts namely, direct and indirect acts. She further stated in the analysis of selected Nigerian funeral orations that most of the statements in the orations perform both direct and indirect illocutionary acts (Bamigbola, 2010).

2.3. Political System

The nations of the world practice different political systems. The earliest of such systems is thought to be the patriarchal system of government in which the head of the family exercises authority over the rest members. Other common political systems include democracy, republic, monarchy, communism and dictatorship. Most of these systems have been developed over the years. The form of government dictates the structure of the system. For example, the presidential system is characterised by a strong central government surrounded by federating units. This type of democracy puts in place a three-arm of government comprising the executive (that exercises control over an area of jurisdiction), the legislative and judiciary divisions. Both the legislative and judiciary sectors are put in place to checkmate the executive arm, in order to allow for a balance of power.

2.4. The Nigerian Setting

Nigeria is a country in the West African sub-region which gained political independence from the British colonial power in 1960 but became a republic in 1963. At the initial stage, it practiced parliamentary system of government but later adopted the presidential system. As a result of frequent incursion of the military into politics, the country entered into the fourth republic in 1999. Structurally, Nigeria operates a federal system with a central government, 36 state governments, the Federal Capital Territory and 774 local governments.

The Nigerian constitution prescribes a multi-party system and stipulates that appointment into political offices at the three tiers of government should be by election. By law, the tenure for the president of the nation and the governor of a state is four years subject to a maximum of two terms. Towards the expiration of the tenure of a president or a governor, elections are conducted by an appointed electoral body and the process of election is clearly documented in the Electoral Act.

2.5. The Case Study

Ondo State, Nigeria was created in 1976. It originally included what is now Ekiti State, which was split off in 1996. Presently, the state is divided into 18 local government areas. The majority of the citizens live in urban centers. However, the predominant occupation of the people is farming. The people of the state place a high premium on having training in Western education. It is one of the states with the highest proportion of literate population in Nigeria. Ondo State has had seven general elections in the years 1979, 1983, 1991, 1999, 2003, 2009 and 2012. The last was conducted on 21 October, 2012.

Before the 2012 election, the Nigerian Election Debate Group in collaboration with the Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria and National Orientation Agency, with the support of Independent National Electoral Commission, organized a three-session debate for the candidates of the governorship election. The debates gave the contesting political candidates the opportunity to present to the people, their plans and programmes. The first session of the debate involved six political parties, namely, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), Labour Party (LP), National Solidarity Democratic Party (NSDP), People for Democratic Change (PDC), Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and Progressive People Alliance (PPA). This debate, which was directed by the African Independent Television (A I T), was the first of its kind in the history of Ondo State. The responses of the candidates of three of the six political parties that participated in the first session of the debate - ACN, LP and PDP, whose flag bearers were Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, Oluwasegun Mimiko and Olusola Oke, respectively - are analysed in this study. These three parties were the most prominent contestants in the election.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Though the first session of Ondo State 2012 pre-election governorship debate involved six political parties, only the responses of three of the candidates are analysed due to time constraint. The utterances of the participants were transcribed from the video recording of the debate sourced from YouTube on the website and the data generated is presented in tabular form.

This study examines how the utterances of the panelists are handled and tackled by the parties' candidates, and how each of the utterances made by the participants in response to the questions posed by the panelists is reflective on the utterances of the other candidates. The analysis of the data, as stated earlier, is based on Austin's verdictive and Searle's directive, commissive, assertive, declarative and expressive categorisation of speech acts.

The following are the questions to which the parties' candidates reacted.

1. Can you please share with the people of Ondo State your vision for Ondo state today, tomorrow towards sustainable development and general wellbeing of the citizens of this state?

2. In your opening remarks, you talked about Ondo State being blessed with natural and mineral resources. What are the concrete plans you would put on ground to annex and utilize the mineral resources because we have oil, bitumen and some other mineral resources in Ondo State? What concrete plans have been put on ground to annex those resources and what would you do if re-elected in the Sunshine State?

3. In the mantra of one hundred days in office, most governments, whether local government, state or federal government level when they get to office, they always speak of the things they would do in the first one hundred days in office. For you, if you are elected governor of Ondo State, what would you consider to be your major challenge in the first one hundred days in office?

4. Poverty; high crime rate has been traced to poverty and twiddling employment opportunities. The United Nations has said that 64.4% of Nigerians live below poverty line. 40% of that is severe poverty. What are you going to do if you become governor to tackle the twin problems of high crime rate and twiddling employment opportunities?

5. Some parts of Ondo State are experiencing devastating gulling erosion. What will be your blue print to tackle this huge natural disaster? We also do know that Ondo State as well as some other states in the country has been ravaged by flood. So if elected as the governor of Ondo State, what would you do to tackle the problem of erosion and flooding?

6. Closely related to the issue of erosion and flooding that you've just talked about is the whole issue of pollution. Pollution is prevalent in most states in Nigeria including of course Ondo State. Ondo State is an oil producing state and most of you have also spoken about your intentions to industrialize the state. When that happens, there will be a lot more pollution, not just pollution from oil production but from the industries. Now, what is your blue print, your master plan for controlling pollution, whether it is water pollution, whether it is industrial pollution or what have you?

7. You will agree that shelter is the basic human necessity. Now what is the ………in the housing need of Ondo State people and what would be your housing agenda if elected the governor of the Sunshine State?

8. For commerce, for leisure, for work, movement of people must always be guaranteed; it's always an issue. The rail line, the water line, land line; what programme do you have for mass transportation of our people in Ondo State?

9. Ondo State is alleged to be in a debt situation as a result of loans that had been taken and of course, if not well managed, it would spell doom for the state. How do you plan to manage the debt profile of the state if elected?

After the round of questions was the section for closing remarks during which each candidate was allowed three minutes to give his complimentary closure and remark. The data generated from the responses of three of the candidates to the questions asked by the panellists are presented in the table below.

Table 1: Summary of Acts (Direct and Indirect) Performed in the Utterances of the Three Candidates

SPEECH ACTS	ACN	LP	PDP	TOTAL ACTS
Assertive	175	206	134	515
Directive	57	26	7	90
Expressive	51	54	31	136
Commisive	29	64	104	197
Declarative	95	116	119	330
Verdictive	18	16	16	50
TOTAL	**425**	**482**	**411**	**1318**

4. DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

In the analysis, it was observed that there is competition in the selection of words by the candidates, since each aimed at winning the support of the people to his side. One can deduce from the analysis that some of the illocutionary acts performed have more momentum and dominance than the others. For instance, from all the utterances made by the three candidates, assertives dominate since they are statements that describe a state of affair in the world which could be true or false. They indicate a speaker's mind-set to the truth of the expressed proposition. It can however be observed from the analysis that the candidate of the Action Congress of Nigeria used 117 assertives throughout the debate, ranging from the response to the first question up to closing remarks, while 57 of his acts were directive, 51 expressive, 29 commissive, 95 declarative and 18 verdictive. He makes use of assertives like stating, suggesting, describing, telling (saying, predicting, swearing, claiming) etc. than other illocutionary acts. Some of his assertive statements are cited below:

I have set five cardinal programmes which I have distributed round as goals when I come into office.... I have been round the state and I know that we do not have infrastructure and I know the fact that we have large areas of this state that have been neglected and because of this, it is important to key in on issues of infrastructural development....

Any political leader that is really ready for governance must know how to assert in a way that the masses will enjoy some sense of conviction through what he says. The ACN candidate, from the analysis, made few promises that went a long way to indicate his abilities. He did not commit himself above what he believed he could handle. This is reflected in his use of just 29 commisives in the debate. Below are some examples of his commisive statements:

... One thing we would do in 100 days is that we will employ 30,000 youths within the first 100 days.... If I come into office as I said, poverty will be a thing of the past.

He succeeded in using less of directives like commanding or ordering, but he used directives in assessing, requesting and some less authoritative acts. All the direct promises he made had been confirmed to be real and mind-made-up by the use of declaratives. He as well used declaratives in confirming most of his assertives. This

trend of unleashing political intentions was also used by Labour Party and Peoples' Democratic Party candidates.

The Labour Party candidate performed 206 assertives, 26 directives, 54 expressives, 64 commissives, 116 declaratives and 16 verdictives. Judging by the speech acts performed by the Labour Party candidate, one can say that he, being the incumbent governor at that time, had more confidence than his colleagues. He used more assertives and declaratives to restate and re-emphasize his commitment to the people of Ondo State. In his assertives, there were so many instances where he gave reports of what he had done in the previous three and a half years. Examples are cited below:

I can say three and a half years after, that vision is becoming a reality because the typical Ondo State man today talks about government as 'we' not 'they' again.... Our Abiye Programme has been endorsed as a benchmark. World habitants have given a school of honour in recognition of our very inclusive urban renewal programme.... In oil and gas, we are positioning ourselves since we came on board for example, the Arogbojo area of Ondo state, CONOIL has already discovered oil seismic sensing (sic) has been done. We are providing enabling environment for private sectors to thrive and actually explore our vast and incredible natural resources and many other resources for example, the lime stone in Okeluse.... We have awarded the extension of the grid from Alape junction up to Araromi Sea Side to be able to take light to the filtrate zone.

He used few commissives to promise, since he believed the people are more acquainted with him than his colleagues. He committed himself to continuing with only what he had been doing, and not promising new things, because he believed that what he had been doing before was enough to serve as complacencies for the denizens of Ondo State. In his speeches, he used more stating than any other assertive acts, since he was very sure of everything he said. He believes that he knows Ondo State, had ruled the state and is therefore closer to the people than his colleagues.

The PDP candidate performed 34 assertives, 7 directives, 31 expressives, 104 commissives, 119 declaratives and 16 verdictives. From the analysis, it can be said that the PDP candidate only performed few assertives compared to the candidates earlier mentioned. He was so much desperate of governance that he did not have time to start tackling personalities like the ACN and LP candidates did, who used more expressives.

The PDP candidate spent more time soliciting for the support of the masses and reiterated his commitment to them. Relevant examples are cited below:

This is what my administration intends to do when I'm given the opportunity to be the governor of this state.... In my government, I would put in place machinery that will insist that when there is spillage, that remediation is undertaken, that adequate compensation is paid to the people, that a remediation programme that would bring back the land that has been damnified to its original self is put in place.

He used commissives to assure the masses in a more convincing way than his colleagues. It can be said that the PDP candidate made use of appropriate acts in convincing the masses.

From the findings, it is evident that the Labour Party candidate used more assertives than his other colleagues. This could be due to the perspective insight gained through experience about the state he intends to rule. He reacted seriously to every comment made by his colleagues, especially those that are referential to his three and a half-year rule in the state. Most times, as stated above, he used reporting assertive to deplore his colleagues. The PDP candidate can be seen to be the only one who has succeeded in using appropriate speech acts to convince the people through the use of more commissive acts to give concrete hope and make them believe that there was still a future for them.

Apart from inaugural and victory speeches which are post-election speeches which often have expressives as the dominant acts, any pre-election speech like debate or campaign should contain more of commissives and directives of requesting and urging than other acts. Any political speech that has more directives of commanding and ordering will be associated with militancy or military government. Therefore, the PDP candidate can be confirmed to have been compliant with the linguistic rule of speech acts that are designed for the conviction of the masses. If winning the election is based on the platter of what was linguistically delivered by each of the candidates, the PDP candidate should be the expected winner of the election. It is however inauspicious that the overriding factor is the power of incumbency especially when the incumbent has performed excellently because no one ever succeeds in changing a winning team especially in an enlightened society.

In the summary, the overall assertives are 512, 90 directives, 136 expressives, 197 commissives, 330 declaratives, and 50 verdictives, making a total of 1,318 acts

performed by the three candidates. This makes it clear that political speeches contain more assertives than other acts whether direct or indirect. The **findings** of the study reveal that:

– Utterances are made in order to DO things with words rather than mere SAY things with words.

– Ability of an aspiring political leader to make use of appropriate illocutionary acts can earn him the support of the electorates.

– The winner of the last Ondo State election was not determined by the outcome of the pre-election debate but by an overriding factor which is more powerful than what is voiced out since previous performance convinces better than words.

– Political aspirants in their speeches make use of more commissives than other illocutionary acts.

– Incumbent leaders aspiring to be re-elected make use of directive illocutionary acts in order to initiate the masses into being aware of their past accomplishments, and thereby imploring them to re-vote him into power so that his "good works" may continue.

– Some illocutionary acts are peculiar to speeches made by military leaders, while some others are peculiar to civilian leaders; ordering is associated with the military while requesting is associated with civilians.

The **implications** of the above are:

1. An incumbent seeking re-election must ensure that he performs well in order to make an easy triumph in future contests.

2. Political campaign must be issue-based with convincing evidences of understanding the nitty-gritty of the requirements of the office sought to occupy rather than alluding to personality blackmail.

3. Effective use of language is strategic to winning elections since it is required to communicate political plans and programs.

5. CONCLUSION

Pre-election debates are common features among political candidates in modern democracies. Such debates are fora for contestants to explain their political agenda which can then be subjected to public scrutiny. This provides the electorates the opportunity to make informed decisions on which of the aspirants to vote for on the day

of election. In this study, six illocutionary acts propounded by Searle and Austin were used for the categorisation of utterances of flag bearers of the political parties that participated in the Ondo State 2012 pre-election governorship debate. Only the responses of three of the flag bearers were analysed. In essence, this study demonstrates that effective language use is a veritable tool to achieving victory in political contests.

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PROMOTING CRITICAL LITERACY IN THE EFL CONTEXT: IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT TO YOUNG LEARNERS

Isaak PAPADOPOULOS[1]
Eleni GRIVA[m]

Abstract

In response to the continually growing demands of this era, the society needs active members who are able to cooperate with each other and show a critical stance in what they read, see, touch, smell or come across. Thus, modern language education should aim at developing critical readers and writers. As a result, the critical literacy programs in which students are turned into active participants of their learning process and accept something after they have already remarked it, are more than necessary in the education of the 21st century.This paper outlines the rational for and the purpose of designing and implementing a thematic pilot project aiming at developing students' critical literacy in an EFL (English as a foreign language) classroom. This pilot project was implemented to 20 Greek-speaking students of the 5th primary school class (aged 11 years old) who had been learning English for 4 four years. It was initiated with the purpose to provide insights into developing students' critical literacy skills as well as their four language skills in the foreign language. The project was carried out in 25 two hour sessions focused on the thematic area of the "Sports". This topic was selected because of the nature of the sports and their popularity among the teenagers. Moreover, sports are a 'controversial' subject/concept that students can express different opinions and examine it from different perspectives. Special emphasis was placed on the creation of an environment promoting critical thinking and critical stance. Moreover, an attempt was made for a pleasant and creative foreign language learning environment to be developed, where students actually could enhance personal and interpersonal skills.In order to estimate the feasibility of this project, we used three basic tools a) a pre- and a post- test about the language assessment, b) journals kept by the teacher/researcher throughout the intervention and c) structured interviews conducted by the researcher with students individually to record the students' different perspectives based on a text. The findings showed a significant improvement of the students' language skills in EFL, as well as their critical thinking and ability to examine a text from different perspectives.

Key – words: *critical literacy, EFL classroom, pilot project, young learners, critical readers*

[1] *Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, isaak_calling@hotmail.com*
[m] *Applied Linguistics, University of Western Macedonia, Greece, egriva@uowm.gr*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Defining critical literacy

Over the years many researches and scientists have defined critical literacy in various and different ways; however, they found a common ground on encouraging students to develop critical awareness of the text and understand socially constructed concepts. Thus, critical literacy involves accepting multiple perspectives and possibilities (Green, 2001) and contributes to students' learning to position themselves as active an reflective readers and writers. According to Freire (1970), "*critical literacy views readers as active participants in the reading process and invites them to move beyond passively accepting the text's message to question, examine, or dispute the power relations that exist between readers and authors. It focuses on issues of power and promotes reflection, transformation, and action*". Nevertheless, critical literacy does not necessarily involve showing a negative stance from the part of the reader or writer, but looking at an issue in different ways and suggesting possibilities for change and improvement. (Vasquez, 2004).

Beatty (2013) suggests that critical literacy either helps students to "see" and think about the text from a different perspective or it promotes critical discussions based on reflection and resulting into action: "*critical literacy is a stance, mental posture, or emotional and intellectual attitude that readers, listeners, and viewers bring to bear as they interact with texts* (Luke, 2004). Furthermore, critical literacy is *"a 'new basic' required in contemporary society. Being critically literate enables learners to navigate through the numerous texts available to them while questioning what the text claims and its authority. Students examine how the text aims to influence the reader, and how they can use the text to imagine other possible perspectives"* (Luke, 2007*).*

Lewison, Flint and Van Sluys (2002) identify certain principles of critical literacy related to: a) investigating multiple perspectives, making and challenging common assumptions and values, b) examining the differences in power, reflecting on reading and writing. Furthermore, McLaughlin & DeVoogd (2004) examined how critical literacy promotes understandings and beliefs about the power relationship between the reader and the author and highlighted the following basic principles. On the one hand, critical literacy focuses on issues of power and promotes reflection, transformation, and action, and on the problem and its complexity (see Oikonomakou & Griva, 2014).

Considering the abovementioned viewpoints, we conclude that critical literacy presupposes a set of skills and strategies from the part of students in order to analyse critically the author's message, and to become critical consumers and users of information (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004).

1.2 Critical literacy development in EFL context

Despite the fact that for the last decades, the primary purpose of foreign language teaching has been to help students develop communicative skills, nowadays there is an emerging interest in encouraging students' critical language awareness in a foreign language context.

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching has been more focused on directing students' attention to correct English structures and forms of the texts rather than to critically interrogate language use (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011 in Fajardo, 2015). The language and text-genres choices are not neutral, since according to Janks (2010) texts are always informed by authorial bias. In other words, texts contain beliefs and messages that reflect the author's opinions, attitudes, biases and interpretations of reality. More time may be needed for encouraging students to analyse the way authors' choices of words and structures reveal implied ideologies (Fajardo, 2015).

The development of students' critical literacy helps students realize the social and ideological dimension of the language (Hatzisavvidis et al., 2010). In a critical literacy teaching context, the focal point is to make students realize the way people value the linguistic and the text choices through the language texts and the visual reproductions, as well as to help them construct their own perceptions of the reality (Hatzisavvidis, 2010). Students need to be encouraged to evaluate what is said and how it is said in the foreign language (FL) in order to 'uncover' ideas, to disagree, and reconstruct textual representations in a FL (see also Gainer, 2010). Also, students need to be trained to direct and reflect on their own learning process, collaborate with others, and develop ways of handling/managing complex issues that require different kinds of expertise and critical stance (Murnane & Levy, 1996). Besides, every student, having a different background knowledge, 'brings' to school different experiences, perspectives and ideologies. This diversity and multiplicity can facilitate the class teacher to cultivate students' respect for the diverse views and diverse way of thinking and interpreting, as

well as to enhance students' ability to question, examine and explore multiple perspectives, which is the basic purpose of critical literacy.

Modern EFL practices should not be limited in enhancing students' four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), but aim at developing a variety of critical awareness skills and reasoning abilities, such as examining authors' intentions and viewpoints, questioning, juxtaposing, reconstructing and exploring multiple perspectives. All these skills could be enhanced within *multimodal* learning environment and a *task based* context, by engaging students in problem solving activities such as debates, role-plays, simulations, raising critical questions, rewriting texts from another perspective (see also Haydey, Kostiuk, & Phillips, 2007; Morgan & York, 2009).

In a *multimodal* context, students are provided with opportunities to a) take into account how linguistic choices and visual modes fulfill the purposes of a text, b) understand the different ways of meaning-making, select from various meaning-making modes/resources conveying certain/diverse stances, c) articulate their views and d) design multimodal texts in the target language (eg, advertisements, posters, web-pages) (see Archer, 2011; Jewitt & Kress, 2003). Also, the advent of multimodal texts in class motivate students and enhance their positive attitude towards the target language (Korosidou & Griva, 2014).

Furthermore, in a *task-based* framework, reading critically a text in a FL constitutes an interactive and intragroup and intergroup cooperative process resulting into the 'production' of various and different meanings from the part of the members of group/groups. Students communicate and collaborate with each other, so that they can effectively interact in real-life situations, communicate and construct meaning/s (Stambler, 2013). In simple words, students are enabled to use and develop their four language skills along with critical awareness, reflective and evaluation skills (Stambler, 2013). Within this environment, they practice their evaluation skills, since they always need to evaluate their classmates' stances, conclusions, perceptions and possible explanations. Students from each group are invited to present their analysis and defend their interpretation of the text to the class.

2. THE PROJECT "'SEE' SPORTS FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES"

2.1 Rationale and objectives of the project

Having considered the impact of critical literacy programs on students' critical awareness development (eg. Hatzisavvidis, 2010; Stabler, 2013; Christensen, 1999), we decided to design and implement a pilot project on the subject of "Sports" with the purpose to develop both students' critical literacy skills and their skills in EFL. As previously mentioned, experts underline the fact that although there has recently been launched a wide range of critical literacy programmes in students' mother tongue, there has been a small number of critical literacy programmes in a foreign language (Ko & Wang, 2009; Ko, 2013; Norton & Toohey, 2004). As a result, the implementation of a critical literacy programme in a foreign language context was a challenge for us, aiming at:

- Developing students' critical awareness skills and EFL skills by being exposed into authentic material and engaging them into reading critically a number of multimodal texts about sports.
- Measuring the feasibility of the programme in matters of equipping students with a critical stance to reading texts about sports in their everyday life.

2.2 Sample

The sample consisted of 20 primary school students, who had been attending the sixth grade of a Greek primary school in Larissa (a city in Central Greece).They had been learning English as a foreign language (EFL) for four year, they were placed in the B1 level of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) and they took part in this four -month programme (October – December 2014) with the permission of their parents.

2.3 Design of the project

2.3.1. Module: The two 'sides' of sports

For the purpose of the programme, a topic-based mini syllabus was designed incorporating a variety of activities that engaged students in critical and inquiry-based processes. In this framework, the expected learning outcomes involved the students' enhancement of:

Language skills, by using the target language as a medium of communication in various and authentic communicative situations. *Critical Awareness skills*, by developing an understanding of the ideological and social dimensions of the language through reading critically various text genres related to 'sports'. The students were expected to: a) develop strategies for critical thinking, b) be able to analyze, interpret and evaluate information found in various media sources, c) examine authors' intentions and viewpoints, d) question, juxtapose and familiarize themselves with the process of recording notes of different genres. *Social skills*, by enabling students to work together, interact and listen to other mates' views.

The main reason for having chosen the topic of 'sports' was that critical literacy programs should be based on themes that both teachers and students agree to deal with (Markee, 1997). Thus, the topic of 'sports' is really preferable due to its popularity among the teenagers, and is a controversial subject that students can express different viewpoints about and examine it from different perspectives. The thematic units were the following:

Thematic Unit: Definition of the concept of 'Sports'

The aim of the first thematic unit was to introduce students to the definition of the concept of 'sports' and the 'identification' of the types of sports, as well as to encourage them express their viewpoints on related articles, visual representations, dictionaries, etc. More specifically, the students got familiarised with different types of sports within a multimodal learning environment. They raised their awareness about team and individual sports, they expressed their opinions and their ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of each sport-category and they dealt with specific vocabulary in relation to sports such as "activities", "physical activities", "outdoor sports", "indoor sports", "pitch", "field", "court", "player", "athlete", "championship" etc. They had the opportunity to compare these words with each other and be led to connections, contrasts and analogies promoting their critical thinking and developing their perceptive and productive language skills in the target language.

Thematic Unit: Sports and Free time

In this thematic unit, an attempt was made to encourage students develop their four language skills, and practice 'simple present' as a tense used to talk about hobbies, habits and general truth, as well as ' present continuous' as a tense used to talk about a current status or annoyance.

Also, students were encouraged to focus and criticise sports-matches through videos or extracts of football matches or news from British and American Channels that reported on athletes and champions who got caught up in medical doping tests. Nevertheless, students had the opportunity to: a) "read" articles about the benefits of regular activity and exercise may be beneficial for people's physical condition, b) "listen" to interviews in English from famous athletes, doctors, physical education teachers, coaches that promote sports as a free time activity, c) reflect on those articles and interviews, try to interpret and evaluate information and examine it from different perspectives, and d) debate on the role of sports in every individual's free time in order to maintain their physical and mental condition and health in contrast to the inappropriate substances that many athletes get, in order to improve their performances and strengthen their muscular system.

Special attention was placed to the inappropriate language used during several sports events by the fans and athletes and they tend to be used continually by young children as a result of their incapability to distinguish between what it right or not.

Thematic Unit: Role Models

The aim of this thematic unit was to familiarize students with important personalities of sports (major athletes) and motivate them to read about their actions. A variety of articles were incorporated with the purpose to make students comment on their behavior, their charity activities and compare those athletes with athletes who were involved in incidents of illegal substances use or of violent behaviors. Furthermore, students could also discuss on the tendency of advertise producers to invite these athletes to lead on the advertisements promoting sports clothes, equipments or even electronic devices.

Therefore, apart from dealing critically with the above mentioned facts, the students familiarised themselves with certain vocabulary in the target language such as: "I'm interested in", "I'm keen on", "I'm into", "I enjoy", "I used to", "had the habit of", "advertisements", "materialism", "products", "persuasive", role-model", "charity", "volunteer" "imitate", etc. Moreover, the students were offered the opportunity, through the athletes' biographies, to practice the past simple tense and the present perfect simple as tenses focusing on past actions. Also, they were encouraged to practice writing in the genre of mini biography with reference both to a person's hobbies and to some of his/her past actions.

Thematic Unit: Values

This thematic unit aimed at making the students discover 'values' related to an individual's participation in a sport, such as 'collaboration' and 'competition'. Moreover, they could argue about 'hostility' and 'antagonism' among the athletes and their fans who do not hesitate to do vandalisms, to spay graffiti on the walls and destroy properties in case of their favourite team loses a match or a race. Also, the students were encouraged to practice writing about the "description of an event" with particular emphasis on the expression of people's feelings and thoughts about the process of an athletic event.

Thus, the target vocabulary regarding the values of participating in sports and the vices was: "honesty", "boldness", "trust", "freedom", "team spirit", "modesty", "fun", "responsibility", "creativity", "collaboration", "diversity", "communication", "compassion", "accountability", "interdependence", etc// "antagonism", "arrogance", "hostility", "individualism", "over-ambition", etc. Also, the target vocabulary in relation to the feelings included the following: "happy", "sad", "mad", "brave", "embarrassed", "friendly", "sorry", "disappointed", "frustrated", 'silly", 'hopeful", "left out", "excited", 'jealous", "curious", "cranky", "sensitive", "insecure", "grateful", "guilty", "shy", "uncomfortable", 'hurt', surprised", 'scared", etc...

Thematic Unit: Sports Facilities

This thematic unit was designed with the purpose to engage students in activities of comparing and contradicting the sports facilities in Greece, as they were during the

Olympic Games 2004, when the government provided funding for the establishments and their maintenance, with their current situation. Articles, videos, and photos of the Greek sports facilities were included. We incorporated material of the later phase, such as articles and reports referring to the abandoned stadiums that have been merely damaged and they are not used anymore as they are not available for the Greek athletes and championships.

Moreover, we included articles and photos regarding the sports facilities of other countries that have hosted the Olympic Games and they are still in use for the athletes, championships or even for charitable organisations who support people in need. Students have the opportunity to get involved in the process of comparing the foreign stadiums and their situation with the Greek ones underlining the emphasis that each country places on sports and sports facilities.

Therefore, the target vocabulary in relation to the feelings included the following: "sports facilities", "state funding", "exercising", "abandoned", "building infrastructure", "property", "neglect", "decay", "economic failure", "state negligence" while they focused on the types of sports facilities such as " a swimming pool", "a basketball court", "a badminton court", "a tennis court", "a squash court", "a volleyball court", "a football field", "a baseball field", "a hockey field", "an athletics field", "a running track", "a cycling track", "a golf course", "a golf driving range", "an archery range", "a shooting range", "a shooting gallery", etc.

2.4 Implementation of the project

The project was carried out in 25 three hour sessions with special emphasis on the creation of a multimodal environment, where students had the chance to come into contact with various genres, and to reflect on and discuss about controversial matters on 'sports' in a collaborative, interactive, and communicative environment. Advertisements, videos, letters/emails, stories and newspaper articles, narratives and blog-entries were some of the genres used during the intervention. The implementation stages were the following:

2.4.1   Pre-stage
The focus of the pre-stage was on activating students' background knowledge and motivating them by introducing the text, and setting a purpose for reading. The texts

that were chosen and used by the teacher were mostly multimodal. It was during this stage that the students were prepared to cope with the demands of each one of the tasks presented to them within the modules (see also Griva & Chostelidou, in press 2017), but were also equipped with all skills considered essential to deal with the specific topic.

2.4.2 Task-circle

During the while-stage, the students were provided with opportunities of working in groups, cooperating, communicating and interacting in the target language (EFL) with their classmates within group and with other groups.

In groups, the students worked on authentic materials and various genres trying to explore in depth the meaning(s) of the text, and examine the topic of sports from different perspectives. They were engaged in many tasks that promoted reflection and discussion, making decisions, thinking critically, articulating and defending their views and co-deciding on issues related to sports.

Task: Approaching critically in pairs

Description: In pairs, the students read a part of the text. After reading each part, they paused, they reflected on this part of the text, they identified the meaning, they articulated their view and exchanged ideas about this part of the text. They also made their own predictions about the following paragraph. The reading process goes on in this way.

Linguistic Objectives: This particular activity was chosen as it offers the chance to the students to read and listen to authentic linguistic input from newspapers, television channels and radio programs that helped them develop their EFL skills. Students were familiarised with a range of specific vocabulary, while they had the opportunity to enhance their grammatical and structural resources. While reading, students looked their unknown words up, they kept notes, they created idea-maps, hence, they practiced their four language skills.

Critical Awareness Objectives: Regarding the students' critical awareness raising, through working in groups and collaborating with each other, they were given the opportunity to read and reflect on what they were reading, discuss and exchange ideas about each topic, as well as analyse the views of the authors of the texts. The students

understood and expressed different views about the target topic, thus there was a "critical" discussion among them, while employing various communicative/persuasive strategies in order to persuade their classmates about their viewpoints. Throughout this phase, students realised and developed connections between their personal views and those of their classmates concerning the topic 'under investigation', and seemed to become fully aware of a topic expanding the 'border of their personal understanding'.

Task: Experiencing Mapping in groups

The students, cooperating in groups, were reading multimodal texts and created various maps based on their personal experiences and the prompts given by the teacher. Among the prompts were used to help the students connect their experiences with the text were: "It reminds me of…", "An experience I have had like that…".

Then, they explained their connections, and the students of each group shared their mappings with their classmates of other groups, so that they could come in touch with the different perspectives and experiences of their classmates.

Linguistic Objectives: While reading the specific texts, the students were helped to pause at some points that were related to their experiences. After having completed their mappings based on their experiences, the students shared their papers with their experience-maps with their classmates and they created extra maps in cooperation. In this way, the students worked on authentic material by cooperating, interacting and exchanging experiences in the target language.

Critical Awareness Objectives: Through students' attempt to link their experiences with the text given, students managed to create a map of their personal experiences connected with the ideas of an author. Then, the students shared their maps with each other and they came across different views and experiences from different "authors".

They learnt to appreciate diverse views, the multidimensional nature of language and the power of language to develop social realities. Although many students read the same text and they were given the same prompts, they finally realised that every person interprets what he reads based on his/her own experiences and beliefs.

 A special example is *a picture that accompanied an article about the role of sports in our life, showing a foot ball and a vaccine 'approaching' it.*

Using the prompts of "This picture reminds me of...", the students expressed various views. There were students that stated that: 'it is a football and a vaccine of a doctor that tries to help the footballers when they feel sick", there were other views such as: "of course this photo is about the drugs that many athletes get to improve their performances ....", "it is a picture that shows a vaccine to approach the football, but it is not able to give drugs to the football because sports and athletes exercise and they are strong"....", "...this pictures shows us that if we do gymnastics and play many sports we will be strong and we will not have problems".

The students realised that the picture was produced with a very specific image and target in the designer's mind, but they also appreciated the multidimensional analysis created by their classmates.

Task: Reflecting on a multimodal text in groups

Students, in groups, watch and "read" a video. The students of each group stopped at certain points of the video recording, selected by the teacher, to reflect on that part and discussed with the mates of the group about what they watched, they commented on an action, an event, a situation etc and exchanged ideas, while the 'secretary' of the group was keeping notes. The students prepared a written report including their ideas about the multimodal text. Afterwards, the leader of each group announced their decision to the teacher and the classmates.

Linguistic Objectives: Being engaged in this activity, students not only developed both their receptive and productive skills in EFL. More precisely, a) they had the chance to participate in authentic conversations through using the target language, b) they had to understand the language input he/she came across in a multimodal context and then express his/her views on it, c) they had to listen carefully to the partner's opinion so that to use appropriate language devices to support their views, especially in cases of disagreement.

Critical Awareness Objectives: The students, based on their personal experience, supported their views and ideas at certain teacher-selected points. In this way, they informed their partners about a specific topic or part of the text/video they dealt with and then they were engaged in discussing about it. They appreciated the "two sides" but

they tried to realise why an event or an action is presented in a particular way through the use of certain language devices that each author uses.

During the project, the students relied significantly on the Critical Literacy Questions to Ask of Texts (Yale University, 2013). Firstly the students used a set of questions related to "textual purposes". Then, they dealt with the "textual structures and features". Specifically, they were introduced to different text types and genres, while particular emphasis was placed on the images, the words and the formality of the language that the author(s) decided to use. It is worth mentioning that the students were also encouraged to express themselves and justify these particular language and imagery use.

Moreover, they used a number of questions related to the "construction of characters". In fact, the students 'investigated' how young and adults were presented, trying to focus also on the reason the writer or producer of the materials had made them act in that particular way in a text type. Apart from that, students "questioned" about the material in matters of "gaps and silences". To be specific, they tried to look into possible gaps and silences in the material and they tried to give some explanations about those absences by 'revealing' some reasons.

In relation to the texts about the "advantages of sports", according to students' views, 'sports' could benefit "gym owners who promote their services", "coaches who try to persuade young people take up sports" or even "health dieticians trying to raise people's awareness about the importance of a balance between health eating habits and regular exercise". Meanwhile, a television commercial promoting a famous footballer advertising his new trainer could benefit "the company of the trainers" but there is also a missing fact that "not only athletic trainers guarantee the success but regular trainings".

2.4.3 Follow-up stage

The students were invited to: a) transform their newly acquired knowledge, b) produce their own text, c) reflect on their own progress. Specifically, the students were provided with opportunities to enhance their creativity by producing their own multimodal texts in the target language (eg. passages, posters, advertisements, and videos).

3. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

In order to evaluate the impact of this pilot implementation on critical awareness development and EFL language skills enhancement, as well as to determine whether the objectives chosen a priori were fulfilled, the researcher used three methodological tools:

3.1 Pre and post- test

A pre-test, focusing on the thematic area of sports, was distributed to all students before initiating this project, while a post- test was distributed to the students upon the completion of the implementation. It should be noted that both the pre and the post- test referred to the same skills, so that the results can be objective and measure the effectiveness of this particular intervention (Stocking, 1999). The test consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions related to 'sports'.

3.1.1 Results

The following table.1 shows the mean scores and the standard deviation of the students' correct answers in the pre-test to the post- test. As it is obvious, an improvement in the students' scores of their language level at the post-test (Mean Scores: 22) has been released, compared with their performance at the pre-test (Mean Scores: 12).

Table 1. Mean scores and Std. Deviation of Pre- and Post- Test

Mean (Pre-test)	Mean (Pre-test)	Mean (Pre-test)	Mean (Pre-test)
12	0,73	22	0,67

3.2 The journal of the researcher/teacher

The teacher/researcher's journal was used, since it has been proved a very effective tool to assess experimental and educational interventions (Altrichter et al, 1993; Papadopoulos & Griva, 2014). The researcher kept notes upon the completion of each teaching session reflecting mostly on the students' engagement into reading critically

various multimodal texts. The structure of the journal was based on the "questions to guide reflection journal entries" (Richards & Lockhart, 1994: 16 -17) as follows:

a) Questions about the instruction process

1. What objectives did I set? To what extend did I achieve them?

2. What teaching material did I use? How effective were the teaching aids?

3. What forms of communication among students and the teacher were used?

b) Questions about students' attitude and participation

Which was the students'' attitude at the beginning, middle and at the end of each activity? How did I react?

c) Questions about the general estimation of the instruction.

1) What went well and what did not? Why?

2) What could I change? Why?

3.2.1 Results

Through the analysis of the journal entries, it was revealed that a variety of techniques, activities and aids were used in the specific teaching context. In particular, the teacher offered the students opportunities for intergroup interaction through using multimodal material encouraging them to examine and reflect on certain topics. Students came across news stories, leaflets, news articles and digital material with information about sports. It was noted that while students were communicating and interacting with each other, they shifted from mother tongue to foreign language in a natural learning process (translanguaging is used).

The students exhibited special interest in group cooperation and in language mediation activities. They were motivated to read critically and reflected on the topics of multimodal texts. Meanwhile, the teachers served as a facilitator of the learning process, by providing assistance and encouragement to students, and giving instructions for this "unknown so far" way of working and scaffolding. However, throughout this project, the students encountered some difficulties in relation to EFL use, as well as to reflect and discuss critically on a "message", mainly at the first sessions. Specifically,

they faced some difficulties in understanding certain concepts in relation to sports and further in using appropriate specific vocabulary while interacting with their classmates.

Concerning the benefits gained through students' participating in the project, it was recorded that they managed: a) to develop their social skills not only through being aware of the social dimension of language, but also through their interaction with their classmates as well; b) to enhance their EFL skills and their cognitive skills; c) to develop critical awareness skills, as they were equipped with a critical stance towards 'reading and interpreting the meaning/message' of a variety of multimodal texts.

3.3 Student Interviews

Moreover, an interview was conducted with each student individually. Throughout the interview, the researchers attempted to investigate students' various perspectives regarding 'sports' based on the article given to them and on the Critical Literacy Questions to Ask of Texts (Yale University, 2013),

The questions were as follows:

Critical literacy questions for textual purposes

- What is this text about? How do we know?

- Who would be most likely to read and/or view this text and Why?

- Why are we reading and/or viewing this text?

- What does the composer of the text want us to know?

Critical literacy questions for textual structures and features

- What sort of genre does the text belong to?

- What do the images suggest?

- What do the words suggest?

- What kind of language is used in the text?

Critical literacy questions for construction of characters

- How are children, teens, young adults constructed in the text?

- Why are the characters represented in a particular way?

Critical literacy questions for gaps and silences

- Are there 'gaps' and 'silences' in the text?

- Who is missing from the text?

- What questions about itself does the text not raise?

Critical literacy questions for power and interest

- who benefits from the text?

- is the text fair?

Whose view; whose reality?

- What view of the world is the text presenting?

- What kinds of social realities does the text present?

- What is real in the text?

Interrogating the composer

- What kind of person composed the text?

- What view of the world does the composer assume?

Multiple meanings

- What different interpretations of the text are possible?

- How else could the text have been written?

3.3.1 Results

At the first stage of the interviews, the students managed to identify the main idea of the text , eg. "the importance of sports in our life", "the benefits of physical exercise", but they did not get a pre-critical interpretation of the text. However, at the next stages of the interviews, students' stances changed, they presented multiple perspectives and aspects of the "sports" and thought critically about the texts.

Concerning the analysis of the interviews, based on the critical literacy questions, basic typologies emerged with subcategories, giving further meanings and understanding in relation to students' critical awareness.

Category: Critical literacy questions for the text	
Textual purposes	1. *"the text focuses on the benefits of the physical exercises in a try to make people with a sedentary life take up a sport"* 2. *"this text is about the different aspects of sports in our lives as the one in competitions, or in the people's everyday life or even at schools without mentioning a disadvantage because the author wanted to persuade people take up a hobby"* 3. *"this text describes only the benefits of sports in our live from a young age to an old age in an attempt to motivate people from a young age to take up sports, a habit they may carry till their old age*
Textual structures and features	1. *"of course this text is an article since we can see the title above it, the sources of the newspaper/website and generally the form of this text is related to the articles writing"* 2. *"I can see an athlete walking on a treadmill and eating a pizza at the same time, to be honest there are many thoughts and ideas about this picture, it may want to show us that there are many athletes that take regular exercise but they eat also junk food in moderation"* 3. *"it may want to show us that sports can serve as a medicine for the people because they help our health and can make us to avoid fast food…"* 4. *"as we can see the man is going to eat the pizza but he does not and that means that if we stand up to the unhealthy food and the people who advertise them, we can get all the physical benefits of the sports physically and emotionally because people who try to make us eat fast food try to prevent people from sports, they think only about their incomes.* 5. *"there are many repetitions of the beneficial role of sports so, we can understand that the author wants to persuade people about participating in a sport"…* 6. *"the language of the author is sometimes formal and sometimes semi-formal because he refers either to children or to adults and that's why these two categories are offered different language level so that the author can be understandable.*
Category: Critical literacy questions for construction of characters	
The way children,	1. *"Children are presented as the ones playing and doing sports every*

teens are constructed in the text	*day and the author connects this habit of children with their happiness"* *2."The author presents the teenagers not enjoying very much doing sports as they have much of homework...the author mentions that the education system is very strict and he presents the teenagers as passive people"* *3."The young adults are divided. There are some people who combine their responsibilities and their exercise... but there is another category of people who are very pressed they don't think about exercise and gymnastic"*
The reason these characters are represented in a particular way	*1."Children are very happy with their games and sports, the author maybe wants to persuade us that if you play and do sports from this age we will be happy and healthy. he uses the children as a stimulus for all the other people"* *2."Of course the teenagers do not have free time because they study a lot. The author believes with this way that the education system of our country is not very good and it does not offer many times of relaxing and doing sports. Students must study for the school and to go to the university and their physical situation is not a necessary thing for them".* *3. "Some young adults manage to do sports and they are healthy and others do not do sports and they have obesity problems because they work in their office very much. We know that our country has many economic problems and this makes the people to work for so many hours ...they don't care about the sports and they eat very junk food because they hurry."*
Category: Critical literacy questions for gaps and silences	
Investigating "gaps" and "silences"	*1."The author promotes only the benefits of exercising but he does not inform people about some dangers of the sports...many athletes have health problems and injuries..."* *2."The voice of the athletes is missing...they live and they do gymnastics everyday and I think that they do not find that sports help us to relax..."* *3."The author presents only the benefits of sports for people who do not do gymnastics. For example, students and people who work and they do not have much free time for exercising may support that sports will make them tired or they may say their opinion about the negative side of sports...."*

Category: Critical literacy questions for power and interest	
Matters of Fairness	*1."Although at the beginning, I believed that this text is very important for all of us, I think now that this text is not very informative! It is not fair! When we mention only the one side of a matter and not the other, then the people cannot learn all the things"*
	2."The author in this text helps the coaches, the gym owner and of course he does not support people who are not active...it is something like bullying for people who do not do sports"
	3."Of course this text is not fair! It is about the advantages of sports without to mention the bad things of them. When we read a text we should read all the sides...the author possibly is a sportsman and he does not support the others..."
Category: Whose view; whose reality?	
The view of the world in the text	*1."The text presents a world with many people who do not do sports...only the children play and do gymnastics when they young, but when they get older, they stop it!"*
	2."The text is very strange. I think that there are many advantages of sports but indirectly it shows that the world has many problems and it needs sports...it presents a problematic world"
	3."The author presents a world of happiness for people who like sports but it also gives some points for people who do not like them and it mentions that there is something wrong with people."
What is real in the text?	*1."We can understand that people who work do not have much time for exercising but NOT all of them"*
	2."It is real that many young people play and do sports but they do not have the jobs of their parents..."
	3."Generally, I believe that all the things that the author says are real but he does not write about their negative side.."
Category: Interrogating the composer	
Matters of Author	*1."The author is certainly an active person..and of course a coach...his language is like a coach speaking and of course he also talks about young children...maybe he is a coach of young people"*
	2."The author is of course a gym owner..I believe that he promotes his gym and he tries to persuade people with sedentary lifestyle take up

	sports" *3."I believe that the person who wrote this text is a promoter. The text has some special information about sports and I think that these people who promote vitamins, proteins and other medicines write these texts to attract the people and then to make them buy their products!!!!"*
Category: Multiple meanings	
Changed article	*1."The text should include both the negative and positive sides of sports...so it will be fair and it will let the readers decide on sports"* *2."The text can have more information about the benefit of sports and not write certain negative things about the people who do not do sports"* *3."The text should have more pictures about each of the categories it presents...it should have more information about the ways that people who work, can take up sports because it does not give solutions...it only presents the benefits ..."*

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The project "'see' sports from different perspectives" was designed with the purpose to promote students' critical awareness skills and EFL skills by exposing them into authentic material (multimodal input from newspapers, television channels and radio programs) and encouraging them to examine a number of multimodal texts about sports from a critical stance. More precisely, an attempt was made for students to be equipped with the appropriate skills needed for the demands of "the media saturated, diverse world" (Comber, 2001).

The participants of the pilot project managed to deeply understand information in the area of "sports" through 'coming in touch' with a variety of texts, and they realized that reading critically a text involves looking for multiple perspectives and possibilities and using literacy as an agent of social change (Green, 2001). Being engaged in this project, they were turned into active readers moving beyond passively accepting the text's message by questioning, examining or disputing the power relations between the readers and the authors. In other words, the students managed to enhance and deepen comprehension mainly through the analysis of 'how' and 'to what degree' the text promotes the status quo. They questioned, examined, or disputed the power relations

between readers and authors focusing on issues of power and promoting reflection, transformation, and action (Freire, 1970).

Throughout this project, the students, having engaged in critical activities, focused on the power and the interest of various texts and they paid special attention to the view of the world and the social realities that are presented in the texts. Also, they were given the opportunity to discuss controversial matters on sports, exchange ideas about the topics in a collaborative, interactive, and communicative EFL context. Moreover, they familiarized themselves with techniques of identifying and assessing their own responses and relationships to the text. While their attempt to analyze how texts have been constructed and how they influence audiences was really advantageous. They were also able to evaluate the validity and reliability of the text and its premises serving as researchers of languages and texts (Green, 2001).

Concluding, the critical literacy implementation can be regarded as advantageous for the EFL students, since it contributed to helping them raise their critical awareness skills as well as encouraging them to realize that language is used to create particular social realities, to interpret the meaning/message of multimodal EFL texts and to express and justify their viewpoints on different text types and genres.

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HERMENEUTICS AS THE INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION IN CULTURAL CONTEX: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF ALBANIAN CULTURE

Matilda LIKAJ SHAQIRI[n]

Abstract

Sociological and philosophical approaches often have been decisive in the study of cultural aspects of religions, imparting to the social disciplines a theoretical basis and the direction in which research should proceed. One of most important field of these approaches is the interpretation of religion and religious texts, which in terms of modern philosophy is entitled as hermeneutics. Hermeneutics has been a root of sociological and philosophical theory of modern interpretation, the theory of achieving an understanding of cultural, holly texts and utterances. As a theory of interpretation, the hermeneutic tradition stretches all the way back to ancient Greek philosophy till nowadays as a sociological interpretation of religion in context of culture. The interpretation and understanding of our life can be related with hermeneutic of holly texts, religion, social and cultural structure of a society. This article is going to focus on and discuss about the hermeneutic as the philosophy of interpretation, hermeneutic and religion, and the interpretation of religion in the cultural context such as Albanian culture.

[n] *Department of Sociology, Faculty of Educational, University of Aleksander Moisiu Durres,*
matildalikaj@gmail.com

1-Introduction

Sociological and philosophical approaches often have been varying in number of religion studies, imparting to this discipline not only a theoretical basis, but also the direction in which research have been progressed. During the last two centuries, every important sociological and philosophical orientation has left its imprint on the investigation specific to this field. Kantianism, Hegelianism, Marxism, the philosophy and sociology of life and pragmatism, phenomenology and hermeneutics, structuralism and de-constructivism, cognitive and analytical philosophy have all appeared with their own theories and analyzed the religion according to their discipline. Focus of hermeneutic, moves from the objects or text toward the acts of interpreting and also toward the group who interpret it. The reason for this transformation is that signs or texts, which formerly used to guide interpretation, reveal their instability.

This article will be focus shortly on the field of hermeneutic and will explain religion in the sociological and philosophical perspective. Hermeneutic is the study of interpretation and we will use hermeneutic as the interpretation religious text and the interpretation of religion according to university youth of Albanian society.

2- Hermeneutic as the Field of Interpretation

Hermeneutic is not quite new in theories of social sciences but is promoted quite new in history of humanity and social sciences. Hermeneutic as a concept contains in itself a varied wide meaning, because it is not just focusing in doing rhetoric in literatures but also it is the practice of our own life. By understanding and interpretation is very easy to state that hermeneutic also use its practice in everyday life. Hermeneutic reflection, like Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is supposed to mediate between science and the life-world and in particular between their respective languages.

Hermeneutic has a varied on stating definition, but in this article hermeneutic is going to be study from a sociological perspective of philosophy of interpretation. The reason of the application of hermeneutic in every day life is quite normal and well spread. The interesting issue is that most of social actors are not conscience on doing hermeneutic. In the social sciences hermeneutic contains different interpretation as its own primary function. One of them is interpretation of religion in the society too. 'In contemporary French, the word *interpretative* is no longer used, other than through recuperation of

the English word *interpretative*, taken in the sense of 'whatever serve interpretation'(Descombes; 1991). For this sense, the Oxford English Dictionary defines that: 'Having the character, quality or function of interpreting, serving to set forth the meaning (of something), explanatory or expository. Interpretable can be alternatively understood as:

1-That which can be interpreted, that which does not rule out interpretation;

2-That which must be interpreted, that which it requires an interpretation'

3-The interpreted as such, the formal object of interpretation (Descombes; 1991).

So based on these explanation is important to stress out that interpretation is done according to the social and cultural conditions of society where the interpreters are continuing their life.

Charles Taylor expresses that, interpretation, in the sense relevant to hermeneutics, is an attempt to make clear, to make sense of an object study. This object must, therefore, be a text, or a text-analogue, which in some way is confused, incomplete, cloudily, seemingly contradictory - in one way or another unclear' (Descombes; 1991). The Taylor's claim can be right by the contradictory form of interpretation that is not so much unclear. It is focusing at the diversity conceptions and perceptions of social actors.

According to Gadamer hermeneutic is related with e sort of understanding which come over as a result of participation in a cultural tradition. It forms the arguments of interpretations and present orientation by taking as reference the culture and society where social actors are living (Gadamer; 1978). Gadamer's concept of the natural attitude to the world, it marks out an important area of enquiry, that of the world-pictures, ideas of natural order (Outhwaite; 1987). So the understanding is formed according to the self-consciousness that is based on the collection of beliefs, values, norms and tradition of the society where the social actors live. Gadamer claimed that the language games of science remain related to the meta-language presented in the mother tongue' (Outhwaite; 1987). Refer to that, is important to state that Gadamer's conception of understanding retains a dichotomy between subject and object and an objectivistic conception of interpretive method. This dichotomy of subject and object is influenced form the social and cultural background of society.

Another interpretation of hermeneutic had been influenced by the theories of Jurgen Habermas. According to Habermas's development of critical theory introduced the

term of 'hermeneutic' into the social scientific culture of English-speaking world (Outhwaite; 1987). So, it is important to claim that hermeneutics has been used since seventeenth century to refer to the interpretation of holly texts. Initially restricted to religious writings, it was gradually extended to classical philology and to linguistic understanding in general. Consequently to this, is important to state that, Habermas stressed that understandings come form notion of communication and communicative action, which are inevitable to everyday life.

Furthermore, according to Gadamer hermeneutic is universal, because understanding is fundamental way where human beings participate in the world. And the term started to use in derivative way to refer to those variants of social theory which give a special place to understand or Versteihen: symbolic interaction, phenomenological sociology, ethno-methodology and so on (Outhwaite; 1987). To have a better analyze of this, in the following chapter is going to analyze the connection of hermeneutic and religion, and interpretation in everyday life.

3- Hermeneutic and Religion

In sociological literatures religion is one of seven most important of social institutions in the society. For that reason, is needed to claim that, religion is as personal as social element in everyday life of social actors. It exists in all societies, although religious beliefs and practices vary from one culture to another one. 'All religions involve a set of symbols, involving feelings of reverence, linked to rituals practiced by a community of believers.' (Giddens; 2009). But it is very important to say that in social sciences are a verity number of definitions about the religion as term and as theories. So to make the sociological archaeology of the religion as term and as theories, could not be always in objectively perspective. Because religion is very reach in its concept and in practice. Also the discipline of hermeneutic offers a new perspective for each social researcher to analyze the religion as a social institution.

So it important to stress that hermeneutic gives different meanings in interpretation of word of religion. Such as, the word "religion" has Latin roots, but even in classical Rome it was interpreted in various ways. According to Repsad and Fruseth, religion sometimes meant "to re-read" and sometimes "to bind together." It is possible, of course, to imagine that religion is something that is repeated, in the form of rituals, or

something that binds gods and human beings together (Repstad & Furseth ; 2006). But according Tylor's theory, the human beings develop religious beliefs in order to explain dreams, visions, unconsciousness and death. Also Peter L. Berger in his theory, defines religion as man's relationship to 'a sacred cosmos'.

Parsons assumes that religion has several functions in society. First, religion helps members of society to deal with unforeseeable and uncontrollable events, such as an early death. Second, through rituals religion enables individuals to live with uncertainty. Religion gives meaning to life and explains phenomena that otherwise would seem meaningless, such as suffering and the problem of evil.' In this way, religion calms tensions that otherwise would disturb the social order, and helps to maintain social stability' (Parson; 1974). Parsons argues that religion is very important not just for personal solidarity but it is important for social order and social solidarity too. According to him religion's aim is to be formed over the love.

The struggles about the definitions of religion might contain also some point of views from the post classical sociologists, such as Sharpe and Habermas. According to Eric J. Sharpe, the mythological and ritual dimensions can be excluded from religion. So he claimed that religion is nothing more than a perception or inner feeling of every social actor. 'He admits that mythology and rituals frequently occur in religious life, but so do regulations, music, and symbols. He concludes that religion has four modes: the existential, the intellectual, the institutional, and the ethical (Sharpe ; 1983). According to Habermas, religious traditions have a special power to articulate moral intuitions, especially with regard to vulnerable forms of communal life. Religious citizens must develop an epistemic attitude toward other religions and world views that they encounter within a universe of discourse hitherto occupied only by their own religion. They succeed to the degree that they self-reflectively relate their religious beliefs to the statements of competing doctrines of salvation in such a way that they do not endanger their own exclusive claim to truth (Habermas; 2006). If the Sharpe's perspective view on religion is to analyze it form the practical forms of religious life of people, Habermas analyze the religion as a practical form of individual life, social life and politic.

Also it is important to claim that some sociologists support the ideas that religion is as a cultural system of commonly shared beliefs and rituals that provides a sense of ultimate meaning and purpose by creating an idea of reality that is sacred and supernatural. As

Giddens claims that Durkeheim, Berger and Wuthnow defined three key elements of religion in sociology such as:

1-Religion is a form of culture;

2- Religion involves beliefs that take the form of ritualized practices;

3-Perhaps the most important, religion provides a sense of purpose a feeling that life is ultimately meaningful. (Giddens; 2009)

So, shortly let conclude that religion in sociological perspective as following:

1- Religion involved a set of symbols, involving feelings of reverence or awe and are linked to rituals or ceremonial engaged in by a community of believers.

2- All religions contain ritual acts. Ritual acts include praying, chatting, singing, eating certain kinds of food or refraining from doing so-fasting on certain days and so on. Rituals acts are orientated towards religious symbols. Lighting a candle to honor or placate a god differs completely in its significance from doing so light a room. Religious symbols and rituals are often integrated with the material and artistic culture of the society- music, painting of carving, dance, storytelling and literature.

3-Religious rituals are often carried on by individuals in isolation but all religions also involve ceremonials practiced collectively by believers.

So based on these issues is important to stress that the religion contains a very important role in society, and sometimes it can be not divided from the social life and from the structure of culture. So the conception of religion to the social actors differs not just because of their culture of the society where they live but also from the perception of their own. Consequently to these sociological different theories, it is necessary to mention that most of the time religion is related with spirituality. So it is very important to stress that spirituality is an essential issue that borne from religion, but both of them form the application perspective of religion. Both spiritualism and religion are elements which increase the diversity of interpretation in religion. According to Simmel individuals develop powers that cannot be traced within the individual alone, and a greater unity, a deity, grows from these units. On the other hand, there is a conflict between the individual's search for independence and meaning by focusing on their own inner life, and the longing for being part of the group (Simmel; 1971). So, how it can be done an interconnection between religions and hermeneutic? It is as simple as much

complicated, because the hermeneutic as discipline has been formed to interpret the messages of God that were transmitted through the holly texts. Or by sociological perspective is important to stress that 'the discipline of hermeneutic has been used from late 17th century to interpret the hidden message of God founded in Holy books' (Goka, Topcuoglu & Aktay; 1995). So the interpreter activity is exercised on a test, or on something which is analogous to a text. Reading a text is given as the definition or at least as the examples '*par excellence'* of understanding meaning (Descombes; 1991). The fact that text is interpretable still does not give individuals any reason to interpret it. Many errors and rights understandings may derive from the fact that it is often assumed that can be cause different interpretations. As to interpret is, to discover a meaning, to discover a second hidden meaning, to go on discovering new meanings indefinitely and to invent a new use for the text other than the one that consisted in looking for one or several meanings in it, every one can interpreted according to its own psychological unique (personal) and social world.

Texts always contain the intention of writers but not interpretation. For this reason is important to state that to interpret the holly texts is very difficult because, first must be done the deconstruction of meaning according to the history, structure of society and culture, the date which it has been written or sent (defined as a first difficult). The second difficulty is to make deconstruction of intention of writer, because at three main fundamental religions in the world, it is supposed that holly texts have been written by author that uses the message sent by God. So to interpret the intention of God is almost impossible to access the right results. For fundamental religions such as Islam, Judaism and Christian, an important contribution of interpretation has been given by the prophets. Their interpretation had been based also on cultural and social structure of society where they found. Even the help of their interpretation, human beings has been misunderstood or have been skeptic to their comments. Because every social actor's cultural background, attitudes, norms and values are different. 'Demonstration of Cartesian methods of gaining the apodictic certainty of the ego cogito by means of a universal methodological doubt' (Gadamer; 1978). So influenced by Cartesian's demonstration is very important to stress that the intention of reader is also very important and inescapable**.**

It is important to conclude that hermeneutic and religion have a close relationship which always bring interpretative forms. These interpretative forms are not all the times are quite right or wrong understandable, because they are related with writer intention (in our case is God) and reader intention social and cultural background too.

4- The Interpretation of Religion in the Cultural Context: Albanian Culture Sample

Another important researcher on the hermeneutic field is Paul Riceour argued that the hermeneutics is polarized between two projects: the recollection of meanings' and 'the exercise of suspicions'. Social actors construct the meaning according to the beliefs and social values that had required during first and second socialization in their own life. But the recollection of meanings means the reorganization of thoughts and values for a proper propose. In this case (article) it is important to stress the reorganization of beliefs and values according to the new construction and perception of religion has been formed in two periods of Albanian history. These are during communist and post communist regime periods. During the communist regime (1945-1990), marxist and atheistic ideologies made possible the reorganization of society structure, reorganization of values, beliefs, norms and tradition. According to the Marxist theory and interpretation of religion bring out a new form of perception of religion that it is like opium or drug for people. This means that social actors could not think as they want. Also by using the strict policies of implication of atheist ideology during 1960's, make people belief that the religion is nothing more than the philosophy that oblige people to abandon the contemporary social and cultural issues of society. As Durkheim claims, the 'Old God died' in Albania during the communist period 'All gods died'.

After 1990's the fall of communist regime and the new liberal political regime and policies of freedom made possible the 'Rebirth of New Gods'. The freedom of religion almost has been attempt to everyday life. But the situation is not so much all over spreader, because to reinterpretation of religion has been done according to the recollection of information or according to the 45 years long-stand information. Here it is very important to stress that the recollection of meaning is formed by the deconstruction of meaning and new interpretation.

From Marx perspective of view, religion contains a strong ideological element such as

religion provides justification for the inequalities of wealth and power found in society. He argued that all meta-physics involve an inversion of the real world that is harmful to humanity: that is, there is only life on earth. Any vision of life beyond earth is a delusion; and delusions undermine the evolution and enlightenment of humanity. 'In societies where the material infrastructure reproduces economic exploitation, it is elites who have perpetuated ideologies to sustain the status quo, and religions have operated to persuade the masses to acquiesce to their subordination (for example, the virtue of humility) while offering them the olive branch of a hereafter (that is, rewards in heaven)' (Spalek & Imtoual ; 2008).

For Durkheim religion is important because of the cohesive functions it serves, especially in the ensuring that people meet regularly to affirm common beliefs and values. Durkheim adopted a positive attitude towards religion insofar as it is an expression of the 'conscience collective' and operates as a socializing and moralizing force to prevent and/or remedy transgressions that could be harmful to the community. However, 'he was adamant that the only thing that could ever be sacred is society itself and concluded that the clan was essentially worshipping itself. When the social becomes sacred by virtue of itself, this is tantamount to the death of the spiritual qua supernatural' (Spalek& Imtoual ; 2008). So Durkheim claimed that religion is not more than a form of society perception. For Weber, religion is important because of the role it plays in the social changes, as seen in the development of Western capitalism. The elements that religions add to social capital of societies in West countries were related to the perception of 'working hard, spend less and make investments'.

But Habermas (in his theoretical points of view) sees the life-world as a "finite province of meaning" and as a public sphere of communicative action. 'His premise is that individuals need personal integration, identity, or meaning, and that meaning is dependent upon integrating cultural norms created by society'(Calhoun ; 1992). For this reason people are in hurry to find a place to form the infinite perception of life. So according to Habermas religion is nothing more than an issue that is sacred form individuals in a society. ' In the spirit, the social actor finds ambition, animation and exultation that all move and mobilize the self to reach beyond itself. As a phenomenon, spirituality is something subjective, experiential, non - rational, unverifiable and serendipitous in its eruptions, all properties an enlightened

sociology finds difficult to transpose into the ordering argot of the discipline'(Turner; 2000).

Jacque Derrida, in Lilla's book, claimed that to interpret something, people first need to deconstruct the meaning. Interpretation is never enough to understand exact form that people come from different social classes (Lilla; 2004). Every social actor could give meaning to the subject of religion as their collective beliefs and as his/her own intentionally. 'Giving meaning to subject is not just a simple action comes from brain but it is also an activity. Meaning is formed between individuals, and contains properties of an inter-subjective. It contains a common sense and understanding in a language of a society; it is a practice which engages with the practice of interactions of social actors in everyday life. The center of meaning is the form of interpretations, which it is found in the subjective and objective forms (Goka, Topcuoglu & Aktay; 1995). During May, 2008 it has been finalized the research among the Albanian youth studying at Tirana University (410 students) about the culture and values. Also in this research an important place took the questions about religion. For this reason it is going to be stressing just the question that influence on an understanding of religion and religions' elements interpretation. Young university students believe in different religion. According to the answers some of identifications of their religions are as: Muslim, Bektashi, Christianity, Orthodox Christianity, Protestant, Atheist etc. As the following table Albanian youth had very interesting interpretation of perception on religion.

Table 1. Which of the following do you believe?

	YES		NO	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
God	362	88,3	48	11,7
Life after death	164	40,0	246	60,0
Paradise	199	48,5	211	51,5
Hell	157	38,3	253	61,7
Sin	220	53,7	190	46,3
Destiny	217	52,9	193	47,1
Supernatural forces	182	44,4	228	55,6
Angels	232	56,6	178	43,4
Devil	155	37,8	255	62,2
Total	**410**	**100**	**410**	**100**

The table above shows that with 88, 3 percent (262 out of 410 respondent students) believe in God. The challenges answer is that the perception of youth on Paradise and Hell is much interesting as contradictory. Because, youngers believe in God (88, 3 percent) and do not believe in Paradise (51.1 percent) and in Hell (61,1 percent). Also another interesting issue is that young students believe in Angels (56, 6 percent) and do not believe in Devil (62, 2 percent).

So as conclusion to the perception and interpretation of Albanian youth of post communism, has been focused on the acceptance religion as a form of life that just contains positive issues such as God, Paradise, and Angles. So the interpretation of religion in Albanian society, as our case Albanian youth, is forming form the intentionally understanding and recollection of positive information. Recollection of positive information has been done as the result of being against the atheistic form of society of communist period. For this reason it is very important to stress that the interpretation of holly texts has been done according to the positive point of view of attention of readers.

5- Conclusion

As following, it is important to stress that the interpretation of religion is based on the social structure of society and the cultural background of every social actor. The perception and interpretation of post communist Albanian youth, has been focused on the acceptance religion as a form of life that contains some issues that are possible acceptable by them. So the interpretation of religion in Albanian society, as this case has as a target group Albanian youth, is forming form the intentionally understanding and recollection of 'positive' information. Recollection of this 'positive' information has been done as the result of being against the atheistic form of society of communist period which defined the religion as a negative issue for social life. To conclude, as Giddens claims that religion is the interpretation of according to the culture, also Baudrillard reflects the '*simularca*' (see the following reference) of the cultural background on the present interpretation of religion in different social groups in society (in this case university youth in Albanian society)

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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY TO IMPROVE THE FAITH FEELINGS AND KNOWLEDGE. (ALBANIA-AN EXAMPLE OF TIRANA)

Fatih Ufuk BAĞCI [o]

Abstract

Family is the first institution to be part of the socialization of the child. This process which starts since the child's birth, will last until his last breath. That's why we can say that family is the basic and the most important factor in children's education. A child's education is a multiple-ways responsibility. As we try to resolve physical needs, spiritual needs are one of the most sensitive things of this responsibility. Surely we give a big importance to fulfill the needs of wearing, eating, drinking, and such physical needs, but it is important as well to get him to know community values, to help him with the teen age, as well as to be introduced to religious knowledge and religious way of living.

In our study, we have taken in consideration how the families who live in Tirana and whose children go to religious schools, live religion within their families. In our research we have collected data especially from families who have religious knowledge and send their children to religious school being conscious about it and about the way how they live and understand this way of life. Throughout our research, in order to get information about how religion is lived within families, we have used the "Scale of religious activities within families" method. The scale was applied on the high school "Madrasa Haxhi Mahmud Dashi, Tirana, which is a religious institution. In the end of this study we came in the conclusion that after the high school students took this survey, the average was 27 for the frequency of the religious activities, and 28 for the importance of the religious activities.

Keywords: *Religious Activities within family, religious life, religious knowledge.*

[o] University College "Bedër", Department of Turkish Language and Literature, Tirana/Albania
fatihufukbagci@gmail.com

1-Introduction

Human being whether material or spiritual way, is surely the most special being among all living beings. Being like this, in Islam human beings have earned the right to be called "Caliph". They have come to life with the privilege of being caliph and in order to continue holding this degree one has to follow some specific steps. Surely, no matter how superior human beings are, since birth they are in need of several things

This process through which they go during their lives is called "socialization". Socialization as a term means for a human being to be part or a member of a society (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). This means that the member knows the culture, values, religion and such elements of that society and shows he has personalized and used them. In order to support this statement we can mention that socialization is "a process in which an individual acquires the attitudes, behaviors and knowledge needed to successfully participate as an organizational member" (Van Maanen, 1979) which clearly shows that it is a process experienced in different points of someone's character.

In the first place from where socialization takes life is family. Surely, children from the first moment they come in this life and until a specific age, family members are the ones with whom he spends the most of his time. This kind of period gets back to him as a behavior. It is not for sure that learning is always the best through this period. Sometimes one needs to learn from others by imitating because during this process he learns by looking at behaviors. While some other behaviors are naturally earned. That's why we can say that the process of getting involved into the society (socialization) is a very complicated process. Individuals are under the influence of the physical conditions of their society which one may compare it with hundreds of events, people, culture and socio-economic condition of their society (Doğan, 2010).

One of the factors that influences someone's civilization is about being involved into religion knowledge and activities. Of course that the first step of this involvement is family. Children live their first religious experience in their families because after all, it is family with whom we live with. "It is there (family) where children learn language, life and behaviors" (Yavuz, 1986).

In 1990's Albania has gone out of communism to democratic republic and the country went into a fast development. Both inside country investments, and visits abroad for education and tourism purposes have brought as a conclusion the results of these in social life. One of the things that can be seen during this process is religious life.

With the coming of democracy many students who flew to Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Gulf countries, after getting their own education, came back and brought that education and culture to their country. Nowadays, these people are working on their specialized fields and a part of them have continued their lives in different directions. The common point of all of them is that they have created their own families and are active members of their society.

2-Purpose Statement

The influence of society is important on children's character formation, whether religious, cultural, etc. This influence stars from family, his living area and ends in his working place. We can say that family is the most important factor in children's first step towards socialization. Starting from here, we collected data about religious information in Albania which is new to religion, and the importance of religious activities within their families.

3-Research Method

In this study we have used the survey technique. In order to learn about the thoughts or ideas of how much do school students give importance to religion and how much do they live it in their families, we have used the scale "religious activities within family".

3-Scope and Limitations

The study has been limited between high-school students of class 2016 of Madrasa of Tirana, Haxhi Mahmud Dashi girls and boys. The survey was chose to be done here as the school is connected to the Muslim Community of Albania and it is a school that accepts students from all over the country without exceptions which makes the school the most appropriate for this survey.

4-Data Collection Tools

In the survey we have used as data collection tools the Individual Information and the Religious Activities Form within the Family Scale.

4.1-Individual Information Form: Individual Information form was made up of age, gender, school, class and similar information.

4.2- Religious Activities within the Family Scale: The scale developed in 2010 by Nathaniel M. Lambert and David C. Dollahite is a measurement tool based on the

assessment of individuals' religious activities, frequency, and personal importance within the family. This scale is made of 9 matters.

According to the frequency of scale, there are six matters; (0- never, 1- once or more a year , 2- once or more a month, 3- once a week, 4- sometimes a week, 5- every day, 6- more than once a day), and according to the importance there are four matters; (0- not important at all, 1- a little bit important, 2- important, 3- quite important, 4- very much important).

The lowest score that can be taken from the scale is 1, the highest score is 36 according to the aspect of the religious activities. According to the frequency of religious activities, the lowest is 1, the highest is 54.

Religious Activities within the Family Scale is an American survey, that's why we have decided to use Akın A., Özbay A., Odabaşı Ş., Baykut İ. and Akkaya O's adapted version in Turkish as it is closer to Albanian culture.

5-Religious Knowledge and development of feeling at child

Human beings are in a process of learning since the very first moment they open their eyes in this world. This process includes a wide range of activities ranging from the acquisition of speech skills to the attainment of certain cultural achievements this process which is lived in general sense has taken the name "Socialization". The learning that takes place in this survey does not always need particular days to learn. Sometimes, especially in the very first start children learn it through imitation. Many habits and behaviors become natural. A boy who sees his father driving a car, wants to play with cars, the child who sees her mother feeding her, starts feeding her baby doll too (Doğan, Dini Tutumların Oluşmasına Etki Eden Sosyo-Kültürel Faktörler, 2010).

On the other hand, this time slot has a different significance in terms of the life that the individual will live and the period in which the character to be gained is shaped. The individual learns to prepare himself for adulthood life largely at an early age and acquires social statues in the society he has lived with and in different cultures (Köylü, 2004).

Some psychologists argue that learning at these ages has left deep traces in the child, and even 90% of personality development takes place in the first 6 years of childhood. This leads to very serious responsibilities in childhood education, starting from the immediate vicinity of the child (Köylü, 2004).

This form of childhood constitutes an applicable " Religious knowledge and feeling ". The formation, or the shaping, of such information and sensation in the child may not take place in the natural course. Because the culture in which the child lived is antagonizing as a helping factor in shaping universal behaviors. Together with all of this, the child is not empty. God does not give the thoughts out of nothing, but surely some psychological characteristics may facilitate the introduction of the child's religious literacy (Vergote, 1986).

This process, which Vergoten has stated, can be described as " religious socialization ". We can address to religious socialization as a process in which an individual assimilates the religious norms, beliefs and practices of the society in a social context and communicates it religiously and culturally (Birekul, 2014). It is worth to mention that in addition to being influential in environmental factors in religious socialization, individuals have an individual process of developing their own consciousness about religion, religiously assessing their own behavior and learning to relate to others (Birekul, 2014).

It can be said that the society that has lived in this process, which started with the child's opening to the world, is influenced by many factors in our specializing and globalizing world. It is believed that there are a number of demographic factors that influence this succession occurring in children. We can list these factors as below:

- Family socialization,
- Gender view,
- Gender ,
- Civil status,
- Age,
- Education,
- Geographic area,
- Rural-urban life,
- Socio-economic status (Kurt, 2009) .

On the other side, according to Vergote, the factors that influence in the child's religious formation are as the following in order of importance: *family discipline, personal thoughts and school*. (Vergote, 1986) No matter how this sequence occurs, it

is observed that not only the nature of the child is gaining religious identity but also other external elements are more effective in this process.

Starting from here, religion, morality, traditions and so on, cannot be thought of as continuing and developing independently in the same or closely related cultures, without being influenced by anything. On the other hand, "*the essence, the source and the nature of religion, and especially divine religions, tend to be transcendental, over-time and over-history, no matter how they are understood, together with the human phenomena in civil societies, as long as they manifest themselves in cultural and social conditions, they must be subject to events, processes and interactions with people and society*" (Birekul, 2014).

Bandura draws attention to the importance of environmental factors in the name of the individual's development, saying that "people develop learning and cognitive capacities by observing, enabling them to shape their lives through this powerful model" (Bandura, 2003).

The aim of this study was to focus on the position and the importance of family in this area and for instance the importance of the religious activities within the family are two most important things we have based our study.

The family, which has an important place in preparing the child's life, has a wide range of tasks. This organization, which consists of parents and children, has many other functions that are determined by traditions, besides the duties set by law. Family reflects the values-judgments, traditions and customs, likes, beliefs, prejudices and the culture (Yörükoğlu, 1993). On the other hand, the family is the primary social circle that affects children's socio-cultural personality. Religion, together with values like love, respect, obedience, sacrifice, sharing, helping, is learned parallel in family. (Kurt, 2009). At this point, the parental duties assigned to child's education whether direct or indirect can be ordered as:

a- Biological duty,

b- Economical duty,

c- Protective duty,

d- Psychological duty,

e- Education duty,

f- Religious duty,

g- The duty of evaluating leisure time,

h- The duty of providing prestige (Tezcan, 1991).

In the pre-school period, the child also needs a model to imitate while learning to be a social individual. This identification that is necessary for the formation of the personality, together with many other factors, family can be regarded as the most important element and the most effective. "Religious duty" which is one of the tasks family influences in the education of the child, may be the representation of the purpose of our research. Surely, the saying of Hz. Muhammed that: *"Every born child is born pure. Then his / her parents make him Jew, Christian, Majus"* (Buhari, 1979) draws the attention to the importance of family in child's education.

Starting from the first steps of the culture, religion has always been in close relation with the natural units such as family, tribe, and nation. This, of course, does not mean that religion is an entirely social event. Religion has both normative and social foundations (Birekul, 2014). Whether in the normative sense, or as a social reality or binding, human beings find their forms and habits of life, such as language, religion, morality, culture, tradition and custom, ready for use.He accepts the attitudes, behaviors and values of his family without prejudice in the flow of life, and establishes relationships with the outside world through this background. As time goes on, he begins to form his own world view to reconcile the accumulations he finds with his own accumulations. For this reason, it is natural for the child to meet the religion of his / her own society and to develop a unique understanding of religion and life by processing and changing the religious beliefs, according to the example or what he lives with the adult and based on his spiritual experience (Yavuz, 1986).

Essentially, it the religion that is apparently similar to the others that the child has developed in his or her own spirit world, not the religion to which the adults are relocated. Because the child is active in this process. As a consequence, the individual has a direct impact on the family's other socialization institutions, establishing what he or she learns about in the family environment, in his own family life, in his practice in the religious setting, and in the school's relations with the family (Birekul, 2014).

Hollenbach, on the other hand, approaches to the depth of the topic from a psychological point of view. He believes that in a child who is weak and in need of assistance, there is an inexhaustible and yet unexplained, but needed to be, an unending curiosity, and a search for infinite power to help himself and to protect himself at all

times. According to him, with this curiosity and search for the infinite, the child will seeks and learns for what he cannot yet bear the name but learns over time that he is "holy and absolute" until he reaches to what he will know is "Divine Power". (Transf: Yavuz, 1986, s. 131-132).

Birekul emphasizes that the family has a holistic character in the religious identity of the child, and emphasizes the importance of family in social and economic dimensions, the importance of family in the solidarity, and the importance of modern society in socialization (Birekul, 2014).

According to Birekul, the family, which interacts with religion as a social institution, also stands out as a religious group at the same time. "*Religious groups in religious sociology books are usually treated according to the classification of religious scholars such as Wach and Mensching. According to this segregation, religious groups are divided into "natural religious groups" and "pure religious groups". At the beginning of natural religious groups stands the "family". The family is a social unit that identifies natural group ties and religious group ties*" (Birekul, 2014).

This function should be considered perfectly normal by the family. Because, as mentioned above, the influence of the people on the normative nature of religion has existed from the first man and manifested itself in every unit of the religious community. Perhaps, family is the main factor in these fields. Family is the place where most of the religious activities take place. These activities are sometimes confronted with worship and sometimes with traditions. If we take in consideration a Muslim, the prayers that the family members will pray for, the fasting held in Ramadan, the beginning of no-meal for anyone without iftar (the time we break the fast) time, starting to eat with the name of God, ceremonies for marriage, are the first steps in religious socialization for children who are in the process of imitating their parents.

There is no doubt that these examples explain that the influence of the family on the formation of religious attitudes is, to a large extent, predominant. If religious education in the family is deeply affecting the children, this is due to the fact that the family is also a model of religious values and religion's relationship. Religious movements of relatives and religious expressions used by relatives have taken place in a deep life that directly symbolizes them (Vergote, 1986). The child who begins to mature with this depth of life will synthesize these things, which he has seen for years with his environmental interactions, and will make them unique behaviors. Especially for

children who cannot learn the religion from their family because of various reasons, this situation can be more troublesome.

According to Vergote, the child has a vital need to live in a really, solid, safe, happy and good world. According to him, what is sacred is formed within the perspective of a vital faith. However, the family presents it with the universe of desires. A child who does not believe in the religious world of his family will be nothing but a child who has been destroyed in a dangerous way. But later on, when grown up, this non-naturalness between childhood and religion will present a worrying question: *"is religion, after all, not a dominant delusion of humanity's desire from childhood?"* (Vergote, 1986).

6-Findings

In this part of the study, the data obtained as a result of the research will be evaluated as separate titles. In order to determine the religious activities in the family, the questions asked by the students were interpreted according to the distribution of girls and boys and the tables were formed in this way.

The average score of this questionnaire applied to the students of Tirana Haxhi Mahmud Dashi Madrasah High School was determined to be 27 according to the frequency of religious activities and 28 according to the importance of religious activities. This situation is lower than the points that we get from the Turkish adapted version of the scale by Akın A.,Özbay A., Odabaşı Ş., Baykut İ. and Akkaya O.

The distribution of students participating in the research according to their gender and age is as follows:

Table: 1

GENDER	AGE		Total
	16	17	
MALE	69	24	93
FEMALE	80	28	108
Total	149	52	201

A total of 201 students participated in the research, of which 93 were males and 108 were female students. 69 of boy students were 16 years old and 24 boy students were

17 years old. While from the girl students 80 of them were 16 years old and 28 of them were 17 years old.

Within the scope of the research, the answers given by the students to learn the frequency and the importance of the activities of family religious activities will be given as individual titles and tables, and after it there will be made some general comments.

1- Distribution Of Answers Given To We Make Prayers With All The Family:

Table: 1

GENDER	WE MAKE PRAYERS WITH ALL THE FAMILY						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	Total
MALE	20	19	17	14	13	10	93
FEMALE	36	28	16	11	8	9	108
Total	56	47	33	25	21	19	201

2- We Read Religious Books All Together

Table: 2

GENDER	WE READ RELIGIOUS BOOKS ALL TOGETHER						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	Total
MALE	29	16	20	13	11	4	93
FEMALE	46	22	14	13	7	6	108
Total	75	38	34	26	18	10	201

3- We Listen To Religious Music All Together

Table: 3

GENDER	WE LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS MUSIC ALL TOGETHER						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	
MALE	28	15	15	14	12	9	93
FEMALE	39	17	10	21	16	5	108
Total	67	32	25	35	28	14	201

4- We Make Religious Activities, Meetings or Celebrations

Table: 4

GENDER	WE MAKE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS OR CELEBRATIONS						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	
MALE	22	15	19	17	13	7	93
FEMALE	36	29	10	13	14	6	108
Total	48	44	29	30	27	13	201

5- We Follow Television Programs and Radio Stations

Table: 5

GENDER	WE FOLLOW TELEVISION PROGRAMS AND RADIO STATIONS						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	
MALE	29	19	12	15	10	8	93
FEMALE	22	27	16	18	15	10	108
Total	51	46	28	33	25	18	201

6- We Make Religious Activities, Meetings or Celebrations

Table: 6

GENDER	WE MAKE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS OR CELEBRATIONS							Total
	NOT AT ALL	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	
MALE	1	19	16	17	16	13	11	93
FEMALE	0	27	17	17	19	15	13	108
Total	1	46	33	34	35	28	24	201

7- We Pray All Together When We Eat

Table: 7

GENDER	WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER WHEN WE EAT						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	
MALE	24	16	16	15	12	10	93
FEMALE	37	22	11	11	14	13	108
Total	61	38	27	26	26	23	201

8- We Pray All Together

Table: 8

GENDER	WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	ONCE A MONTH OR MORE	ONCE A WEEK	SOME DAYS A WEEK	EVERYDAY	MORE THAN ONCE A DAY	
MALE	23	19	15	13	15	8	93
FEMALE	35	28	18	14	7	6	108
Total	58	47	33	27	22	14	201

9- Mother and Father Make Prayers Together

Table: 9

GENDER	MOTHER AND FATHER MAKE PRAYERS TOGETHER						Total
	ONCE OR MORE A YEAR	**ONCE A MONTH OR MORE**	**ONCE A WEEK**	**SOME DAYS A WEEK**	**EVERYDAY**	**MORE THAN ONCE A DAY**	
MALE	31	14	12	14	13	9	93
FEMALE	35	26	16	10	9	12	108
Total	66	40	28	34	22	21	201

The most remarkable thing about the answers given by students in the questionnaire according to the frequency of family religious activities is that they perform prayers such as praying, making prayers (dua), watching religious programs and listening to religious music several times a month or year. And as a number is accepted to be 14. In other words, the frequency of activities is falling prevalently. According to these results, close to 1/4 of the students do not do such activities frequently.

The general average of responses to the frequency of family religious activities is given in the following table:

Table: 10

TOPICS	NUMBER	AVERAGE
WE MAKE PRAYERS WITH THE WHOLE FAMLY TOGETHER	201	2.9
WE READ RELIGIOUS BOOKS ALL TOGETHER	201	2.5
WE LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS MUSIC ALL TOGETHER	201	2.8
WE MAKE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS OR CELEBRATIONS	201	3.0
WE FOLLOW TELEVISION PROGRAMS AND RADIO	201	3.2
WE TALK ABOUT RELIGION TOPICS	201	3.2
WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER WHEN WE EAT	201	2.9
WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER	201	2.9
MOTHER AND FATHER MAKE PRAYERS TOGETHER	201	2.8

The notable drawback of this table is that the average of the answers in the activities the students evaluate over 6 points varies from 2.5 to 3.2. In addition to the scale of the questionnaire for family religious activities, the students in the above table have been found to concentrate more on " a few times a month and once a week " options.

On the other hand, we can see how much importance the students give to such activities, according to the following table:

1- We Make Prayers All Together

Table: 11

GENDER	WE MAKE PRAYERS ALL TOGETHER				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	5	15	24	49	93
FEMALE	4	19	16	69	108
Total	9	34	40	118	201

2- We Read Religious Books All Together

Table: 12

GENDER	WE READ RELIGIOUS BOOKS ALL TOGETHER				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	5	22	28	38	93
FEMALE	7	30	30	41	108
Total	12	52	58	79	201

3- We Listen to Religious Music All Together

Table: 13

GENDER	WE LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS MUSIC ALL TOGETHER				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	18	25	24	26	93
FEMALE	17	22	38	31	108
Total	35	47	62	57	201

4- We Make Religious Activities, Meetings or Celebrations

Table: 14

GENDER	WE MAKE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS OR CELEBRATIONS				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	8	13	29	43	93
FEMALE	10	25	33	40	108
Total	18	38	62	83	201

5- We Follow Television and Radio Programs

Table: 15

GENDER	WE FOLLOW TELEVISION AND RADIO PROGRAMS				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	17	21	27	28	93
FEMALE	16	27	36	29	108
Total	33	48	63	57	201

6- We Make Religious Talks At Home

Table: 16

GENDER	WE MAKE RELIGIOUS TALKS AT HOME				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	5	15	32	41	93
FEMALE	4	18	33	53	108
Total	9	33	65	94	201

7- We Pray All Together When We Eat

Table: 17

GENDER	WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER WHEN WE EAT				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	8	19	24	42	93
FEMALE	15	23	22	48	108
Total	23	42	46	90	201

8- We Pray All Together

Table: 18

GENDER	WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	3	12	16	62	93
FEMALE	14	14	17	63	108
Total	17	26	33	125	201

9- Mother and Father Make Prayers Together

Table: 19

GENDER	MOTHER AND FATHER MAKE PRAYERS TOGETHER				Total
	A BIT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	VERY MUCH IMPORTANT	
MALE	5	17	30	41	93
FEMALE	8	18	22	60	108
Total	13	35	52	101	201

The most remarkable situation in the answers given by students in the questionnaire made according to the importance of domestic religious activities is that most of the students think that such activities are important. More than 90% of the students think that religious activities within the family are important or very important.

The general average of responses according to the precepts given to religious activities in the family is given in the table below.

Table: 20

TOPICS	NUMBER	AVERAGE
WE MAKE PRAYERS WITH THE WHOLE FAMLY TOGETHER	201	3.3
WE READ RELIGIOUS BOOKS ALL TOGETHER	201	3.0
WE LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS MUSIC ALL TOGETHER	201	2.6
WE MAKE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS OR CELEBRATIONS	201	3.0
WE FOLLOW TELEVISION PROGRAMS AND RADIO	201	2.6
WE TALK ABOUT RELIGION TOPICS	201	3.2
WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER WHEN WE EAT	201	3.0
WE PRAY ALL TOGETHER	201	3.3
MOTHER AND FATHER MAKE PRAYERS TOGETHER	201	3.1

What grabs attention in this table is the average score of the students' responses on the 4-point scale which differs by 3 out of the two. In addition to the scale of the questionnaire for family religious activities, it has been found that the students in the above table concentrate more on " quite important " options.

6-Conclusion and evaluation

For the Albanian people who struggled with communism for 50 years and met with democracy at the beginning of 90's and continue the process of integration with Europe from that time, it is of utmost importance to transfer religious knowledge and sentiments to generations. Because of the industrial revolution with materialistic thoughts and feelings that prevail in Europe it can be said that accepting as a reality the things that can only be measured and entered into the experimental field by ignoring some values can be said to be a serious distress. Nowadays, these countries are putting into their training programs plans to transfer their future needs in a variety of forms (mandatory or elective), with material options.

Albania is still in the beginnings of this process. However, technology and communication facilities are developing so fast and are reaching to remove the barrier between countries and are sending this to the top of it. Together with its benefits, it can be said that this will bring serious problems.

A place to give values to generations is family. The education given by the family is permanent. That is why family must use different, effective methods to make this work and should obviously be very sensitive when it comes to this point. We can claim that

there are 5 matters where parents should be careful while trying to educate their children.

A-Being an example

B-Bringing out alternatives

C- Being tolerant

D- Considering the Child's Development Level

E-An education based on Love (Özdemir, 2002).

It should not be forgotten that parents are the first to get a child's first model. Being an example to children by making small interventions for their speech, their movements, and by doing these correct behaviors according to their age of development is the most important elements of a healthy character development. The same is true of religious beliefs and worship.

In the socialization of the child in the religious sense, parents have a serious responsibility towards their family members. If the parents do what they believe in, that is, their worship and other obligations in the home environment, if the child sees elements of the father in some way and is trying to make sense in the world of thought that means the parents are managing this process in a healthy way. Thus, in a survey on 1000 children, 63.24% of their families found positive incentives for worship and participated in worship with their families (Ay, 1994).

From here, with the prayers performed in the family, the prayers (dua's) that are made, the prayers that are made while sitting in the table, the thankfulness made after the meal, the religious feelings that are experienced in sacred days and nights and holidays, the religious ceremonies performed in the family from time to time, we can say that it has affected children deeply and that over time they have become a form of behavior (Özdemir, 2002).

According to the results of the "Family Religious Activities" survey conducted on the students of Tirana Haxhi Mahmud Dashi Madrasa High School with the aim of determining the importance of religious activities in the development of religious knowledge and awareness, Tirana Haxhi Mahmud Dashi Madrasa High School students, according to the frequency of religious activity the activities were dated as 27, According to the importance of religious activities, it was determined as 28. This

situation is lower than the points that we get from the Turkish adapted version of the scale by Akın A.,Özbay A., Odabaşı Ş., Baykut İ. and Akkaya O. What is worth mentioning is that Albania's religious sense of history and historical reality are different from Turkey. It can be considered that this country has not had much more than 50 years of religion and it has not been so bad when it is regarded as a questionnaire made by communist emotion and thought. So it is not proper to compare with the Turkish adapted version.

On the other hand, especially the second part of the questionnaire, the high value given to religious activities gives the impression that religious life is important in the eyes of the students and therefore of the families. These outcomes may then strengthen the belief that future generations will increase the rate of domestic religious experience and that families will educate their children with this awareness and thought.

As a result, religion and human beings are two influential elements. Parents have serious responsibilities in order to maintain this interaction in a healthy way and to train the generations healthier. Surely the most natural learning area of the child is the family institution. The behaviors that the parents have shown with the family members constitute the first effect in the socialization of the child and it is aimed to use this effect in the most rational way and our main purpose is to educate our generation with the universal values or religious feelings and thoughts.

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